

TOBIN

Proposed Development at Newtownmoyaghy
Road, Kilcock, Co Meath.

Preliminary Examination and Environmental
Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Screening Report



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Document Control Sheet	
Document Reference	Preliminary Examination and Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Screening Report
Client:	Meath County Council
Project Reference	11434

Rev	Description	Author	Date	Reviewer	Date	Approval	Date
A	Planning Issue	YMCM	30/04/2024	DMcH	30/04/2025	PC	30/04/2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared to accompany a planning application from Meath County Council to An Bord Pleanála under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) to obtain development consent for road upgrade works and stream diversion (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”) on the L-6219 Newtownmoyaghy Road situated to the northeast of Kilcock within the Meath County Council Local Authority area.

This report presents a Preliminary Examination and Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Screening for proposed road improvement works and associated stream diversion works and infilling of channel over 575 metres approx. on the L6219 within Meath County Council functional area, against the criteria set out under Annexes I, II and III of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive) and as transposed into Irish law. EIA Screening is the stage which ascertains whether the effects of a development on the environment are expected to be significant and determines whether an EIA is required as per the EIA Directive. It should be noted that the screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment and the whole project must be considered.

The purpose of this review is to determine the applicability of the EIA Directive to the proposed development and whether the proposed development is likely to result in significant effects, thereby requiring an EIA.

This Preliminary Examination and EIA Screening has been completed by TOBIN and takes due notice of the following regulations and guidance documents:

- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2024;
- EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive);
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (August 2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on Carrying out EIA (the 2018 Guidelines);
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (May 2022);
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (the EC 2017 Guidance);
- Guidelines issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government to Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018); and
- Office of the Planning Regulator (“OPR”) Practice Note PN02 on Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (June 2021).

2. REGULATORY CONTEXT

The EIA Directive is European Policy on the environment and is based on the precautionary principle, requiring that effects on the environment are considered as early as possible during planning and decision-making processes.

The EIA Directive is set out under EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EU ("the EIA Directive"). Annex I lists developments for which EIA is mandatory and Annex II lists projects which require a determination of their likely significant effects. Criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA is set out in Annex III.

These annexes are broadly transposed into Irish legislation under a variety of Acts and Regulations. For the purpose of the proposed development, the relevant legislation includes Part 10 and Schedules 5 – 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA are set out under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Schedule 7A lists information to be provided for the purpose of an EIA Screening. Under Article 120 of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations, where a Local Authority proposes to carry out a sub threshold development, the Local Authority must carry out a preliminary examination of, at least, the nature, size or location of the development.

Where the Local Authority concludes based on that preliminary examination that –

- i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it must conclude that an EIA is not required; or
- ii) if it concludes instead that there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development it must carry out a screening for EIA; or, finally,
- iii) where it concludes that there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development it must at that point conclude that development would be likely to have such effects and prepare or cause to be prepared an EIAR in respect of the development.

In the present case the conclusion at preliminary examination stage was as per (ii) above.

The EIA Directive states that in order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including where relevant, its subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and where relevant demolition phase. When determining whether significant effects on the environment are likely to be caused by a project, the competent authority should identify the most relevant criteria to be considered and should take into account information that could be available following other assessments required by EU legislation in order to apply the screening procedure effectively and transparently.

3. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION CONCLUSION

As referred to in Section 2 above the conclusion following preliminary examination in accordance with Article 120(1)(a) of the 2001 Regulations as amended was that there was significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and so it was necessary to proceed with screening for EIA and in that regard to prepare the information specified in Schedule 7A of the Regulations for the purposes of a screening determination.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

4.1 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

The proposed development comprises of lands adjacent to and including the Newtownmoyaghy Road (also known as the Moyglare Road) which is situated approx. 1km north-east of the town centre of Kilcock Co. Meath. The road serves as a busy link road between Kilcock and Maynooth, especially at peak traffic commuter times enabling vehicles to avoid the busy R148. The lands are within the administrative boundary of Meath County Council. The Kildare County Council administrative boundary is located to the north-west of the site.

Surrounding lands comprise of agricultural land and one-off rural housing to the east of the carriageway with a rural dwelling to the west of the carriageway. More urban development is located within the Kilcock settlement area in both local authority areas.

The Newtownmoyaghy Road is classified as a local secondary route however, it is used as a 'bypass' or 'rat run' for vehicles avoiding traffic congestion in Kilcock and Maynooth.

The need for the scheme has been highlighted in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 - Kilcock Environs written Statement – *To examine the feasibility of a new road which will connect the lands at Newtownmoyaghy with the L6219/L2211* and in the Kilcock Local Area Plan 2015-2021.

The Newtownmoyaghy Road is under review by Meath County Council given the safety concerns which have arisen in the area. The existing road edge and verge has collapsed into the adjacent stream at various locations due to what is considered to be erosion from flood events. The study area is also located within a flood risk area as identified on the Kilcock Environs Land Zoning Map and associated CFRAMs maps available from Floodinfo.ie.

4.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The location and layout of the proposed works can be viewed in Figures 4-1 and 4-2 below.

