

**PLANNING REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 179 3(a) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
ACT 2000 (as amended)**

Re:

Golf Links Road Upgrade

The proposed development comprises of:-

Demolition of Ballysimon Bridge over the River Groody on Golf Links Road L1116. Ballysimon Bridge is on the Record of Protected Structures Register Number 1596 Ballysimon Bridge;

Construction of a new bridge over the River Groody;

Construction of flood defence walls along the River Groody, including a weir wall upstream of the new bridge;

Road widening and upgrade of 350 metres of roadway on Golf Links Road L1116 and 300 metres of roadway along Old Ballysimon Road L1171;

Construction of boundary walls, footpaths, cycleways, traffic lights and public lighting;

Installation of surface water sewers, foul sewers, gas main, telecommunications, utility services and associated services;

Installation of traffic calming measures on the Old Ballysimon Road including a new gateway entry to the city, traffic calming measures on Golf Links Road, new road surfacing, new road markings, upgraded road signage and street furniture and all ancillary works necessary for completion;

At:

Ballysimon, Ballysimon (Staunton) and Garryglass, Co. Limerick.

Limerick City & County Council

Planning Reference No. 21/8006

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Pursuant to Section 179 3(a) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) this report is submitted to the members of Limerick City & County Council. In accordance with Section 179(4) (b) of the above Act, it is proposed to proceed as indicated in Section 6 of this report.

Sean Coughlan
Sean Coughlan
Chief Executive
Limerick City & County Council

Date: 15/9/21

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1.0 Foreword

This planning report has been prepared pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

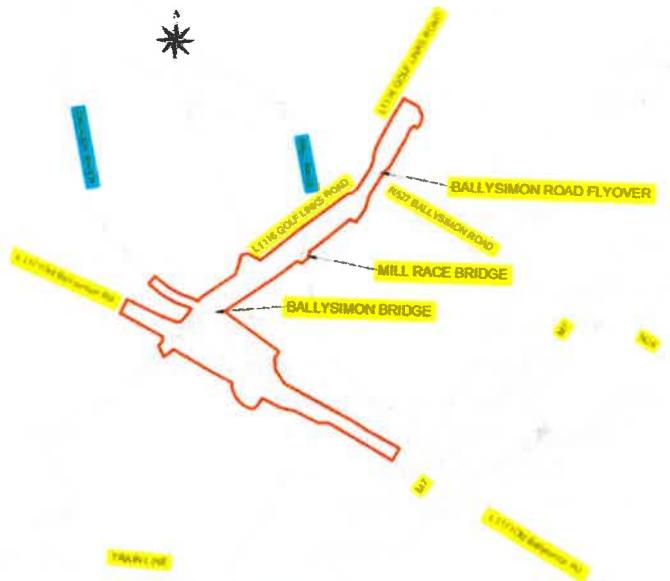
2.0 Description of the nature and extent of the proposed development

The Golf Links Road (L1116) is a local county primary road within the Limerick City urban boundary in the eastern city suburb of Castletroy. It is an arterial urban distributor road that links the R445 Dublin Road from the Milford Road traffic signals in Castletroy, just South of the University of Limerick and runs southwards through Newcastle and Kilbane, passing to the west of Castletroy Golf Club, then passes between Glantán and Fox Hollow, passing School House Road and finally turning south west towards Ballysimon, where it passes under the R527 Ballysimon Road, near the M7/N24 Ballysimon Interchange and forms a cross roads with the L1171 Old Ballysimon Road at O'Shea's Pub in Ballysimon, overall, a distance of 2.3km. The L1116 Golf Links Road continues in a westerly direction from the L1171 for a distance of 1.5km through a very rural undeveloped part of Ballysimon to where it terminates at a T-junction on the R512 Kilmallock Road.



Figure 1: Site Location

The work extents are from the Golf Links Road (L1116) junction with the Old Ballysimon Road (L1171) to the entrance to Cairnsfort housing estate – approximately 350m north along the L1116 and also extending 300m from the L1171/L1116 Junction south-eastwards along the L1171 Old Ballysimon Road. It is proposed to signalise the Golf Links Road/Old Ballysimon Road junction and to create a new gateway and transition zone from the rural to the urban environment on the L1171. See figure 2 showing site boundary.



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Figure 2: Site Boundary

Under this planning application the Applicant, Design and Delivery Services, Limerick City & County Council, proposes the following:

- Demolition of Ballysimon Bridge over the River Groody on Golf Links Road L1116. Ballysimon Bridge is on the Record of Protected Structures Register Number 1596 Ballysimon Bridge.
- Construction of a new bridge over the River Groody.
- Construction of flood defence walls along the River Groody, including a weir wall upstream of the new bridge.
- Road widening and upgrade of 350 metres of roadway on Golf Links Road L1116 and 300 metres of roadway along Old Ballysimon Road L1171.
- Construction of boundary walls, footpaths, cycleways, traffic lights and public lighting.
- Installation of surface water sewers, foul sewers, gas main, telecommunications, utility services and associated services.
- Installation of traffic calming measures on the Old Ballysimon Road including a new gateway entry to the city, traffic calming measures on Golf Links Road, new road surfacing, new road markings, upgraded road signage and street furniture and all ancillary works necessary for completion.

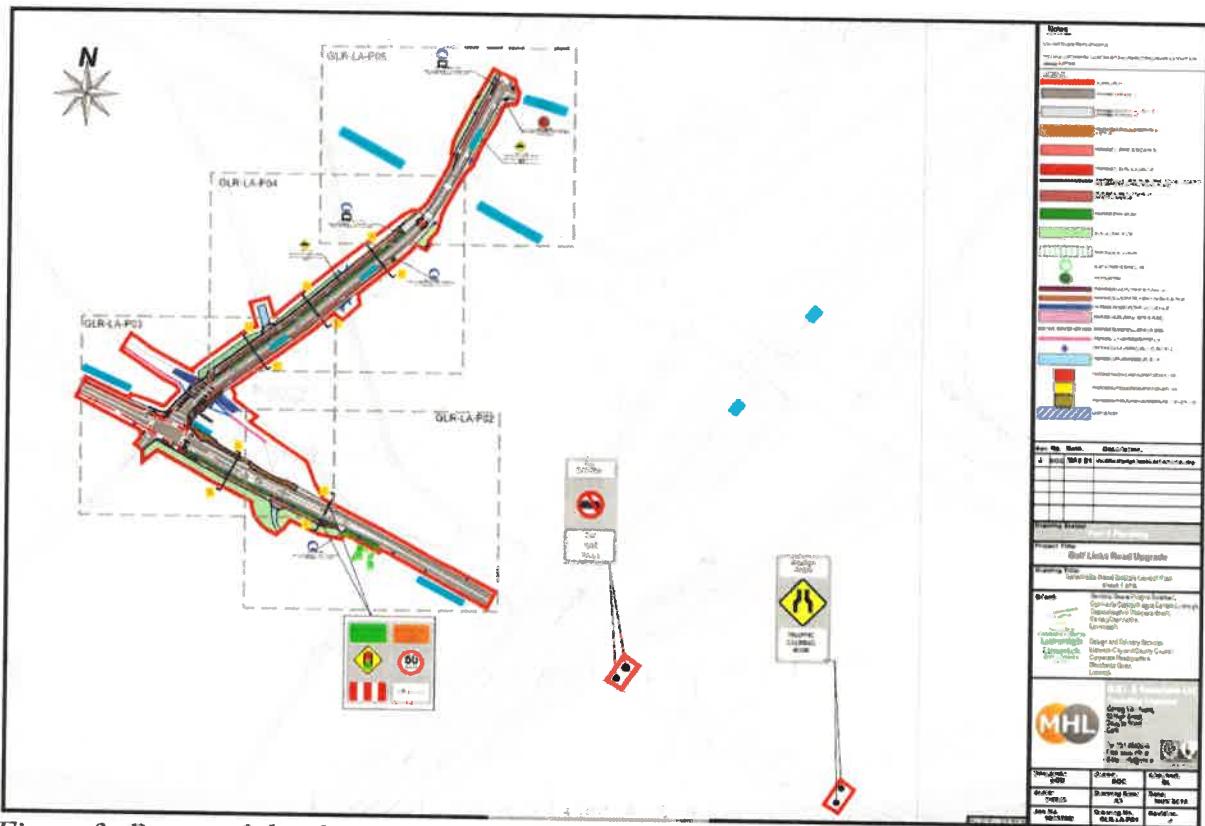


Figure 3: Proposed development

The main purpose of the road upgrade scheme is to provide a suitable road arrangement that will accommodate existing and future pedestrian, cycle and vehicular traffic accessing the Ballysimon employment hub area from the residential districts of Castletroy, Monaleen, Newport and Annacotty. It will also provide a suitable link from the South East of the city and county towards the Castletroy District Centre. The area is also subject to river flooding in the vicinity of the Ballysimon Bridge by the Groody River. It is the intention that the existing bridge would be replaced by a new structure which would cater for a 100 year design flood return period.

