

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)



**SOUTH DUBLIN STREET & BACKLANDS
REGENERATION PROJECT**
Non-Technical Summary (NTS)



South Dublin Street &
Backlands
Regeneration Project
November 2023

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1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Purpose of this Report

This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Monaghan County Council (MCC) in respect of the proposed South Dublin Street & Backlands Regeneration Project in Monaghan Town Centre, Co. Monaghan.

A standalone NTS presents a summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) in plain, non-technical language, as required by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The NTS provides a concise outline of the proposed development, the potential environmental effects identified and mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset these effects, as well as any related remaining ('residual') impacts. This NTS presents, in non-technical language, a summary of:

- The proposed development;
- The purpose and scope of the EIAR;
- The main findings of each chapter of the EIAR; and
- The mitigation and enhancement measures proposed.

The proposed development focuses on a major Urban Regeneration scheme within Monaghan town centre, which includes demolition of buildings and associated outbuildings and structures, creation of a new street and civic space (Charles Gavan Duffy Place), and public realm improvements throughout South Dublin Street including new paving, lighting, drainage, and all other associated works.

This scheme is the first phase of a regeneration plan for South Dublin Street and its Backlands, and funding has been secured through Project Ireland 2040 – Urban Regeneration Development Fund to progress these works. The regeneration plan is also part of a larger project being undertaken by the Council to regenerate the wider Dublin Street area and its surrounding lands, and work is currently underway to progress detailed regeneration proposals for the subsequent phases of this wider project and will be the subject of planning applications in the future.

The EIAR will support a planning application under Section 175 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) which seeks permission for the proposed development. It is anticipated that the planning application will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála by Monaghan County Council in Q1 2022

RPS prepared an Environmental Screening Report (ESR) for the proposed development which concluded that it met the thresholds that trigger a mandatory requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). In tandem, RPS also prepared a report to inform the Screening for Appropriate Assessment which concluded that the project whether individually or in combination with other projects and plans is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, and a Natura Impact Statement is required.

This ESR has been prepared in order to assist An Bord Pleanála in adopting a scoping opinion in accordance with Article 95 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). In line with the EIA Regulations, the following has been provided within this report:

- The location of the land or structure to which the request relates and a site location map identifying:
 - the land and structure to which the application relates and the boundaries thereof in red, and;
 - any land which adjoins, abuts or is adjacent to the land to be developed and which is under the control of the applicant or the person who owns the land, which is the subject of the application in blue;

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- any wayleaves in yellow.
- A description of:
 - The nature of the proposed development;
 - The development specific characteristics including its location and technical capacity and;
 - The development's likely impact on the environment.

The main purpose of the EIA scoping exercise is to both identify potentially significant environmental effects for detailed examination as part of EIA, and those topics that can be 'scoped out' of a future EIA. Scoping out is justified on the basis of any of the following:

- A topic is irrelevant, due to the nature of the impact of the works on the receiving environment;
- The proposed development results in negligible impacts and is located in an area that is not environmentally sensitive to the anticipated effects;
- Effects on a particular receptor are considered to be below the significance threshold; or
- Any design or mitigation measures incorporated within the design will avoid the particular environmental effect.

The ESR considers environmental topics having regards to:

- A brief assessment of the existing situation (baseline)
- The identification of potential effects and key issues which may be associated with both the construction and operation of the proposed redevelopment;
- An indication of any mitigation measures likely to be proposed; and
- An indication of the approach to be adopted towards a detailed assessment of potential effects (where appropriate).

1.1.2 Structure of the Non-Technical Summary

The EIA Directive and its implementing Regulations requires that an environmental impact assessment must identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in light of each individual case, the direct and indirect significant effects of a project on the following factors and the interaction between those factors:

- population and human health;
- biodiversity, and in particular species and habitats protected under Council Directives 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) and 2009/147/EC (the Wild Birds Directive);
- land, soil, water, air and climate;
- material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape.

