

11 Landscape and Visual

11.1 Introduction

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was written by Geraldine Hayes of Hayes Ryan, Landscape Architects. The assessment is based on a desktop study and a field survey of the proposed site and receiving environment. These assessments were conducted on the 29th June 2025. The viewpoints selected were also photographed 5th August 2025 for verified photomontage. This report is to be read with the accompanying set of verified photomontages prepared by 3Dimensional in the accompanying verified photomontage booklet. Weather conditions were good to variable with good visibility for the time of year. Trees had full foliage.

Although interlinked, the landscape impact and the visual impacts are assessed separately and with their own sets of criteria.

The landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) concerns itself with landscape, landscape values, aesthetic and visual amenity and landscape as a resource which provides society with cultural, economic, and environmental benefits. Landscape has come to be defined according to the European Landscape Convention as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.'

The assessment is informed by EPA Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports¹ 2022 and the methodology prescribed in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (GLVIA) published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment.

The EPA sample guidelines analyse landscape from the visual and amenity perspective. Visual effects examine context, character of the view, significance and sensitivity with amenity regarding, public access, public amenities, recreation, and tourism. Landscape is studied under the headings; Landscape Appearance and Character, Landscape Context, Views, and Prospects (in the landscape character area and related areas), and Historical Landscapes including Designed Landscapes.

GLVIA guidelines examine landscape and visual effects in a necessarily interconnected manner. However, they are studied as separate study components.

11.1.1 Landscape

The effects on landscape are studied with Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) as the guiding principle. This is concerned with the identification of and assessment of the importance of landscape characteristics, landscape quality and the condition of the landscape. According to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA)¹, 'Landscape' results from the interplay between the physical, natural, and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations and spatial distribution of these elements create variations in landscape character. 'Landscape Character Assessment' is how landscape is described. It is how we understand the effects of development on the landscape as a resource.

¹https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/EIAR_Guidelines_2022_Web.pdf

² Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA)

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

The impact of the development itself is studied as the impact of the proposals and development on the landscape, whilst 'effect' describes the changes brought about by these impacts e.g., a change to landscape character.

11.1.2 Visual

The visual assessment aims to assess the extent of visibility of a development, define the sensitivity of receptors and set out the likely perception of viewers and visually sensitive receptors. This is largely to do with views and visual amenity. 'Visual' addresses the effects on specific viewpoints of the Proposed Development as it is experienced by general viewers and those inhabiting the local area. The effect on the views and general visual amenity is assessed. In short, visual assessment is concerned with changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity.

11.2 Methodology

11.2.1 Baseline Information³

The baseline descriptions are required to consider the context of the landscape and views in terms of the proposed location, magnitude and spatial extent of landscape affected as well as current trends in that landscape/view.

Landscape Character Assessment and the character of the relevant views are described and checked against the local condition. The distinguishing characteristics of the landscape/view are examined.

The significance of the landscape or the view is assessed against current designations, significance of the landscape/view locally nationally or internationally. The quality of the landscape or the view is examined as are any legislative protections. The landscape/view is examined for its rarity, its ability to renew itself, uniqueness, and scenic qualities. The landscape/view is considered for its quality, value, designation, and any legislative protections connected to the landscape. The rarity/unique status and condition of the landscape is noted as is its ability to renew itself. Sensitivity relates to the sensitivity of the landscape or view to change.

Landscape assessment of potential landscape effects, involves assessing and classifying the sensitivity of the landscape as a resource and then describing and classifying the magnitude of landscape change which would result from the development. The combination of sensitivity and magnitude of change gives a classification for the significance of the landscape effects. The 'impact' of the development is the action which results in landscape and visual changes. 'Effect' refers to the changes brought about by such an impact. The effect may result in the alteration of the landscape character of the area. 'Effect' is defined as the change or changes resulting from those actions, e.g., a change in landscape character, or changes to the composition, character, and quality of views in the receiving environment. This report focusses on these effects. The study considers the area from which the development will be seen and the landscape it is set in. As per the GLVIA the emphasis is on a "reasonable approach which is proportional to the scale and nature of the Proposed Development." ⁴

³ EPA Table 3.3 Typical Standards of Descriptions of Baseline Data for use in an EIAR

⁴ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment p 98

RECEIVED: 18/7/2025

11.2.2 Thresholds of Magnitude of Change

In this report the magnitude of change ranges from very high to high, medium to low and negligible with a similar rating for sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors. This refines the EPA categorisation from high to medium to low and negligible and allows the GLVIA and EPA methodologies to both conclude on the same rating for significance of effects (see 11.2.1 below) i.e. seven generalised degrees of effects of significance⁵ profound, very significant, significant, moderate, slight, not significant and imperceptible.

A set of viewpoints were studied for the visual section of the report, and a general landscape photographic study was conducted to examine and confirm the landscape character, its form and pattern around the Proposed Development.

The area around the site of the Proposed Development was examined and from this field study a specific set of viewpoints were selected for the visual aspect of the study. Professional judgement as recommended by the GLVIA and establishing a proportionate examination of the area relative to the size of the project has allowed for a thorough visual study.

Various tools, techniques and criteria are used to judge landscape capacity and sensitivity. Thresholds of magnitude of change are established by using such tools. In addition to examining local Landscape Character Assessments (LCA), the field study was conducted to establish the magnitude of change to the landscape and views.

Assessment of “significance of landscape effects” requires a review of landscape character assessments at local level, establishing sensitivity against which any predicted change can then be measured. This involves a desk study review of published landscape characterisation studies and assessment of sensitivities for the case in hand.

Field observations are used to confirm decisions to assess landscape character and confirm landscape character against the desk top study. It is also used to assess the appropriateness of the landscape character type for this landscape.

Subjective information on less tangible characteristics is also recorded to inform the impressions or perceptions of the landscape and landscape value.

Ordnance Survey and other published information such as historical maps are also useful in examining the landscape, landscape history and its capacity for change.

The character, quality, scale, and value of the landscape is assessed according to the criteria below.

⁵ https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/EIAR_Guidelines_2022_Web.pdf
Section 3 p53

RECEIVED: 16/12/25

11.2.3 Landscape Quality

Landscape quality is primarily a matter of how clearly the distinctive character of a landscape is expressed in an area, and of the state of repair or condition of landscape elements and the integrity and intactness of the landscape. There are three categories of quality ranging from high to medium to low.

High – landscapes strong in character or distinctive character, in good condition and very few or no incongruous features. Excellent example of a landscape type.

Medium – moderate strength of character and retain many key characteristics. Such a landscape will typically have suffered some decline and is marked by the occasional incongruous feature.

Low – landscapes with weak strengths of character, fragmented and/or featuring significant atypical, incongruous, or discordant features.

11.2.4 Value

The value of a landscape reflects its value to society and in estimating this, the report sets out to establish levels of importance of the potentially affected landscape, aspects of the landscapes that are valued, to whom and for what reason. It refers to the relative value we attach to different landscapes and is the basis for designating or recognising certain highly valued landscapes. The reasons a landscape is valued are many and varied. It can include a landscapes' scenic quality, its tranquillity, or its wilderness attributes. It may be highly valued at a national or local level due to conservation reasons or cultural associations.

Landscape value is categorised from high to medium to low.

'High' value landscapes covered by a national designation for landscape value and display a high number of locally valued features present or are very highly valued as a landscape for other reasons.

'Medium' value landscapes are landscapes not covered by designation for landscape value. These landscapes may have a moderate number of locally valued features present, or they are moderately valued as a landscape for other reasons.

'Low' value landscapes are those not covered by a local or national designation for landscape with very few locally valued features present and not locally valued as a landscape for any other reason. A landscape with a low value may be degraded, display numerous incongruous features and have no obvious local association.

Landscape can also be seen to be valued at community level or for intangible reasons can be perceived to be valuable to a particular community. It may be valued for the elements that remain of a finely articulated landscape, with all its associations and connections over time.

RECEIVED: 10/11/2025

11.2.5 Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity refers to the degree to which a landscape can accommodate change without adverse effects on the landscape or its character. It has regard for the value placed on the landscape at all levels, how it is used, the patterns of the landscape, its sense of enclosure or openness and all its visual receptors.

The nature and scale of development also reflect on sensitivity. Five categories are used to classify sensitivity.

Sensitivity Descriptions

Very High Areas: Where the landscape exhibits very strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics that combine to give an experience of unity, richness, and harmony. The landscape character is such that its capacity to accommodate change in the form of development is very low. Because of their very high sensitivity these landscapes are subject to protection by designation either nationally or internationally. The priority for such landscapes is the protection of their existing characters from change.

High Areas: Where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features, and characteristics. The landscape character has a limited or low capacity to accommodate change in the form of development. Such landscapes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national, regional, or county value. The principal objective for the area is the conservation of existing landscape character.

Medium Areas: Where the landscape has certain valued elements, features, or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong, or has evidence of alteration, degradation or erosion of elements and characteristics. The landscape character is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.

Low Areas: Where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character is such that it has capacity for change; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy, and the principal management objective may be to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration, or enhancement.

Negligible Areas: Where the landscape exhibits negative character, with no valued elements, features, or characteristics. The landscape character is such that its capacity to accommodate change is high; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes include derelict industrial lands or extraction sites, as well as sites or areas that are designated for a particular type of development. The principal management objective for the area is to facilitate change in the landscape through development, repair, or restoration.

Sensitivity of the landscape and susceptibility to change are interlinked. This is the ability of the landscape receptor (overall landscape character, landscape quality, condition of the landscape area etc.) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the baseline situation and /or the achievement of landscape policies and strategies. ⁶

ORS

Existing assessments are very useful and largely deal with intrinsic or inherent sensitivity. This occurs without reference to a particular type of development. According to the GLVIA, “These cannot reliably inform assessment of the susceptibility to change since they are carried out without reference to any particular type of development and so do not relate to the specific development proposed.”⁷ Therefore susceptibility must be related to the project.

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

⁶ GLVIA 3RD Ed., Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013 p 89.

⁷ GLVIA 3RD Ed., Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013 p 89

11.2.6 Geographical Extent

Having regard to the geographical extent of landscape effects, it is important to iterate the effects which may have an influence on differing scales at landscape level.

The effect at (a) site level will refer to the effect within the site itself and at (b) the level of the immediate setting of the site and (c) at the scale of the landscape type or character area. Some effects may have a geographical extent (d) ranging over several landscape character areas

11.2.7 Loss/No Loss of Landscape Elements

In addition to effects which result in the loss of landscape elements, it is possible to have effects which cause no loss of landscape elements and no removal of existing components but there is an introduction of new elements e.g. buildings which alter the skyline or arise over the tree line. In such a case, scale can be seen to alter the landscape character and quality of visual amenity.

11.2.8 Magnitude of Landscape Change

Magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape by a development, with reference to its key elements, features, and characteristics ('landscape receptors'). Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change.

Description of the Categories of Landscape Change Magnitude

Very High: Change that is large in extent, resulting in the loss of or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered totally uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in fundamental change to the character of the landscape with a loss of landscape quality and perceived value.

High Change: Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.

Medium Change: Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape but not necessarily reduction in landscape quality and perceived value.

Low Change: Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape and no reduction in landscape quality and perceived value.

Negligible Change: Change that is limited in scale, resulting in no alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic of the context. Such development results in no change to the landscape character, its quality or perceived value.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

11.2.9 Probability of Effects

Likely or probable effects can be described as those which are planned to take place and those which can be reasonably foreseen to be inevitable consequences of the normal construction and operation of the project.

Thus, the probability of the effects is defined as likely and unlikely.

Likely Effects: The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.

Unlikely Effects: The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.

11.2.10 Significance of Effects

To classify the significance of effects, the magnitude of change is measured against the sensitivity of the landscape using the guide in Table 11.1 below. The matrix is only a guide. The assessor also uses professional judgement informed by their expertise and experience to arrive at a classification of significance that is reasonable and justifiable.

Table 11.1: Guide to Classification of Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

		Sensitivity: Landscape/View				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change: Landscape/View	Very High	Profound	Profound to Very Significant	Very Significant to Significant	Moderate	Slight
	High	Profound to Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate to Slight	Slight to Not Significant
	Medium	Very Significant to Significant	Significant	Moderate	Slight	Not Significant
	Low	Moderate	Moderate to Slight	Slight	Not Significant	Imperceptible
	Negligible	Slight	Slight to Not Significant	Not Significant	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

According to EPA guidelines the description of the likely significant effects on both the landscape and visual receptors should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term, and long-term, permanent, and temporary, positive, and negative effects of the project.’

11.2.11 Duration of Effects

The duration of effect is categorised in this report according to the EPA guidelines⁸

⁸ Environmental Protection Agency, 2022 Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports

- Momentary Effects: Effects lasting from seconds to minutes.
- Brief Effects: Effects lasting less than a day.
- Temporary Effects: Effects lasting less than a year.
- Short-term Effects: Effects lasting one to seven years.
- Medium-term Effects: Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
- Long-term Effects: Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
- Permanent Effects: Effects lasting over sixty years.
- Reversible Effects: Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration.
- Frequency of Effects: Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually).

11.2.12 Environmental Protection Agency Guidelines

The EPA Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, May 2022, describes the significance classifications as follows:

Imperceptible: An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.

Not significant: An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.

Slight: An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.

Moderate: An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.

Significant: An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.

Very Significant: An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.

Profound: An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

11.3 Methodology for Visual Effects Assessment

Assessment of visual effects involves identifying a number of key/representative viewpoints in the site's receiving environment, and for each one of these classifying the viewpoint sensitivity and the magnitude of change which would result in the view. These factors are combined to arrive at a classification of significance of the effects on each viewpoint.

11.3.1 Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor to Change

This depends on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention is focussed on the views or visual amenity they experience at that location. Visual receptors most susceptible to change include residents at home, people

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

engaged in outdoor recreation focused on the landscape (e.g. trail users), and visitors to heritage or other attractions and places of community congregation where the setting contributes to the experience. Visual receptors less sensitive to change include travellers on road, rail and other transport routes (unless on recognised scenic routes), people engaged in outdoor recreation or sports where the surrounding landscape does not influence the experience, and people in their place of work or shopping where the setting does not influence their experience.

11.3.2 Value attached to the view.

This depends largely on the subjective opinion of the visual receptor but also on factors such as policy and designations (e.g. scenic routes, protected views), or the view or setting being associated with a heritage asset, visitor attraction or having some other cultural status (e.g. by appearing in arts). Five categories are used to classify a viewpoint's sensitivity.

11.3.3 Categories of Viewpoint Sensitivity

Very High: (views towards or from a landscape feature or area) that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of national value. The composition, character and quality of the view are such that its capacity for change is very low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change.

High: Viewpoints that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses or tourist-based views focused on the landscape). The composition, character and quality of the view may be such that its capacity for accommodating change may or may not be low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change that reduces visual amenity.

Medium: Views that may not have features or characteristics that are of particular value, but have no major detracting elements, and which thus provide some visual amenity. These views may have capacity for appropriate change and the principal management objective is to facilitate change to the composition that does not detract from visual amenity, or which enhances it. Such views can be judged to have some scenic quality, which demonstrates some sense of naturalness, tranquillity, or some rare element in the view.

Low: Views that have no valued feature or characteristic, and where the composition and character are such that there is capacity for change. This category also includes views experienced by people involved in activities with no particular focus on the landscape (e.g. shopping or they are on heavily trafficked routes). The view may make for an attractive backdrop but is not an important element for these activities. For such views, the principal management objective is to facilitate change that does not detract from visual amenity or enhances it.

Negligible: Views that have no valued feature or characteristic, or in which the composition may be unsightly (e.g. in derelict landscapes). For such views, the principal management objective is to facilitate change that repair, restores or enhances visual amenity. Such viewpoints reflect users whose activity has no focus on the landscape or where the view has no relevance to their activity. Such a view may be of poor quality.

RECEIVED: 15/11/2025

11.3.4 Magnitude of Change to the View

Classification of the magnitude of change takes into account the size or scale of the intrusion of development into the view (relative to the other elements and features in the composition, i.e. its relative visual dominance), the degree to which it contrasts or integrates with the other elements and the general character of the view, and the way in which the change will be experienced (e.g. in full view, partial or peripheral view, or in glimpses). It also takes into account the geographical extent of the change, as well as the duration and reversibility of the visual effects. Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change to a view:

Categories of Visual Change - Magnitude of Change Description

Very High: Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features or characteristics, or introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes dominant in the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity.

High: Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.

Medium: Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity

Low: Minor intrusion of the development into the view or introduction of elements that are uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change in visual amenity.

Negligible: Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

11.3.5 Significance of Visual Effects

As for landscape effects, to classify the significance of visual effects, the magnitude of change to the view is measured against the sensitivity of the viewpoint, using the guide in Table 11.1 above.

11.3.6 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measures for both landscape and visual effects are categorised as;

- **Mitigation by Avoidance**
- **Mitigation by Prevention** e.g. Prevention measures are put in place to prevent the effects of accidental events from giving rise to significant adverse effects.
- **Mitigation by Reduction;** seeks to limit the exposure of the receptor.

ORS

- **Reducing the Effect;** This strategy is used for effects which occur over an extensive and undefined area of land view or landscape. The mitigation is often achieved by installing screening between the likely receptors and the source of the effects.
- **Offsetting:** This is a strategy used for dealing with significant adverse effects which cannot be avoided, prevented, or reduced. It includes measures to compensate for adverse effects. e.g. planting of new vegetation elsewhere to replace unavoidable loss of similar vegetation.

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

11.4 Baseline Conditions

11.4.1 Ordnance Survey Ireland Historical Maps

The following historical maps from Tailte Éireann; (the OSI historical six inch black and white and coloured (first editions), as well as the six inch black and white last edition and twenty-five inch black and white maps) (**Figure 11.1- 11.4**) were studied to identify the evolution of the landscape in and around the proposed site and to examine it in the context of the landscape and landscape character area as we find it today. The modern townland boundary concurs with the historical townland boundary. The eastern portion of the proposed site boundary is shared with the townland boundary.