Need for Improved Transport Links

- LCCC have identified significant growth in development of the Castletroy Local Area Plan with consolidation of its status as a District Centre. There is a requirement for improved transport links. Golf Links Road is an important arterial link road between Ballysimon and Castletroy.
- The existing Golf Links Road is not fit for purpose as widths are substandard, particularly between Evanwood and the Old Ballysimon Road.
- There are two major pinch points at Ballysimon Bridge and at the Mill Race bridge where only one way traffic can pass, as vehicles travelling in opposite directions have to yield to each other to cross the bridges. Yield road markings have been placed on the road as a road safety measure. This situation is a road safety hazard and exacerbates traffic congestion during peak traffic hours. The road at Ballysimon Bridge is only 3.3m wide and the road at the Mill Race is 3.7m wide.
- With current traffic flows in excess of 6,000 AADT and a likelihood of increase to 8,000 vehicles per day in the short to medium term it is clear that not only is the road bridge

width inadequate but also the bridge is structurally inadequate as it was not designed to cope with this volume of traffic loading. There is currently a 3 tonne limit on the bridge.

- The construction of wider bridges to replace the existing Ballysimon Bridge and the Mill Race culvert along with widening of the Golf Links Road corridor will significantly improve traffic flows along Golf Links Road as well as improve road safety with the removal of the two pinch points.
- The proposed road upgrade scheme will allow Golf Links Road to form part of a future bus route to serve the area with a public transport alternative travel mode.
- The installation of traffic signals at the Old Ballysimon Road/Golf Links Road junction will improve traffic flow along Golf Links Road and Old Ballysimon Road.
- The installation of traffic signals at the Old Ballysimon Road/Golf Links Road junction (O’Shea’s) will improve road safety as junction sight lines are very poor at this location. Traffic exiting Golf Links Road onto Old Ballysimon Road has very limited view of oncoming traffic from the east.

Need for Safer Environment for Pedestrians & Cyclists

- There are currently no pedestrian footpaths on Golf Links Road from its junction with the Old Ballysimon Road to the N24/Ballysimon Road underpass.
- The proposed scheme will provide pedestrian footpaths on both sides of the road along Golf Links Road from its junction with Old Ballysimon Road to the Cairnsfort housing estate.
- The provision of footpaths will provide a safe link for pedestrians and vulnerable road users.
- The installation of traffic signals at the Old Ballysimon Road/Golf Links Road junction will incorporate pedestrian crossing facilities that will allow pedestrians to safely cross the road.
- The provision of public lighting along the Golf Links Road will provide a safer environment for pedestrians.
- The provision of off-road cycle tracks on the Old Ballysimon Road and Golf Links Road will provide a much safer and cycle friendly environment for cyclists.
- The provision of cycle facilities through the junction connecting with the existing cycle facilities on the Old Ballysimon Road will be a major improvement to encourage active travel in the Ballysimon and Castletroy hubs.

Mitigation of Flood Risk

- A flood study report that has been carried out as part of this road upgrade scheme has found that the existing Ballysimon Bridge structure does not have the capacity to convey critical rainfall events, i.e. a 1 in 100 year rain storm event or even a 1 in 30 year storm event. A copy of the flood study report can be found in the Part VIII Planning Pack of documents.
- The replacement of the bridge will ensure that flood risk is significantly reduced during future critical rainfall events.
- The flood study report also outlines a number of flood defence works to be carried out adjacent to the road improvement scheme that will significantly reduce the risk of flooding of the road and local properties.
- The Ballysimon Culvert is sufficiently sized to convey year 100 year design flow, with a 20% climate change and 95% factorial standard error.
- On the south bank a 1.4m high wall will be constructed as follows:

- (a) A distance of 45m upstream of the Ballysimon Culvert, to the rear of O'Sheas Public House
- (b) A distance of 52m downstream of Ballysimon Culvert, to the rear of Mr Anthony Nolans property.

A 1.4m high wall will ensure a minimum freeboard of 300mm during a 100-year storm event, with a 20% climate change factor and a 95% factorial standard error.

- During the 200-year flood event and 1000-year flood event the Ballysimon culvert is able to convey the design flow. No overflow occurs at the Ballysimon Bridge. The proposed flood defences are sufficient to protect properties on the left bank from flooding during the 200 year and 1000 flood events.

The application included the following documents:

- AA Screening
- EIA Screening
- Record of Protected Structure
- Flood Study
- Road Safety Audit
- Part 8 Planning Report
- Part 8 Planning Drawings

The plans and particulars went on public display from the Monday 31st May 2021 to Tuesday 29th June 2021 (inclusive of both dates). Submissions and observations had to be submitted by 5pm on Wednesday 14th July 2021.

Request to An Bord Pleanála for EIAR and AA determination

An Bord Pleanála wrote to Planning Department on 23rd June 2021 regarding Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) as follows:-

- (a) ABP-310604-21 regarding correspondence received by the Board requesting it to exercise its powers under Section 50 of Roads Act, as amended, to require the Council to prepare an environmental impact assessment. The Council was requested to make a submission within 21 days from the date of the letter.

The Board also requested to whether the proposed development is or intended to be subject to process set out at Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended. If this process has been commenced but not completed the Board advised that the Council may wish to consider suspending completion of same until after the Board's consideration of the request has concluded.

The Board requested within two weeks, a copy of all documentation relating to the proposed development.

- (b) ABP-310606-21 regarding correspondence received by the Board requesting it to exercise its powers under Article 250(3) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended, to require the Council to prepare a Natura Impact Statement. The Board invited the Council to submit observations on whether the proposed development would, in the local authority's opinion, be likely to have significant effect on a European Site and if not to explain the basis for such an opinion. The response was requested no later than 5.30pm on 14th July 2021.

Design and Delivery made separate submissions to An Bord Pleanála on ABP-310604-21 and ABP-310606-21, by email and post, dated 8th July 2021. An Bord Pleanála wrote to Limerick City and County Council on 13th August 2021 regarding ABP-310604-21 and ABP-310606-21 advising that the request to require the local authority to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment and Natura Impact Statement was withdrawn. Design and Delivery is now progressing with the Part 8 planning application.

3.0 Likely implications, if any, with respect to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

3.1 Policy and Zoning

Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 as amended

Castletroy Local Area Plan 2019-2025

The following are the relevant objectives from the Castletroy Local Area Plan.

Objective T5: Movement and Accessibility

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Encourage the development of safe and efficient movement and accessibility networks that will cater for the needs of all users and to encourage priority for walking and cycling, public transport provision and accident reduction;
- (b) Ensure that adequate facilities and access provisions are provided for those with disabilities in the community. The Council will strive to ensure that the provision of such facilities will be in line with current good practice in relation to such issues;
- (c) Improve the efficiency of junctions in the District to enhance the free flow of traffic through the District;
- (d) Only permit development where a safe and secure access can be provided;
- (e) Require that roads provided to serve private housing developments are designed to a high standard
- (f) Improve directional signposting in the District
- (g) Advertising signage adjacent to the M7 and the N24 and other major transport routes will be prohibited;
- (h) To promote and provide facilities to facilitate increase public transport, cycling and walking and deliver significant modal shift from private car usage to more sustainable transport modes;
- (i) Provision of clear and unambiguous carriageway markings and associated directional signage indicating directional priorities for traffic;
- (j) Facilitate the improvement of junctions on Public Roads

To support the above objective it is proposed to facilitate the following improvement works to existing public roads including ;

- Upgrade and widen Lower Golf Links Road including bridge upgrade works

Objective T6: Network of pedestrian and cycle facilities

It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Castletroy and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off road footpaths and cycle facilities. This will be achieved by:

- (a) Seeking secure cycle parking facilities at appropriate locations as opportunities arise;
- (b) Combined off-road footpath and cycleway links will be required and gaps will be identified in the network;
- (c) A pedestrian/cycle network will be encouraged where identified in Map C-19/25-03 linking existing and proposed residential areas to each other and to amenity areas and to provide permeability across the area.

It is proposed to improve the provision of walking and cycling facilities on the following public roads:

- Golf Links Road

3.2 Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

An AA screening report was prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd and submitted with the application on behalf of Limerick City and County Council.

During the preparation of this Screening Report for the proposed project it was found that European Sites occur within the zone of influence of the project. These European Sites are the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA.

The River Groody was identified as the only potential impact pathway connecting the project site to these two European Sites. A key part of this screening was the examination of the potential for the River Groody to function as an impact pathway and convey potential emissions, that may arise as a result of the upgrade works, downstream to the Lower River Shannon SAC and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. This examination has found that the potential for the emission of polluting substances to the River Groody will be restricted to suspended solids and small quantities of hydrocarbons. It is considered that any input of such emissions to the River Groody will be degraded, diluted and/or assimilated within this watercourse prior to entering the River Shannon and the associated SAC and will not have the potential to undermine the water quality status of the River Shannon.

The Screening Report has found that due to the absence of a functional impact pathway between the project site and the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA there will be no potential for the proposed upgrade works to result in likely significant effects to the Conservation Objectives of these European Sites.

