

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Proposed road realignment works, Killiaghan and Gort
and Carnagh West, Co. Roscommon



Oran
Ecology

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Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

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1 Introduction

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has been prepared by Oran Ecology Ltd on behalf of Roscommon County Council to accompany a planning application under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the proposed road realignment project at Killiaghan and Gort and Carnagh West, Co Roscommon. This report has been commissioned to determine if EIA is required for the proposed project as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the Act) and in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended (the Regulations).

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) has been prepared and will be submitted alongside this planning application. The findings of the AASR and the relevant site and desk studies are referenced where appropriate in this EIA Screening Report.

1.1 Legislative Context

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements derive from 2011/92/EU (as amended by EU Directive 2014/52/EU), commonly referred to as the EIA Directive. The EIA Directive was transposed into Irish law with the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018).

The EIA Directive 2011/92/EU requires the assessment of the effect of certain public and private projects on the environment and sets out the process by which the likely significant effects of a project on the environment are assessed. The EIA Directive lists potential EIA projects in two categories:

- Annex I lists categories of projects where EIA is mandatory.
- Annex II lists those projects where EIA is necessary when a proposed development is likely to be associated with significant effects on the environment, based on development thresholds set at national level or a case-by-case examination of development below such thresholds.

In Ireland, Annex I of the EIA Directive has been transposed as Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2021. Annex II has been transposed as Part 2 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023. Within Part 2, the text of the Directive has been supplemented by a series of national thresholds which if exceeded, require that an EIAR is undertaken. Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations sets out relevant criteria to inform this screening process. Schedule 7 directly transposes the criteria specified in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

The EIA Directive has also been transposed into the Roads Act 1993, as amended by Roads Regulations, 1994 (S.I. 119/1994) and the European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019). Section 50 of the Act specifies the types of roads projects that automatically require EIA and sets out criteria for determining whether or not other roads projects should be subject to EIA.

1.2 Statement of Competency

The survey and assessment were carried out by James Owens (B.Sc. (Env), M.Sc.) who has relevant academic qualifications and is a competent expert in undertaking environmental assessment. James has over seven years' experience as an environmental consultant and has prepared numerous Environmental Impact Assessment screenings. James has been involved in the production of EIAR's for various developments including renewable energy developments, housing developments, flood relief schemes and forestry projects.

2 Characteristics of the Development

2.1 Site Location

The proposed works area is located in the townlands of Killiaghan and Gort and Carnagh West, Co. Roscommon (ITM Grid Ref. X 597029 Y 752293). A site location map is provided in Figure 2.1.