It is proposed to upgrade and widen the existing Newtownmoyaghy Road for a length of 550m which will result in the diversion of the Dolanstown/Newtownmoyaghy Stream over a length of 575m to the northeast of the existing channel, adjacent to an existing treeline, within an area of agricultural grassland. The footprint of the new channel is 5,825 sq m. The new channel will then travel south to reconnect to the existing Newtownmoyaghy Stream channel via a precast concrete box culvert connecting the stream from east to west. The existing mature trees along the east side of the road will be retained, with a minimum amount of tree removal (five trees in total) occurring along the path of the realigned stream. The route of the diversion will pass through privately-owned lands which will require a land acquisition.

The existing roadside stream channel will be backfilled with suitable material including recovered material from the new channel excavation. The approximate volume of soil to be excavated is 6,775 sq m. This will provide the additional width required for a Type 3 Single (6.0m) carriageway and widened grass verge, which can be developed into a shared cycle and pedestrian facility at a future date as shown in Figure 4-2 below.

In summary, the proposed development involves:

- a. Diversion of the Dolanstown (Newtownmoyaghy) stream from its current course to a new course approximately 50 metres east of the current line. This will require the development of a new 2 stage channel. The length of the new diverted stream is 575m.
- b. Widening and realignment of the Newtownmoyaghy Road. The length of the road affected is 550m.
- c. Infilling of existing roadside Dolanstown stream, including a conventional filter drain system to collect surface water road runoff.
- d. The proposed realigned stream will reconnect via a precast concrete box culvert connecting the stream from east to west.
- e. All associated site works including replacement landscaping.

Subject to statutory approval, the following is the sequence of activities that will be undertaken during the construction phase of the proposed development:

- It is anticipated construction will begin in late Q2 of 2025, if planning approval is granted prior to the date, or alternatively Q2 of 2026 (during low flow periods) and is estimated to continue for a duration of six months.
- Traffic will be maintained along the existing carriageway, while the bypass stream is under construction. The existing carriageway will be unimpeded but may have to operate under a stop-and-go system while the existing stream is being infilled during the last two to three months of the Construction Phase.
- Normal working hours during the Construction Phase are expected to be Monday to Friday 08.00 to 17.00 hours.
- Five trees will be removed to facilitate the channel diversion (as shown in Figure 4-2).

The construction of the new stream channel is expected to involve:

- The new channel will be excavated to a depth of between 1.3 to 2.8m.
- The new open channel will be excavated with all unsuitable material, removed from site to a licensed landfill facility. The volume of material anticipated to be excavated is 4,375m³ over a two – three week time period. The existing channel will be filled with topsoil and suitable recovered material, subject to meeting suitable grading requirements. Material will be stockpiled on site, outside the 1/10-year flood area, for reuse on infilling the existing channel.
- Silt curtains will be installed instream at the point where the new channel will join back with the Newtownmoyaghy Stream and also between the interface of the stockpiled material and new open channel (Figure 4-2).
- The new channel will be inspected for any silt buildup that may have occurred during construction. Any additional silt found present, will be removed from the channel prior to the diversion.
- Some riffles, pools, and boulders will be incorporated into the channel to provide aquatic habitat enhancement. The substrate of the new channel bed will consist of imported certified clean gravels.
- The bunding of the existing Newtownmoyaghy Stream using sandbags at two points (point A and B) will be carried out (refer to Figure 4-2).

- Prior to backfilling of the existing stream and bringing into operation the new channel, aquatic surveys will be undertaken. If deemed necessary, a fish salvage will be undertaken (under licence using electrofishing techniques by certified personnel) along the old channel, which will be isolated due to bunding. Translocation of any fish present will take place to the Newtownmoyaghy Stream directly downstream of the proposed development.
- After the fish salvage is completed, the stream will be diverted into the newly formed channel during low flow conditions, outside the 1 in 10-year flood event extents. Due to the low flow conditions under which the channel diversion will take place it is unlikely that over-pumping will be required, as the diversion of the flow from the old channel to the new channel will be managed in a gradual fashion. It is anticipated that the diversion of the stream using sandbags will take one to two working days.
- The channel will be graded, with topsoil placed, reseeded, and stabilized as necessary with a geocore/geojut material to prevent erosion.
- The channel will be fenced on the eastern bank (boundary of farmland).
- An estimated 15m long box culvert will be installed at where the proposed diversion will pass from the east side of the road to the west side before re-connecting into the existing stream. Two trees will be removed to accommodate the new box culvert. A second box culvert will be installed at Ch. 100m to provide a access to the farm land between the existing road and newly diverted stream.

Following the diversion of the stream to the new channel, the Construction Phase of the old channel will include:

- Dewatering of the old stream channel will be undertaken prior to the infilling works.
- The existing roadside channel will be backfilled with suitable material subject to meeting grading requirements which had previously been removed from the new channel excavation.