In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of the Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Limerick City and County Council that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific practice and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

Both construction and operating phases of the proposed development to be considered

<p>Construction Phase: Demolition of Ballysimon Bridge over the River Groody, Construction of a new bridge and all associated works.</p> <p>Are effects significant? No</p> <p>Are substantial works required? Yes</p> <p>Are effects significant? No</p> <p>Operating phase effects: Are effects significant? No</p>	<p>Ex-situ effects: Are effects significant? No</p> <p>Run-off: Are effects significant? Yes</p> <p>Abstraction: Are effects significant? No</p> <p>Displacement: Are effects significant? No</p>
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Identification of Natura 2000 sites which may be impacted by the proposed development

1	<p>Impacts on designated rivers, streams, lakes and fresh water dependant habitats and species eg. Bogs or otters -see abstraction/run off etc above.</p>	<p><i>Is the development in the relevant catchment of or immediately up/downstream of a watercourse that has been designated as a Natura 2000 site?</i></p> <p>Name of site: Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165) and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004070).</p>	Yes
2	<p>Impacts on terrestrial habitats and species.-see area and disturbance/displacement effects above.</p>	<p><i>Is the development within 1km of a SAC site with terrestrial based habitats or species?</i></p> <p>Name of site:</p>	No
3	<p>Impacts on designated marine habitats and species.</p>	<p><i>Is the development located within marine or intertidal areas or within 5 km of a SAC site whose qualifying habitats or species include the following habitats: Salmonid, Lamprey Mudflats, sandflats, saltmarsh, shingle, reefs, sea cliffs</i></p>	Yes

		Name of site: Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165)	
4	Impacts on birds in SPAs	<i>Is the development within 1km of a Special Protection Area</i> Name of site:	No
5	Cumulative effects	Would consideration of a number of significant projects nearby such as forested areas, quarries, wind energy together with the proposed development significantly increase the impacts listed above:	No

3.3 Environmental Impact Assessment Report Screening

An EIA screening report was prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd and submitted with the application on behalf of Limerick City and County Council.

The EIA screening report notes that the proposed upgrade of the Golf Links Road does not trigger the threshold for a mandatory EIA/EIAR as set out in the 2001 Regulations (as Amended) and has been assessed as a sub-threshold EIA development. The EIA Screening Assessment has determined that the characteristics of the proposed development are not considered significant due to the scale and nature of the proposed development, its footprint, is confined to an area of approximately 1.1ha. Furthermore, having regard to the characteristics and sensitivities of the receiving environment, the design of the development and the use of best practise measures which will be implemented as part of the construction phase and operation phase of the proposed development, it is considered that an EIAR is not required in this instance.

Given the scale and nature of the project and taking account of all available information, the overall probability of impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed development (during the construction or operational phases) is considered to be low, as summarised in Table 5.3 of the Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd.

No significant environmental impacts will occur once mitigation measures outlined in the report are implemented. These mitigation measures are representative of standard industry environmental management that are implemented to minimise the impact of projects to the environment.

The information provided in the EIA Screening Report can be used by the competent authority, Limerick City and County Council, to conclude and determine that an EIA is not required for the proposed upgrade works to the Golf Links Road, Limerick as there will be no significant environmental effects.

3.4 Bridge/ Culvert Design

The proposed bridge culverts protrude beyond the line of the parapet walls for the bridge. This is shown on the planning drawing 80138-NOD-00-XX-DR-C-002. The planning authority considers that this could lead to maintenance issues, poor visual amenity and a public safety issue. The horizontal overhang on the upstream and downstream ends of the proposed bridge culvert shall be removed so that the culvert roof does not protrude more than 600mm beyond the line of the proposed bridge parapet walls. This will be addressed by way of condition number 3.

3.5 Traffic

The proposed development has been amended to provide five number additional speed ramps on the Golf Links Road between Cairnsfort housing estate and School House Road as per drawing GLR-RT-D01 Rev C.

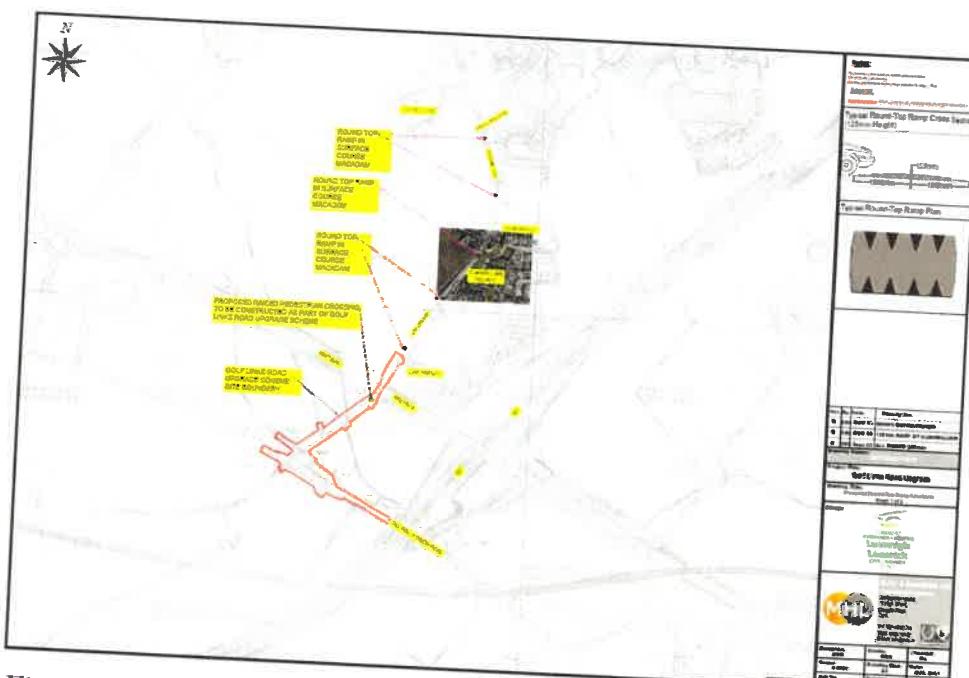
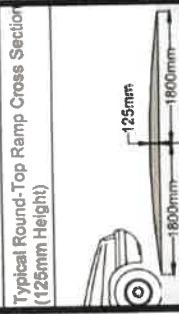


Figure 4: Proposed speed ramps (drawing GLR-RT-D01 Rev C)

Notes:

Any dimensions given are in imperial units unless otherwise stated.
Lc: width, width, gradient
For any dimensions listed in plan, refer to drawing title block.

Legend:

Typical Round-Top Ramp Cross Section
(125mm Height)

Typical Round-Top Ramp Plan



Ref	By	Date	Description
A	Bob	AUG 21	RAMP REPOSITIONED
B	Bob	AUG 21	125mm RAMP AT CLANNWILLIAM
C	Bob	Sep 21	ALL RAMPS 125mm

Drawing Status: INFORMATION

Project Title: Golf Links Road Upgrade

Drawing Title: Proposed Round-Top Ramp Locations

Sheet 1 of 2

Client:



Carraig na Ghléas,
Lutannáig,
Limerick
Eireann

MHL & Associates Ltd.
Engineering Consultancy



Carraig na Ghléas,
Lutannáig,
Limerick
Eireann

Drawn by:	Printed by:	Checked by:
Bob	Bob	Bob

Scaling: 1:5000 Drawing Sheet: A3 Date: 20/08/2021
Job No: 10037610 Drawing No: QLR-RT-201
Revd: 0



3.6 Land Acquisition

The acquisition of lands required for the development will be subject to a compulsory purchase order (CPO) by Limerick City & County Council. The LCCC Property Department will liaise with relevant parties and their representatives to arrive at a satisfactory compensation package as part of the CPO process.

4.0 Submissions with respect to the proposed development

A total of 13 no. written submission/observation was received and are listed below:

Submission Ref	Name	Address
1	James Quirke	1 Clanwilliam, Golf Links Road, Castletroy, Limerick
2	Ria Aherne	13 Golf Links Road, Castletroy, Limerick.
3	Liam Hickey	Millview House, Ballysimon, Co. Limerick
4	Mary Murphy Solicitors	Mary Murphy Solicitors, 59 William Street, Limerick V94 TXR2 on behalf of Mr. Anthony Nolan, Riverside, Ballysimon, Co. Limerick
5	John Field	Cullendale, Golf Links Road, Limerick
6	Limerick Cycling Campaign	Limerick Cycling Campaign C/O Bruce Harper, 216 Woodhaven, Co. Limerick
7	An Taisce	John Logan, An Taisce, The Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8, Ireland
8	Irish Water	Ali Robinson, Irish Water, PO Box 6000, Dublin 1, D01 WA07
9	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Jane Gilleran, Inland Fisheries Ireland-Limerick, Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick
10	Architectural Conservation Officer	Tom Cassidy, Architectural Conservation Officer, Planning and Environmental Services, Limerick City and County Council, Dooradoyle, Limerick
11	O&M Technical Staff & Capital Delivery Teams	Seamus O'Reilly SEE, O&M Technical Staff & Capital Delivery Teams, Limerick City & County Council, Dooradoyle, Limerick
12	Environmental Services	Clodagh Brennan, Environmental Services, Limerick City & County Council, City Hall, Merchants Quay, Limerick
13	Mid-West National Road Design Office	Gerard Carey, Mid-West National Road Design Office, Limerick City & County Council, Lissanalta House, Dooradoyle Road, Limerick

4.1 Submissions:

SUB 1 James Quirke, 1 Clanwilliam, Golf Links Road, Castletroy, Limerick. V94 DFP4

Submission Summary:

The respondent observes that *the proposed development will lead to increased pollution as a result of increased traffic volumes.*

The respondent suggests that *there should be a greater focus on public transport and the provision of a bus route and a 'proper' cycle path which goes the entirety of the Golf Links Road.*

The respondent observes that *the proposed development will also involve the demolition of a protected structure which is of historical significance. He contends that if this development proceeds, it will render meaningless the protection given to such structures in the first place.*

The respondent observes that *the proposed development will lead to increased traffic volumes and urges the council to give consideration to providing additional speed ramps along the lower half of the Golf Links Road.*

Design and Delivery comments:

All of the above are noted and comments are as follow:

“increased pollution”

One of the principle aims of the scheme is to relieve traffic congestion with the removal of the bridge pinch points. The pinch points constrain the road to one-way traffic only and this results in queuing traffic throughout the day with congestion during peak hour traffic conditions. The widened road scheme will allow two-way traffic flow freely and hence less excessive mechanical vehicular emissions.