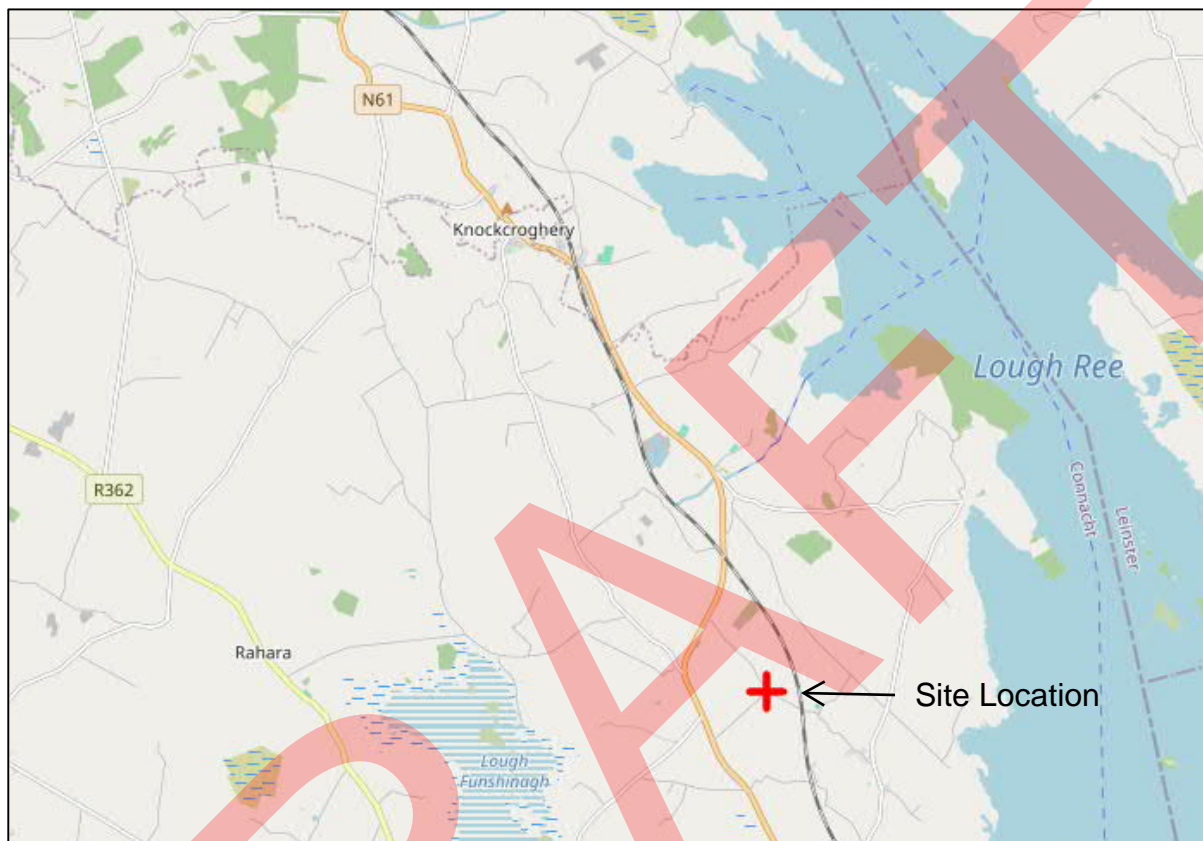


Figure 2.1 Site location

2.2 Development Description

The proposed works involve the construction of approximately 75m of new road to create a new opening for the L-7610 local road onto the existing L-5550 local road and the decommissioning of approximately 125m of existing road. The purpose of the proposed works is to widen road and improve sightlines. Existing agricultural sheds will need to be removed to facilitate the proposed development. The sheds will be dismantled and removed by Roscommon County Council and stored on adjacent land for re-use or sale by owner. The council will remove from the site all materials which cannot be reused as part of the proposed development and these will be disposed of under licence. The proposed development layout is shown in Figure 2.2.

Roscommon County Council are proposing complete the following work:

- Demolition and removal of existing sheds and boundary wall within the proposed development footprint
- Construction of 76m of new road carriageway (6m wide) and relocation of junction
- Decommissioning of existing stretch of road to be returned to grass
- Existing hedgerow and fence on old road to be removed
- Provision of new post and wire fence and relocation of field gate

- The provision of 100m of new hedging consisting of native tree species along new fence line
- All works will be undertaken in accordance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2023

2.3 Description of the Existing Environment

A multi-disciplinary walkover survey of the proposed project site was undertaken on the 27/03/2024 in accordance with Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora & Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2008) to provide baseline information on the site. All habitats within the site were categorised in accordance with A Guide to Habitats in Ireland (Fossitt, 2000). The walkover survey also included a search for invasive species listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011). All habitats were readily identifiable at the time of the site visit.

The proposed new road will run through a dry stone wall categorised as Stone walls and other stone work (BL1), a small area of rank Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2), existing road and agricultural sheds categorised as Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) and an area of Recolonising bare ground (ED3) (Plate 2.1 and Plate 2.2). The rank Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) habitat made up a small paddock at the southern side of the existing sheds. It was characterised and dominated by rank grasses cock's foot-grass (*Dactylis glomerata*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) and encroaching bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). A short larch (*Larix* sp.) Treeline (WL2) was also recorded to the south of the sheds (Plate 2.1).

The existing road which will be decommissioned was categorised as Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3). The southern side of the road contained a Hedgerow (WL1) containing whitethorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) (Plate 2.3). The northern side of the road was demarcated by a fence.

No species listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) were recorded during the survey.

No habitats listed under Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive were recorded at the site. No species listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) were recorded during the survey.