This boundary is to be retained. The pattern of the field system is broadly similar to the pattern we find today with long fields running south from the esker towards the Ballinure River. Except for the Torva enterprise, the land directly surrounding the unit has retained its field pattern. The historical planning enquiries shows the parcel on the eastern side of the proposed site with similar boundaries extending to the south of the site.

The fields level out with some drama from the esker ridge to the lower lying river valley. There were originally smaller fields at the top of the ridge running parallel to the Glenloughaun road (between the current R355 and along the L8412). The larger field boundaries dropped perpendicularly from these smaller horizontal units.



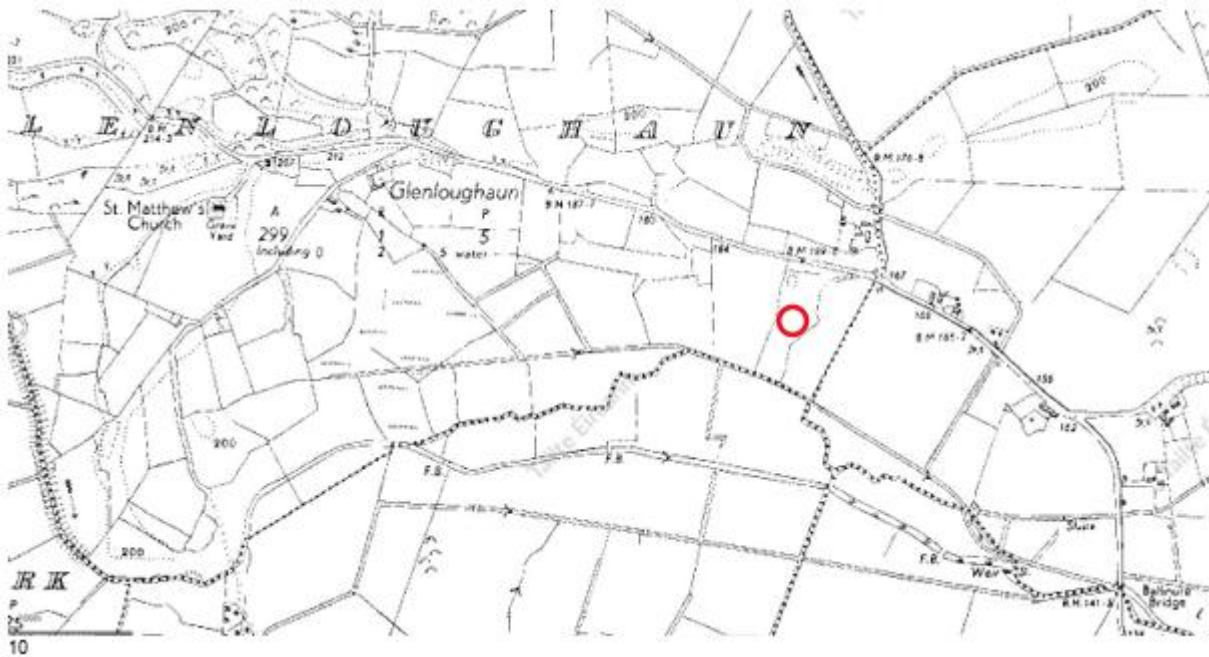
Figure 11.1: Townland Boundary

⁹ Tailte Éireann Historical Map Viewer
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3ae19cc156bf4706a929304bf8fcc4f6>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Figure11.2: OSI Historic Map 6-inch first edition black and white

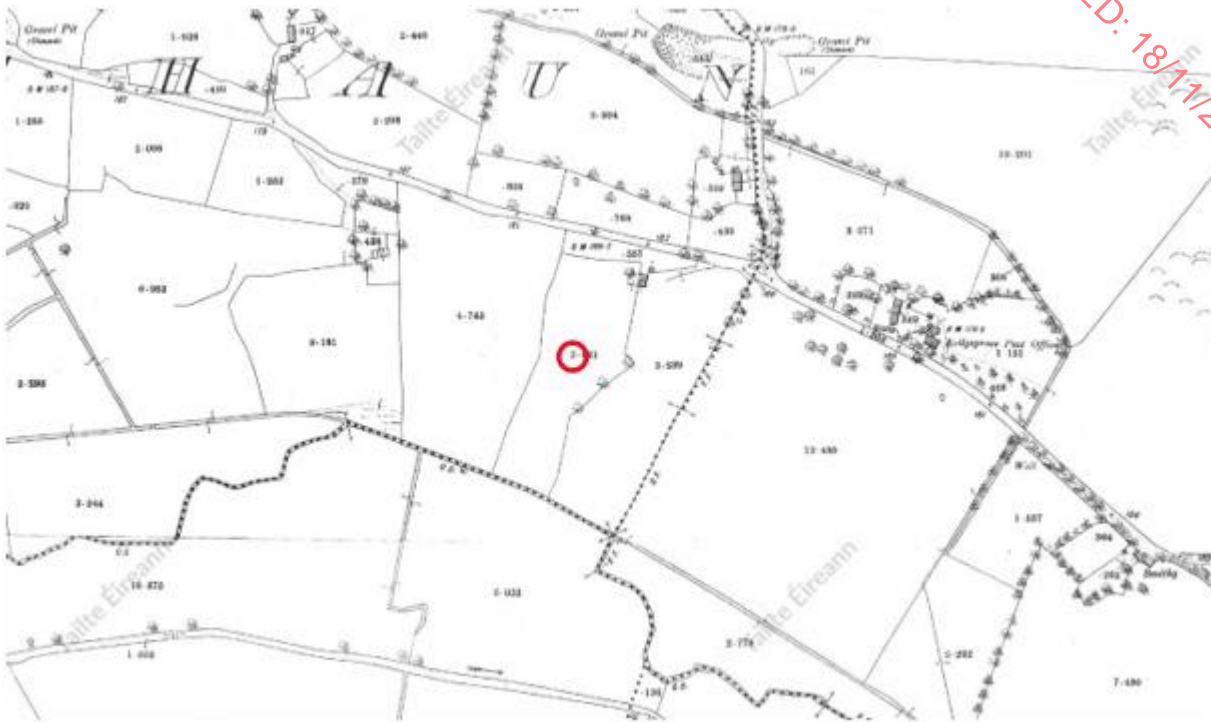


¹¹ Figure 11.3: Tailte Éireann OSI Historic Map 6-inch last edition black and white

¹⁰ <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3ae19cc156bf4706a929304bf8fcc4>

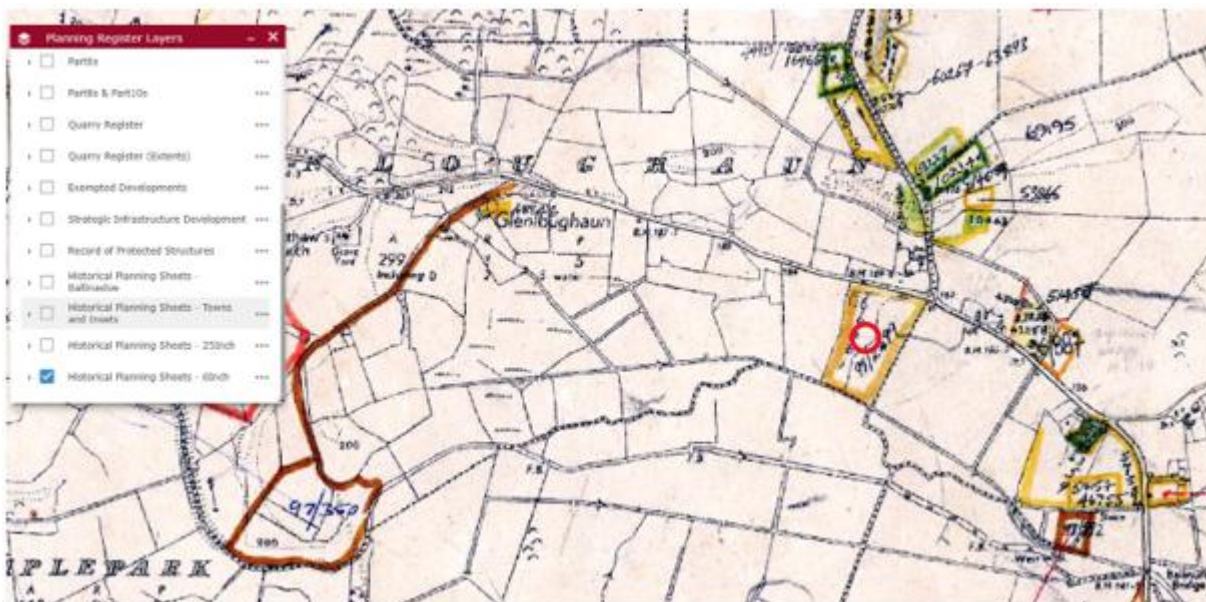
¹¹ Tailte Éireann OSI 6 Inch Black and White last edition <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



12

13 Figure 11.4: OSI Historic Map 25-inch



14 Figure 11.5: Ballinasloe Historical Planning Sheets

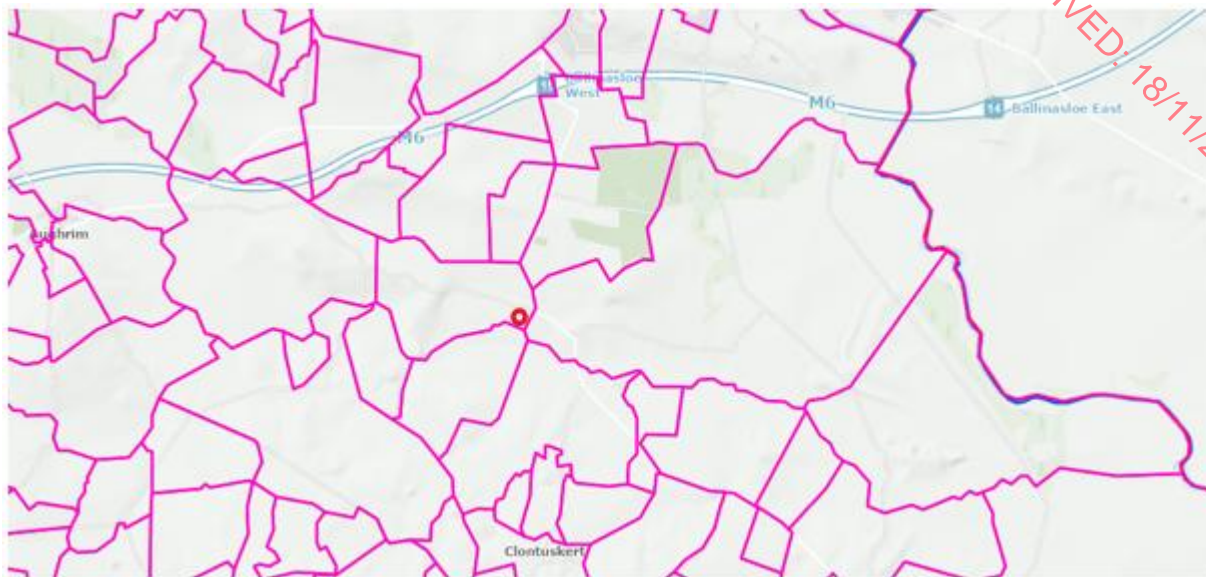
12 <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3ae19cc156bf4706a929304bf8fcc4f6>

13 Tailte Eireann OSI 6 Inch Black and White last edition

14 <https://galwaycoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3570e45b0e354cf0b740ecbc7505adb2>

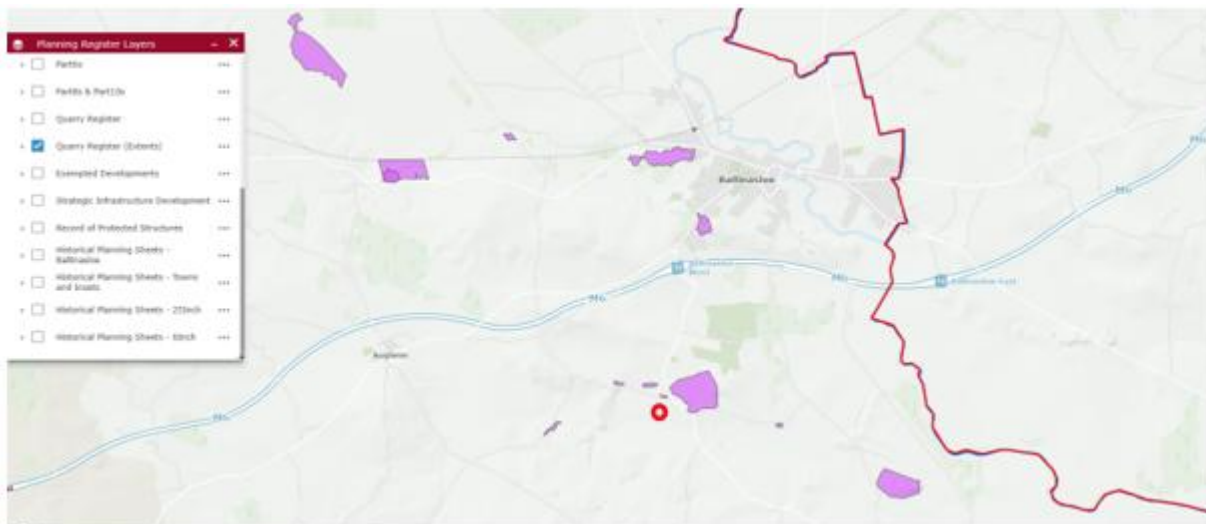
ORS

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



15 Figure 11.6: Townland Boundaries Contemporary Glenloughaun with Kellysgrove to the east of the proposed site.

The site of the proposed development sits lower in the southern segment of the site with the esker topography screening it from the north. There is currently and has been a good deal of sand and gravel extraction and quarrying evident in the landscape locally. This has transformed the esker ridges over time and the landscape associated with them.



16 Figure 11.7: Excerpt Galway County Council Quarrying Register

However, the ridge along the Glenloughaun road is relatively intact with smaller quarries to the north and the ridge to the west of the site of the proposed development has adequate intactness to provide topographical absorption. The existing natural environment allows for a good measure of seclusion to the proposed site from the north and the west.

¹⁵ Tailte Éireann

¹⁶ Registered quarries

<https://galwaycoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3570e45b0e354cf0b740ecbc7505adb2>

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

The natural glacial formation of the esker and the drainage pattern (of the river Ballinure to the south of the proposed site) and the associated field divisions generated by drainage to the river, along with the hedgerows on higher ground, define the landscape at the site of the proposed development. In the wider area, a large quarry with evident overburden, extraction and manufacturing operations, dominates the area. Evidence of the esker having been quarried to various degrees abound. Along Glenloughaun road there is a good sense of the esker as a landscape and cultural phenomenon. The Ballinure river flows to the Suck and feeds the Suck Callows which itself is a tributary of the Shannon. There are bogs and peat influenced landscapes in evidence. There is a good contrast and diversity in landscape types over a short distance. The top of the esker ridges allows for an overview of this landscape diversity.

At site level the Torva enterprise the buildings, turning areas and parking has already influenced the landscape with incongruent elements. Immediately to the west and north of the proposed development the esker influences the site. To the south there are long views over the river Ballinure valley and to the east the landscape character is dominated by the concrete and quarrying operation. At landscape character scale as discussed above there is a mixture of influence from the Kilcrow basin unit and a weaker representation of the Shannon environs unit, each of these belonging to the Central Galway landscape complex and the Shannon Environs landscape character types.

11.4.2 Landscape Associations

As per GLVIA recommendations, landscape associations are one of a range of factors that help in the identification of valued landscapes. Some “landscapes are associated with particular people such as artists and writers or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area”.¹⁷ For this reason landscape associations at or near the site of the proposed development are examined. Eiscir Riada is the ridge of the ‘riding or driving’, referring to its position as the main ancient thoroughfare across the country from Dublin to Galway. Commonly referred to as An tSlí Mór the esker network facilitated travel over peatlands, wet ground and a multitude of landscapes. Esker Riada also facilitated the division of the country into Leath Cuinn to the north and Leath Muga Nuadat to the south. The initial ecclesiastical division of the country also corresponded to this natural division¹⁸ after the Synod of Ráth Breasail. Esker Riada and the River Shannon also connected a string of early Christian monastic settlements together including Clonmacnoise. Nearby Clontuskert Abbey south of the Ballinure River a tributary of the Suck and then the Shannon, is also associated with the area.

The townland Glenloughaun, Gleann a Lochain (from O Donovans’ Field Name Books) Glen Lochan refers to the glen of the small lake, likely west of the proposed site. The area is associated with the Ua Maine (Hy Many) see “The Tribes and Customs of Hy-Many Commonly Called O’ Kelly Country”¹⁹ with territories mapped west of the River Suck. Kellysgrove is associated with Hy Many in this way.

The area is associated with the Battle of Aughrim. This is examined below in relation to battlefield sites and walking trails.

The Hymany Way a way marked walking trail is associated with the epic march of O Sullivan Bere from the Beara peninsula in January 1603 accompanied by 1,000 followers and reaching O’Rourke’s Castle in Leitrim with only 35 people remaining.

¹⁷ GLVIA Section 5.28 p 84

¹⁸ <https://turtlebunbury.com/document/esker-riada/>

¹⁹ <https://archive.org/details/tribescustomsofh00dubl/page/n5/mode/2up>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

11.4.3 Monuments and Protected Structures

The National Inventory of Architecture and the local Record of Protected structures are considered as part of this report. The interaction of archaeology and landscape is considered in this report as an element of landscape. There are no recorded monuments or protected structures on the sites of the proposed developments.