The remainder of this NTS considers the above environmental topics in the order outlined in Table 1.1 below:

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Table 1.1 Topics considered in this Report

Chapter No.	Role
1	Introduction
2	Project Description
3	Scoping and Consultations
4	Noise and Vibration
5	Flood Risk and Drainage
6	Water Quality
7	Soils, Geology & Contamination
8	Terrestrial Biodiversity
9	Traffic & Transportation
10	Air Quality & Climate
11	Waste
12	Population & Human Health
13	Material Assets & Land Use
14	Townscape & Visual Impact
15	Cultural Heritage & Architectural Heritage
16	Interactions

1.2 Proposed Structure of the EIAR

This NTS sets out the structure of the EIAR, as well as the various environmental topics to be considered. The EIAR comprises:

- a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) (*This document*);
- Volume I Main Report;
- Volume II Technical Appendices; and,
- Volume III Technical Drawings and Figures.

The EIAR will include all information identified in Schedule 6, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), including:

- A description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size, and other relevant features of the proposed development;
- a description of the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed development
- a description of the features if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment of the development;
- a description of the location of the development;
- a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development, including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land–use requirements during the construction and operational phases;
- a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge;
- a description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the development (in particular any production processes), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources (including water, land, soil and biodiversity) used;

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- an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (such as water, air, soil and subsoil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation) and quantities and types of waste produced during the construction and operation phases.

The EIAR will also include a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the applicant, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.

1.2.1 EIAR Methodology

The Methodology for EIAR provides for a staged approach, which can be summarised as follows:

- **Scoping/ consultation exercise:** to be undertaken to compile relevant background data and identify issues and constraints.
- **Baseline surveys:** including walk-over visits, detailed specialist surveys and discussions with relevant statutory and other consultees to determine the nature and extent of the existing environment.
- **Identification of potential significant effects:** predicting the likely significant environmental effects of the development during construction and operation of the facility for the range of predicted uses as well as setting the scene for the identifying appropriate mitigation for the development.
- **Mitigation:** on-going development and description of mitigation proposals which will be incorporated into the project design as it evolves, including regular review and evaluation, to mitigate the potential environmental effects.
- **Monitoring:** if considered necessary, monitoring requirements may be identified for both the construction and operational phase of the development.
- **Residual and cumulative effects:** consideration of the residual effects remaining after mitigation.
- **Reporting:** preparation of the EIA Report, including NTS.

The assessment of whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment will be undertaken through a variety of methods:

- Professional judgement and experience based on published guidance criteria
- Assessment of both temporary and permanent effects
- Assessment of cumulative effects
- Assessment of duration, frequency and reversibility of effects
- Assessment against local, regional and national planning policy
- Consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees

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1.3 The Proposed Development

1.3.1 Location of the Proposed Development

The application site is located in the central core of Monaghan town centre, Co. Monaghan. Figure 1.1 below shows the site location.