OSI Map reference 2827

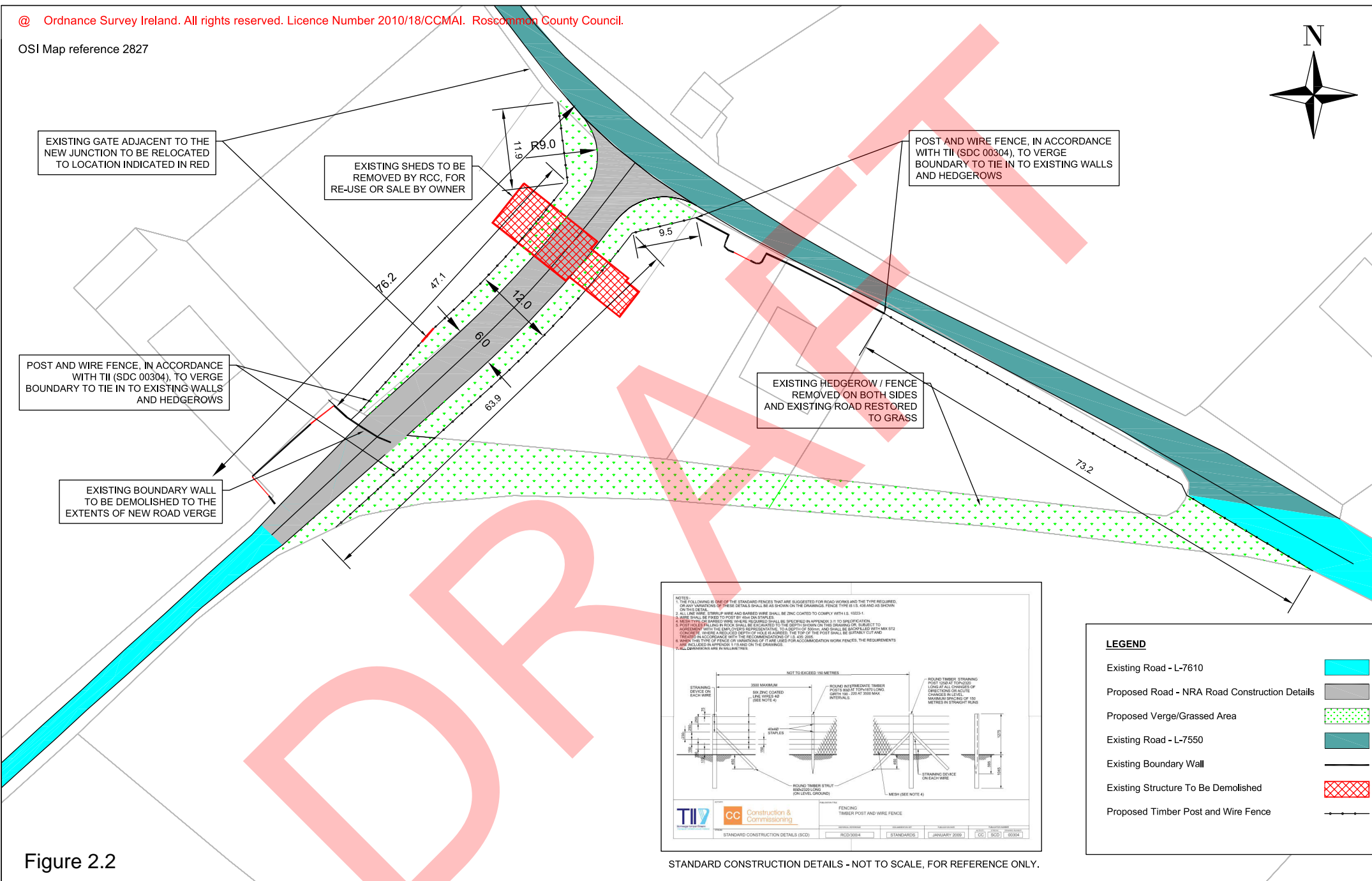


Figure 2.2



ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

Roads Design Section,
Ara an Chontae, Roscommon,
Phone 090 66 37100
Mr. Shane Tiernan, Director of Roads &
Transportation, Emergency Services, Building Control,
Human Resources and Boyle MD Area Manager.



Notes:

1.

Date	By	Revision
0000	0000	0000

Project: L7610_L7550 Killlaghan And Gort Proposal			
Title: Proposed Layout			
Scale: 1:500	Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023	Drawing No.: 003	
Design: —	Drawn: P.Mullins	Checked: —	
Filename: C:\Users\roscom\Documents\2023\1911\19110001\19110001_003.dwg			



Plate 2.1 Existing road (BL3) and stone wall (BL1) adjoined by Treeline (WL2) where the proposed new road will run through.



Plate 2.2 Existing sheds (BL3) and small field of rank Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) habitat



Plate 2.3 Existing road (BL3) to be decommissioned and Hedgerow (WL1)

2.3.1 Fauna

A detailed daytime visual inspection of the sheds to be demolished was undertaken on the 27th March 2024 for bats and birds. The potential for suitable bat roosting habitat to occur was assessed based on the 'Negligible, Low, Moderate and High' classification described in Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins (ed.), 2016).