There are no historical landscapes designated at the site of the proposed development. The records of protected structures and monuments (Fig 11.8. to Fig 11.10 below) show there will be no effect from the proposed development on any of the buildings or monuments listed. The visual section of this report examines intervisibility.



Figure 11.8: Protected structure in relation to the proposed development site
St Matthews Church, (west) and Ballinure Bridge, (east) □ Proposed development

RECEIVED: 18/07/2025

11.4.4 Galway Development Plan LCA, Landscape Character Area

The landscape character assessment included in the Galway County Council development plan 2022-2028 indicate Landscape Character Areas that generally share the same characteristics.

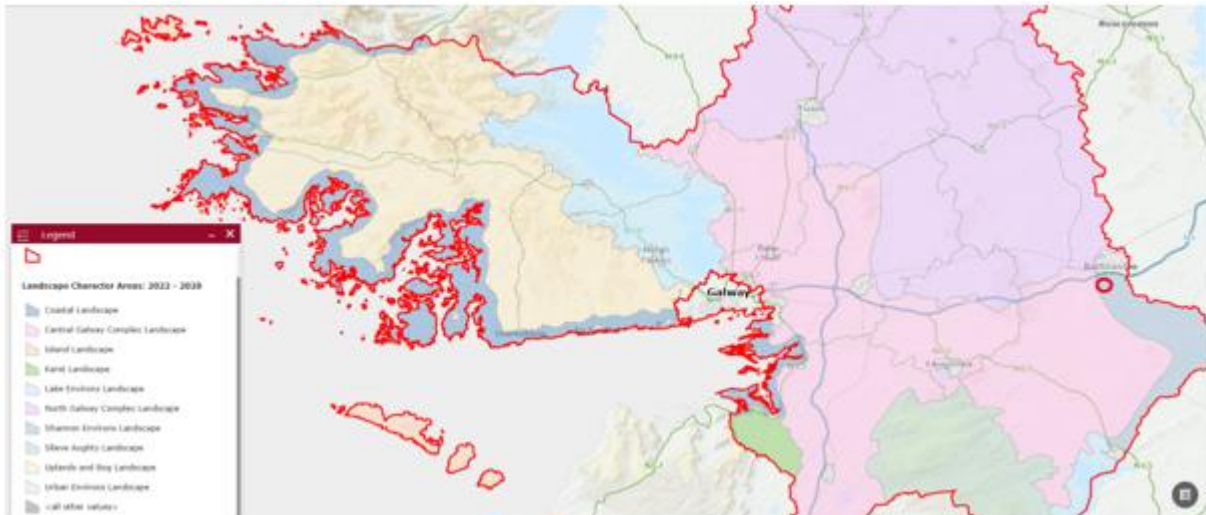


Figure 11.11: Galway Landscape Character Areas GCDP 2022-2028
 ○ Location of the Proposed Development



²¹ **Figure 11.12: “Shannon Environs” landscape type adjacent to the “Central Galway Complex (Kilcrow Basin Unit)”**

The proposed development falls into the Shannon Environs Landscape type, with the unit 5a also described as Shannon Environs landscape unit. However, the landscape at the site of the proposed development sits right on the border of the adjacent Central Galway Landscape Character type with the landscape unit being the Kilcrow Basin Unit.

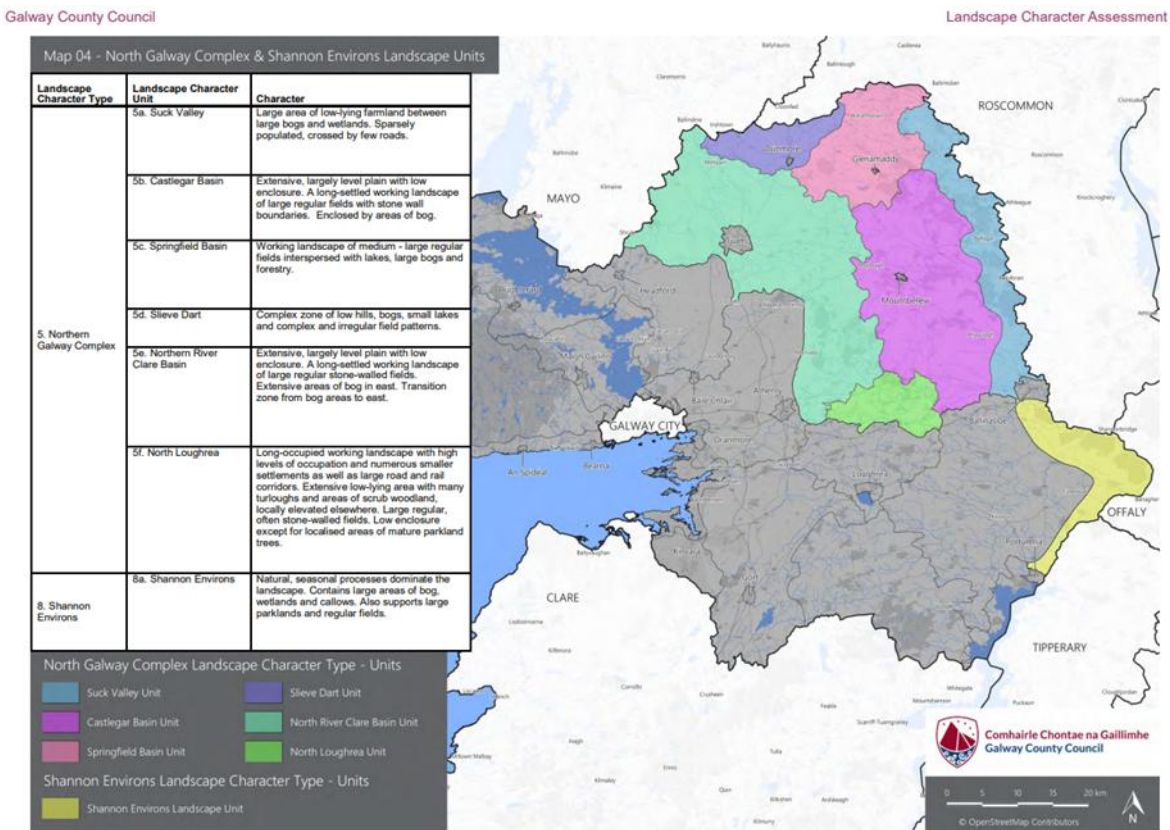
The Shannon environs landscape type is described in the LCA as “an extensive area of distinctive character along much of the south-eastern boundary of the county. There is a core area of open water often fringed by wide areas of naturalised vegetation along shallow shores and many elongated islands.

²¹ Galway Landscape Character Areas
<https://galwaycoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3570e45b0e354cf0b740ecbc7505adb>

RECEIVED: 16/11/2025

The Shannon Callows, which are seasonally flooded grassland ecosystems adjacent to the low lying river floodplain are an important characteristic of the area. These areas support internationally significant numbers of wintering birds that amplify the overwhelmingly natural character of these areas of Callows. The adjoining areas are also distinctive, either on account of very large areas of bog or extensive farm holdings and parkland landscapes. The more productive soils of this area, which are often characterised by large flat fields, are the result of a long history of intensive agriculture and settlement. This historic pattern of settlement has resulted in elevated concentration of archaeological, architectural and cultural remains.

Features from different periods of land management and settlement are often found in proximity. The landscape is full of instances of such concentrations. These include Protected Structures around Lawrencetown such as the Gothic style folly gateway in Ballymore or around the National Monuments of The Cathedral of St Brendan Clonfert and Clontuskert Abbey.”



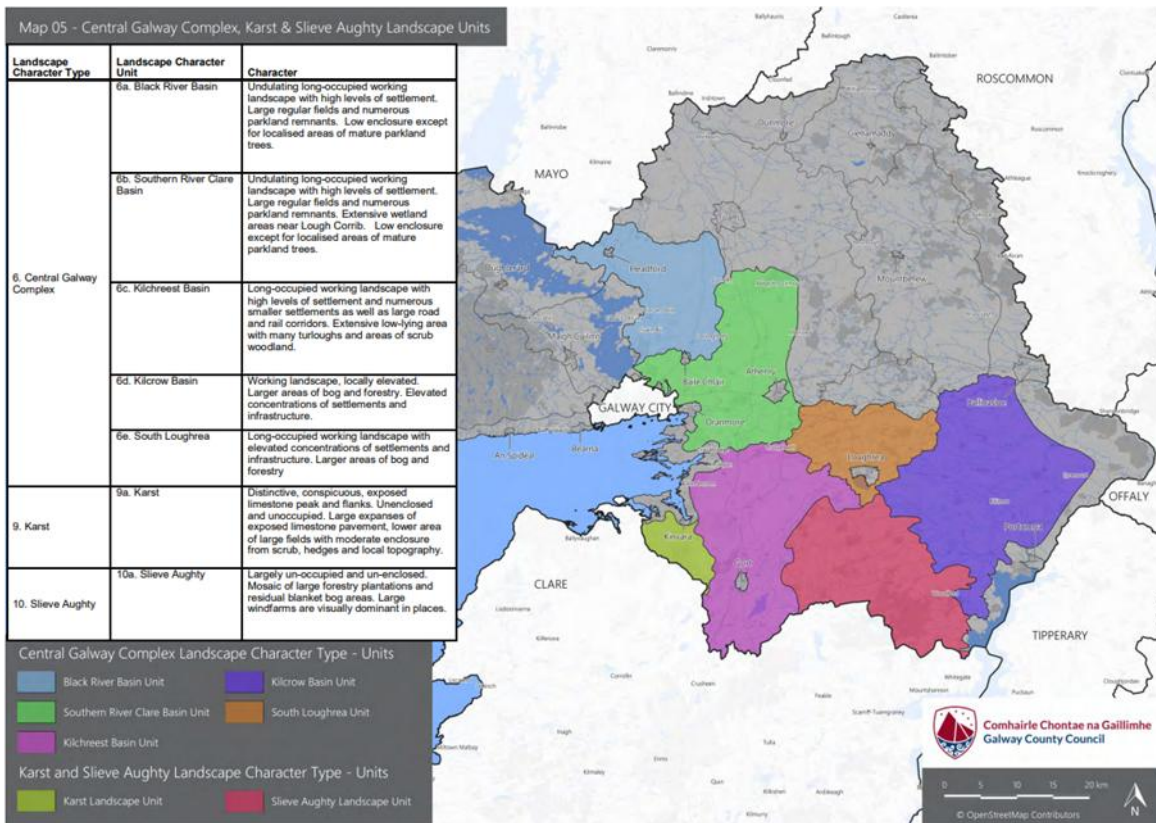
22 Figure 11.13: “Shannon Environs” landscape type adjacent to the “Central Galway Complex (Kilcrow Basin Unit)”

The central Galway Complex is described as ;

“An extensive plain of grasslands comprising of medium-to-large fields with low enclosures and many areas of low stone walls used for field boundaries. It also includes distinctive features, including locally elevated features, such as Knockma, south-west of Tuam as well as areas that overlook Lough Corrib in the west and the complex of lakes and foothills between Gort and Loughrea in the south. This area contains the majority of the county's population with associated high levels of urban generated rural housing, roads and settlements. These range from large to small settlements with associated infrastructure, services and commercial activity. The western and southern parts of these landscapes are underlain by karst limestone which

RECEIVED 11/11/2025

results in many unusual hydrological features - such as turloughs and large springs. The more productive soils of this area have resulted in long histories of more intensive historic settlement and associated higher concentrations of remains from major periods of land-management, including early Christian, medieval and 16th - 19th century estates. This historic pattern of settlement has resulted in elevated concentration of archaeological, architectural and cultural remains. Features from different periods of land management and settlement are often found in close proximity. Examples of sites with many periods include Pallas, Eyrecourt and Garbally Park.”



²³ Figure 11.14: The “Central Galway Complex” bordering the “Shannon Environs Landscape Character Type”

The LCA typological characteristics are also described as follows in the GCDP 2022-2028

“Shannon Environs The river gives rise to a distinctive landscape type that has evolved in response to two factors. Nearest to the river, there are extensive areas of very flat, flood-prone lands that include the Shannon Callows as well as some large peatlands. The Callows, which are seasonally flooded grassland ecosystems adjacent to the low-lying river floodplain, are an important characteristic of the area. These areas, often waterlogged, have little settlement but are highly valued for summer grazing. The area is also used by internationally significant numbers of wintering wildfowl. The combination of wild vegetation and large flocks of birds creates one of Ireland’s most distinctive natural landscapes. Better-drained adjacent lands are extremely productive for agriculture and have been used and valued for centuries.

²³<https://consult.galway.ie/en/system/files/materials/6962/Appendix%20%20Landscape%20Character%20Assessm ent.pdf>

RECEIVED
20/11/2025

The wealth generated by these lands has supported elevated concentrations of large estates and related fortifications and, latterly, important ecclesiastic sites and settlements that give this area a rich legacy of sites with cultural heritage. Tourism, mostly river-based is slowly emerging as an important land use in this landscape because of these factors.”

“Central Galway Complex Most of Galway’s settlement and agriculture, with associated roads and infrastructure, occur within this busy working landscape. Each period of history has attracted farming and settlement to the fertile, level soils of this landscape. Ringforts, tower-houses, field walls and parklands occur throughout this area, as evidence of these past uses. Today, the rural housing, with associated roads, schools, powerlines, clubs and signposts that create the domesticated landscape character in the environs of towns, villages and smaller settlements that recurs throughout this landscape. The appearance and character of the majority of this landscape type remains dominated by grass-based agriculture. Fields generally have low enclosure, with limestone walls evident in many areas. The wider landscape is punctuated by stands of large mature trees – often remains of parkland landscapes that surrounded large 17th – 19th estate residences. In some areas there are large blocks of commercial forestry that further subdivide these grasslands. Though largely level, roads along occasional low ridges provide long-distance vistas that extend to distant horizons in other counties.”

There are elements of both pertinent to the site of the proposed development, however the description of grass-based fields and elevations with historical and amenity markers is closer to the field survey findings (see Appendix 11.2). The presence of many incongruous elements and elements which are industrial in nature do not tally with the special sensitivity of the Shannon Environs landscape type.

11.4.5 Landscape Character Assessment Policy Objectives and GCDP Policy Objectives

The following objectives with respect to landscapes are included in the GCDP 2022-2028. assessment.

LCM 1 Preservation of Landscape Character Preserve and enhance the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation and enhancement, where possible of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.

The closest amenity Beara Brefini / Hymany Way will be preserved

LCM 2 Landscape Sensitivity Classification The Planning Authority shall have regard to the landscape sensitivity classification of sites in the consideration of any significant development proposals and, where necessary, require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany such proposals. This shall be balanced against the need to develop key strategic infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the plan.

This LVIA report accompanies this application.

LCM 3 Landscape Sensitivity Ratings Consideration of landscape sensitivity ratings shall be an important factor in determining development uses in areas of the County. In areas of high landscape sensitivity, the design and the choice of location of proposed development in the

RECEIVED: 10/11/2025

landscape will also be critical considerations.

A landscape masterplan accompanies this planning submission. It is carefully devised and designed to integrate the proposals into the surrounding landscape.

LCM 4 Open/Unfenced Landscape Preserve the status of traditionally open/unfenced landscape. The merits of each case will be considered in light of landscape sensitivity ratings and views of amenity importance.

There are no tracts of open or unfenced land relevant to this planning application.

LCM 5 Prospecting and Mining It is a policy objective of the Council to give careful consideration in exceptional circumstances for prospecting or mining for gold, silver or base metals in landscapes class 3 or 4.

There is no application for mining or prospecting relevant to this planning application.