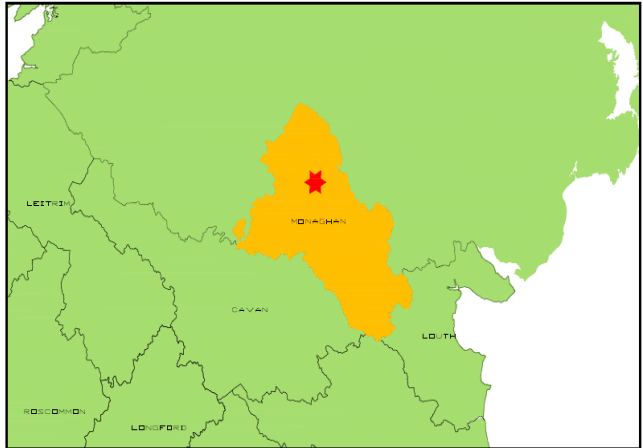
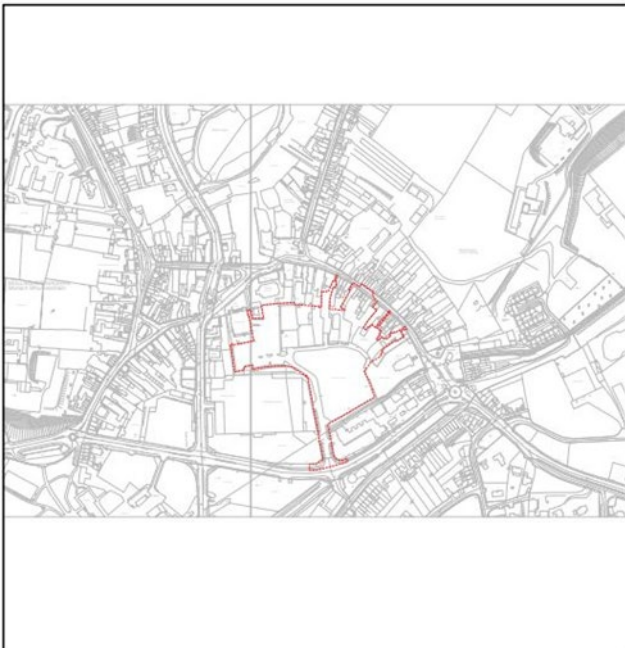
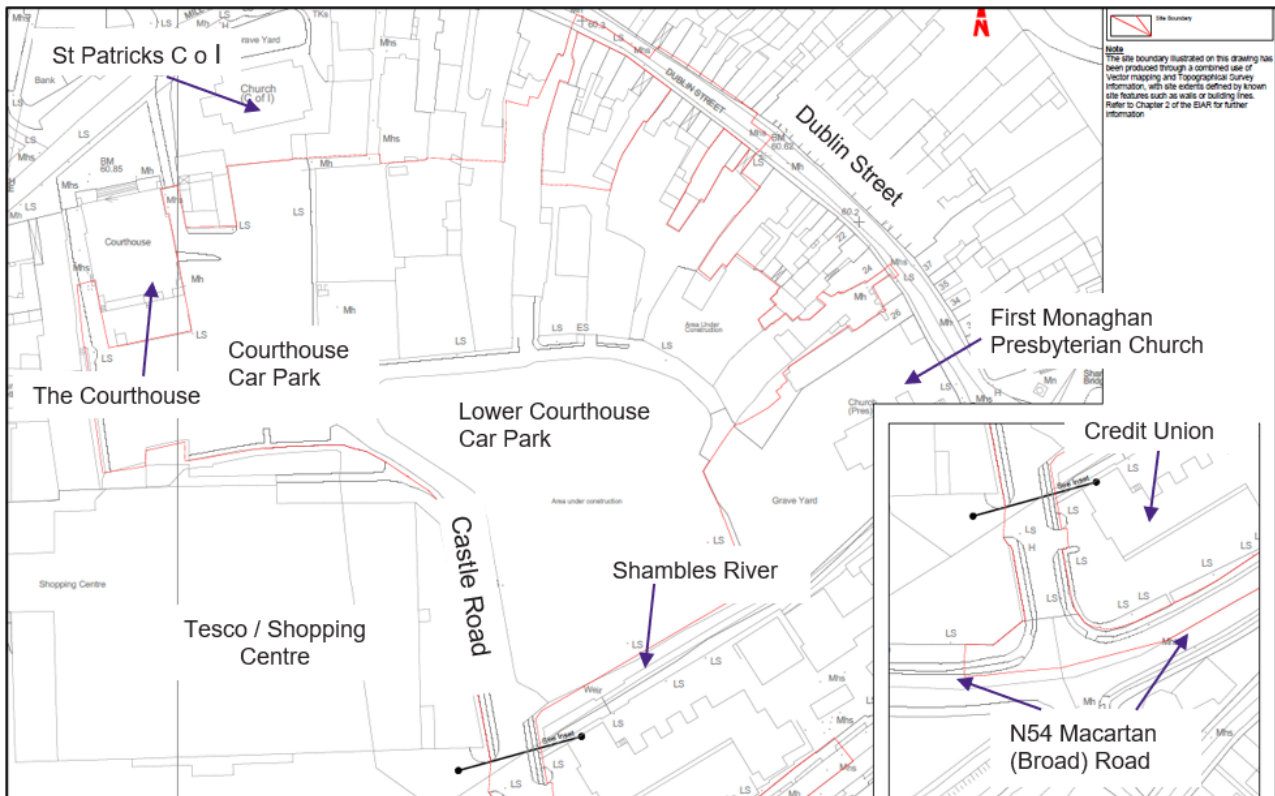


Figure 1.1 Site Location

(Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No. EN0005020 © Ordnance Survey Ireland/Government of Ireland) (Drawing Not to Scale)



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Monaghan town is strategically located at the juncture of the N2 Dublin – Derry/Letterkenny and the N54 Belfast to Galway National Routes and is on a key east west corridor linking Dundalk and Newry to Sligo. In the context of National Planning Framework (NPF) Monaghan is located in the Northern and Western Region, with important cross-border linkages with Northern Ireland. As the Tier 1 Principal Town in the County, it performs important economic, employment, retailing and administrative functions, and supports a wider rural hinterland and network of towns and villages.