The scheme is an “active travel” project involving provision of high quality pedestrian and cycle facilities along the length of the scheme to encourage modal shift to active travel modes. It is part of the Limerick Smarter Travel Route 4 project which promotes walking, cycling and public transport travel modes in the Ballysimon/Castletroy/Monaleen/ Newtown/Annacotty areas of the city. It is expected that this scheme will help deliver a reduction in private car travel mode and hence reduced pollution from vehicular carbon fuel emissions. Two metre wide segregated off road cycle tracks and footpaths have been provided in each direction of travel along the length of the scheme.

“provision of a bus route and a ‘proper’ cycle path”

As previously stated the scheme is part of the Limerick Smarter Travel Route 4 project which is focussed on provision of active travel and connections to public transport. A very high quality cycle path will be provided through the scheme along with high quality pedestrian facilities, linking existing pedestrian/cycle facilities on the Old Ballysimon Road to future ped/cycle facilities proposed on Golf Links Road from the scheme to the Schoolhouse Road Junction. The future facilities would be part of a Golf Links Road Phase 2 scheme under the Limerick Smarter Travel proposals. The National Transport Authority’s Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (NTA’s LSMATS) proposes future bus services for the city. There will be a new link road constructed from the Golf Links Road/Schoolhouse Road junction to Kilbane Road Roundabout that will contain a

priority bus route connection from the area towards Limerick City centre and UL. See figure 5 below. This scheme will provide pedestrian/cycle connectivity towards that proposed public transport route. In any case a bus route through the scheme would require even more road widening in order to provide bus priority and still require demolition of the old bridge structure.



Figure 5 Extract from NTA's LSMATS

“demolition of a protected structure”

The demolition of the protected structure is necessary for the construction of the scheme as the scheme involves road widening. The existing Ballysimon Bridge structure is not fit for purpose to convey the current traffic loading and has a 3 tonne limit. The road width between the parapet walls is only 3.3m wide and is a road safety hazard as it can only convey one way traffic on a two way road, a priority yield system is in place. It is particularly dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists as there are no facilities and they have to share the narrow carriageway with vehicular traffic. Refer to MHL document “18037RD-Doc07 Golf Links Road Upgrade Part 8 Planning Report” which was provided with the published Part 8 “Plans and Particulars” for public inspection.

The area is also subject to flooding due to the limited capacity of the Ballysimon Bridge to convey the Groody River which passes underneath. The resolution of flooding issues is also a main objective of the proposed scheme. Several properties in the vicinity flood regularly, and in particular O’Shea’s Bar, which is itself a Protected Structure. A Flood Study Report was commissioned by LCCC for the proposed scheme and was prepared by Nicholas O’Dwyer Ltd. Consulting Engineers. The Flood Study discovered that the existing Ballysimon Bridge does not have sufficient capacity to convey a 2-year storm event in its present state. The report recommends that the Ballysimon Bridge be replaced with new box culverts that can accommodate a 100 year flood event, a 200 year flood event and even up to a 1000 year flood event. This has been agreed with the Office of Public Works.

Healy Partners Architects Ltd. were appointed to provide a Conservation Heritage Report on the Ballysimon Bridge as part of the design process. The purpose of the inspection was

to identify the historical value of the bridge from an architectural heritage perspective while also identifying the current condition of the bridge structure and identify alterations that have been made to the bridge since its original construction. The inspection report concludes that while the bridge is a protected structure (No. RPS 1596), the structure has undergone many alterations since its original construction and that the structure can only be considered to be of minor significance from a heritage perspective. The report concludes that the proposed replacement of the bridge would serve the greater good for the locality. It is proposed that the record of the bridge will be kept in a photographic library. It is proposed to reuse all of the stone masonry in the construction of the new bridge parapets and accommodation works boundary walls along the proposed road improvement scheme. The Conservation Heritage report for the Ballysimon Bridge can be found in the published Part VIII Planning Pack of documents.

“additional speed ramps”

The proposed development has been amended to provide five number additional speed ramps on Golf Links Road between Cairnsfort housing estate and School House Road as per drawing GLR-RT-D01 Rev C.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate action to apply

SUB 2 : Ria Ahern, 13 Golf Links Road, Castletroy, Limerick.

Submission Summary:

The respondent acknowledges “*this project is in everyone’s best interests, however, the receiving environment and surrounding ecology should not be at risk of damage due to the absence of mitigation measures*”.

The respondent is concerned that the AA screening Report and EIA Screening Report failed to correctly consider the following:

1. The potential impact of the construction activities on breeding Atlantic Salmon in the Groody River and requests that the Appropriate Assessment be progressed to Stage II with a Natura Impact Statement carried out by a competent Ecologist.
2. The potential for significant effects that could be caused by a hydrocarbon spillage as large as 200L on the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA 3.4km downstream of the site.
3. The potential presence of Qualifying Interest Species such as Lamprey, Salmon and Otters has not been assessed.
4. The combined effect of the construction of this scheme and a 1000 pupil, 4 storey school which is currently being constructed upstream.
5. Mitigation measures required due to potential impacts of the construction works on bat species and queries if a bat survey was carried out.
6. The Impact of the instream works on river life, querying if IFI have been consulted as it is an offence to disturb the bed of a river under the Fisheries (Consolidation) Act, 1959.

The respondent concludes that in their opinion the proposed works would pose a risk of significant effects on the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries and that the potential impacts should be reassessed and that the AA should progress to a stage II.

Design and Delivery comments:

The proposed scheme has been assessed by a competent Environmental Consultant, Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd. (DEC) and both a screening report for Appropriate Assessment (AA) to identify the potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to European Sites and an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for the proposed scheme have been written and no mitigation measures have been identified resulting from the assessments. A CEMP (Construction Environmental Management Plan) will be prepared in advance of any construction works and will be based on best practice mitigation measures and in agreement with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). Any identified mitigation measures for the project will be implemented to ensure that all associated building and environmental regulations are adhered to it and it is predicted that the project will not have the potential to result in a major accident or disaster.

In relation to the concerns Design and Delivery respond as follows:

1. On-site consultations were undertaken with the Inland Fisheries Ireland (Mr Michael Fitzsimmons, former Environmental Officer for Shannon catchment) during April 2019. It was noted during the onsite meeting that the instream habitat occurring under the bridge at the Golf Links Road and upstream and downstream of the bridge is comprised of an artificial concrete apron. There is no suitable instream habitat for fish along this section of the Groody River. As part of the proposed works the concrete apron will be removed and the instream habitats will be restored to a natural condition as directed by IFI. The removal and restoration of a natural stream bed along this section of the Groody River is consistent with the aims and objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
2. The Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA have been assessed in the AA Screening Report. Section 5.1 of the AA Screening Report addressed the hydrological pathway to function as an impact pathway. The only likelihood of a hydrocarbon leakage from mechanical equipment would be during the construction stage and such an event would be a low probability mechanical failure accident. As the main plant storage compound will be located away from the watercourses the instream works are the critical period where such an incident might occur. Section 3.4 of the Report outlines the method statement for instream works, which will be carried out using cofferdams and works in the dewatered cofferdam area only. The CEMP will further ensure emergency cut off drains and environmental barriers will be in place to prevent any accidental spillage in a cofferdam area reaching the running watercourses. The River Groody represents just 3% of the volume of water in the River Shannon at the confluence, some 3.4km downstream of the site. This figure was supplied by the Hydrologists who carried out the Flood Study Report for the scheme.
3. The AA Screening Report schedules the habitats of Lamprey, Salmon and Otters in Table 4.1. Assessment of potential for likely significant effects was addressed in section 5.0. Section 6.0 concludes that the findings of the assessment were “no significant effects”. *“This examination has found that the potential for the emission of polluting substances to the River Groody will be restricted to suspended solids and small quantities of hydrocarbons. It is considered that any input of such emissions to the River Groody will be degraded, diluted and/or assimilated within this watercourse prior to entering the River Shannon and the associated SAC and will not have the potential to undermine the water quality status of the River Shannon”.* *“This Screening Report has found that due to the absence of a functional impact pathway between the project site and the Lower River Shannon*

SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA there will be no potential for the proposed upgrade works to result in likely significant effects to the Conservation Objectives of these European Sites". The EIA Screening Report states that "a search for the presence of otters along the River Groody and the old mill race was completed during a field visit to the site in late February and May 2019. The section of the river upstream and downstream of the Golf Links Road was inspected for field signs, such as holts, couches, spraints, footprints etc. indicating the presence of otters. No such field signs were encountered during the survey".