11.4.6 Landscape Units Sensitivity and Value

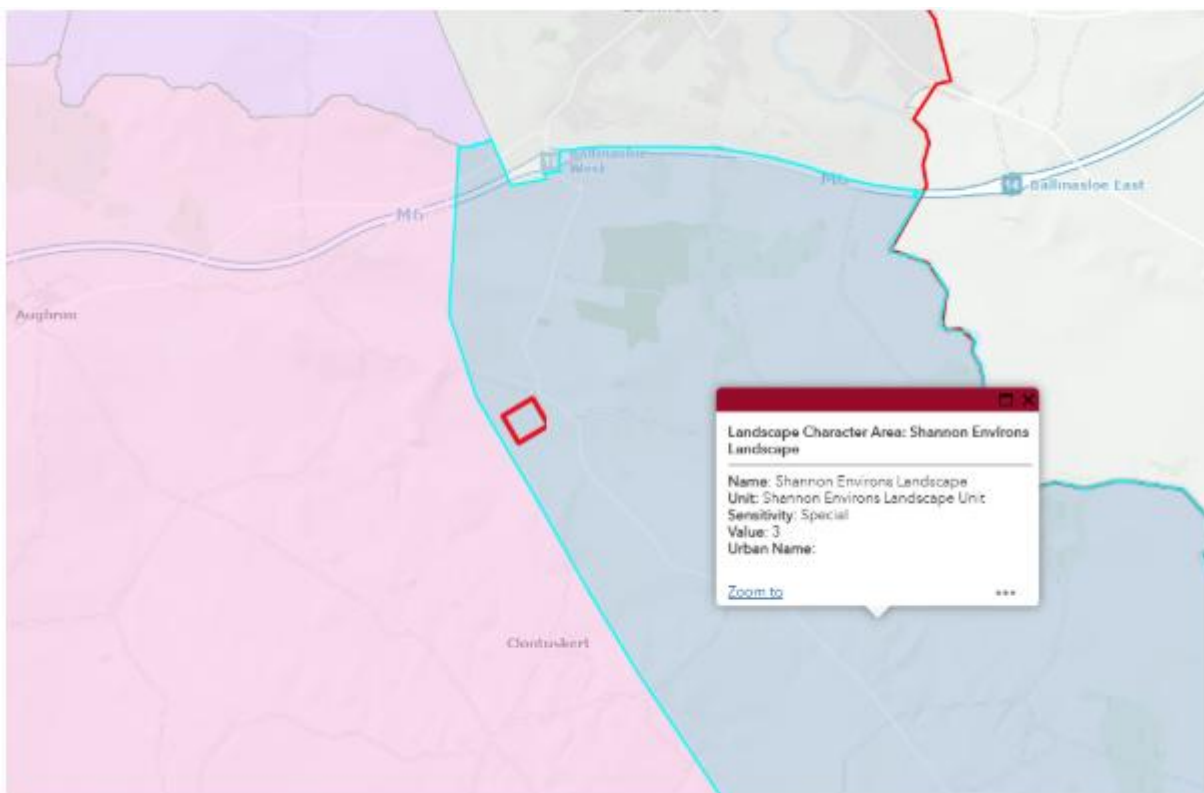


Figure 11.15: Shannon Environs Landscape Unit Special Sensitivity, Value 3 ²⁴

◆ Site Location

²⁴ Vol 4 GCDP 2022-2028

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

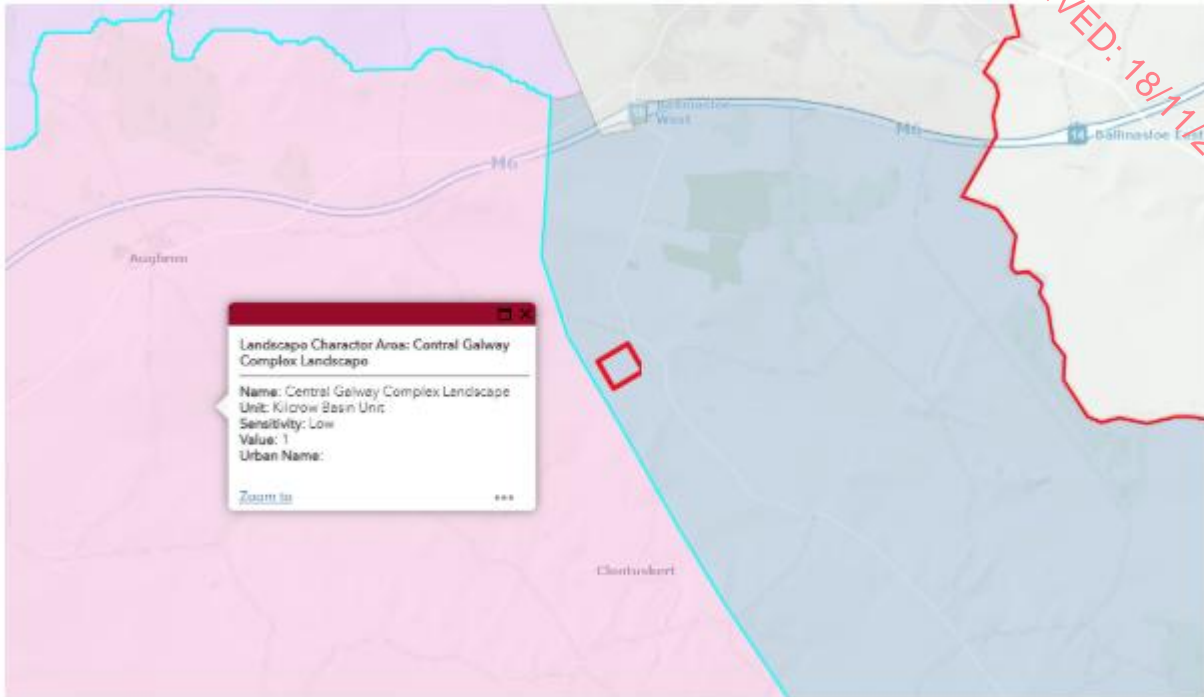


Figure 11.16: Kilcrow Basin Unit Low Sensitivity Value 1

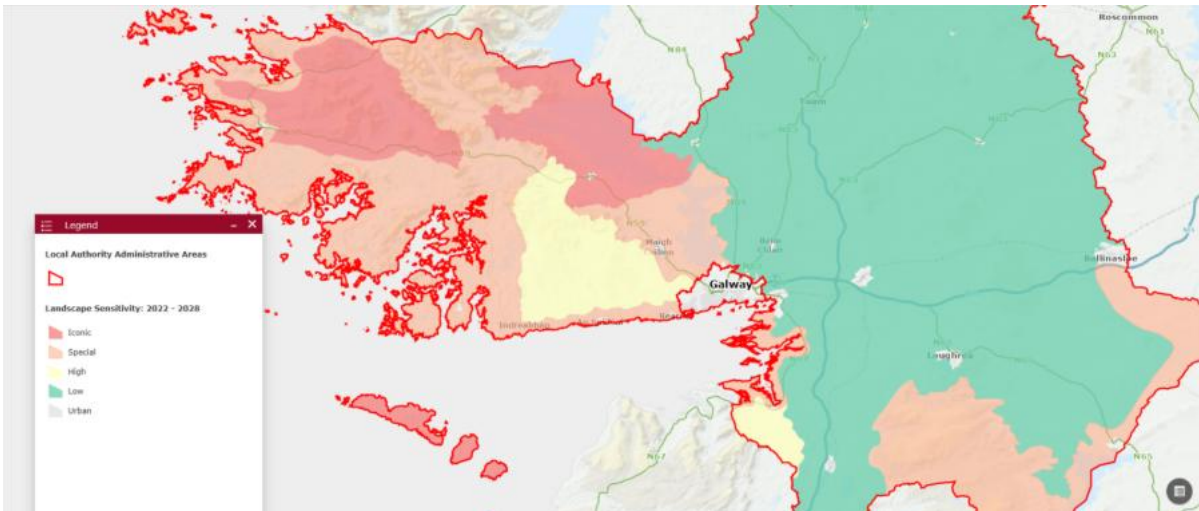


Figure 11.17: Landscape Sensitivity GCDP 2022-2028 Shannon and Environs- Special Sensitivity

◆ Site Location

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

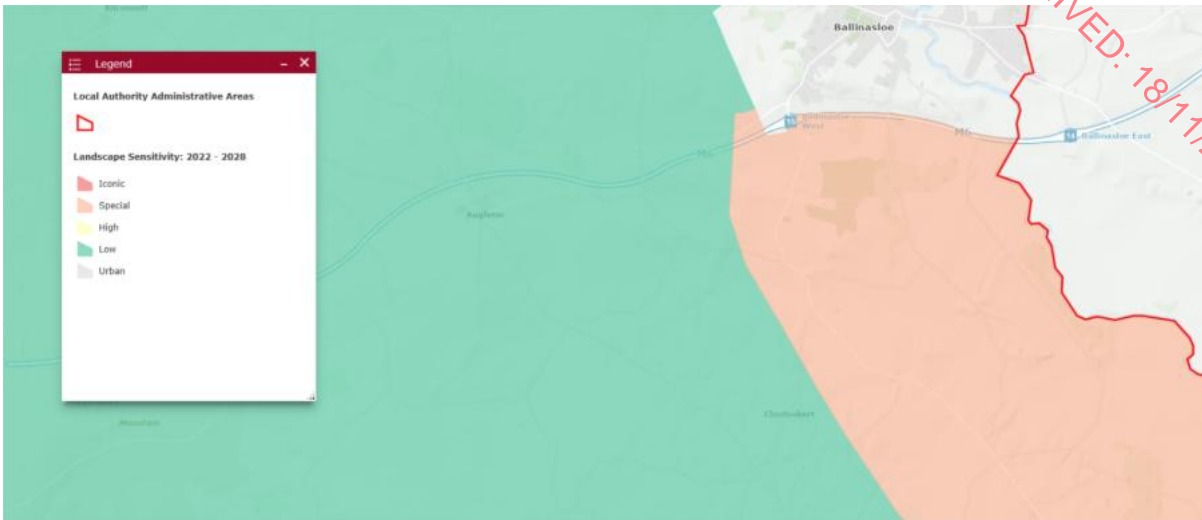


Figure 11.18: Kilcrow Basin Landscape Unit Low Sensitivity

GCDP 2022-2028 landscape character assessment defines the sensitivity ratings attributed to landscape character types as follows;

Iconic: Unique landscape with high sensitivity to change

Special: High sensitivity to change

High: Elevated sensitivity to change

Low: Unlikely to be adversely affected

The site of the proposed development falls between the ‘low’ and ‘special’ definitions above.

11.4.7 Landscape Capacity

The landscape character assessment for County Galway 2022-2028 links landscape capacity and landscape sensitivity. It iterates, a” landscape’s capacity to absorb new development, without exhibiting a significant alteration of character or change of appearance is referred to as it’s ‘sensitivity’. This depends on factors such as elevation, slope, as well as the types of land-cover and soil. Landscape sensitivity increases when one or more of these factors occur in the same place. e.g. development on a steep heather-covered elevated site on shallow soils is highly likely to be visually prominent over a wide area. Arising from this analysis the following Sensitivity Ratings have been defined:

- Class 1 – Low
- Class 2 – High
- Class 3 – Special
- Class 4 – Iconic” 25

The Kilcrow basin landscape unit falls int Class 1 **low sensitivity** landscape whilst the adjacent Shannon environs falls into the Class 3 **special** sensitivity landscape.

The LCA also considers other sensitivity factors which have been combined to produce indications of a landscapes capability to absorb, withstand and accommodate change.

²⁵ Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028
<https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=99ffbafef68ab4f2296bd66908e3b5a79>

These include;

- 1.Slope—Areas with a slope greater than or equal to 15°
- 2.Elevation—higher than 200m

The 50-60m contour along the esker ridge mainly influences the slope and elevation around Glenloughaun.

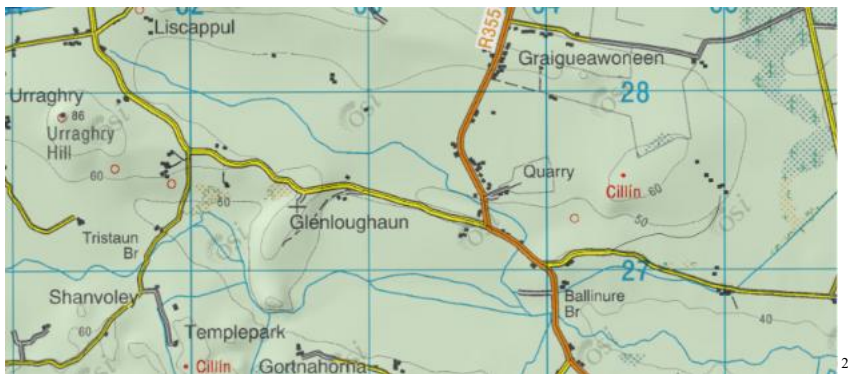


Figure 11.19: The L8412 runs along the esker ridge at Glenloughaun rising to 50-60m elevated over the lower lying ground to the south.

3.Landcover (in the following CORINE categories)

- Continuous urban fabric
- Discontinuous urban fabric
- Broad-leaved forest
- Mixed forest
- Natural grassland
- Moors and heaths
- Transitional woodland scrub
- Inland marshes
- Peat Bogs
- Water bodies

Of these categories the most relevant is the water body, the Ballinure River running south of the site.

4.Soils also contribute to an areas ability to accommodate change with sensitivity in Co. Galway around acid shallow well drained mineral soils, blanket bogs, cutover peat, lacustrine soils and scree. Lacustrine soils to the south of the site are associated with the Ballinure River. Coarse loamy drift with limestone, influences most soils surrounding the site of the proposed development.

It is stated in the Co Galway LCA, that “It should be noted that individual projects in any landscape area, notwithstanding its dominant sensitivity rating, may have greater or lesser impacts on the visual quality and character of the landscape depending on the details of the project design and the specific characteristics of the site and its context.”

Therefore, capacity and sensitivity should be read in conjunction²⁷ with the GCDP policies as outlined above. This outlook as devised in Galway County LCA has guided the landscape assessment below.

²⁶ Tailte Éireann

²⁷ Appendix 4 GCDP Landscape Character Areas

11.4.8 Localised Sensitivity Factors

The localised sensitivity factors in this case relate to the **Shannon Environs Landscape Type**. However, upon examination of the principal characteristics of the landscape type i.e. “open water often fringed by wide areas of naturalised vegetation along shallow shores and many linear islands.”, it does not align with the field survey findings relevant to the site of the proposed development. South of the proposed development the Ballinure River a tributary of the Suck and therefore the Shannon certainly is a water body with elevated winter water levels, but it does not define the landscape at the site and surrounding the site of the proposed development.

Significance Nationally significant ecological, scenic and recreational asset.

There are varied levels of scenic quality in the area but on the eastern side of the site the landscape is more dominated by quarrying operations.

Sensitivities Very sensitive to any form of development or change of management regime.

The local landscape is not as sensitive as described due to its location. It is more the combination of its position between the esker ridges with varying degrees of quarrying activity and the lower lying Ballinure valley that generate sensitivities and susceptibilities due to the proposed development.

For this reason and due to the location of the proposed development adjacent to the boundary of the neighbouring **Central Galway Complex Landscape Type**, this landscape type is examined for local sensitivities.

The LCA description of the **principal characteristics** as a level plain of productive grassland containing many settlements and dwellings, match the field survey findings relating to land along the banks of the Ballinure River and surrounding the site away from the esker ridge. The **significance** description of many areas having local sensitivities – often on account of local amenities or historic sites, match the field survey findings more closely than the Shannon Environs landscape type. The **sensitivities** as described “open countryside offers frequent extensive panoramic views from local highpoints” also concur with field survey findings relating to the esker.

11.4.9 Compliance with Landscape Sensitivity Designations

This relates to GCDP 2022-2028 DM Standard 47. The sensitivity category of Shannon Environs is category 3 whilst the central Galway complex is category 1.

Class 1 – Low Sensitivity All developments which are of appropriate scale and design and are consistent with settlement policies.

Class 2 – High Sensitivity Few developments, including those with substantiated cases for such a specific location and which are in compliance with settlement policies.

Class 3 – Special Restricted to essential residential needs of local households, family farm business and locally resourced enterprises.

Class 4 – Iconic Negligible alterations will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances.

The biodigester facility falls into the category of a locally resourced enterprise of class 3 whilst design and scale relate to Class 1 above

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

11.4.10 Other Standards; Agricultural Building Colour

This relates to rural building colour, DM Standard 14, part (d) Agricultural Buildings. In dealing with planning applications for such buildings the Planning Authority will have regard to:

d) Rural Landscape The assimilation of the buildings into the rural landscape by means of appropriate siting, external colouring, screening and shelter belting.

Although this is targeted at agricultural buildings it is relevant to the anaerobic digestion facility due to the similarities of the shed structures and the construction materials used. This is considered as part of the iterative design process.

11.4.11 Views, Prospects and Scenic Routes

The objectives of the GCDP in relation to views and prospects were considered in this report.

Objectives PVSR 1 – Protected Views and Scenic Routes Preserve the protected views and scenic routes as detailed in Maps 8.3 and 8.4 from development that in the view of the Planning Authority would negatively impact on said protected views and scenic routes. This shall be balanced against the need to develop key infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the plan.

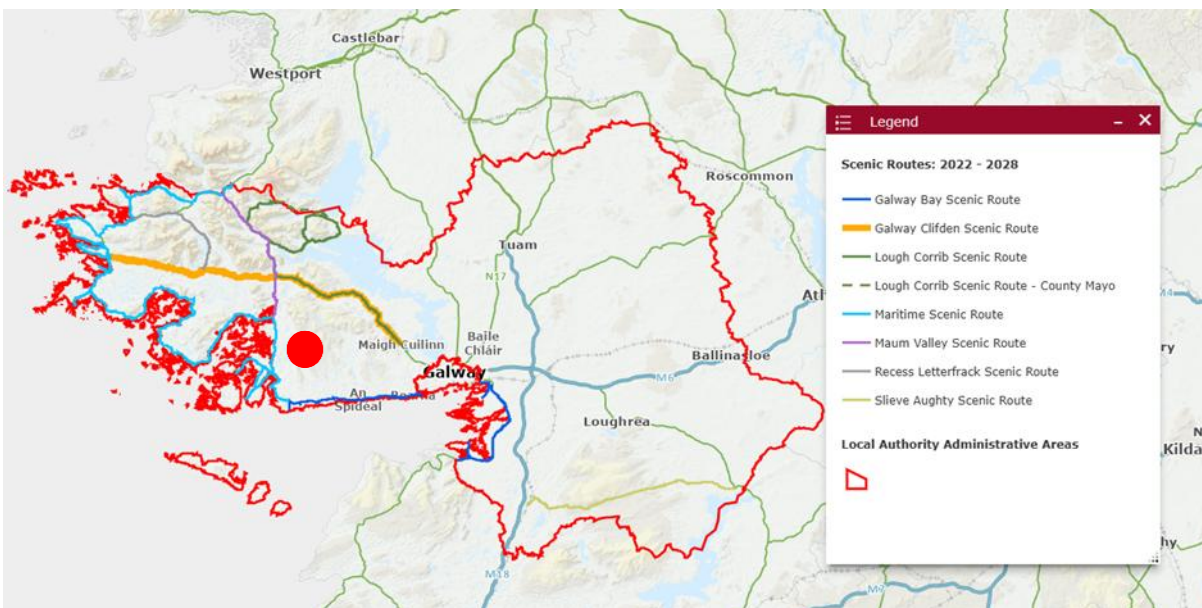


Figure 11.20: Co. Galway Scenic Routes ²⁸ None Affected

The tourism routes and hilltop viewing points in Galway will not be affected by the proposed development. The scenic prospects as listed in the GCDP as well as views were examined in relation to the proposed development. There are no listed scenic routes in the proximity of or focused on the proposed development site.