The site is located within the town centre boundary as defined in the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025. The wider context is dominated by town centre uses, including retail, business and commercial, residential, and community / ecclesiastical uses.

The site is located to the southeast of the town core, extending from The Diamond to the northwest, south eastwards along Dublin Street, and is defined to the southeast by the First Monaghan Presbyterian Church to the south at Old Cross Square. The Shambles River and the development of European Union House/Credit Union building defines part of the southern boundary along with Castle Road. Monaghan Shopping Centre, built in the 1990's defines the southwest and western boundaries, with the rear of several properties fronting Dawson Street, such as McElvaney's Pub and Monaghan Courthouse defining the north-west boundaries. St Patricks Church and Church Square define the northern boundaries of the project area.

The boundary of application site/red line of the proposed development works extends to approximately 2.72ha.

1.4 Project Background

1.4.1 South Dublin Street & Backlands Regeneration Project

The proposed development is the first step in delivering the regeneration proposals for the Dublin Street area and its backlands set out in the **Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017**. This Plan sets out a strategic regeneration vision for Dublin Street and its environs, which focuses on consolidating the urban structure, to create new streets and public spaces which will integrate seamlessly with the existing town centre and introduce a new backland quarter. The Plan was adopted by Monaghan County Council and incorporated into the statutory Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 (Monaghan Town Centre Objective MPO2 and Appendix 20).

The regeneration objective for Dublin Street is to enhance permeability of the area, facilitate new and more compact development, create a legible network of connections and spaces for pedestrians and traffic, and provide an attractive place where people wish to live, work and visit. A well-defined and clear urban structure is fundamental in delivering a successful new neighbourhood. The Plan provides an overall design concept to guide the detailed design and delivery of this regeneration vision, which is summarised below.

Dublin Street together with its Backlands offers a unique opportunity to create a new and viable town centre quarter, with the potential to accommodate additional shopping, office, cultural, residential and new employment zone. It offers the opportunity to address the weaknesses of the area and to maximise its strengths; to enhance pedestrian and vehicular movement, to enhance the existing built heritage; to integrate with the historic streetscape in a manner that is both contemporary and forward looking while complimenting the built heritage; to create an integrated and commercially robust, viable proposal, and a vibrant and sustainable new urban quarter in Monaghan.

Short Term Vision

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 sets out the short term vision for the area, which incorporates:

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- Upgrading existing public spaces, streets, spaces, and footpaths.
- Creation of new connections, with new streets and spaces to enhance the urban structure.
- Provision of new high quality public realm in the Quarter (footpaths, street furniture, wayfinding, signage, landscaping etc).

The intention is that new high quality public realm will set the standard for new developments, and reuse and adaptation of existing structures. The short term vision is embodied in the excerpt from the design concept, shown in Figure 1.2 below. This clearly identifies the upgrades, new connections, and high quality public realm to be delivered within South Dublin Street and its backlands, and the creation of plots to be the focus of new development in the future. This short term vision forms the basis for the proposed development.