The road upgrade and resurfacing Construction Phase is expected to consist of:

- Resurfacing the road with a 150mm layer of dense bituminous macadam and finished with a double layer finish of tar and chip as existing.
- Raising of the road level where the flood waters are modelled to be in excess of 175mm, by 150 to 175mm, in order to ensure the safety of road users during future flood events. Where the road is raised, an equivalent volumetric of storage to the raised section will be provided for in the newly formed bypass channel.
- The construction of a Type 3 Single (6.0m) carriageway and widened grass verge.
- A standard filter drain will be installed with a 400mm slotted pipe along the new roadside edge of the (Newtownmoyaghy Road). This will cater for road surface run-off and localised land drainage to the west of the existing road. This water will be directed back to the stream via an outlet head wall.
- A petrol interceptor will be installed at the end of the 400mm slotted pip

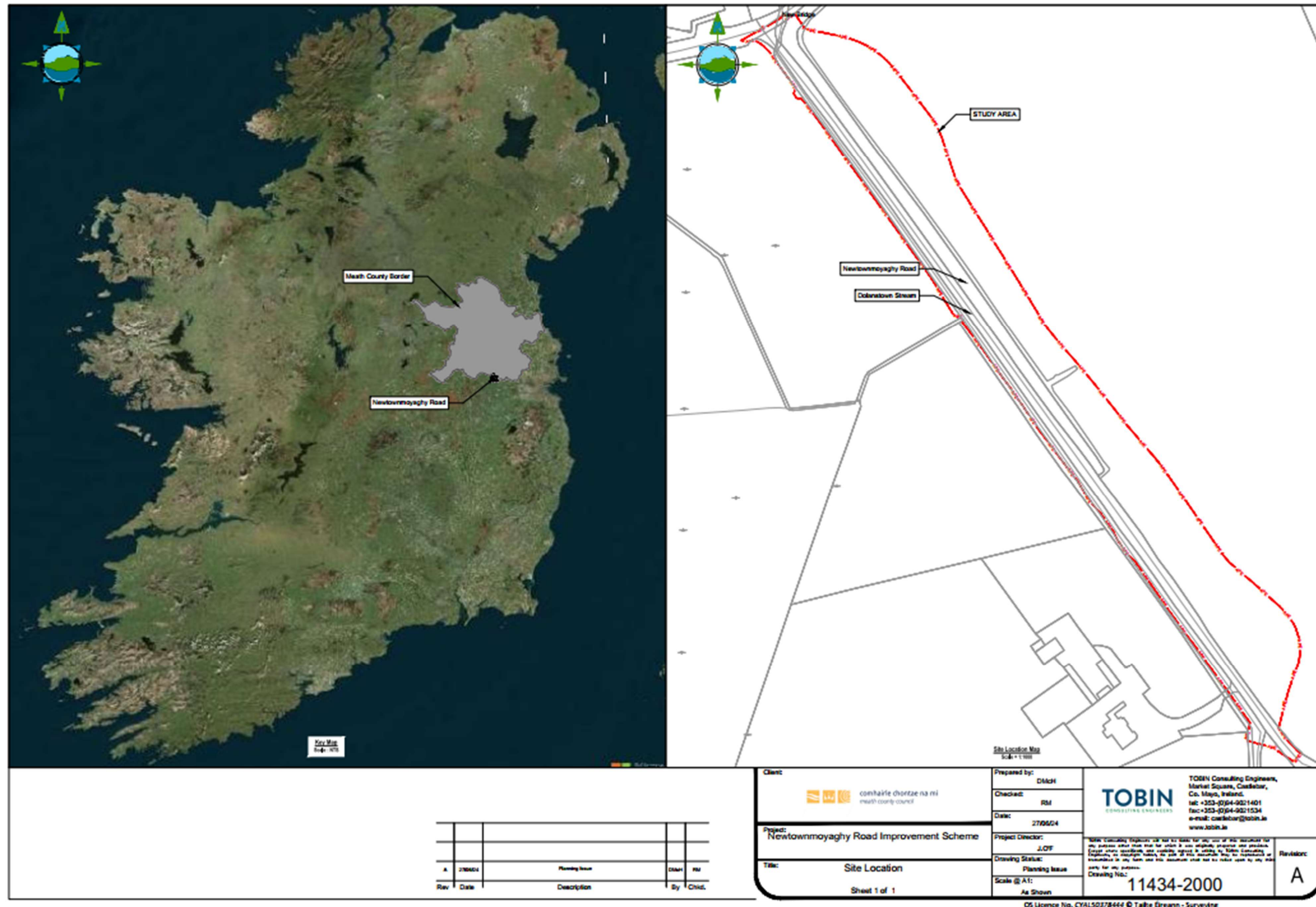


Figure 4. 1 - Site Location Map

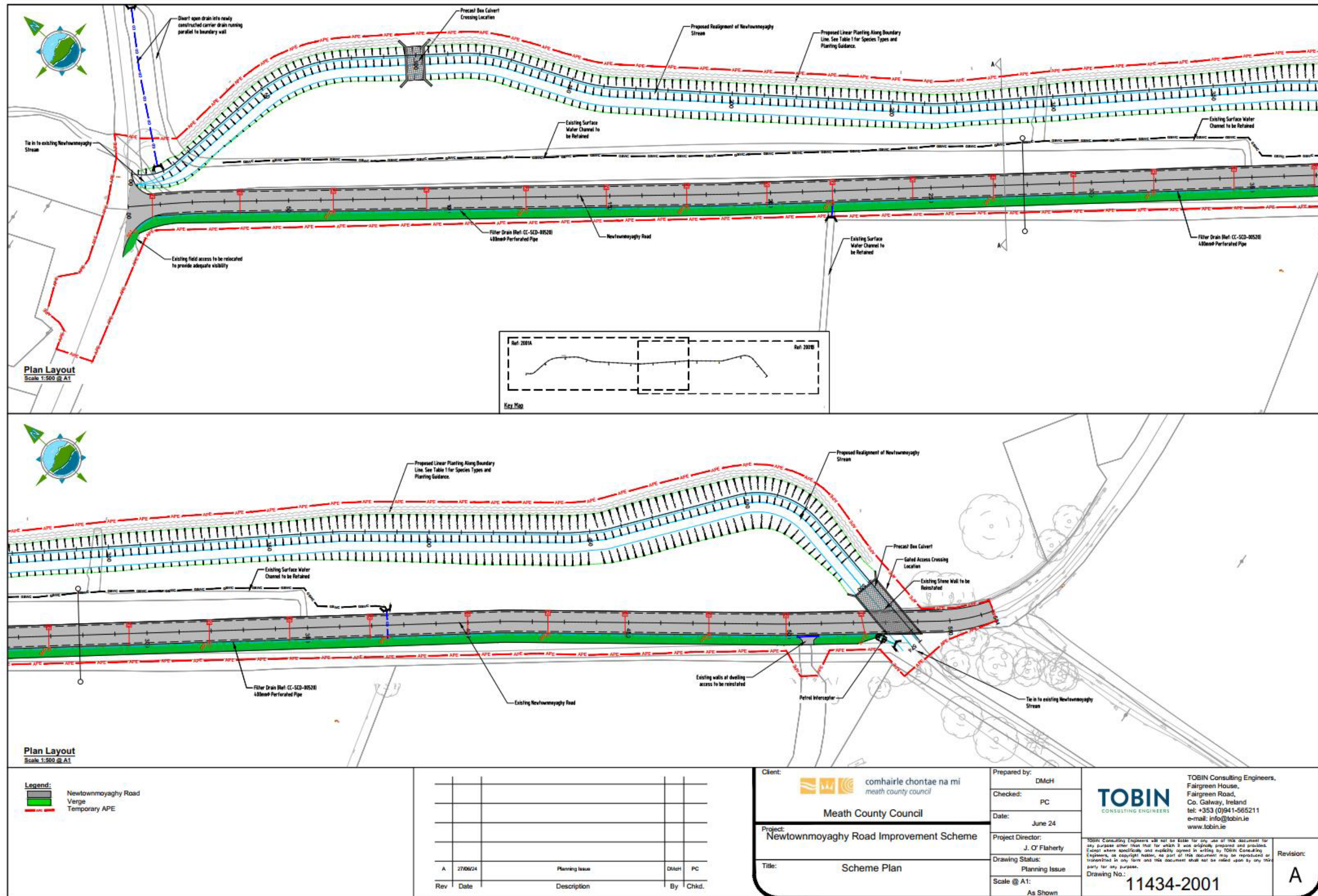


Figure 4-2 - Site Layout Plan

5. SCHEDULE 5 PROJECT TYPE APPLICABILITY

This section considers the full proposed development in relation to Schedule 5 of the 2001 Regulations, as amended.

The proposed development does not meet or exceed Schedule 5 Part 1 and Part 2 thresholds and criteria, and as such, EIA is not mandatory.

A consideration of sub-threshold development has been carried out and as per the ruling of the European Court¹, it is recognised that the EIA Directive has a '*wide scope and a broad purpose*' when determining if EIA is required. A review of Part 1 confirms that there are no applicable classes, hence the proposed development is not considered a Part 1 sub-threshold development.

Part 2 Thresholds

Class 10 (f)(ii) Canalisation and flood relief works is of relevance to the stream diversion. This class states:

"(ii) Canalisation and flood relief works, where the immediate contributing sub-catchment of the proposed works (i.e. the difference between the contributing catchments at the upper and lower extent of the works) would exceed 100 hectares or where more than 2 hectares of wetland would be affected or where the length of river channel on which works are proposed would be greater than 2 kilometres"

The proposed project does not involve canalisation. Neither will the proposed development have a contributing catchment of greater than 100 hectares. The proposed development will not affect greater than 2 hectares of wetland. The length of river channel on which the works are proposed measures 575 metres in length and therefore would not exceed 2 kilometres of river channel.

Class 10 (dd) *All private roads which would exceed 2000 metres in length*

This class is not relevant as the road improvement works relate to a public road with a length of 550 m.

Furthermore Class 15 should be noted, as this is applicable to *"Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7."*

The proposed development which encompasses road widening / improvement scheme and the diversion of a waterbody / stream (575 metres) on an overall site of ha2.69 ha. Recognising the requirement to apply a 'wide scope' it is considered that the proposed development has the potential to be considered a sub-threshold development of Part 2 Class 10 Infrastructure Projects, and in particular, (f) (ii).