²⁸ <https://galwaycoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3570e45b0e354cf0b740ecbc7505adb2>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

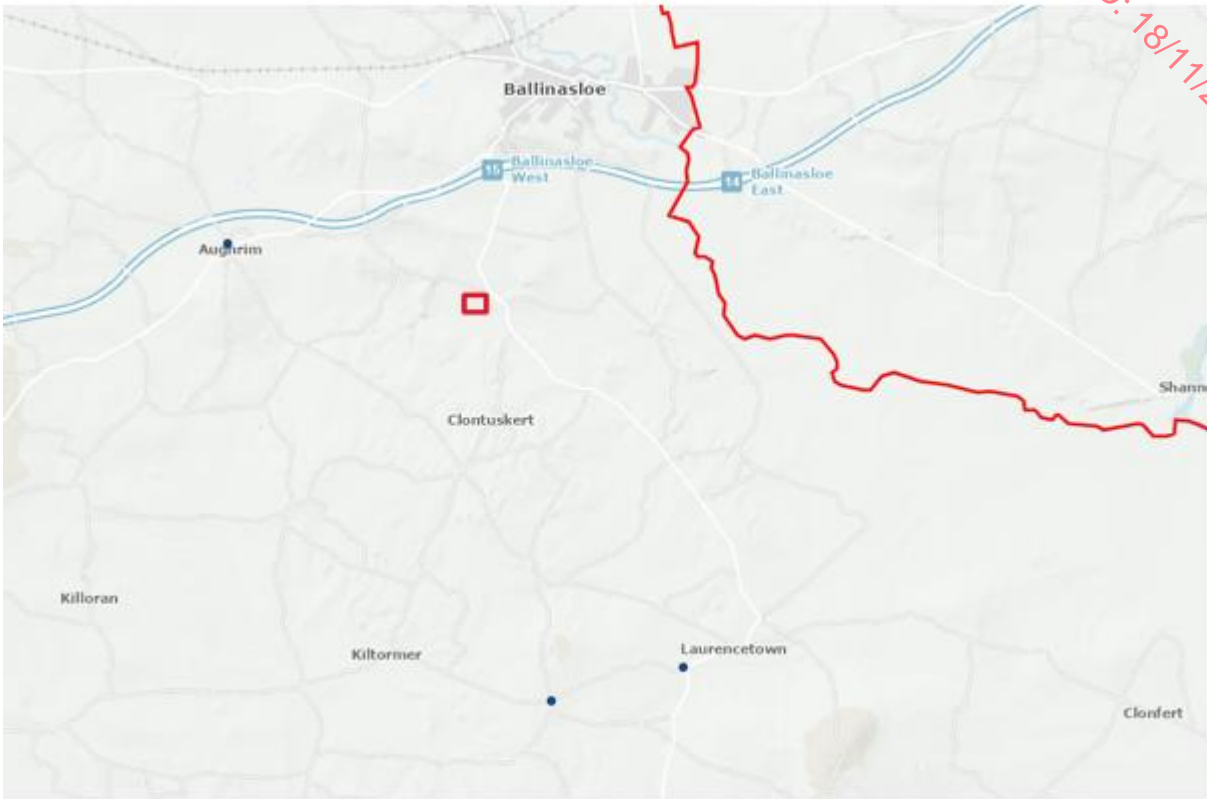


Figure 11.21: No impact from the proposed development Galway CDP Protected Views 2022-2028

The closest viewpoint VP43 from Aughrim visitor centre and focused on the church spire will not be affected by the proposed development.



Figure 11.22: Viewpoint 43 towards Aughrim Church Spire

RECEIVED: 16/11/2025

11.4.12 Geological Heritage

Examining the Galway County Development plan and Geological Survey Ireland, there are no listed areas of geological heritage or interest affected by the proposed development from a landscape or intervisibility perspective

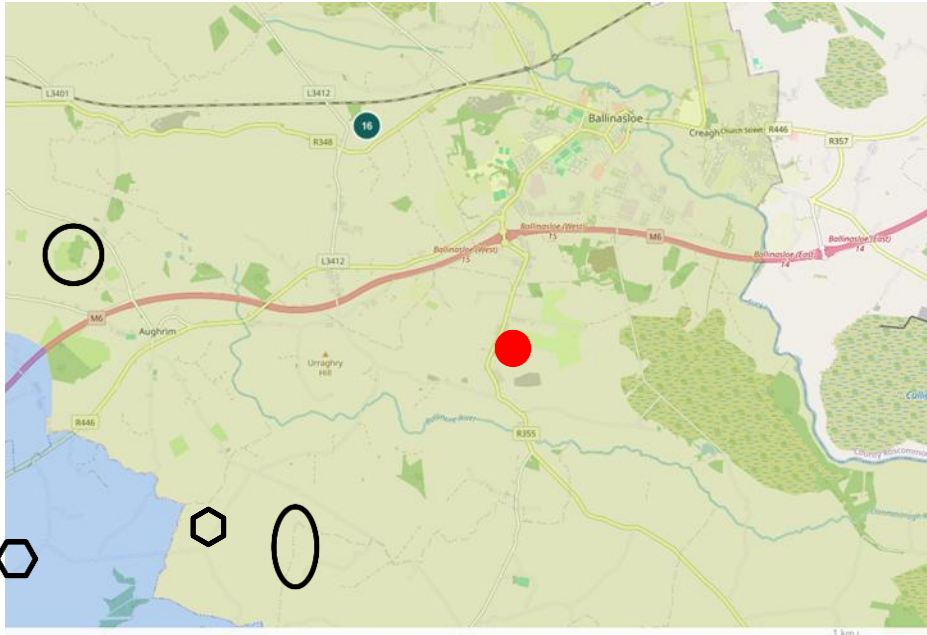


Figure 11.23 Geological Heritage Sites ²⁹

The closest geological heritage site, the Ballinasloe Esker and surrounding sands and gravels includes “an exceptionally large accumulation of sands and gravels deposited both under the ice sheet and at its margin, as the ice withdrew westwards across eastern Galway and the western Midlands area at the end of the last Ice Age. The esker forms part of the larger Ballinasloe-Split Hills-Clonmacnoise-Clara Esker System, which extends from Galway, through Offaly and into Westmeath, and is the traditional route defined as the ‘*Eiscir Riada*’ in ancient Irish Folklore”. The geological heritage area includes;

Ballinasloe Esker Quaternary County Geological Site Highfield, Cappagh, Northbrook, Derradda, Knockglass, Balynamockagh, Perssepark, Pollboy, Kilcloony, Tobergrellan, Portiuncula Hospital Ballinasloe ³⁰

Glenloughaun is not included in this geological heritage area.

²⁹ The Geological Heritage of County Galway

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0a5423b05f494a83872735a25966fbdcc>

³⁰ <https://www.galway.ie/en/media/Appendix%20%20Geological%20Heritage%20of%20Ireland.pdf>

³¹ <https://www.galway.ie/en/media/Appendix%20%20Geological%20Heritage%20of%20Ireland.pdf>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

Another adjacent geological heritage area is the Suck River Callows³¹, fluvial and lacustrine geomorphology which includes the townlands;

Garryduff, Annaghcorrib, Kylemore, Lismanny, Cloonascragh, Kellysgrove, Pollboy, Townsparks, Cleaghgarve, Cleabeg, Creggaun, Shanbvoley, Dalysgrove, Addergoole North, Addergoole South, Srahloughra, Derryfadda, Srahgarve, Gortananny, Derreen, Muckanagh North, Tully, Garreer, Srahaunnagort, Cloonruff, Clooncannon, Cloonaspaddaun, Rockwood, Easterfield Ballinasloe.

This includes the townland of Kellysgrove but not Glenloughaun.

The geological heritage areas are unaffected however the GCDP does list these objectives in relation to eskers.

ESK 1 Protection of Eskers Systems Protect and conserve the landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity value of esker systems in the county. Assess applications for quarrying and other proposed developments with reference to their status or relative importance, for example, amenity, landscape and scientific value in the context of the overall esker system.

The main value of the esker running parallel to the northern boundary of the proposed site is from an amenity perspective with the way marked trail running along the top of the esker coinciding with the L8412. The works at the site will necessarily protect and retain the top of the esker for this reason.

ESK 2 Esker Areas Have regard to the Landscape Character Assessment of the County of Galway and its recommendations relating to the Esker areas and any other subsequent relevant reports/ data.

The site of the proposed development falls into the Shannon Environs Landscape Unit but also influenced by the adjacent Kilcrow Basin Landscape Unit. Neither unit emphasises eskers as the overriding significant factor relating to landscape sensitivity. Nevertheless, this is examined as part of the landscape impacts and effects below.

11.4.13 Recreation and Tourism

The recreation and tourism aspect of the proposals overlap with the landscape associations for the proposed development. The site of the proposed development falls into the tourism promotion brand, Irelands Hidden Heartlands since 2018.

GCDP recognises the plan “to entice visitors with the area’s walkways and lakes, and the campaign will promote activities like walking, cycling, fishing and boating. A walkway and trail network, the Beara Breifne Way, will have an extensive reach, with many towns along the route (including Portumna, Tiernascragh, Meelick, Eyrecourt, Clonfert, Eyrecourt, Clonfert, Ballinasloe, Aghrim, Ahascragh and Ballygar in Co. Galway to be identified as “walking hubs.” The Galway section of the Beara Breifne Way is known as the Hymany Way.”

GCDP 2022-2028 lists the following objectives in relation to tourism;

HT1 To work with the relevant stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, Fáilte Ireland, Údarás Na Gaeltachta, the Arts Council, Waterways Ireland, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in Galway.

HT2 To support and protect the heritage assets (built and natural) that are the focus for tourism

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

development and that best practice standards in relation to the environmental management of tourism enterprises are adhered to.

HT3 Sustainable Tourism To support the development of a more sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species; species, leaving them undiminished as a resource for future generations, while supporting social and economic prosperity.

These objectives are considered in this report and in the generation of the landscape masterplan accompanying this application.

11.4.14 Cycling, Walking and Driving Routes

The following GCDP policy objectives relate to walking and cycling infrastructure.

GBW1 Walkways and Cycleways

To promote and facilitate the development of walkways and cycleways at appropriate locations throughout the County subject to environmental considerations.

Nearby Aughrim will feature in such an event.

GBW2 Future Development of Network of Greenways

To support the delivery of sustainable strategic greenway/blue ways projects in the county in accordance with the Strategy for Future Development of National and Regional Greenways

Apart from the existing way marked trail, future trails are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed development.

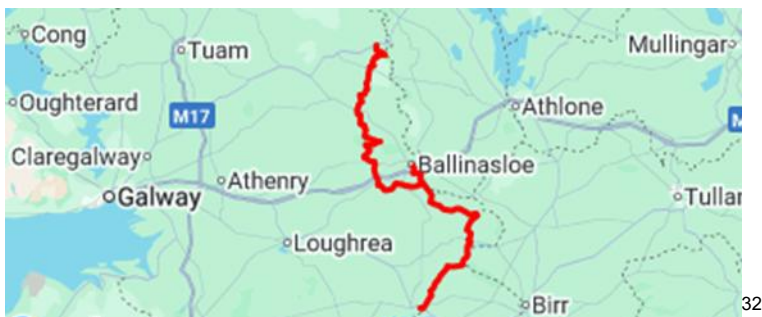


Figure 11.24: Hymany Way

The Hymany Way is one of a series of eleven sections of the greater Beara Breifne Way. This section of the trail ends at Aughrim village, where there is a Battle of Aughrim Centre and parking.

The Hymany Way traverses watercourses, including the Shannon River and the species-rich mosaic of habitats along its banks, the callows, cutover and drained and raised bog, forest paths and country roads.

The route is rich in features and information panels including St. Ruth's Bush (close to the proposed development), site of the Battle of Aughrim in 1691.

³² Fáilte Ireland <https://www.discoverireland.ie/galway/hymany-way>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

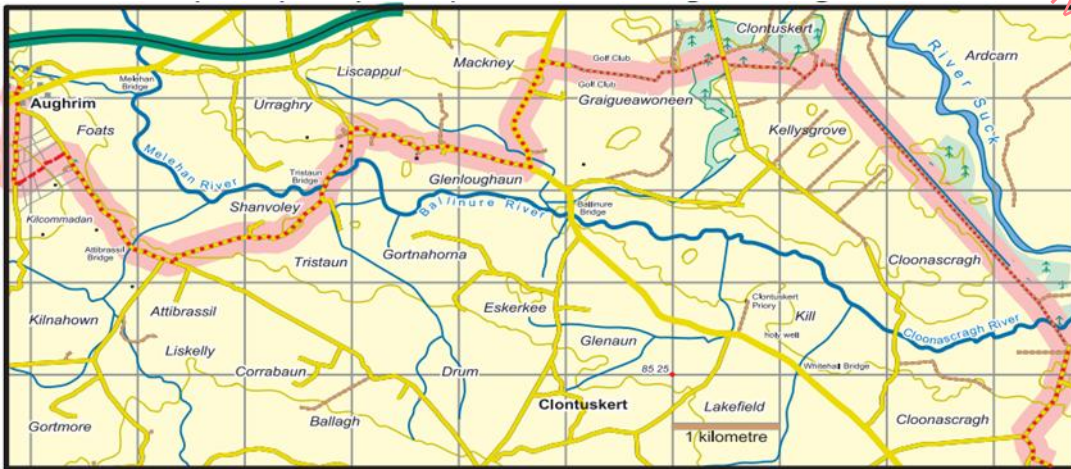


Figure 11.25: Sports Ireland³³ Hymany way, Clonascragh to Aughrim via Kells Grove and Glenloughaun



34

Figure 11.26: Sports Ireland³⁵ Hymany Way, Options linking to Ballinasloe or Aughrim

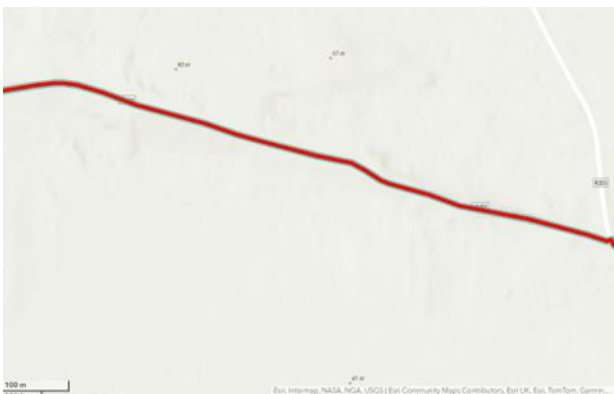


Figure 11.27: Sports Ireland³⁶ Hymany Way, trail along the L8412 passing the site of the proposed development

³³ <https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/maps/HW4%20%20Clonascragh%20to%20Aughrim.pdf>

³⁴ <https://www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/find-your-trails>

³⁵ <https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/maps/HW4%20%20Clonascragh%20to%20Aughrim.pdf>

³⁶ <https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/maps/HW4%20%20Clonascragh%20to%20Aughrim.pdf>

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

Intervisibility along the trail is examined in the visual section of this report. The necessary protections and retaining of the ridge and roadside vegetation from within the site of the proposed development will shield the way marked trail as it passes near the western side of the site.

11.4.15 Natural Heritage

Natural heritage is examined in this report as it can contribute to landscape value. There are no protected sites within the proposed site or adjacent to the site of the proposed development. There are no Natura sites (National Parks and Wildlife Service designations) (SPA, SAC, NHA or pNHA) within the boundaries or close to the Proposed Development.³⁷ All the designated areas are at some distance from the Proposed Development. The Natura sites within Co Galway do not share landscape with the site of the proposed development.

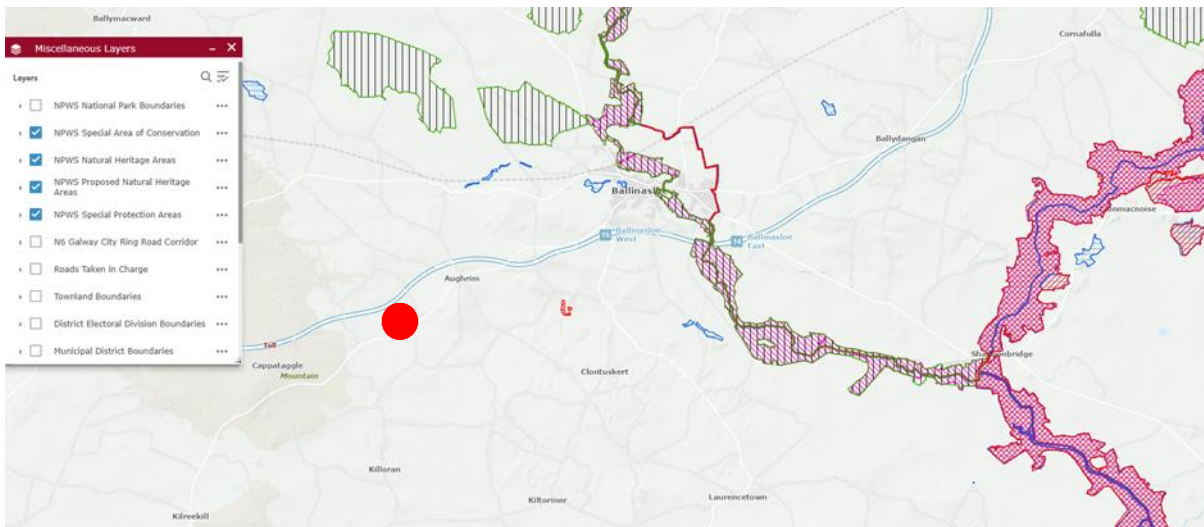


Figure 11.28: No NPWS designated sites at the site of the proposed development.

11.4.16 Trees, Hedgerows and Stone Walls

The following policy objectives relating to trees, woodlands, hedgerows and stone walls are included in the GCDP 2022-2028.