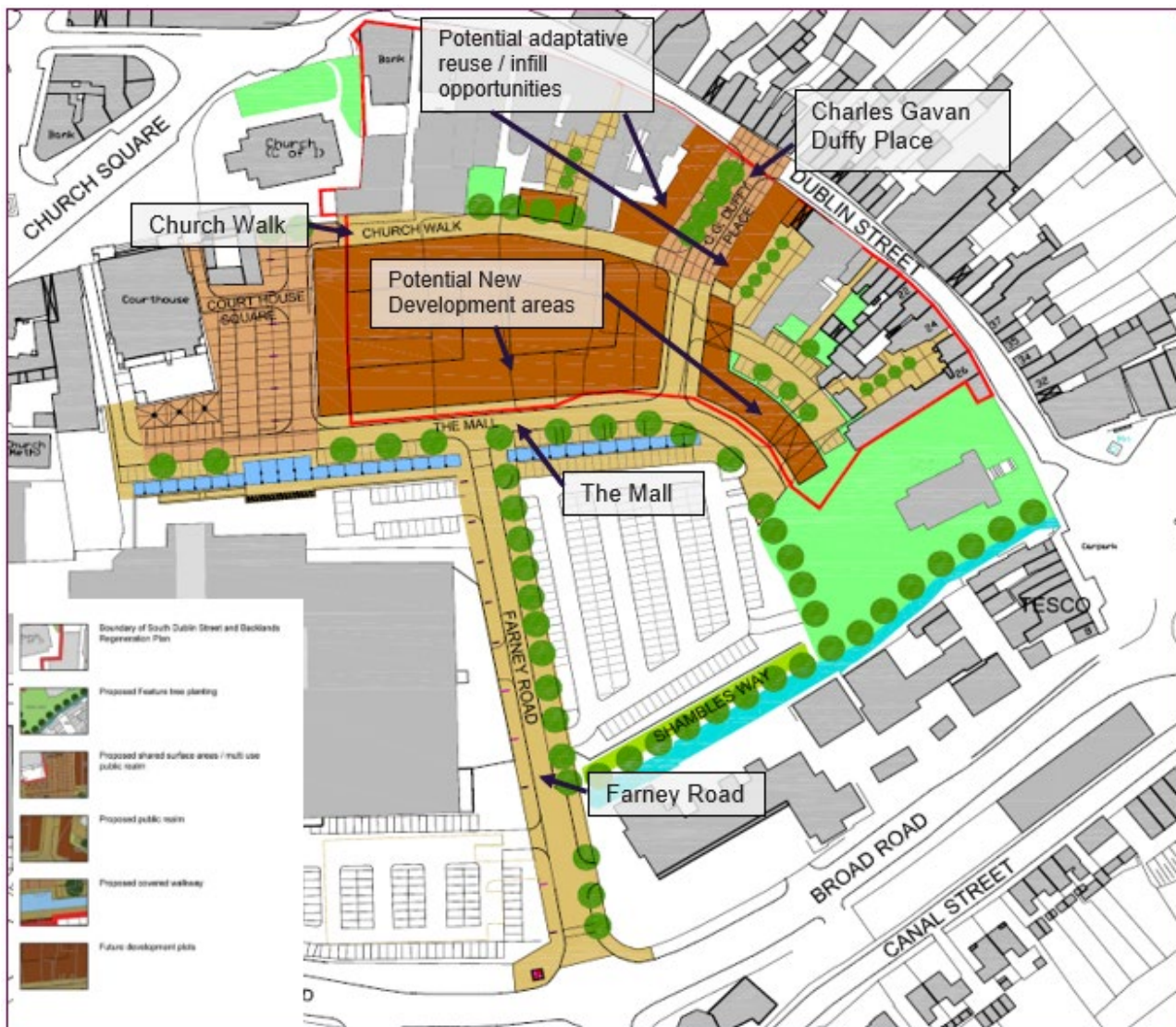


Figure 1.2: Dublin Street & Backlands Regeneration Concept

(Source: Excerpt from Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017, Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planning Consultants, 2018)

Longer Term Vision

The longer term vision foresees the regeneration of the existing urban fabric through a combination of redevelopment of existing buildings and spaces, as well as new development and urban blocks within the framework of new and improved spaces and movement routes (short term vision). These new developments

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would aspire to improve upon and enhance the Dublin Street area and provide a new 'façade' to the backland area, creating a new identity for the newly regenerated Dublin Street Quarter.

1.4.2 Wider Monaghan Regeneration Initiatives/ Plans

There are two other schemes currently being progressed by Monaghan County Council, and are considered as part of the cumulative assessment.

1.4.2.1 North / North East Dublin Street Regeneration Plan

The North Dublin Street and Backlands Scheme has also evolved from the overall Dublin Street Regeneration Plan, and funding has been secured to develop the conceptual detail for regeneration proposals throughout this area. This area is the subject of a Local Area Action Plan and is supported by the objectives of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 - 2025.

An Architects & Urban Planning Consultants were working through draft regeneration proposals for this area, and it have brought masterplans forward for public consultation in early 2022. Public consultation on the proposed variation to the County Development Plan is currently ongoing. Following public consultation and agreement with Elected Members, the intention is to incorporate the final proposals into the County Development Plan, giving statutory weight to the regeneration framework for this area.