¹ Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment August 2018, August 2018

Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended

Under sections 50 and 51 of the Road Act 1993, as amended, an EIA is required for certain types of road development. In relation to sub-threshold road schemes the key requirement is whether the proposed scheme is likely to have a significant environmental effect as set out under Sections 50 (1)(b)&(c). Section 50 (2) of the Roads Act 1993, sets out the specified information to be contained within an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Under Section 50 and 51 of the Road Act 1993 (as amended), an EIA is required in the following circumstance:

S.50.— (1) (a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:

- (i) the construction of a motorway;
- (ii) the construction of a busway;
- (iii) the construction of a service area;
- (iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.

Part V of the Roads Regulations 1994 prescribes types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of section 50 of the Act shall be—

- (a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;
- (b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.

The proposed development will involve the upgrade and resurfacing of c. 550 m long road. The works will consist of resurfacing of the road and raising the road level by 150 to 175mm in order to ensure the safety of road users during future flood events; a type 3 single (6.0m) carriageway and widened grass verge will be constructed. The proposed works do not involve the construction of a motorway, busway or service area and cannot be said to fall within the thresholds of Part V, (1)(a)(iv). The proposal as such does not fall under the classes of development prescribed for under Sections 50 and 51 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) and therefore does not require mandatory EIA.

An EIA Screening determination is required for sub-threshold developments as per the 2001 Regulations, as amended and a screening assessment is provided in Section 6 below.

6. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED FOR EIA (SCHEDULE 7 & 7A OF THE REGULATIONS)

Under Schedule 7A of the Regulations, as amended, the following information is to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purpose of screening sub-threshold development for Environmental Impact Assessment:

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—
 - a) A description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
 - b) A description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—
 - a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
 - b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

Under Schedule 7 of the regulations, as amended, the following criteria should be used to determine whether development listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment:

1. *Characteristics of proposed development –*

The characteristics of proposed development, in particular—

- a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,
- b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,
- c) the nature of any associated demolition works,
- d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,
- e) the production of waste,
- f) pollution and nuisances,
- g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and
- h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. *Location of proposed development –*

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—

- a) the existing and approved land use,

- b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
- c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - ii. coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - iii. mountain and forest areas;
 - iv. nature reserves and parks;
 - v. areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;
 - vi. areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;
 - vii. densely populated areas;
 - viii. landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

3. *Types and characteristics of potential impacts –*

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of ‘environmental impact assessment report’ in section 171A of the Act, taking into account—

- a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- b) the nature of the impact,
- c) the transboundary nature of the impact,
- d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,
- e) the probability of the impact,
- f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,
- g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and
- h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

7. SCHEDULE 7 AND 7A EIA SCREENING

This section provides an EIA Screening against the appropriate criteria as established by the EIA Directive Annex III and as transposed into Irish law by Schedule 7 of the 2001 Regulations, as amended.

It should be noted that under the EIA Directive, the EIA Screening process balances two objectives, in determining if a project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore be made subject to an assessment of its effects on the environment; and it should ensure that EIA is only carried out for those projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible.

Table 7-1 below screens the proposed development against the Schedule 7 criteria Information pertaining to Schedule 7A of the 2001 Regulations, as amended is provided herein.

The following reports/drawings have been consulted in the preparation of the EIA screening:

- Planning and Environmental Considerations Report (PECR) dated June 2024.
- Natura Impact Statement dated June 2024.
- Planning application drawings.

Table 7-1: Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

EIA Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
1. Characteristics of project	Consideration of the Proposed Development
The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to: - a) the size and design of the whole project; b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172 (1A) (b) of the PDA 2000) and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment; c) the nature of any associated demolition works; d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity; e) the production of waste; f) pollution and nuisances; g) the risk of major accidents having regard in particular to substances or technologies used and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge; and	There is no likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development having regard to the characteristics of the project, as set out below: a) The project is not significant in terms of size or design. The study area for the purposes of the EIA screening report encompasses a site area of 2.69 hectares, and includes the diversion of the Dolanstown (Newtownmoyaghy) stream from its current course to a new course approximately 50 metres east of the current line. The overall length of the new diverted channel is 575m. This will require the development of a new 2 stage channel; widening and realignment of the existing Newtownmoyaghy Road (L-6219) which is c.550m in length; infilling of the existing roadside Dolanstown stream, including a conventional filter drain system to collect surface water road runoff; The proposed realigned stream will reconnect via a precast concrete box culvert connecting the stream from east to west. and all associated site works including replacement landscaping. All works will take place within and adjacent to an existing roadway of approx. 550m. b) The Meath County Council, Kildare County Council and An Bord Pleanála on-line portals were reviewed with regard to planning applications within 500 metres of the site for the years 2017 – 2024. The most notable planning application granted within the immediate vicinity was for 10 terraced houses and 65 apartments to the south-west of the application site in Kildare County Council (Reg Ref 211121/ABP 311751). There are no significant development proposals within the vicinity of the site that could act in cumulation with the project. In addition, the nature of the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to any significant cumulative environmental effects. c) The project will not involve the demolition of any existing structures other than excavation and associated removal of soil. The excavated material will be used as part of the required infill and any material which is not suitable for infilling of the existing channel will be removed off site. The volume of soil to be excavated will be 6,775 m3. d) There is no land take for the improvement of the road and the footprint of the proposed channel is 5825 sq m. No water will be used for construction or operation. The existing mature trees along the southbound side of the road will be retained. It is envisaged that 5 No. trees at Ch. 0+010 will be