The main shed consisted of a hay shed with corrugated iron roof and sides. A smaller stone plastered shed was built on to the eastern side of the hay shed. This also had a corrugated iron roof. No signs of bats such as droppings or staining were recorded from inside or outside the sheds. The corrugated iron roofs do not provide suitable roosting habitat for bats. Bats prefer to utilise slate roofs where they can roost under slates or ridge tiles. The potential for the buildings to offer bat roosting habitat was assessed as negligible.

An old swallows nest was recorded within the shed adjacent to the hay shed and two old nests which potentially belonged to corvids were recorded on a ledge in the hay shed.

3 Screening Assessment

3.1 Mandatory EIA

The project was reviewed against the classes specified in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations in order to screen for whether mandatory EIA was warranted.

Annex I

Projects subject to mandatory EIA include:

- c) construction of motorways and express roads;

There is no class set out under Schedule 5 in relation to the provision of realignment or upgrade to an existing road.

Under the provisions of Schedule 5, the closest type of project to the subject development is for the provision of "all private roads which would exceed 2,000 metres in length", as per Item 10 (a)(dd) of the Schedule. The proposed development is a realignment of an existing public road and not the construction of a new private road and therefore is not subject to EIA.

Under Schedule 5, Part 2, Item 11(b), EIA is required for installations for the disposal of waste with an annual intake greater than 25,000 tonnes. It is not proposed that the annual intake of waste (spoil material) at the spoil areas will exceed this threshold and therefore EIA is not required.

Under Schedule 5, Part 2, Item 14, EIA is required Works of demolition carried out in order to facilitate a project listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of this Schedule where such works would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7. The proposed development is not deemed to be a development listed in Part 1 or Part 2 and therefore EIA is not required.

In addition, Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended) and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 outline the legislative requirements that determine whether an EIA is mandatory for a proposed road development.

Section 50 (1) (a) of the Roads Act, 1993 as substituted by Section. 9(1)(d)(i) of the Roads Act, 2007

A road authority or the Authority shall prepare a statement of the likely effects on the environment ('environmental impact statement') of any proposed road development it proposes consisting of—

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

Article 8 of S.I. No. 119/1994 Roads Regulations, 1994 (The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended)).

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

(b) The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length

The proposed development is an upgrade to the existing public road and does not trigger the requirement for mandatory EIA under Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended) and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.

3.2 Cumulative Effects Assessment

The proposed development was considered in combination with other plans and projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment.

A search of the online planning system for Roscommon County Council for existing, proposed and approved projects recent planning applications was undertaken on the 26/03/2024. Refused, withdrawn and incomplete information applications were not included in the assessment. The following planning applications were returned within the past five years from the relevant townlands;

Killiaghan and Gort

- PI. Ref. 19494 – Construction of a dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 21718 – Construction of a dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 22180 – Extension to a dwelling house and installation of new sewerage treatment plant
- PI. Ref. 2360117 – Construction of a dwelling house

Carnagh West

- PI. Ref. 19204 – Construction of dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 19229 – Extension to a dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 2143 – Demolition of barn and agricultural shed and the for the construction of a dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 21536 – Construction of a dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 21558 – Refurbishment of, and rear extension to an existing dwelling
- PI. Ref. 2229 – (1) Permission for retention and completion of a domestic garage, with integrated home office; (2) Retention of alterations to balcony features on the dwelling house and retention of minor alterations to the access from the public road from that originally granted under Planning Ref. Nos. PD/08/1436 and PD/11/252; (3) Permission for the construction of a pergola type feature attached to the southern elevation of the dwelling and (4) all associated site works
- PI. Ref. 23208 – Permission to demolish existing extension and porch, reconstruct and extend existing dwelling house, construct new porch and install a new waste water treatment system
- PI. Ref. 23264 – Construction of a dwelling house
- PI. Ref. 2360296 – Construction of a dwelling house

Given the nature of the developments i.e. residential development, the potential for ongoing environmental effects and associated potential cumulative effects with the currently proposed development are not significant.

3.3 Sub-threshold EIA

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations specifies the criteria for determining whether or not a sub-threshold development is required to be subject to EIA. As the project does not correspond to any project type in the Roads or Planning and Development legislation, as listed above, it is not considered to be 'sub-threshold development'.