4. It is expected that the construction of the school will be complete before construction of this project commences.
5. A bat survey was carried out by DEC Ltd. The Ballysimon Bridge and the millrace culverts were inspected for their potential to support roosting bats and it was found that neither the bridge nor the culverts have potential to function as a bat roost.
6. The impact of the instream works have been assessed in both the AA Screening Report and in the EIA Screening Report. IFI were consulted with on more than one occasion and an on-site meeting was held with Mr Michael Fitzsimmons, former Environmental Officer for Shannon catchment, during April 2019. This was already addressed in point 1 above.

In addition, DEC consulted with Inland Fisheries Ireland, carried out Bat Surveys, Mammal Surveys and an assessment of the instream habitats at the bridge location.

DEC conclude that *"it is acknowledged, as set out in the EIA Screening Report, that the potential will exist for some short-term disturbance during the construction phase works associated with the upgrade. However the implementation of all best practise measures detailed in the EIA Screening Report will ensure that this disturbance will not result in significant negative impacts to the environment. Furthermore it is noted that following the completion of works there will be positive impacts for the environment in terms of improved traffic conveyance, improved surface water management and surface water runoff to the Groody River and improved instream habitats."*

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB 3 : Liam Hickey, Millview House, Ballysimon, Co. Limerick

Submission Summary:

The respondent states that they objects to any entry to their lands *"for the purpose of carrying out the proposed works or indeed facilitating the road widening works"*. The respondent states that any *"attempted entry"* to his lands *"will be vigorously resisted"*.

Design and Delivery comments:

The acquisition of the respondent's land will be subject to a temporary and permanent compulsory purchase order (CPO) by Limerick City & County Council. The LCCC Property Department will liaise with the respondent and their representatives to arrive at a satisfactory compensation package for the respondent.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB 4 : Mary Murphy Solicitors, 59 William Street, Limerick V94 TXR2 on behalf of Anthony Nolan, Riverside, Ballysimon, Co. Limerick

Submission Summary:

Mary Murphy Solicitors on behalf of the respondent object to the Planning Application for the proposed works with the following observations:

- The respondent's property has a mature well-attended garden which has been a considerable amenity to the respondent who has resided in the house for many years.
- The proposed works will greatly impact and diminish the respondent's enjoyment of their home and garden. The proposed works will *seriously devalue his property such is the interference envisaged in the proposed development.*
- The respondent's garden would be reduced in size and the building of a high wall so close to the house would make living there untenable.

Design and Delivery comments:

The acquisition of a portion of the respondent's garden will be subject to a compulsory purchase order (CPO) by Limerick City & County Council. The LCCC Property Department will liaise with the respondent and his representatives to arrive at a satisfactory compensation package for the respondent.

The construction of footpaths around the perimeter of the southern and eastern sides of the respondent's property as well as the widening of the road to reduce traffic congestion is a net positive for the respondent and their property.

The construction of a boundary wall around the southern and eastern sides of the respondent's property will provide privacy to their property. The height of the wall and the materials used in its construction were discussed during consultation with the homeowner's representatives during consultation and can be further amended during the CPO process.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB 5 : John Field, Cullendale, Golf Links Road, Limerick

Submission Summary:

The respondent welcomes the proposed development and would like to make two observations to be considered in relation to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area as follows:

1. **Boundary Treatments:** The respondent requests that where existing boundaries are to be retained along the northern end of the Golf Links Road, south of the N24/R527 Underpass, that they should be replaced with stone walls of similar quality of those to be provided on the opposite side of the road from his boundary and as proposed on the eastern side where the road is being widened. Their main concern is that an appropriate boundary treatment be provided between their site and the scheme.
2. **Traffic Calming Measures:** The respondent outlines long term speeding traffic issues on Golf Links Road and thereby requests to provision of additional traffic calming from Cairnsfort to the Golf Links Road and even extending traffic calming measures between Cairnsfort and Clanwilliam.

Design and Delivery comments:

1. The replacement of the existing front boundary wall will be considered at detail design stage.
2. Additional traffic calming measures are being proposed from Cairnsfort to Clanwilliam and further north as far as School House Road as per drawing 18037RD GLR-RT-D01 RevC .

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate action to apply

SUB 6 : Limerick Cycling Campaign C/O Bruce Harper, 216 Woodhaven, Co. Limerick**Submission Summary:**

Limerick Cycling Campaign states that it welcomes the scheme and the efforts made to protect the cyclists but makes the following suggestions for improvement:

1. The section of the scheme from the junction along the Old Ballysimon Road towards the M7 underpass does not have cycle lanes. The right turning lane for traffic should be removed to make room for segregated cycle lanes along this stretch of road. The junction marks the end of a primary cycle route under the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study and it is not acceptable to have no segregated facilities along this stretch where there is room.
2. The Golf Links Rd section of the scheme should have segregated cycle lanes along its entire width. This is an important route designated as a “feeder route” under the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study and links a significant number of residential areas to places of employment, education, and ultimately to the city centre. This can be achieved by:
 - a. The Golf Links Rd underpass under the Ballysimon road is narrow. To make space for segregated cycle facilities and maintain footpath width, motorised traffic should only be permitted to travel in one direction at a time, enforced by traffic lights or passive measures.
 - b. North of the underpass under the Ballysimon Rd, the road should be widened to encompass the green area so that the segregated cycle lanes are provided in both directions.
3. The efforts to protect the movement of cyclists at the junction are welcomed. However they could be significantly improved by:
 - a. Protecting the other two corners of the junction with a kerb for the cycle lane to prevent conflict with cyclists
 - b. Making sure that the kerb is significant and visible at the corner, to avoid the crushing of wands or similar as has been seen at the left turn between Sexton St and Parnell St.
 - c. Widening the corners to provide refuge points for cyclists crossing making right turns across the junction
 - d. Considering how conflicts can be removed/mitigated in all movements through the junction
 - e. Raising the cycle lanes through the junction to provide priority and to calm traffic
 - f. Moving the stop line for cyclists forward to after the pedestrian crossing, not before
 - g. Tightening the corner radii for motorised traffic to ensure that they cross the cycle lane at a more perpendicular angle.

- h. Providing for advance traffic light signals for cyclists with cyclist detection
- i. Particular attention should be given to the safe movement from the Golf Links Rd towards the city through the junction. The radius is very tight for right-turning cyclists through that junction after they cross the road
- j. Amber left turn signals for cyclists should be provided in all directions

4. The provision of raised cycle lanes at entrances is welcome. However, the splay of the entrance could be reduced to reduce vehicle speed entering and exiting.

Climate Considerations

“This project is clearly about increasing vehicular capacity on the road and it is therefore works against reducing carbon emissions by inducing additional traffic thereby not complying with the Council’s Climate Charter”.

LSMATS

Identified as the junction of a primary and a feeder route on the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Plan.

The current plan to abruptly end a primary route at O’Sheas Pub to facilitate on street parking is not appropriate and will not encourage modal shift.

5 Needs of Cyclists

The plan is not safe and not coherent.

DMURS

No walking or cycling audits carried out.

National Cycle Manual

Poor quality facilities – Cycling on carriageway with cars and trucks is not safe, comfortable or attractive.

Safety, Comfort, Coherence

The abrupt sharing of the road with bicycles was flagged up in the road safety audit. RSA Problem 2.3.3 Limerick Cycling Campaign note that the risk of the sudden loss of a cycling facility requiring sharing the carriageway with vehicles under the bridge still exists in the latest plans and that the painting of bicycle stencils on the road is not an effective safety measure.

RSA Problem 2.4.2 Limerick cycling campaign note that the risk also presents for cyclists travelling eastbound through the gateway. Limerick cycling campaign argue that the level of safety should not be dependent on your direction of travel and that it is poor design for cyclists accessing the city to be surprised by the absence of safe infrastructure on the return journey.

Design and Delivery comments:

Suggested Improvements:

1. The scheme does not extend to the M7 underpass. The proposed scheme is the widening and realignment of the Golf Links Road and upgrade of the junction with the Old Ballysimon Road. The right turn lane is required as part of the junction upgrade. The traffic calming of the Old Ballysimon Road on the approach to the junction was added to the scheme following road safety considerations. An inbound cycleway is proposed from outside the gateway on the Old Ballysimon

Road to the junction with the Golf Links Road. As the built up area does not extend outside the speed gateway it was decided that an outbound cycle facility would be unwarranted. LSMATS does show that the primary cycle facility ends at the junction and an interurban cycle facility extends up the Golf Links Road. There is no requirement to provide cycle facilities on the Old Ballysimon Road to the east of O'Shea's. See Figure 6 below.