Table 7-1: Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

EIA Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
h) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	removed as they are along the path of the realigned stream. The removal of five trees will result in no net loss as the proposed development involves replacement planting with native trees which were chosen due to their presence in the surrounding area and biodiversity value. e) During construction all waste produced including soil removal will be managed in accordance with approved removal practices. The majority of soil and subsoil / excavated material etc. will be reused in the infilling of the old watercourse, and this work will be carried out in accordance with best practices. These works are of a scale that are not likely to have a significant environmental impact. All construction waste will be sorted and stored in on-site skips, prior to removal by a licenced waste management contractor. f) The proposed development during construction and operation will not result in significant pollution or nuisance. During the construction stage, best practice construction methods as set out in CIRIA C741 'Environmental good practice on site guide' will be implemented in order to prevent water pollution. This will include proper site management during construction to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to prevent run-off/pollutants from entering any watercourse in the vicinity of the works. The construction compound and welfare facility will be located within the existing agricultural lands and set back a minimum of 30m from the watercourse. Standard best practice pollution control measures will be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the project and are also summarised in the Planning and Environmental Considerations Report (PECR). With the mitigation measures in place the impact on soils and geology will be low impact during both the construction and operational phases. Similarly, the impact on the surface water and groundwater environment during the construction and operational phases will be of low impact. g) The proposed development is not a COMAH site (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) nor is the site location near a nuclear installation. The proposed development will not result in a risk of major accidents and/or disasters including those caused by climate change or flooding. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was prepared by TOBIN and was carried out in accordance with flood risk management guidance documents. The catchment area for the Newtownmoyaghy Stream at the subject site was estimated to be approximately 13.5km² based on the OPW's FSU dataset and the topography of the area.

Table 7-1: Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

EIA Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
	The assessment indicates that significant portions of the subject site may be at risk of flooding from the Newtownmoyaghy Stream during the 10%, 1% and 0.1% AEP fluvial flood events. Accordingly, a majority of the site is located within Flood Zone A. In terms of fluvial flooding post works, the stream channel and road improvements will involve changes in existing ground elevations and will optimise surface water drainage within the developed area. The proposed channel is designed such that the existing hydraulic conditions are maintained, and stream levels are preserved. It is estimated that the risk of pluvial flooding and ground water flooding at the subject site is minimal. It is estimated that the lands are not at risk of coastal flooding due to their elevation. Based on the hydraulic assessment carried out, it is predicted that the proposed channel and road improvements will reduce the probability of flooding along the Newtownmoyaghy Road. This is against a backdrop of where a roadside stream is relocated away from a current location that directly interfaces with narrow roadside edge that has in places collapsed into the stream. The proposed channel is designed such that the existing hydraulic conditions are maintained, and stream levels are preserved. h) The proposed works will generate noise during construction from general building works. The proposed general construction hours are Monday to Friday 08.00 – 18.00, and Saturday 08.00 – 14.00. Occasional weekday evening works may also be required however evening activities will be significantly reduced in order to manage any associated noise. The construction works will be subject to applicable standards including BS 5228:2009: Parts 1 and 2, the TII's "Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes, 2014", and European Union (Environmental Noise (Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25th June 2002 relating to the Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise. With mitigation measures in place (as set out in Chapter 10 of the PECR), construction works at the proposed development will not result in an increase in noise or vibration levels in the local environment and any potential impacts will be low and short term in nature. It is not anticipated that there will be any noise or vibration related impacts during the operational phase of the development over and above the existing use of the roadway.

Table 7-1: Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

EIA Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
	In terms of traffic, the proposed project will utilise the national road network for the construction of the proposed project. Traffic volumes associated with the works are low in number and relate primarily to the delivery of construction equipment and materials. The implementation of an approved Construction Stage Traffic Management Plan will minimise the potential for traffic and transport impacts during construction activities and there will be no residual impact. There is no proposal to include any permanent artificial lighting on the site. Potential impacts during the construction stage arising from dust emissions will be minimised through the provision of mitigation measures that will be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan. The implementation of the above mitigation measures will ensure that construction works at the proposed development will not result in an increase in dust levels in the local environment and the potential impact on air quality will be low. It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on air quality because of the operational phase of the development. The proposed development during construction and operation will not result in significant pollution or nuisance. During the construction stage, best practice construction methods as set out in CIRIA C741 'Environmental good practice on site guide' will be implemented in order to prevent water pollution. This will include proper site management during construction to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to prevent run-off/pollutants from entering any watercourse in the vicinity of the works. The construction compound and welfare facility will be located within the existing agricultural lands and set back a minimum of 30m from the watercourse. Standard best practice pollution control measures will be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the project and are also summarised in the Planning and Environmental Considerations Report (PECR). With the mitigation measures in place the impact on soils and geology will be low impact during both the construction and operational phases. Similarly, the impact on the surface water and groundwater environment during the construction and operational phases will be of low impact. Services such as power and water will be required during the construction phase. It is not considered that there will be significant use of these resources as part of the development.