TWHS 1 Trees, Hedgerows, Natural Boundaries and Stone Walls Protect and seek to retain important trees, tree clusters and tree boundaries, ancient woodland, natural boundaries including stonewalls, existing hedgerows particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows, where possible and replace with a boundary type similar to the existing boundary. Ensure that new development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands and that all planting schemes developed are suitable for the specific site and use suitable native variety of trees of Irish provenance and hedgerows of native species. Seek Tree Management Plans to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and incorporated into the design of new developments.

³⁷NPWS <https://galwaycoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3570e45b0e354cf0b740ecbc7505adb2>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

The existing site boundaries are being retained and reinforced as part of the landscape masterplan for the proposed development and there is a large increase in the number of native trees proposed for the site. The mitigation measures included in this report require that root protection zones are established for the retained boundary trees and hedgerow material during the construction process.

TWHS 2 Planting of Trees and Woodlands Encourage and promote in co-operation with Coillte and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and other organisations, the planting of trees and woodlands, as an important means of contributing to its objective of sustaining, protecting and enhancing the County's biodiversity, natural resources, amenity, landscape and developing tourism product. Encourage community woodlands in urban/urban fringe areas utilising funding available through schemes such as the NeighbourWood and Native Woodland Schemes

This is not relevant for the proposed development, but a large number of trees and native plant material is proposed for the site.

TWHS 3 Protection of Forestry Protect all substantial areas of deciduous forest, other than areas of commercial forestry. Proposals for development in these areas should seek to interact with the landscape character of the forested areas and its limits while also enhancing the forested areas so as to increase biodiversity value.

The hedgerows bordering the site are to be protected and additional hedgerows and tree planting bulk out the buffer zones and reinforce the linkages to and between habitats. The landscape masterplan accompanying this application specifies a range of native and naturalised trees and hedgerow materials of differing ages and growth stages which offer immediate habitats and future habitats to a wide range of animals, birds, and insects.

11.4.17 Green Infrastructure

The following GCDP 2022-2028 policy objectives relating to green infrastructure are considered in this report.

Invasive Species IS 1 Control of Invasive and Alien Invasive Species It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to support measures for the prevention and eradication of invasive species. IS 2 Invasive Species Management Plan Ensure that proposals for development do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species. If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are currently or were previously present, an invasive species management plan will be required. A landscaping plan will be required for developments near water bodies, and such plans must not include alien invasive species.

Avoidance as a mitigation measure is outlined in this report and the landscape masterplan relies on native and naturalised plant species to the south of the site running parallel to the Ballinure River.

Pollinators PO 1 Delivery of All Ireland Pollinator Plan To facilitate the delivery of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan where possible. In the interest of preserving and enhancing biodiversity and working in conjunction with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan - It shall be the policy objective of the Planning Authority to ensure that at least 20% of the green space on all housing estates being built will have to be dedicated, developed and maintained as a pollinator zone. The area dedicated can be confined to one single lot or various lots around the site providing that the total

area of the lots meets the minimum requirement of 20%. The pollinator zones should be planted with a mix of pollinator friendly-bulbs, self-seeding annuals and biennials, perennials, shrubs, trees, fruit trees and fruit bushes and the majority of this planting should consist of native plants.

The landscape plan recommends seed mixes and landscape management strategies that maximise the potential for pollinators. All trees and especially flowering trees including species of *Prunus avium*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix cinerea* and *Sorbus acuparia* will increase pollinating trees available at a local level.

In general, the landscape master plan that accompanies the proposed development ensures that there will be an increase in biodiversity gain in the context of the Proposed Development.

Effective landscape management will aid with the conservation and dispersal of species and replace the future loss of ash in the landscape.

11.4.18 Potential Capacity

Landscape capacity is regarded as the ability of a landscape to visually absorb change and accommodate diverse types of development.

In this respect, the capacity to absorb the proposed anaerobic digestion facility is regarded in terms of the existing topography, soil ability to support vegetation and growth, existing vegetation and cover, and the presence of the structures on and near the proposed site. A well-designed facility can exist alongside the existing developments namely the Torva facility and Whites Concrete so long as there is good integration with substantial planting as outlined in the landscape masterplan. Local soils are very fertile albeit thin in places. Tree selection development and growth will benefit from enhanced topsoil and careful management of the subsoils. This increases the potential capacity of the site to absorb the development.

Topography ensures there is good capacity for the area to enclose the site from the north and west and absorb the potential development. Careful retention of the upper ridge and its vegetation during excavation and construction will also increase the potential capacity of the site to absorb the development.

There will be a need to carefully manage soils and subsequent planting, retain the esker ridge and its upper vegetation to maximise the potential capacity of the site to absorb development.

11.5 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The development will consist of the following:

- Demolition and site clearance works including the removal of an existing shed (with a GFA of c. 126.8 sq.m), and adjacent hard standing areas and tank structure, located centrally on the site.
- Construction of 2 no. primary digesters (with an overall height of c. 12.1m), a pump house (with a GFA of c. 115.3 sq.m), and 2 no. post digester tanks (with an overall height of c. 12.1m), located in the northwestern section of the site.
- Construction of 2 no. prepits (c. 4.3m in height), a pasteurisation buffer tank (c. 4.3m in height), and a pasteurisation unit (with a maximum height of c. 4.2m), located to south of the primary digesters, within the western section of the site.
- Construction of a digestate storage tank (c. 16.4m in height) located centrally on site, to the southeast of the primary and post digester tanks.
- Construction of a digestate treatment building and a feedstock reception building (with a height of c. 12.1m and a GFA of c. 1,703.7 sq.m) with an odour abatement system (with a height of c. 13m to top of odour abatement stack), located in the southwestern section of site.
- Construction of combined heat and power (CHP) unit (c. 2.6m in height and c. 5.6m in height to flue, with a GFA of c. 38.53 sq.m), a biogas boiler (c. 2.6m in height and c. 5.6m in height to flue, with a GFA of c. 12.74 sq.m), a backup boiler (c. 2.6m in height), and a gas treatment system (c. 4.2m in height), located in the southeast section of the site.
- Construction of a CO₂ liquefactor (with an overall height of c. 10.7m to top of storage vessels), and an emergency/ safety flare (c. 11.3m in height), a grid injection unit (with a height of c. 2.8m and a GFA of c. 21.7 sq.m), a fuel storage tank (c. 2m in height), and a propane tank compound accommodating 2 no. propane tanks (c. 1.6m in height), located in the southern section of the site.
- Construction of roofed silage clamps (with a GFA of c. 665.7 sq.m and a height of c. 8.7m), located centrally on site.
- Construction of a two storey office building (with a GFA of c. 327.4 sq.m and a height of c. 11m) and an ESB substation (with a GFA of c. 23.5 sq.m and a height of c. 3.4m), within the eastern section of the site, adjacent to the site entrance.
- Alterations to the adjacent local road frontage including improved access arrangements and boundary setback to allow for improved access and safety.
- Associated and ancillary works including parking (8 no. standard, 3 no. EV and 1 no. accessible parking spaces and bike storage for 12 no. bikes), a weighbridge, solar PV arrays at roof level, wastewater treatment equipment, bunding and surface treatments, attenuation pond, boundary treatments, lighting, services, drainage, landscaping, and all associated and ancillary works.

11.5.1 Site Location

The site is located. In Glenloughaun adjacent to the townland of Kellysgrove, south of Ballinasloe Co. Galway.

RECEIVED: 01/11/2025



Figure 11.29: Site Location

11.5.2 Landscape Character and Sensitivity

Landscape character as discussed above is a significant aspect of the landscape receptors susceptibility to change. The effect on landscape character and its ability to accommodate the proposed development, maintain the baseline and achieve landscape planning policies is considered. The elements which contribute to positive landscape character at or near the site of the proposed development is the topographical ridge generated by the esker, the field pattern running down towards the lower Ballinure valley and the vistas from the top of the esker ridge along with elements of historical interest along the ridgeline, namely St Matthews church and burial ground. Across the Ballinure River there is an interesting archaeological landscape and large level fields running down to the river. The L8412, along the esker ridge affords views over the surrounding landscapes.

There are large agricultural units and modern single housing units in the landscape character areas.

Tranquillity in the landscape surrounding the site of the proposed development is medium to low and there is no sense of remoteness.

The findings of the field study (Appendix 11.2) and the location of the proposed site adjacent to the esker don't fully concur with the Shannon Environs landscape type and unit as described above. Neither does it fully concur with the description of the Kilcrow Basin landscape unit or the central Galway landscape complex.

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

Existing development, quarrying and gravel related concrete industry, the existing Torva development at the site and the influence of the busy R355, reduce the landscape sensitivity of the site.

The 'low' sensitivity as ascribed in the landscape character assessment to the Kilcrow Basin, doesn't fully reflect the positive attributes and elements of the landscape either. If, as iterated landscape sensitivity can be examined in the context of landscape value and the landscapes susceptibility to the proposed development, then a **medium** rating for sensitivity is more relevant. Such a landscape would be expected to have features that are locally or regionally valued. This is certainly the case when one regards the significance of the Esker Riada and although the Shannon Callows and the Suck Callows do not directly influence the site of the proposed development, the Ballinure River offers a landscape of level fields within view of the esker. The local landscape is peppered with historically interesting sites from St Matthews Church to Clontuscert Abbey to the wealth of ringforts and archaeological features in the river valley and the Esker Riada itself. There is also some contrast between arable fields and the more dominant grassy pastoral plains in the landscape surrounding the proposed development.

11.5.3 Landscape Value and Landscape Susceptibility

A medium sensitivity landscape would have some distinctive features landscapes and landscape features with few incongruous elements.

The esker, the historical elements in the surrounding landscape and the significance of the geological landscape would concur with this description though to the east of the site there are more incongruous elements than there are to the west.

The landscape has a medium susceptibility to the proposed development and medium tolerance to change

Having regard to the field survey, considering the nature of the proposed development, the intrinsic and inherent values attributed to the landscape a **medium** sensitivity rating for the landscape surrounding the site of the proposed development is appropriate.

The scenic routes and views as listed in the GCDP 2022-2028 are not affected by the proposed development (Fig 11.20 -11.22 above).

The hedgerow system running south is a valued element in its ability to define the landscape spatial pattern and specifically its high value for landscape connection. The eastern hedgerow boundary definition coincides with the Glenloughaun townland boundary. This will be strengthened as per the landscape masterplan accompanying the proposals.

11.6 Predicted Impacts

11.6.1 Landscape Construction Phase

During the construction phase itself there will be construction traffic coming and going from the site with the requisite use of onsite facilities and a compound during construction. Heavy machinery and excavation equipment, lighting and other ancillary equipment will be required. Hedgerows will be trimmed and tree crowns will likely be lifted for site lines. At site level, there will be soil stripping and storage and a topographical change to the existing levels. The central hedgerow will have to be removed. This along with the topographical change will constitute the main loss of landscape element at the site itself. There will be no loss of elements surrounding

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

the site. At the scale of the landscape character areas there will be no impact during the construction phase.

Except for the loss of the central hedgerow the field pattern will be maintained.

The landscape exhibits a reasonable capacity for change when accompanied with hedgerow and tree protection where they can be retained and managed. The mitigation measures outlined below require that the boundary vegetation is protected during the construction process. In addition to normal root protection zones a temporary slope stabilisation system will be required for the northern boundary to ensure there is no collapse endangering the hazel stands running along the L8412.

This will increase the landscapes capacity to absorb the proposed development.

Any soil disturbance or overload is to be utilised onsite as far as practicable and there is to be no removal of topsoil or required subsoil offsite. Working same into the site will integrate the scheme into the surrounding landscape. This will achieve in protecting the existing landscape character.

The sensitivity of the landscape at construction stage is regarded as '**medium**' for this assessment.

11.6.1.1 Magnitude of Change

During the construction phase there will be activity at the sites of the Proposed Development. Machinery travelling to and from the site, site compounds and storage facilities as well as lighting and other construction aids will have an impact on the landscape in the short term.

During the construction process hedgerows will need to be cut back as per the landscape master plan and there will be widening of the access point as discussed above.

There will be removal of the central hedgerow otherwise the field pattern will remain intact.

This development will likely be in place for more than 15 years which constitutes a long-term change (15 and 60 years as per the EPA guidelines).

Landscape character will be affected by the change in land use resulting from construction on the site of the Proposed Development. The change experienced to the landscape will be due to the introduction and scale of the proposed biodigester facility and the change to the topography onsite. The geographical extent will be south of the esker and on the boundary of the Shannon Environs and Central Galway Complex landscape character types.

The greater landscape character areas will not be affected in their geographical extent.

The overall quality of the remaining esker ridges, scrub and hedgerows with some commercial forestry southwest of the proposed site, all aid in blending the proposals into the landscape during the construction phase.

The reversibility of the development is not considered for the construction phase.

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

The overall magnitude of change will be **'medium.'** This is in line with the description of medium landscape change which is moderate in extent with the introduction of elements that may be prominent but "not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape but not necessarily reduction in landscape quality and perceived value."

11.6.1.2 Significance of Effects

Setting a **medium** magnitude of change against **medium** landscape sensitivity gives a significance of effects that is categorised as **'Moderate'** as indicated in the matrix in Table 11.1, above.

As per EPA guidelines moderate effects are defined as. an "effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends."

11.6.2 Landscape Operational Phase

The impact of the proposed development will be evident during the operational phase but will be reduced from the construction phase as the excavated areas are restored with vegetation and the landscape planting proposed in the landscape masterplan takes effect. At site level the proposed structures will start to be absorbed into the landscape as the planting begins to establish itself and starts to mature. This will also be the case at the scale of the immediate setting of the site with the appearance of a small woodland emerging against the esker ridge. At the greater scale of the landscape character types, there will be no effect.

There will be no further change to the landscape form or structures from the construction phase as the facility becomes operational.

11.6.2.1 Magnitude of Change

The landscape sensitivity is not likely to change from the construction phase, but the magnitude of change will reduce as the planting proposals begin to have effect. The reversibility of the proposals would leave the topography changed and the likely usage of the site would change from its existing agricultural enterprise. There would be considerable removal of concrete foundations as well as structures required and the replacement of topsoil and subsoil. Tree planting would benefit the landscape quality in this scenario and hedgerow boundaries would benefit from management in the intervening period.

Landscape Sensitivity: **Medium**

Magnitude of Change: **Medium**

11.6.2.2 Significance of Effects

Setting a **medium** landscape sensitivity against a **medium** magnitude of change gives a significance of effects rating as **'Moderate'** as indicated in Table 11.1 above. Given the scale of the development and using professional judgement, a rating of **'moderate'** is likely to be appropriate for the significance of effects notwithstanding the positive benefits of the planting proposals will have over the life of the operations.

As per EPA guidelines moderate effects are defined as;

Moderate: An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.

Significance of effects: **Moderate**

11.6.3 Visual Assessment

In conducting the visual assessment for the Proposed Development, issues relating to views and viewpoints were considered including the amount of time over which a view would be experienced, the angle of the view and whether views would be full, partial, or glimpsed. The distance from the Proposed Development was considered and the extent of the area over which the proposed works would be visible. Initially a zone of theoretical visibility (Appendix 11.1) or viewshed influenced the areas being considered for intervisibility. A ZTV is computer generated and presents the worst-case scenario and examines intervisibility without the effect of natural land cover, forests, woodlands, trees, buildings, and vegetation.

Topography, vegetation and existing development are considerations in making visual assessments.

The area was visited and the most likely visual receptors affected identified. Again, as for the landscape effect, the duration of the visual impact was considered. As per EPA guidelines, duration of effects is categorised as follows.

Short-term Effects: Effects lasting one to seven years.

Medium-term Effects: Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.

Long-term Effects: Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.

Permanent Effects: Effects lasting over sixty years.

As described in Table 11.1 above, the magnitude of change is judged according to a set of criteria with results ranging from very high to negligible. Judgements are made based on the size of the proposed works and the geographical extent of the viewpoints. Consideration is also given to duration of effects as outlined above. In choosing the viewpoints to be assessed the scale at which the Proposed Development will have influence was considered and this is considered within the magnitude of change as assessed. The sensitivity of each view is adjudged taking into consideration other factors apart from value and recognised designations. These include the susceptibility of the viewers, panoramas, frequency of visits, features and rarity of the view and the intact nature of the landscape being viewed. Sensory experiences of place, tranquillity, history, nature, and awe also factor into viewpoint sensitivity. A comprehensive assessment was made of potential viewpoints. These were then distilled down to a set of viewpoints which are the subject of the verified photomontage study. The accompanying, 3-Dimensional verified photomontage booklet is to be read in conjunction with this report. In making these assessments, topography, site location, hedgerows systems, woodlands, and residences were considered as well as designated sensitivities and landscape as a resource for visual amenity, recreation, culture, and tourism.

RECEIVED: 12/11/2025

11.6.4 Visual Impact – Construction Phase

The selected viewpoints were assessed, and this is summarised as outlined in Table 11.2 below. The sensitivity at each viewpoint is set against the magnitude of change to arrive at a significance of effects as outlined in Table 11.1 above. The matrix is not over relied on and where appropriate, professional judgement and experience is exercised.

11.6.4.1 Initial Field Study

The area around Glenloughaun and Kellysgrove was visited on 29 June 2025. The viewpoints selected were also photographed on 5 August 2025 for verified photomontage production. The visual impact assessment is to be read with the 3Dimensional, verified photomontage booklet which accompanies this report. The site location and its hinterland were examined referencing the viewshed analysis. Taking topography and vegetative cover into consideration, an inventory of viewpoints was selected. Upon establishing the location of likely viewpoint receptors each was visited and an assessment with respect to viewpoint sensitivity and the likely magnitude of change to this view due to the Proposed Development was made. The verified photomontages of these views examine the extent of any visual impact or loss of visual amenity at these viewpoints.