Figure 6 LSMATS Extract of Proposed Cycle Infrastructure

2. a. The restriction of traffic to a single lane on the Golf Links Road at the underpass to accommodate cycle facilities would be contrary to the design principals of the scheme. The Golf Links Road is a significant traffic commuter route and one of the main objectives of this scheme is to remove two existing pinch points where two way traffic cannot be accommodated. The introduction of a new restriction would be unacceptable. The scheme is designed for the benefit of all road users and not just cyclists.
 - b. A northbound cycle facility has been included north of the underpass for uphill cyclists. It is intended that downhill cyclists would share with traffic.
3. a. The protected kerb arrangement as suggested in the submission for the road to the south is not possible given the swept path for larger vehicles eg agricultural vehicles using the junction.
 - b. A section of protected extruded kerb is being installed at the Golf Links Road junction to the northern side and will be highlighted.
 - c. This can not be accommodated due to the built environment and restrictions on land take.
 - d. This will be examined at detailed design stage.
 - e. This will cause constructability issues, impractical construction detailing and drainage difficulties. The proposed junction lane is signalised and the cycle lane extends through the junction.
 - f. The stop line for cyclists must be before the pedestrian Pedestrians have priority over cyclists in accordance with DMURS.
 - g. This has been provided for in the current design.
 - h. The sequence of the lights will be subject to detailed design but cyclist detection is not practical at this location.

- i. A Stage 2 road safety audit will be carried out as part of the works. The angle of the cycle lane will be examined as part of the process and at detailed design stage.
- j. Left turning cyclists will be controlled by traffic lights in order to avoid collisions oncoming traffic.
- 4. There is a danger if the entrance splay is reduced that drivers will not see approaching/passing cyclists.

Climate Considerations

This project is not about increasing vehicular capacity on the road but improving road safety, for all road users. Reducing carbon emissions is another one of the core aims of this proposed scheme, hence the provision of continuous cycle and pedestrian facilities. The scheme is being funded as part of the Limerick Smarter Travel Scheme, LSMATS, the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study and the Castletroy Local Area Plan, which mean that the route has been planned with the Climate Charter at its core.

LSMATS

The proposal is in line with Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Plan. There are no proposals for a cycle network east of O'Shea's.

The scheme requires land take from the rear of O'Shea's Bar property and the provision of on street parking is a stipulation of the affected land owner. The provision of cycle parking may also be included if accepted by the property owner.

5 Needs of Cyclists

The scheme has been designed in accordance with the National Cycle Manual where feasible. It is considered that the proposed cycling infrastructure is safe and coherent.

DMURS

No walking or cycling audits were carried out but a Road Safety Audit was carried out during the scheme design and consequent amendments were made prior to Part 8 publication of drawings.

National Cycle Manual

Desirable minimum width standards have been achieved on the scheme where widening. This is not achievable under the bridge.

Safety, Comfort, Coherence

RSA Problem 2.3.3 The sharing of the road with bicycles was identified in the road safety audit. Cycle facilities have been provided north and south of the underpass for uphill cyclists. A Stage 2 road safety audit will be carried out at detailed design stage.

RSA Problem 2.4.2 A Stage 2 road safety audit will be carried out as part detailed design stage.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB 7 : An Taisce, The Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8, Ireland

Submission Summary:

A Sensitive and Endangered Habitat

It is An Taisce's opinion that a full Appropriate Assessment should have been carried out. The Lower River Shannon SAC is not "remote" from the scheme. The River Groody is likely to contain populations of Atlantic Salmon, Brook Lamprey, River Lamprey and Otter, all Qualifying Interests of the SAC. The proposed instream works will directly affect these species. They maintain no formal surveys were carried out for these species nor formal Bat surveys nor Bird Surveys. An Taisce suggests that the potential for a hydrocarbon spillage to convey emissions to the SAC via hydrological pathway should have triggered the requirement for Appropriate Assessment.

A Protected Structure

An Taisce state "Ballysimon Bridge is an important part of the local landscape, a piece of early modern vernacular infrastructure, long cherished and regarded with affection by nearby residents. Such items of the local material culture are significant elements in a sense of place, essential to what is now often referred to as place making. That role has been rightly acknowledged by the designation of Ballysimon Bridge as a structure worthy of special protection." An Taisce then "respectfully submits that it is not part of the remit of the architectural consultants to determine whether or not the retention or destruction of the bridge will serve the greater good," that "being rightly the responsibility of the planning authority." An Taisce then concludes that "the project should not proceed in its present form" due to the "large number of deficiencies in the proposals".

Design and Delivery comments:

A Sensitive and Endangered Habitat

The proposed scheme has been assessed by a competent Environmental Consultant, Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd. and both a screening report for Appropriate Assessment (AA) to identify the potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to European Sites and an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for the proposed scheme have been written. Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd consulted with Inland Fisheries Ireland, carried out Bat Surveys, Mammal Surveys and an assessment of the instream habitats at the bridge location.

The River Groody was identified as the only potential impact pathway connecting the project site to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. A key part of this screening was the examination of the potential for the River Groody to function as an impact pathway and convey potential emissions, that may arise as a result of the upgrade works, downstream to the Lower River Shannon SAC and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. This examination has found that the potential for the emission of polluting substances to the River Groody will be restricted to suspended solids and small quantities of hydrocarbons. It is considered that any input of such emissions to the River Groody will be degraded, diluted and/or assimilated within this watercourse prior to entering the River Shannon and the associated SAC and will not have the potential to undermine the water quality status of the River Shannon.

The Screening Report has found that due to the absence of a functional impact pathway between the project site and the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA there will be no potential for the proposed upgrade works to result in likely significant effects to the Conservation Objectives of these European Sites.

In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of the Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Limerick City and County Council that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific practice and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

As set out in the EIA Screening Report, the potential will exist for some short-term disturbance during the construction phase works associated with the upgrade. However, the implementation of all measures detailed in the EIA Screening Report will ensure that this disturbance will not result in significant negative impacts to the environment. Following the completion of works there will be positive impacts for the environment in terms of improved traffic conveyance, improved surface water management and surface water runoff to the Groody River and improved instream habitats.

A Protected Structure

The demolition of the protected structure is necessary for the construction of the scheme as the scheme involves road widening. The existing Ballysimon Bridge structure is not fit for purpose to convey the current traffic loading and has a 3 tonne limit. The road width between the parapet walls is only 3.3m wide and is a road safety hazard as it can only convey one way traffic on a two way road, a priority yield system is in place. It is particularly dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists as there are no facilities and they have to share the narrow carriageway with vehicular traffic. Refer to MHL document “18037RD-Doc07 Golf Links Road Upgrade Part 8 Planning Report” which was provided with the published Part 8 “Plans and Particulars” for public inspection.

The area is also subject to flooding due to the limited capacity of the Ballysimon Bridge to convey the Groody River which passes underneath. The resolution of flooding issues is also a main objective of the proposed scheme. Several properties in the vicinity flood regularly, and in particular O’Shea’s Bar, which is itself a Protected Structure. A Flood Study Report was commissioned by LCCC for the proposed scheme and was prepared by Nicholas O’Dwyer Ltd. Consulting Engineers. The Flood Study discovered that the existing Ballysimon Bridge does not have sufficient capacity to convey a 2-year storm event in its present state. The report recommends that the Ballysimon Bridge be replaced with new box culverts that can accommodate a 100 year flood event, a 200 year flood event and even up to a 1000 year flood event. This has been agreed with the Office of Public Works.

Healy Partners Architects Ltd. were appointed to provide a Conservation Heritage Report on the Ballysimon Bridge as part of the design process. The purpose of the inspection was to identify the historical value of the bridge from an architectural heritage perspective while also identifying the current condition of the bridge structure and identify alterations that have been made to the bridge since its original construction. The inspection report concludes that while the bridge is a protected structure (No. RPS 1596), the structure has undergone many alterations since its original construction and that the structure can only be considered to be of minor significance from a heritage perspective. The report concludes that the proposed replacement of the bridge would serve the greater good for the locality. It is proposed that the record of the bridge will be kept in a photographic library. It is proposed to reuse all of the stone masonry in the construction of the new bridge parapets and accommodation works boundary walls along the proposed road improvement scheme. The Conservation Heritage

report for the Ballysimon Bridge can be found in the published Part VIII Planning Pack of documents.