Notwithstanding, given the wide ranging requirement of 50 (1) (b) to (d) of the Roads Act (as above) that any road development or road improvement project which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment should be subject to EIA, for the avoidance of any doubt, the next section of this report provides a review of the project against prescribed criteria for determining whether or not a sub-threshold development is required to be subject to EIA.

These criteria are given in Annex III of the EIA Directive as transcribed into Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations and consist of the following;

- Characteristics of the Proposed Development
- Location of Proposed Development
- Characteristics of Potential Impacts.

3.4 Characteristics of proposed development

Is the size and design of the proposed works significant?	No. The proposed development consist of the demolition of old agricultural sheds, the construction of 76m of new single lane road and the decommissioning of 125m of existing single lane road. The proposed works are small in scale and short-term in duration. The geographic extent of the proposed works are confined to the site boundary. In addition, there will be no associated impact with the operational phase of the development.
Potential for impacts from project in cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects	No. A cumulative impact assessment was undertaken s part of the EIA. The nature and scale of the project is such that potential cumulative effects are not anticipated. In addition, the AA Screening Report also examined the potential for cumulative effects and concluded that there will be no in-combination effects on Natura 2000 sites as a result of the proposed development.
Use of natural resources in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity?	No. The proposed project is small in scale and will not use significant quantities of resources such as stone. Soil from excavations will be reused on site such as the restoration of the old road to grassland. Stone will be the primary resource used which is not in short supply and will be locally sourced.
Will the works produce waste?	No. Significant quantities of waste are not anticipated as a result of the proposed

	development. The proposed works will reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of grassland where appropriate. Waste where it arises, will be dealt with through a suitably licensed contractor and sent to appropriately permitted waste facilities. The farm sheds to be demolished are relatively small and will be removed by Roscommon County Council and disposed of by licence or they will be re-used or sold by the current owner.
Will the works create a significant amount of pollution or nuisance?	No. No significant water or air borne pollution are envisaged as a result of the proposed works. No watercourses which could act as conduits for pollution were recorded within or adjacent to the works area. Roscommon County Council will comply with environmental best practice measures to prevent any localised pollution occurring. Plant and equipment utilised during construction will use fossil fuels, but the potential impact associated with this is immaterial due to the short-term scale of the works. Due to nature and scale of the project, it is not anticipated that it will create significant nuisance related effects.
Risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the project including those caused by Climate Change in accordance with scientific knowledge?	None. The proposed works are small in scale and short term in duration. The proposed works and construction methods to be used are well established and will be subject to contractor's safety statements and risk assessments. The new road re-alignment will help create a safer junction for traffic users.
Would any combination of the above factors be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment?	No. Due to the nature, scale and duration of the proposed project it is not anticipated that it will result in significant effects on the environment when assessed individually or cumulatively.

3.5 Location of Proposed Development

Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any site designated for conservation interest (e.g. SAC, SPA, pNHA)?	The proposed development site is located 2.5km from Lough Ree SAC [000440], 2.5 Lough Ree SPA [004064] and 2.6km from Lough Funshinagh SAC [000611]. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared for the planning application and it concluded that the proposed project will not result in significant effects on any European site.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. No watercourses were recorded within or adjacent to the proposed works site. None of the habitats recorded at proposed development

	were categorised as being of county, national or international importance. No habitats listed under Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive were recorded at the site.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. No watercourses were recorded within or adjacent to the proposed works site. None of the habitats recorded at proposed development were categorised as being of county, national or international importance.
Potential for impacts directly or indirectly on Habitats or Species listed on Annex II and IV of the Habitats Directive or Annex I of the EU Birds Directive	None. No evidence of species listed under Annex II or IV of the EU Habitats Directive were recorded at the site. The sheds to be removed as part of the proposed development were assessed as offering Negligible potential roosting habitat for bats. The site does not provide suitable supporting habitat for bird species listed under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.
Potential for impacts on breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	None. The sheds to be removed as part of the proposed development have been used by nesting birds which are common in the surrounding landscape. The buildings were assessed as offering Negligible potential roosting habitat for bats. No signs of protected mammals were recorded from the site. The hedgerow that is proposed for removal will be replaced by a new hedgerow of native species. All works will be carried out in accordance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2023. It is not anticipated that the proposed development will result in significant impacts on flora or fauna.
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on any listed ACA in the County Development Plan?	None
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structure or recorded monuments and places of Archaeological Interest	None. The closest Recorded Site or Monument is located 100m north-east of the site (Class: Ringfort-cashel; No. RO045-111) Due to the nature and scale of the proposed works the potential for significant effects to occur are not anticipated.
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on Listed or scenic views or protected landscape in the County Development Plan?	None. The proposed development site is not located within an area which has been listed for scenic views or protected landscape.
Potential to impact on areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.	None.
Potential to impact on densely populated areas.	None. The proposed development is situated in a rural environment with dispersed settlement. The proposed development is not located in close proximity to densely populated areas. The