On the occasion of these initial field studies, conditions were good for the time of year. The hedgerows and trees were in full foliage.

These views, VP 1-5, are assessed in detail at the construction stage and at the operational phase. The accompanying verified photomontage booklet prepared by 3Dimensional, gives a clear indication of the magnitude of change at each of these viewpoints. All viewpoints were taken from publicly accessible areas. Many have been accorded ‘**high**’ receptor sensitivity which as iterated in the methodology above; is defined for viewpoints “that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses or tourist-based views focused on the landscape).

The composition, character and quality of the view may be such that its capacity for accommodating change may or may not be low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change that reduces visual amenity.”

At the construction phase, the objectives of the landscape masterplan to protect the landscape and views from change that reduces visual amenity is not considered. The full effect of new planting will be more apparent during the operational phase when the plant material starts to establish itself.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

11.6.4.2 Visual Impact - Construction Phase

Table 11.2: Predicted Visual Impacts on Selected Viewpoints Assessed – Construction Phase

Viewpoint No.	Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effects	Nature of effects
VP1	Glenloughaun	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP2	Macney (Kelly)	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP3	Kellysgrove/ Graigawooneen	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP4	Kellysgrove	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP5	Gortahorna (Clancarty)	High	Low	Moderate to Slight	Adverse

Viewpoint 1

This viewpoint represents local residents, views from the Esker Riada, walkers along the Hymany Way and those engaging with landscape for visual amenity. The area of this viewpoint represents residential viewers and those depending on landscape for visual amenity. For this reason, this viewpoint is accorded a high viewer sensitivity. There will be negligible change to this view during construction. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated **‘slight to not significant’** and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 2

This viewpoint represents local residents and those walkers using this connection of the Hymany Way towards Ballinasloe. For this reason, this viewpoint is accorded a high viewer sensitivity. There will be negligible change to this view during construction. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated **‘slight to not significant’** and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 3

This viewpoint represents road users, walkers on the Hymany Way connecting to Ballinasloe and local residences. Road users are accorded a low receptor sensitivity as their experience is short lived and fleeting at this viewpoint. Walkers on the Hymany Way and residential receptors are accorded a **high** viewer sensitivity. Consequently, this view is given a high viewpoint sensitivity.

There will be negligible change to this view during construction. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated **‘slight to not significant’** and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 4

RECEIVED 16/07/2025

This viewpoint is close to residential receptors and at the point where the Hymany Way crosses the R355 from Kellysgrove to the east. Even though there are many incongruous elements in the view, it is still given a **high** receptor sensitivity due to the importance of the Hymany Way at a local and regional level. Road users have a low sensitivity to the view as their experience of the view is brief and glimpsed.

There will be negligible change to this view during construction. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated **'slight to not significant'** and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 5

This viewpoint represents residential receptors and examines intervisibility from and across local archaeological features to the south of the proposed development. Residential receptors are accorded a **high** viewpoint sensitivity. This view is representative and will have negligible change during construction though it is likely there will be a **low** magnitude of change to the viewpoint because of construction activity.

Setting a **low** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated **'moderate to slight'** and adverse as set out in Table 11.1 above. The effects will be short to medium term until the benefit of the planting proposals and building finishes are visible in the landscape.

11.6.5 Visual Impact – Operational Phase

The operational phase of the project will have less impact that at the construction phase. There will be a reduction in construction traffic to the site, and the planting measures will start to envelope the site. There are specific considerations at each viewpoint which are addressed here below. The screening effect of tree and hedgerow growth with effective management is factored in at the operational stage of the proposals.

The selected viewpoints were assessed as for the construction phase above, and this is summarised as outlined in Table 11.3 below. The sensitivity at each viewpoint is set against the magnitude of change to arrive at a significance of effects as outlined in Table 11.1 above. The matrix is not over relied on, and professional judgement and experience is employed to rate the viewpoints. Plant material establishment is considered for the short to medium term for the operational phase of this assessment.

Table 11.3: Predicted Visual Impacts on Selected Viewpoints Assessed – Operational Phase

Viewpoint No.	Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effects	Nature of effects
VP1	Glenloughaun	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP2	Macney (Kelly)	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

VP3	Kellysgrove/ Graigawooneen	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP4	Kellysgrove	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Neutral
VP5	Gortahorna (Clancarty)	High	Negligible	Slight to Not Significant	Adverse

Viewpoint 1

This viewpoint represents local residents, views from the Esker Riada, walkers along the Hymany Way and those engaging with landscape for visual amenity. The area of this viewpoint represents residential viewers and those depending on landscape for visual amenity. For this reason, this viewpoint is accorded a **high** viewer sensitivity. There will be negligible change to this view during operations. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated '**slight to not significant**' and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 2

This viewpoint represents local residents and those walkers using this connection of the Hymany Way towards Ballinasloe. For this reason, this viewpoint is accorded a **high** viewer sensitivity. There will be negligible change to this view during operations. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated '**slight to not significant**' and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 3

This viewpoint represents road users, walkers on the Hymany Way connecting to Ballinasloe and local residences. Road users are accorded a low receptor sensitivity as their experience is short lived and fleeting at this viewpoint. Walkers on the Hymany Way and residential receptors are accorded a **high** viewer sensitivity. Consequently, this view is given a high viewpoint sensitivity.

There will be negligible change to this view during operations. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated '**slight to not significant**' and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 4

This viewpoint is close to residential receptors and at the point where the Hymany Way crosses the busy R355 from Kellysgrove to the east. Even though there are many incongruous elements in the view, it is still given a **high** receptor sensitivity due to the importance of the Hymany Way at a local and regional level. Road users have a low sensitivity to the view as their experience of the view is brief and glimpsed.

There will be negligible change to this view during construction. Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated '**slight to not significant**' and neutral as set out in Table 11.1 above.

Viewpoint 5

RECEIVED
20/11/2025

This viewpoint represents residential receptors and examines intervisibility from and across local archaeological features to the south of the proposed development. Residential receptors are accorded a **high** viewpoint sensitivity. This view is representative and will have **negligible** magnitude of change during operations and a reduced impact from the construction phase. Careful colour selection on buildings will integrate them into the wider landscape effectively reducing but not eliminating their visibility.

Setting a **negligible** magnitude of change against a **high** viewpoint sensitivity result in a significance of effects that is rated '**slight to not significant**' and adverse as set out in Table 11.1 above

11.6.6 'Do Nothing' Scenario

There will be no difference to the current views or the landscape for a 'Do Nothing' scenario. It is likely the site will remain as agricultural land unless the adjacent Torva enterprise expands or sand and gravel extraction is permitted in the future. Hedgerows will likely remain as they are once there is no excavation and there will be no adjustment to the topography unless there are any building expansion and extraction at the site.

11.6.7 Cumulative Impact

The remaining structures in the landscape surrounding the proposed development relate to residences or agricultural buildings and infrastructure. There is too great a difference in the nature of the development between the structures and their position in the landscape to have any cumulative impact when considered alongside the proposed development. The quarrying and extraction industries and concrete manufacturing (e.g. planning ref 96887) which have most existing effect on the landscape at Kellysgrove will combine to have a cumulative impact taken alongside the existing Torva enterprise. The cumulative magnitude of change expected will be **medium** allowing for the landscape measures to soften the change in relation to the concrete operations and the existing Torva facility at the site. With a landscape sensitivity rating of **medium**, the significance of cumulative landscape effects will be **moderate**.

11.7 Mitigation Measures

The following landscape protection and landscape impact mitigation measures should be put in place to avoid, eliminate, or minimise any potential landscape and visual impact associated with the construction of the Proposed Development.

- New hedgerow infill planting to replace previously removed hedgerow or degraded hedgerows as required. This will also reduce the visual impact of the proposed site as well as upholding the spatial definition of the landscape over the life of the project.
- Any area of site subject to soil disturbance is to be repaired, the soil reworked into the site, recontoured and modelled. Matching sod/seed sown as per the species rich recommendations to blend the topography back into the rural landscape.
- All construction materials, fill, gravel, etc to be removed from the site and surrounding fields once the works are complete.
- Earthworks and hedgerow planting to have appropriate water levels to facilitate plant survival in relation to drought or drainage and this to be managed and detailed at the design detail stage prior to construction.
- An irrigation plan to be put in place to allow for establishment of young hedgerow and tree plantings with the irrigation water source to be identified prior to the spring of the first year

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

of planting. A plan to irrigate in hot weather and as required to be put in place especially for the first two years after planting. Tree bags or individual tree watering devices to be employed for individual hedgerow trees where newly planted.

- Hedgerows are to be maintained as thick tall hedgerows with an A shaped profile and laid, trimmed and or rejuvenated as required in the traditional manner. Hedgerow trees are to be maintained as such. Hedgerows are to be maintained as tall hedgerows Tree lines and hedgerows are to be managed to ensure not only is the entire proposed development screened, but it is also managed with pollinator capacity and longevity in mind simultaneously. Tree height is to be maintained.
- During construction phase the hazel and tree stand along the L8412, is to be protected from collapse or damage to the root system by temporarily battering this segment until the final retaining system is put in place. This will protect visual amenity along the Hymany Way during construction and later during operations.
- Hazel is to be coppiced for sight lines as required as opposed to removed and hedgerows where possible are to be transposed to obtain sightlines instead of complete removal.

11.7.1 Avoidance Prevention Reduction and Offsetting

Mitigation is discussed below as a measure of avoidance, prevention, reduction and offsetting of impacts and effects. The positioning of the digestion tanks into the topography along with specified screen planting avoids the proposed structures breaking the skyline. Other measures include;

11.7.1.1 Disease

- The avoidance of any further *Fraxinus excelsior*, ash, in any planting will not only protect existing landscape trees from the biologically infectious chalara disease, but it will also protect the local habitats that ash supports for as long as possible, by avoiding this biosecurity risk. Methods of reducing the speed of spread are to be included in the Landscape Management Plan.
- Any plant materials brought on site to be disease free of local provenance, to at a minimum hold all relevant plant passports and preferably be sourced field grown and inspected at source prior to planting. This is to avoid spreading potential infections to local populations. All trees and shrubs will conform to the specification for nursery stock as set out in British Standard 3936 Parts 1 (1992) and 4 (1984). Advanced Nursery stock trees where used in tree planting shall conform to BS 5236. Standards for plant establishment to conform to at a minimum BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape and BS3998.

11.7.1.2 Topsoil

- Avoid bringing topsoil on site. Use local soil to make localised repairs. Where additional topsoil is required use from a matching source as local as possible to the Proposed Development. Do not mix topsoil and sub soil during construction. Identify storage area where soils are to be stored separately until they are reworked into the new landscape contours. Do not mix soils. Amelioration to be informed by soil tests. Topsoil is not to be removed from the site.

11.7.1.3 Invasive Species and Biohazards

- Avoid spreading or bringing invasive plant species onsite in soil or plant materials. Soil and

RECEIVED 18/11/2025

plant material hygiene to be observed and plant, boots, tools, and equipment to be clean before being brought on site. All involved at the construction stage to be made aware of this prior to coming on site.

Invasive Alien Plant Species include;

- Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*
 - Giant knotweed *Fallopia sachalinensis*
 - Bohemian knotweed *Fallopia x bohemica*
 - Himalayan knotweed *Persicaria wallichii*
 - Old man's beard *Clematis vitalba*
 - Winter heliotrope *Petasites fragrans*
 - Garden Yellow Archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon ssp argentatum*.
 - Of these, knotweed is most likely to be problematic if introduced on site.
- *Thaumetopoea processionea*, commonly known as the Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) is not to be brought onsite and reported immediately to the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM), if identified on or near to the site.
 - *Xylella fastidiosa* also presents a threat to new and existing planting and is to be avoided and reported to DAFM if detected on or near the site.
 - All hedgerows and hedgerow trees which are being retained are to be protected during the construction process with a root protection zone established, prior to the commencement of construction. No root systems to be trenched severed or cut and there is to be no piling of building materials, soil, plant, containers, or any loading material on the protected root zone during construction. All parties involved in the construction process to be made aware of this avoidance measure. No unnecessary damage is to occur to the existing tree and hedgerow complex during construction or afterwards during operations. At the detailed design stage tunnelling is to be preferred over trenching where pipework interacts with existing hedgerow systems in selected areas. This to minimise the impact of pipe works on adjacent hedgerow structures. The root protection zone is to at a minimum be positioned outside the drip line of the hedgerow system. All work to connect pipes near hedgerows is to avoid trenching the root system.
 - Landscape planting and hedgerow management to be overseen by a qualified landscape architect during the construction and operational period as required.

11.7.2 Reinforcing Landscape

Any damage to field boundaries received during construction to be repaired in the traditional manner. Low banks for planting trees and hedgerows are to be reinforced where possible. The screening planting and new tree planting will reinforce much of the landscape pattern. Following correct landscape construction and planting, all plant material is to be properly and satisfactorily, irrigated, pruned and given correct amounts of appropriate fertiliser to ensure plant health and vigour.

11.7.3 Failure of mitigation measures

Tree planting and hedgerow maintenance can be regarded as mitigation measures in this context. A good diversity and mix of species sizes and varieties as per the landscape proposals will ensure there is little chance of complete failure of the management strategy. In the unlikely event that this is the case, the screening potential of hedges and trees will be lost and the ability of the landscape to absorb the development will be diminished. Should failure occur, the entire

RECEIVED 10/11/2025

planting and management proposals will have to be reinstated upon detailed examination as to why they were not successful in the first instance. Competent and qualified horticulturist and hedge layers to be employed to plant, establish and manage the landscape and trees once they are growing effectively.

11.8 Interactions and Cumulative Impact

Other environmental impacts which will interact with landscape and visual impacts in the case of this Proposed Development are biodiversity related and are generally positive and beneficial. Mitigation measures which avoid damage to the landscape and views will also help mitigate biodiversity loss.

11.8.1 Biodiversity and Carbon Absorption

Biodiversity, floral, faunal, and microbial will benefit from tree planting and tree maintenance and the use of native and naturalised species as prescribed in the planting mix. There will also be a pollinator benefit from the tree and hedgerow specifications, increasing the habitats for bees and other pollinating insects. Adding native and naturalised trees to the landscape has a generalised effect of increasing habitat size and habitat connectivity in the area. It adds to the corridors which connect hedgerows, woodlands, and habitats to each other.

The avoidance of *Fraxinus excelsior*, in the planting plan species mix will not only protect existing landscape trees from the biologically infectious chalara disease, but it will also protect the local habitats that ash supports for as long as possible, by avoiding this biosecurity risk. Avoiding infectious plant diseases in plant selection will also prevent spreading disease to local tree stands.

For new trees and hedgerow infill materials the emphasis is to be on plant selection of disease resistant, resilient, locally produced and propagated, screening trees of native and naturalised provenance. This will incorporate alternative climax species to ash and will ensure a good addition to the local biodiversity. The requirement to use locally sourced, produced and propagated, native and naturalised plant material will decrease the chances of introducing disease to the system. Climax trees in the planting specification ensures the schedule of planting is maximising its capacity as a carbon absorptive sink. This service will continue permanently i.e. for a period of greater than 60 years. Maturing oak, and other climax trees will ensure there are species present to replace ash in the ecosystem. These species can absorb carbon in increasing quantities each year until maturity. Maturity is expected to continue for greater than 100 years.

11.8.2 Geological Impact

The mitigation measures as outlined in the geological and soil report indicate measures which will increase potential landscape capacity by preserving the soils on site, their variability, fertility and ability to support the landscape masterplan proposals and the proposals to retain the contiguous and proposed development topography. The latter will also ensure the protection of hazel and other screening vegetation along the edge of the esker.

The following proposals will simultaneously benefit landscape protection and mitigation measures as well as screening measures which visually integrate the site into the proposed development. These include specifically;

- ⁴³⁹ • *Excavation work will be conducted in stages to minimise the exposure of unprotected soil, subsoil and bedrock.*
- *Where possible excavated subsoil material will be reworked and used on site.*

- *A geotechnical investigation of the site will be required in order to assess the potential of the underlying soil, subsoil and bedrock for reuse.*
- *Stockpiling material in appropriate locations, away from water sources, with a silt fence surrounding it to reduce the rate of run-off from hydraulic conditions. (simultaneously reducing soil nutrient loss)*
- *Light compaction of stockpiles to minimise the rate of erosion from climatic methods.*
- *Stockpile heights should be kept to a minimum to ensure stockpile stability and minimise wind borne erosion.*
- *Excavations will be postponed in high rainfall conditions to reduce the risk of excavation collapse and erosion to soil and subsoil profiles.*
- *If extreme weather conditions are forecast high sediment stockpiles will be covered to minimise erosion.*
- *Excavations to be backfilled as soon as possible to prevent any infiltration of contaminants to the subsurface and bedrock.*
- *All temporary excavations will be conducted in a safe manner to ensure sidewall stability and prevent collapse of excavations. Mobile shoring equipment will be utilised to this end where required.*
- *All long-term soil stockpiles are to be planted with a vegetative cover to bind the soil and improve slope stability.*
- *Engineered retaining walls are to be installed where required to ensure stability of contiguous and Proposed Development topography.”*

Other measures proposed to protect soil and to avoid damage to soil structure and reduce the effect of soil compaction due to construction traffic will also help with providing a ready source of good quality soil to enable the landscape masterplan achieve its landscape and screening objectives. It will also reduce the need for the importation of additional topsoil post construction. Specifically the following listed measures will be necessary for the landscape mitigation measures to be more readily achieved.