Mr. Tom Cassidy, Architectural Conservation Officer, has prepared a report for the planning file. The Architectural Conservation Officer states

“In recent years faults have developed in the masonry forming the bridges body. While wash out of fines from the interior, and failures in pointing in the abutments, parapets, spandrels and the intrados are grave in themselves, more serious challenges arise through the failures in masonry units such as cracking of voussoirs and dislodged and displaced stones in the arch beneath the deck”

Furthermore

“Limerick City and County Council could layout considerable sums on works that would see the following interventions;

- *Excavation of the infill material blocking the secondary arches, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland and the owners of O’Shea’s Thatched Public House (a protected structure, the curtilage of which within the former channel lies);*
- *Repair, reinstatement, reconstruction, replacement, and re-building of failed masonry units, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *Re-pointing, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *Pressure grouting, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *Potentially, invasive structural interventions, such as rods and patrix plates, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *Potentially, offensive interventions, such as gunniting / shotcrete, , having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *and so forth;*

but still be left with a bridge that would not be fit for purpose having due regard to existing and future vehicular traffic and potential future flood events that could destroy the neighbouring thatched public house, a protected structure identified as a site of Regional Significance by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Ref. No. 21900507.”

Consequently, I am of the view that the proposed works fall within the ambit and meaning of exceptional circumstances set out in Section 57(10)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and that it is in the interests of the common good (as set out in the Acts title) that the works be given authorisation”.

The Architectural Conservations Officers conditions will be adhered to in the detail design and preparation of tender documents for the proposed works.

Planning Authority comments:
Noted and appropriate action to apply

SUB 8 : Irish Water, PO Box 6000, Dublin 1, D01 WA07**Submission Summary:**

“Irish water would like to note that there is a 100mm watermain on the road crossing the bridge. There is no foul network in the vicinity. There does not seem to be an impact on water services but in the bridge replacement/culvert works local operations to arrange a temporary diversion for the watermain without disruption of supply.

Therefore, Irish Water requests that any grant of permission will be condition as follows:

1. Prior to commencement of works, in order to review or approve any temporary diversion of existing assets, the applicant must engage with Irish Water Diversion Team in order to review the proposed works to ensure that adequate protection and access for future maintenance is maintained throughout construction and operational phases of the development.
2. Separation distance between the existing Irish Water assets and proposed structures, other services, trees, etc. have to be in accordance with the Irish Water Codes of Practice and Standards Details.
3. Where the applicant proposed to connect, they shall sign a connection agreement with Irish Water prior to the commencement of the development and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in the agreement.
4. All development shall be carried out in compliance with Irish Water Standards codes and practices.”

Design and Delivery comments:

The comments and conditions from Irish Water outlined above will be adhered to during the construction phase of the project.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate action to apply

SUB 9 : Inland Fisheries Ireland-Limerick, Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick. V94 NPE0**Submission Summary:**

“The chief concern of IFI in relation to the proposed development is the protection of the inland fisheries resource. This includes both the lacustrine and riparian habitat and the water quality of the River Groody and the downstream River Shannon. The Groody provides spawning, nursery, and adult habitat for Salmonicids and other freshwater species such as stoneloach and stickleback.

Please note that any instream works or other works which may impact directly on a watercourse should only be carried out during the fisheries open season which is from 1st July to 30th of September in each year (so as to avoid impacting on the aquatic habitat during the spawning season.) It would be important that appropriate scheduling of works is allowed for.

The preferred option for crossing structures in salmonid waters is a clear span structure so as to avoid any interference with the riverbed or banks. Culverts are generally only acceptable in cases where the river channel is so narrow that foundations would encroach on the channel. Embedded box culverts should maintain the natural channel gradient, width, and substrate and should be buried to 500mm. Gradient should not exceed 3%.

IFI are happy to see the concrete bridge apron at the Ballysimon bridge, a significant barrier to the free passage of fish removed. However, IFI believe this should be addressed in conjunction with the control weir upstream which is an almost complete barrier to fish movement in the system. The river was previously electrofished by Inland Fisheries Ireland in 2017 and 2018. Salmon was recorded below the Lateral Overflow weir but only 1 individual was captured in 2018 above the weir structure. Removal of the bridge apron only restores connectivity to a very small additional area of the river channel.

Contrary to the AA screening report, on a recent site visit I observed an otter spraint just upstream of Ballysimon bridge. The assertion, also in AA screening report, that dilution will deal with a hydrocarbon spill is not an acceptable form of treatment. There shall be no discharges of hydrocarbons to the surface water during the works.

The final CEMP and works method statements should be agreed in advance with IFI.

During the construction phase the following shall apply.

- *There shall be no permitted discharges to surface water resources of contaminated water or surface water run-off from the development including of sediment laden waters during pumping out or opening up of diversion channels.*
- *Servicing including refuelling of plant and equipment shall only be undertaken on impermeable hard standing areas.*
- *All plant and equipment used within the subject site shall carry spill clean-up kits and not to be used or operated if there is evidence of leakage or damaged oil seals.*
- *There shall be no discharge during the construction period of cementitious materials or residues thereof to surface water.*
- *When cast-in-place concrete is required, all works shall be undertaken in the dry and effectively isolated from entering any receiving waters for a period sufficient to cure the concrete.*
- *Hydrophilic grout and quick-setting mixes or rapid hardener additives shall be used to promote the early set of concrete surfaces exposed to water.*
- *All concrete forms will be constructed in a manner which will prevent fresh concrete or cement laden water from leaking into the surrounding water.*
- *Concrete delivery vehicles shall be precluded from washing out at locations that could result in a discharge to surface waters.*
- *Where cement or lime is stored on site, it shall be held in a dry secure area.*
- *All oils and fuels used on or within the site shall be stored in secure bunded areas and servicing including refuelling of plant and equipment shall only be undertaken on impermeable hard standing areas.*
- *Where temporary diesel or petrol driven pumps are used within the site, they shall be positioned within portable bunded units*
- *All plant equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to arriving on and leaving site to prevent the spread of invasive species.”*

IFI requested to be notified at least 1 week ahead of the commencement of the works on site.

Design and Delivery comments:

Overall, Inland Fisheries Ireland do not have any objections to the proposed works and are happy with the proposed instream works at Ballysimon Bridge which will improve the passage of fish through the bridge.

In relation to the observed otter spraint upstream of Ballysimon bridge, it is proposed to construct a mammal shelf on both sides of the Ballysimon Culvert.

IFI's various observations and conditions outlined above will be adhered to during the construction phase of the project. Construction Environmental Management Plan and method statements will be agreed with IFI prior to commencement of the works and IFI will be notified at least 1 week prior to the commencement of the works.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate action to apply

SUB 10 : Tom Cassidy, Architectural Conservation Officer, Planning and Environmental Services, Limerick City and County Council, Dooradoyle, Limerick

Submission Summary:

The Architectural Conservation Officer makes the following observations in relation to the site's protected status as per the provisions of Part IV [Architectural Heritage] of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

“Though Ballisimon Bridge is identified as a topographical feature on historic Ordnance Survey mapping dating back to the 1840’s, it was not considered as worthy of recognition by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage during the agency’s survey of this area of Co. Limerick in 2007.”

Furthermore *“In recent years faults have developed in the masonry forming the bridges body. While wash out of fines from the interior, and failures in pointing in the abutments, parapets, spandrels and the intrados are grave in themselves, more serious challenges arise through the failures in masonry units such as cracking of voussoirs and dislodged and displaced stones in the arch beneath the deck”*

In respect to the proposed demolition:

“Limerick City and County Council could layout considerable sums on works that would see the following interventions:

- *Excavation of the infill material blocking the secondary arches, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland and the owners of O’Shea’s Thatched Public House (a protected structure, the curtilage of which within the former channel lies);*
- *Repair, reinstatement, reconstruction, replacement, and re-building of failed masonry units, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *Re-pointing, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*
- *Pressure grouting, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;*

- Potentially, invasive structural interventions, such as rods and pattice plates, having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;
- Potentially, offensive interventions, such as gunniting / shotcrete, , having due regard to the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland;
- and so forth;

but still be left with a bridge that would not be fit for purpose having due regard to existing and future vehicular traffic and potential future flood events that could destroy the neighbouring thatched public house, a protected structure identified as a site of Regional Significance by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Ref. No. 21900507.

Consequently, I am of the view that the proposed works fall within the ambit and meaning of exceptional circumstances set out in Section 57(10)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and that it is in the interests of the common good (as set out in the Acts title) that the works be given authorisation".

I recommend the following conditions

1/. That the recognised Preservation by Record approach be taken-

- a) The bridge's fabric and materials are to be recorded photogrammetrically and through production of Record Drawings at an appropriate Scale;*
- b) Detailed record Photographs that detail the bridges fabric are to be made and secured to an acceptable archival standards;*
- c) Annotated Record Drawings and captioned Photographic Record, with a Key Plan indicating the location of the camera where each image was made to be lodged with the Architecture Conservation Office.*

2/.The bridge's masonry be dismantled carefully and salvaged for re-use in the new structure and associated ancillary elements such as the approaches and boundary walls."