Table 7-1: Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

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2. The Location of Project	Consideration of the proposed development
The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, with particular regard to: - a) the existing and approved land use; b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground; and c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: - i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; ii. coastal zones and the marine environment; iii. mountain and forest areas; iv. nature reserves and parks; (v) areas classified or protected under Member States' national legislation; special protection Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;	In consideration of the location of the project, there are no anticipated significant environmental effects arising with regards to: a) The Newtownmoyaghy Road is rural in nature and location and would be classified as a local road. The site predominantly consists of built surfaces bordered by treelines, stone walls and a stream in a predominantly rural environment. The existing road edge and verge of Newtownmoyaghy Road has in discrete sections collapsed into the adjacent stream due to erosion from stream flood events compounded by vehicles passing close to the road/stream interface. The proposal development is in keeping with the existing land use as it seeks to upgrade and improve an existing sub-standard road. The need for the scheme has been identified in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. There is a line of mature trees comprising primarily beech, sycamore and horse chestnut along the eastern boundary side of the existing road, which has limited the ability to widen the road in this direction away from the stream on the western side of the road. Stone walls and other stonework was recorded inside the northeastern boundary of the proposed development site, in the form of a bridge, under which the Newtownmoyaghy Stream flows. b) The project is not likely to have a significant impact on the relative abundance, availability, quality, or regenerative capacity of natural resources. The proposed development will be provided on an area already in use as a road. The stream diversion works, and infilling of channel represent an exchange between the ground taken for the channel of the redirected stream and the infilled channel. There is no requirement for additional land-take and in consideration of the size and scale of the works for 550 metres there will be no impact on the abundance, availability, and quality of land within the environs of the proposed facility. c) The proposed development is not situated within a wetland, riparian areas or river mouth, or within a coastal zone, mountain, forest or nature reserve and there are no likely direct or indirect

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(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation have already been exceeded and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; (vii) densely populated areas; or (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	effects arising from the proposed development on the natural environment. The study area is 2.69 hectares and is located within a flood risk area as identified on the Kilcock Environs Land Zoning Map and associated CFRAMs maps available from Floodinfo.ie. Surrounding lands comprise of agricultural land and one-off rural housing to the east of the carriageway with a rural dwelling to the west of the carriageway and more urban development within the Kilcock settlement area inside the Kidare County Council jurisdiction. The predominant soil type is firm dark grey slightly sandy gravelly clay with some clayey gravel lenses. There are no karst features within the proposed development or their immediate surrounds. The site is underlain by the Dublin Groundwater Body (IE_EA_G_008) in the vicinity of the proposed development. No evidence of otter was noted along the Newtownmoyaghy Stream during the survey work. However, otter are known to occur in the area, it is possible that this species may commute along the stream. No Third Schedule invasive plant species were recorded within the proposed development boundary. Key ecological receptors identified with reference to the proposed development site include the Newtownmoyaghy Stream, connected designated sites, treelines and protected fauna such as bats and birds. Once the mitigation measures outlined in Section 4.5 of the PECR have been implemented, potential impacts are considered to be of low magnitude in the temporary to short-term and therefore no significant adverse effects are likely to occur on the sensitive ecological features. In terms of landscape impacts, the proposed development will involve an alteration to the landform within the application site, but it is considered that the proposed development will have only a limited physical impact on the landscape and therefore the impact within and immediately around the site during the construction period, it is considered to result in a localised significance

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	of no greater than Moderate-slight for a temporary / short term duration. In the long term, once the upgrade works have been completed, the permanent landscape impact significance will be Slight-imperceptible. A screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken by TOBIN for the proposed development. The proposed development is not contained within any European protected sites. The closest designated European site is the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398), located approx. 4.6km downstream from the proposed development. The SAC is hydrologically linked to the proposed development via the Newtownmoyaghy Stream within the site, and the Dublin Groundwater Body. The site is also hydrologically linked to the South Dublin Bay SAC, the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA. The AA Screening report concluded using best scientific knowledge through an assessment of the source-pathway-receptor model, which considered the Zone of Influence of effects from the proposed development, and the potential in-combination effects with other plans or projects, that the possibility for likely significant effects on the South Dublin Bay SAC [000210], South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA [004024], North Dublin Bay SAC [00206] and North Bull Island SPA [004006] exists as a result of the proposed development. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment was required and was prepared by TOBIN. Following the application of the detailed mitigation measures in the NIS, potential significant adverse effects will be avoided or reduced. Consequently, it is determined there is no risk of adverse effects on the qualifying interests or special conservation interests, or on overall site integrity, nor in the attainment of their specific conservation objectives for the South Dublin Bay SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, North Dublin Bay SAC and North Bull Island SPA. A standard filter drain will be installed along the new roadside edge (Newtownmoyaghy Road L6218) to cater for road surface run-off. The water flowing to this drain will be filtered back to the Newtownmoyaghy Stream from an outlet head wall. This filter drain will restrict the risk of traces of hydrocarbons directly entering the watercourse, thus reducing downstream pollution.