- *Construction of a hardcore gravel access road on and around the site.*
- *Confine site traffic to designated routes.*
- *Minimise traffic flows on site and establish a construction stage parking compound.*
- *Avoid the use of oversized machinery when and where possible.*
- *Prevent movement of vehicles on site during and after periods of rainfall.*
- *Driving machinery on topsoil stockpiles will be avoided as it damages the soil structure, reduces porosity, and subsequent percolation rates, and can result in ‘smearing’ of the soil surface, which prevents water infiltration. “*

The interaction of the landscape and visual impacts and the geological impacts relate primarily in this instance to the mitigation measures proposed for soils and slope retention. They are necessarily interrelated. The mutual benefit to geology and landscape of protecting the underlying geology and soils as much as possible will enable the landscape and visual mitigation measures to be as effective as possible.

11.8.3 Residual Impacts

Once all mitigation measures have been implemented and there is ongoing care provided to the landscape and hedgerows over the life of the project, the Proposed Development will be effectively screened. Other than the impacts already outlined no further are expected.

References

Environmental Protection Agency, 2022. Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports

Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA)

Galway County Council Development Plan 2022-2028

Irish National Soils Map, 1:250,000k, V1b(2014). Teagasc, Cranfield University. Jointly funded by the EPA STRIVE Research Programme 2007-2013 and Teagasc.

Geological Survey Ireland

<https://www.townlands.ie>

<https://www.logainm.ie>

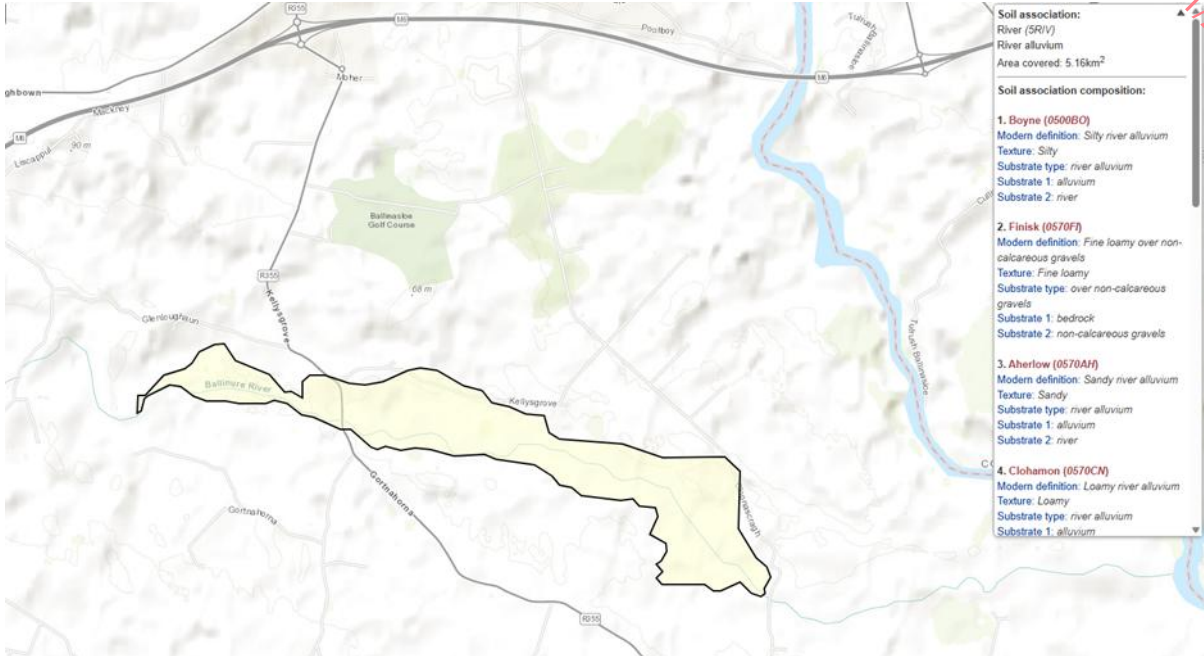
<https://www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/find-your-trails>

Tailte Éireann OSI, Historical Maps

County Galway Landscape Character Assessment for GCDP 2022-2028

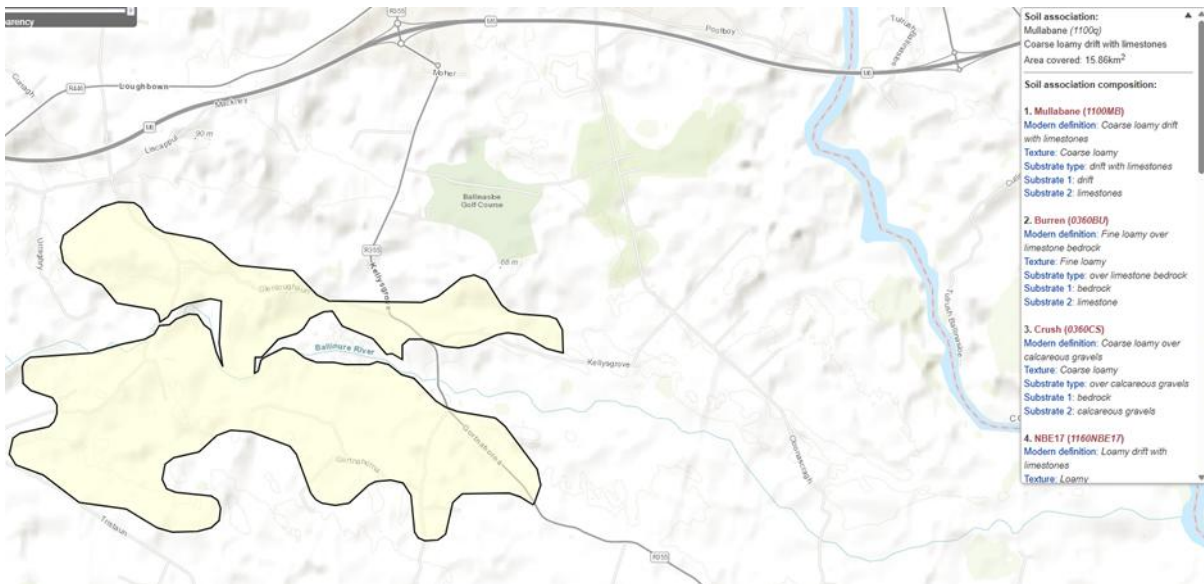
RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

Appendix 11.1: Soil Type Map, Zone of Theoretical Visibility ZTV, Viewpoint Locations,



41

Figure 11.30: Soil Association River alluvium to the south of the site bordering the Ballinure River



42

Figure 11.31: Soil Association Mulbane coarse loamy drift with limestone. At the site of the proposed development gravelly silt with organic matter overlies sand and gravel layers. Rendzinas and luvisols represent soils on the upper part of the proposed site.

⁴¹ ISIS EPA and Teagasc <http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>

⁴² ISIS EPA and Teagasc <http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

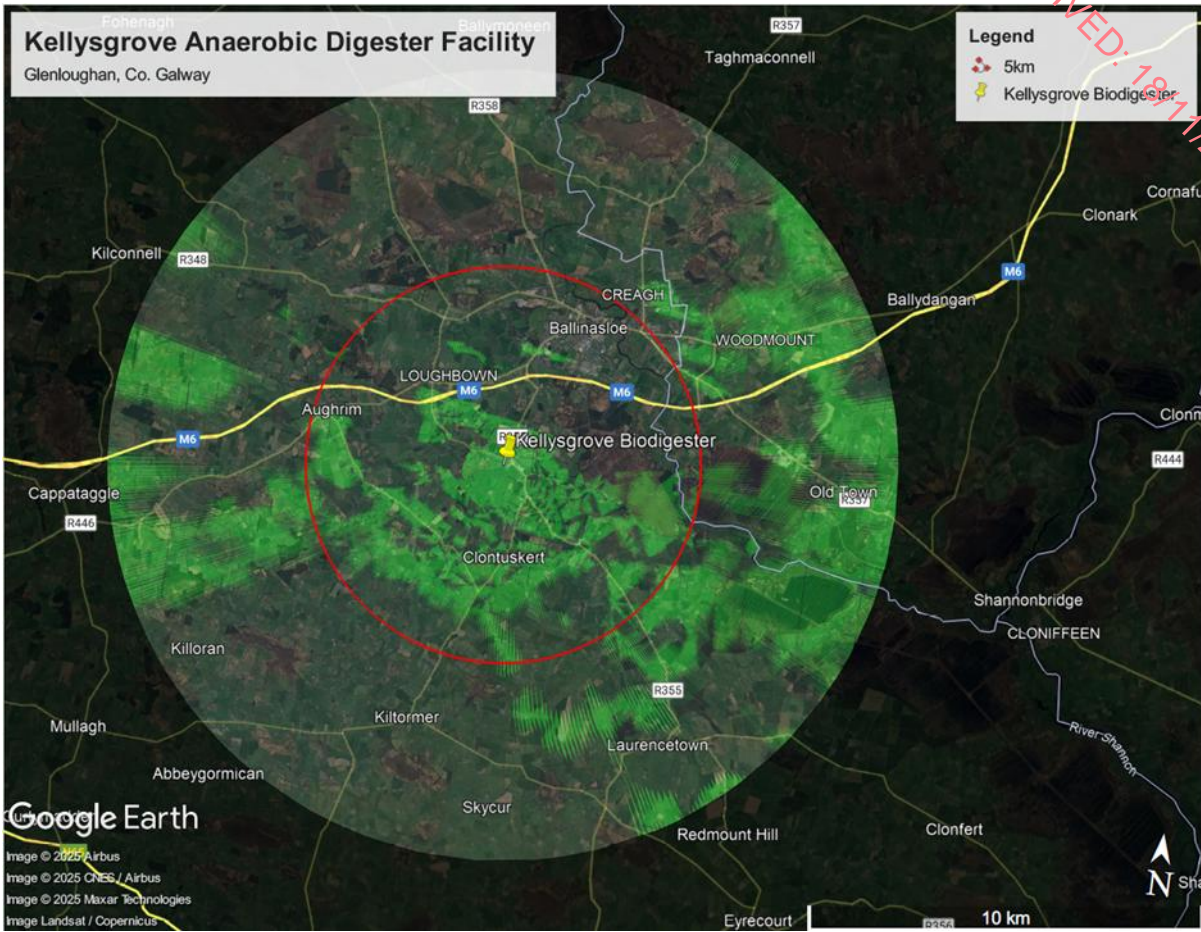


Figure 11.32: Zone of Theoretical Visibility.

RECEIVED 7/8/11/2025



Figure 11.33: Verified photomontage viewpoint locations ⁴³

⁴³ 3 Dimensional VP location

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

Appendix 11.2: Field Survey Photoset

Landscape Character



Fig.11.34 The Hymany Way along the top of the Esker Riada follows the L8412 past the site of the proposed development. Dwellings are typically placed below the ridge in this area.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.35 There are good views afforded over the wider landscape from the top of the esker at a local level.



Fig.11.36 There is good capacity within the landscape to support tall trees with the correct soil beneath. Large fields have developed either side of the esker.

RECEIVED 7/18/11/2025



Fig.11.37 Large fields have developed either side of the esker with historical elements dotted over the landscape.



Fig.11.38 The local road system affords passage along the esker, itself an historical landscape. This also protects the ridge from damage or excavation.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.39: Locally oak and beech are found on earthen banked hedgerows attaining good age and condition.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.40: Large fields are mainly pastoral but there are examples of contrasting arable fields in the local landscape.



Fig.11.41: Large arable fields in the local landscape.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.42: Level fields on lower lying land in the landscape are typically pastoral and large.



RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.43: Ash in various stages of disease in the area. Ash dieback disease is evident in the local landscape, and this will affect the area in time. Currently some trees are badly affected and others not at all. The expectation is that in thirty years all except the odd resistant tree will succumb to the disease.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.44: This is a very typical arrangement of vegetation of hazel, ash, elder and edge flora along the top of the esker. It is enclosing and attractive for certain lengths of the ridge.



Fig.11.45: There are historical elements peppered in the landscape and along the esker ridge as in this example here of St. Matthews' Church and the adjacent burial ground.

RECEIVED 18/11/2025



Fig.11.46: St. Matthews Church in relation to the esker.



Fig.11.47: Historical bridges cross the Ballinure River in the local landscape.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.48: Aughrim village and the surrounding townlands are heavily influenced by historical and prehistorical events and associations in the landscape, most notably the Battle of Aughrim.



Fig.11.49: Clontuskert Abbey is a very significant ecclesiastical feature in the local landscape connected with the Esker Riada. There are many landscape associations in the area with the abbey.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.50: ~~North-east~~Northeast of Clontuskert, large open pastoral fields on lower ground are less influenced by the esker landscape.



Fig.11.51: Traditionally buildings in the area were placed lower in the landscape but close to the esker.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.52: Farmsteads in relation to the ridge

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.53: Traditionally dwellings have occupied space close to but at the bottom of the ridge

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.54: Typical flora of esker soils, line both sides of the L8412

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.55: The road margins at the top of the esker or even local patches of disturbed ground, resemble calcareous grasslands or orchid rich meadows in summer.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.56: The landscape descends and reemerges north of the esker enclosing a largely pastoral landscape. It also creates valley like landscapes insulated from development beyond the ridges.



Fig.11.57: There are also occasions where one encounters gentle undulations close to drainage elements in the landscape

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.58: There are also occasions where one encounters gentle undulations close to drainage elements in the landscape



Fig.11.59: The R355 is a busy regional road east of the proposed site. There is a connection from the Hymany Way back to the town of Ballinasloe along this segment of the road. The road reduces the remoteness and sense of landscape tranquillity near the site of the proposed development.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.60: There are many examples of a much-changed landscape along and near the Esker Riada with evidence of quarrying activity abounding.



Fig.11.61: There are incongruous elements in the landscape close to the site of the proposed development which reduces its sensitivity to change. Some are in relation to land use change,

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

quarrying and subsequent abandonment as in the example above.



Fig.11.62: There are incongruous elements in the landscape close to the site of the proposed development which reduces its sensitivity to change. Some are in relation to land use change, quarrying and subsequent abandonment as in the example above.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.63: The Torva Ireland Ltd. enterprise at the site of the proposed development has altered the landscape at this point of the esker. It is enclosed to the west but more open to the south.



Fig.11.64: The White Concrete plant is another incongruous element in the landscape just east of the site of the proposed development.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.65: The White Concrete plant reduces the sensitivity of the landscape close to the site of the proposed development.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.66: There is a contrast between the Torva site and the surrounding landscape especially to the south. Electrical infrastructure also adds an element of incongruity to the landscape. The important townland boundary east of the proposed site would benefit from strengthening to future proof its ability to continue and screen the existing plant as well as the proposed development from the east.

RECEIVED 16/11/2025

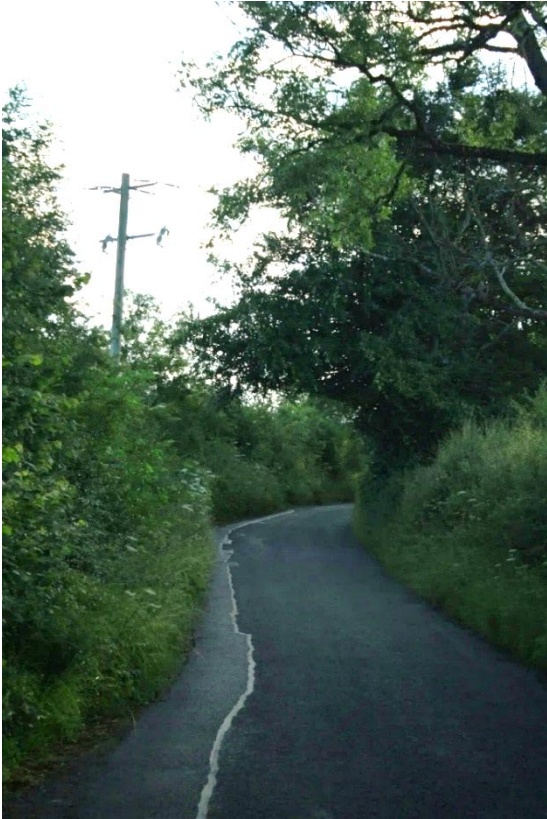


Fig.11.67: Ascending the ridge adjacent to the site of the proposed development. There is good enclosure proffered by the hazel stands and other vegetation along this stretch of the L8412.



Fig.11.68: Views from the esker ridge stretch over the landscape. The woodland and forestry to the southwest of the proposed development have the capacity to absorb much of the development from that direction.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.69: Intermittent views which open up along the ridge such as the one above will not be impacted by the proposed development.



Fig.11.70: Small quarries and quarrying activity are absorbed into the landscape even with modest amounts of scrub and tree growth.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.71: Relatively thin scrub surrounds, afford quarries discretion in the landscape.



Fig.11.72: Electrical infrastructure is evident but not prominent in the landscape

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.73: Low level fields along the Ballinure River



Fig.11.74: Historical bridge over the Ballinure River, east of the R355, connecting to the

ORS

Hymany Way

RECEIVED: 18/JUN/2025



Fig.11.75: Connecting to the Hymany Way east of the R355 along the esker.



RECEIVED: 18/11/2025

Fig.11.76: The side of the esker east of the R355 has been quarried, with only the ridge supporting the road remaining.



Fig.11.77: East of the R355, the view from the esker is of a flat level landscape with evidence of quarry overburden



RECEIVED 18/11/2025

Fig.11.78: Some views from the esker are over scrub, woodlands and hedgerows. Electrical infrastructure is obvious but not entirely incongruent.



Fig.11.79: Hazel provides good screening and cover along the Hymany Way on the L8412 close to the site of the proposed development. This allows for a variety of experiences along the route enclosing it as a landscape in its own right and then allowing for the views to open up over the landscape at specific points.

RECEIVED: 18/11/2025



Fig.11.80: The landscape associated with drainage east of the proposed site is low and level or gently sloped with layers of scrub and trees taking the views into the distance.



Fig.11.81: The influence of the esker and past activity in relation to the esker are evident in the landscape.