	village of Lecarrow is over 2.5km away and the town of Athlone is located 12km away. The project does not have the potential to impact densely populated areas.
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3.6 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Human Beings	The potential impacts are not considered to be significant. During construction there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience, dust and noise. The active works area will be limited so potential impacts will be restricted in their geographic extent as well as their duration.
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	No flora or fauna of ecological significance or sensitivity were recorded at the site. All works will be carried out in accordance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2022. A new hedgerow will be planted (100m) to replace the hedgerow which will be removed as part of the proposed project so there will be no net loss of hedgerow habitat. Designated sites in the vicinity will not be impacted upon as set out in the AASR which accompanies this application.
Soils and Geology	Imperceptible impact. The proposed development will be carried out in accordance with the environmentally sensitive construction methods and environmental management systems. Excavated soils and subsoils will be reused as part of site reinstatement and landscaping or dealt with in an appropriate manner.
Water	No watercourses were identified within or adjacent to the proposed development site. The location, nature and scale of the proposed project is such that no significant effects on surface or groundwater are anticipated.
Air & Climate	No significant air or climate impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. There will be a small amount of dust emissions during the construction phase but these will not be significant due to the nature and scale of the project. There are no new sources of emissions to air associated with the operational phase.
Noise & Vibration	There will be short-term increase in noise at the site due to the use of. However, due to the nature and scale, and location within a rural setting, no significant impacts are anticipated. In

	addition, noise impact during construction activities will be managed through best practice measures.
Landscape	No significant impact. The subject works relate to the provision of a realignment of a small section of local road.
Material Assets	Transportation requirements to the site will be minimal and not much different to existing agricultural activity requirements. In addition, the proposed works will be short-term in duration. The proposed works have the potential to result in some minor short-term traffic inconvenience but this is not expected to be significant. No significant impacts are anticipated.
Cultural Heritage	The proposed development will not give rise to any significant impacts on cultural heritage. There are no significant archaeological or architectural structures within or immediately adjacent to the project site.
Interaction of Foregoing	No impact

3.7 Discussion of Potential Impacts

Will a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed works?	No. The geographic extent is restricted to a short section (76m) of new road and the decommissioning of 125m of existing local road..
Will a large population be impacted as a result of the proposed works?	No. The proposed development is not located within a heavily or densely populated area.
Are any trans-frontier impacts likely to arise from proposed works?	No. The proposed development will be restricted to the site boundary.
In considering the various aspects of the environment, would the impacts of the proposed development be considered complex?	No. The proposed re-alignment work are small in scale and impacts will be short-term in nature and associated largely with the construction phase of the development.
Is there a high probability that the impacts will occur?	No. The nature and scale of the proposed project are such that effects will be insignificant. Construction best practice measures will also ensure that project will not result in significant effects.
Will the effects be permanent rather than temporary?	No. Construction impacts will be short-term. No permanent significant adverse effects as a result of the project are foreseen.
Will the impacts be irreversible?	No. The proposed development will remain a permanent part of the local public road network.
Will there be significant cumulative impacts with other existing and/or approved projects?	In the absence of significant known third-party development in the local area, the project is not likely to result in significant cumulative effects.

Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effects?

The proposed development will avoid any significant effects due to the nature and scale of the proposed development and through the implementation of standard best practice measures.

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4 Conclusion

This project is not a development for which there is a mandatory requirement for EIA either under Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the P&D Regulations or Section 50(1) of the Roads Acts 1993 to 2015.

This screening report has considered the nature, size and location of the project and having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, concludes, that there is no likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that EIA is not required.

The geographic extent of the road realignment is small and there will be no significant impacts during the operational phase. The proposed works have been reviewed in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report which has concluded that the proposal will not result in significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Due the duration, nature and scale of the proposed project, significant effects on sensitive ecological receptors are not anticipated.

The characteristics of the potential impacts are not considered significant and standard best practice will be implemented during the proposed works.

It is considered that the proposed road realignment project does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is not required.