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	No areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in European Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure are within the proposed development site. Having regard to densely populated areas, in the vicinity of the site, Kilcock town is located approximately 1km to the west of the site. The project will involve short-term construction work associated with the upgrade works and construction of the new channel and infilling of the old channel. In the long term the project has been designed to prevent contamination of waterbodies. Due to the distance of the project from Kilcock, it is not considered to have a negative impact on the local population. A desk-based study of the potential cultural heritage impacts of the scheme were assessed. There are several RMP sites in the vicinity of the subject site. They comprise of Ring-ditches (ME049-A003001, ME049-A003002, ME049-A004001, ME049-A004002, ME049-A004003) and an Enclosure ME049-038. These sites are bio securityed in Chapter 11 Archaeology of the PECR. No recorded/listed archaeological or built heritage sites are located in the study area; therefore no direct impacts are anticipated for any of the sites. There is the potential that unidentified archaeological remains will be uncovered within greenfield areas during the diversion Stream works. Pre-construction and post-construction Condition Surveys will also be carried out of the existing bridge although it is not anticipated that the works will interact directly with this structure.
3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact	Consideration of the proposed development

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The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b) (i) (I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account: a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected); b) the nature of the impact; c) the trans frontier nature of the impact; d) the magnitude intensity and complexity of the impact; e) the probability of the impact; f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact; g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects; and h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	There are no anticipated likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development, taking the following into account: a) Regard has been had, to the likely magnitude and spatial extent of impacts arising from the proposed development during the construction and operational phases. The magnitude and spatial extent of the impacts of the proposed development (e.g. habitat loss, dust generation, elevated noise, etc.) will be limited to the site and / or the immediate environs (i.e. typically within 50 m) of the proposed development. b) The nature of impacts during construction will be temporary in that on- site construction work, noise, dust and traffic, will have a temporary effect on existing on-site uses and surrounding uses. The proposed development does not involve a material change to the functioning of the L6219 route and the hydrology or the aquatics of the stream. The project when complete will result in a positive long-term effect by addressing the current flooding issue and general road user safety in this regard. c) The project will not result in transboundary impacts. d) As set out above, impacts arising during construction will be temporary and managed through best practice construction guidelines with respect of excavation, soil removal, dust, traffic and lighting. Waste generated during the construction process will be controlled through measures adopted in a waste management plan. e) The overall probability of impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed development during the construction or operational phases is considered to be low. Based on the hydraulic assessment it is predicted that the proposed channel and road improvements will reduce the probability of flooding along the Newtownmoyaghy Road. It is also predicted that the proposed channel will not impact flow paths or exacerbate flood risk elsewhere in the area. Noise, lighting and traffic generated from the use of the proposed upgraded route will have a neutral impact from the present situation. f) Regarding the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impacts, it should be noted that no significant impacts are anticipated with respect to construction or operation of the facility. Impacts associated with construction are expected to last approximately 12 months, during standard and

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	regularised construction hours of operation. With respect to the possibility of effectively reducing the impact the design of the project has been optimised to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised as much as possible. These impacts are not considered significant and do not result in a requirement for EIA. g) A review of the Meath and Kildare County Council and An Bord Pleanála websites was undertaken for projects and planning applications in the vicinity of the proposed development site. The majority of applications were for small scale residential developments, e.g. residential one-off dwellings and housing upgrades. One application of note was for a development of 10 terraced houses and 65 apartments at Kilcock, to the south-west of the application site within Kildare County Council. Planning permission was granted by An Bord Pleanála on 17th April 2023 for the proposal. (ABP Reference No. 311751). A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was submitted with this application. It is not considered that this application would result in significant cumulative effects with the proposed development. h) With respect to the possibility of effectively reducing the impact the design of the project has been optimised to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised as much as possible. These impacts are not considered significant and do not result in a requirement for EIA. A number of mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposal in order to avoid / minimise potential impacts on the local environment.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed development does not meet or exceed Schedule 5 Part 1 or Part 2 thresholds and criteria, and as such, EIA is not mandatory. Recognising that the EIA Directive has a 'wide scope and a broad purpose', the proposed development was screened as a sub-threshold project under Part 2 Class 10 (f) (ii) Infrastructure Projects – Canalisation and flood relief works.

An EIA screening has been carried out considering the nature of the proposed development, its size and location having due regard to the criteria listed in Schedule 7 and the relevant information listed in Schedule 7A of the 2001 Regulations.

Having regard to the same, it is determined that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not therefore required. The main reasons and considerations with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Schedule 7 of the 2001 Regulations on which the determine is based are included in Section 7 above.