Design and Delivery comments:

The comments and conditions from the Architectural Conservation Officer outlined above will be adhered to during the construction phase of the project.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate action to apply

SUB 11 : O&M Technical Staff & Capital Delivery Teams, Limerick City & County Council, Dooradoyle, Limerick

Submission Summary:

A 10 page report was submitted by O&M Technical Staff & Capital Delivery Teams. The report deals with an number of items relating:

- Traffic & Pedestrian Issues (Ref A – Points 1-28)
- Public Lighting (Ref C – Points 1-13)
- Surface Water Disposal (Ref D – Points 1-2)
- General (Ref E – Points 1-2)
- Construction Management and Delivery Plan (Ref F Points 1)

Design and Delivery comments:

All stages of this Scheme's development are subject to a Road Safety Audit as per TII Publications. The Road Safety Audit assesses the road safety of the Scheme at Preliminary, Planning, Detailed Design, Post Construction and Operational stages of the Scheme. Details of proposed pavements, landscaping, drainage, signal controlled junctions and public lighting will be developed at detailed design stage. Line marking and signage will be defined at detailed design stage. Design and Delivery will engage with the O&M Technical Staff & Capital Delivery Teams as part of the detailed design process.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate actions to apply

SUB 12 : Environmental Services, Limerick City & County Council, City Hall, Merchants Quay, Limerick, V94 EH90**Submission Summary:**

The Environmental Services Department of Limerick City & County Council state that prior to the commencement of any on-site works, "*the appointed contractor shall submit to Planning and Environmental Services for agreement in writing a site-specific waste management plan for the recovery/disposal of all waste that will arise from the site clearance, demolition, refurbishment and/or construction related activities of this development*".

"The waste management plan is to include:

- a) A list of proposed waste collection permit holders to be employed.*
- b) A list of the proposed waste facility permitted sites at which the waste may be recovered or disposed of.*
- c) Estimates of the proposed tonnages of construction and demolition (C&D) wastes by type e.g. soil and stone, rubble, wood, metal and plastic".*

It also states that "Provision must be made for appropriate storage and segregation of domestic/commercial/industrial waste" and "Proposals to be submitted to Planning and Environmental Services".

Design and Delivery comments:

Prior to commencement of on-site works, approval of the appointed contractors proposed site specific waste management plan will be sought from the Planning and Environmental Services Department of Limerick City & County Council. This will all be compiled and included in the Contract Documents for the Works Requirements for the scheme.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted and appropriate action to apply

**SUB 13 : Mid-West National Road Design Office, Limerick City & County Council,
Lissanalta House, Dooradoyle Road, Limerick**

Submission Summary:

“The Mid-West National Road Design Office has no observations in relation to the above application.”

Design and Delivery comments:

Noted

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

5.0 Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principal and shall be carried out in accordance with the actions for the Local Authority hereby attached. It is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with policies of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, as extended and the Castletroy Local Area Plan 2019-2025, and is therefore acceptable and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

6.0 Action taken by Local Authority

It is proposed to proceed with the development in accordance with the drawings submitted and the details and specifications contained in this report.

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application on the 31st May 2021, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

Reason: In order to clarify the development to which this permission applies.

2. Prior to the commencement of development the following shall be carried out;

The recognised Preservation by Record shall be applied to the demolition of Ballysimon Bridge:-

- (a) The bridge's fabric and materials are to be recorded photogrammetrically and through production of Record Drawings at an appropriate scale.
- (b) Detailed record Photographs that detail the bridge's fabric are to be made and secured to acceptable archival standards.
- (c) Annotated Record Drawings and the captioned Photographic Record, with a Key plan indicating the location of the camera when each image was made are to be lodged with the Architecture Conservation Office
- (d) The bridge's masonry is to be dismantled carefully and salvaged for re-use in the new structure and associated elements such as the approaches and boundary walls.

Reason: In order to provide a record of the architectural heritage of the site and in the interests of proper planning and orderly development of the area.

3. The horizontal overhang on the upstream and downstream ends of the proposed bridge culvert shall be removed so that the culvert roof does not protrude more than 600mm beyond the line of the proposed bridge parapet walls. Prior to commencement of development a revised drawings shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of public safety and proper planning and sustainable development for the area.

4. The development shall provide for five number additional speed ramps on Golf Links Road between Cairnsfort housing estate and School House Road as per drawing number GLR-RT-D01 Rev C.

Reason: In the interest of pedestrian and traffic safety.

5. A Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, environmental protection measures, including hours of working, noise and traffic management measures and details of recovery/disposal of all wastes arising from any demolition proposed.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and residential amenity.

6. (a) Inland Fisheries Ireland shall be notified at least one week ahead of the commencement of works.
(b) Prior to commencement of development the final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and works method statements shall be agreed in advance with Inland Fisheries Ireland.
(c) The following conditions shall apply during the construction phase:-
 - (i) There shall be no permitted discharge to surface water resources of contaminated water or surface water run-off from the development including of sediments laden waters during pumping out or opening up of diversion channels.
 - (ii) Servicing including refuelling of plant and equipment shall only be undertaken on impermeable hard standing areas.
 - (iii) All plant and equipment used within the subject site shall carry spill clean-up kits and not be used or operated if there is evidence of leakage or damaged oil seals.
 - (iv) There shall be no discharge during the construction period of cementitious materials or residues thereof to surface water.
 - (v) When case-in-place concrete is required, all works shall be undertaken in the dry and effectively isolated from entering any receiving waters for a period sufficient to cure the concrete.
 - (vi) Hydrophilic grout and quick-setting mixes or rapid hardener additives shall be used to promote the early set of concrete surfaces to exposed water.
 - (vii) All concrete forms will be constructed in a manner which will prevent fresh concrete or cement laden water from leaking into the surrounding water.
 - (viii) Concrete delivery vehicles shall be precluded from washing out at location that could result in discharge to surface waters.
 - (ix) Where cement or lime is stored on site, it shall be held in a dry secure area.
 - (x) All oils and fuels used on or within the site shall be stored in secured bunded areas and servicing including refuelling of plant and equipment shall only be undertaken on impermeable hard standing areas.
 - (xi) Where temporary diesel or petrol driven pumps are used within the site, they shall be positioned within portable bunded units.
 - (xii) All plant equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to arriving on and leaving site to prevent spread of invasive species.

Reason: In the interest of preventing pollution of the River Groody and protection of inland fisheries resource.

7. The height, finish and type of boundary wall along the Southern and Eastern boundaries of the private property which adjoins the South Western corner of the site boundary shall be in agreed in writing prior to the commencement of development.

Reason : In the interest of residential amenity

8. During construction of the proposed development, the following shall apply-
 - a. No work shall take place on site outside the hours of 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Saturday, or on Sundays or public holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.
 - b. No surface water run-off shall be discharged onto public roads, foul sewers or adjacent property.
 - c. Adequate car parking facilities shall be provided on site for all workers and visitors.

Reason : To protect the residential amenities of the area in the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

9. The wheels and underside of all construction traffic leaving the site shall be cleaned, as required, to prevent soiling of public roads. A wheel washing facility, including water jets or other approved cleansing method shall be provided close to the site exit. In the event that any public roads become soiled by construction traffic from the site, these roads shall be cleaned immediately.

Reason: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, road safety and to protect the amenity of the area.

10. (a) Prior to commencement of development, in order to review or approve any temporary diversion of existing assets, the applicant must engage with Irish Water Diversion Team in order to review the proposed works to ensure that adequate protection and access for future maintenance is maintained throughout construction and operational phases of the development.
(b) Separation distances between the existing Irish Water assets and proposed structures, other services, trees etc. shall be in accordance with Irish Water Codes of Practices and Standard Details.
(c) Where the applicant proposes to connect, they shall sign a connection agreement with Irish Water prior to commencement of development and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement.
(d) All development shall be carried out in compliance with Irish Water Codes of Practice and Standard Details.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision of water and wastewater facilities.

11. Prior to the commencement of development details of public lighting shall be submitted for the written agreement of the planning authority prior to the commencement of works. Lighting shall incorporate energy efficiency, suitable column heights, minimum

lumens per watt output, existing lighting levels and overspill of lighting from the proposed development. The warranty of specific products should also be provided. The public lighting shall be designed and signed by a Lighting Design Engineer. All public lighting proposals to be in accordance with BS 5489:2013 and BS EN 13201: 2003.

Reason: In the interest of public safety.

12. Prior to initiating any works at this development, the site developer or appointed contractor shall submit to Planning and Environmental Services for agreement in writing a site specific waste management plan for the recovery/disposal of all wastes that will arise from the site clearance, demolition, refurbishment and/or construction related activities of this development. The waste management plan shall include:
 - (a).A list of proposed authorised waste collection permit holders to be employed.
 - (b). A list of the proposed waste facility permitted sites at which the wastes may be recovered or disposed of.
 - (c). Estimates of the proposed tonnages of construction and demolition (C&D) wastes by type e.g. soil and stone, rubble, wood, metal and plastic.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

13. All service cables associated with the proposed development including electrical and street lighting cables shall be laid underground within the site.

Reason: In the interest of orderly development and the visual amenities of the area.

14. The existing roadside drainage along the site frontage shall not be impaired but shall be piped to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority using pipes of adequate capacity. Details shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason :To prevent flooding of the public road in the interest of amenity and traffic safety.

15. All surface water run-off within the site shall be collected and disposed of within the site to surface water drainage system and shall be discharged to the public surface water sewer. No such surface waters shall discharge onto adjoining properties or the public road

Reason : In the interest of public health and to prevent flooding in the interest of traffic safety and amenity.