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan provides a conceptual level of design detail for the future development parcels, within its design concept (as shown in Figure 1.2 above). The design concept has been developed further for the purposes of the public consultation, and the most recent proposals are identified in Figure 1.3 below.



The key proposals are identified in Figure 1.3 focus on the following elements:

- New streets, civic spaces and public realm;
- New residential, commercial/offices, and retail land uses.
- New open space and amenity areas, as well as links and connections.

These proposals have been finalised and public consultation on the proposed variation to the County Development Plan is ongoing. It is anticipated that this development will be brought forward by the Council or third parties, at a later date in the future, and subject to separate planning application. Any relevant environmental assessments required, would be requested as part of the planning process, when a full level of design detail would be available.

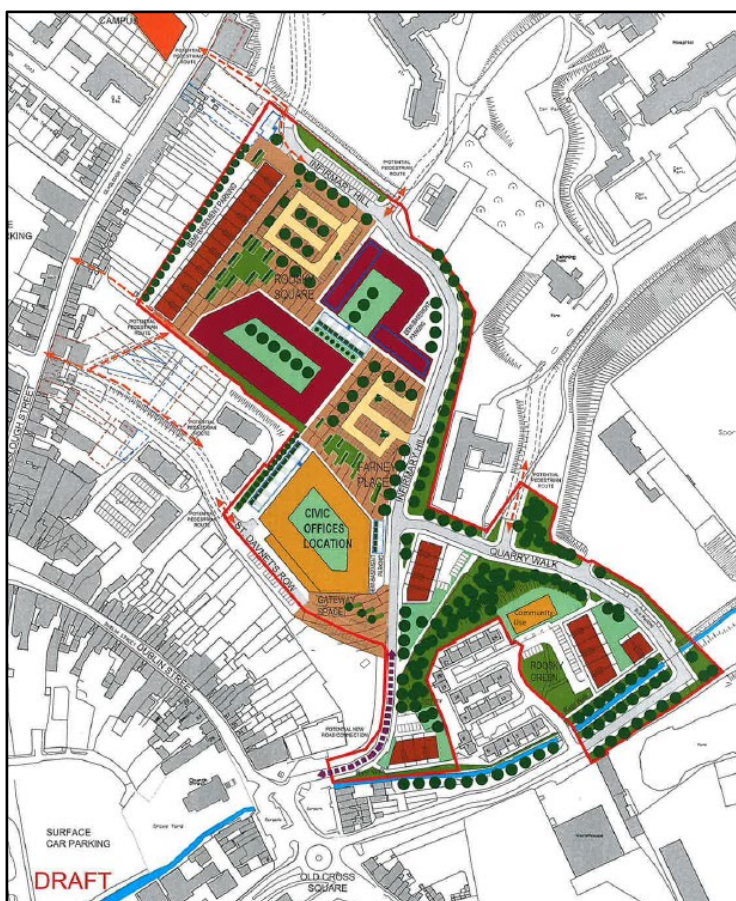
Figure 1.3: Draft Final Conceptual Design Proposals – North East Dublin Street, Monaghan

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1.4.2.2 Roosky Lands

Monaghan County Council recently acquired a land holding from the St Davnets Campus in Monaghan Town Centre, with a view to redeveloping the lands for a range of town centre uses including residential and offices. This land (referred to as the Roosky Lands) lies directly north and north west of, and adjacent to the North East Dublin Street and Backlands area, and its development aims to support the town centre regeneration proposals outlined in the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan also.

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 identifies indicative road proposals within the Roosky lands, with the objective being to facilitate any future development, reduce congestion and improve traffic flows. An Architects & Urban Planning Consultants are currently working through draft regeneration proposals for this area, and it is thought these will be brought forward for public consultation early 2022. Following public consultation and agreement with Elected Members, the intention is to incorporate the final proposals into the County Development Plan, giving statutory weight to the regeneration framework for this area. The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan provides a conceptual level of design detail for the future development parcels, within its design concept (as shown in Figure 1.2 above). The design concept has been developed further by the Architects & Urban Planning Consultants, for the purposes of the public consultation, and the most recent proposals are identified in Figure 1.4 below.



The key proposals are identified in Figure 1.4 focus on the following elements:

- New urban park, new streets, civic spaces and public realm;
- New roads and junctions
- Future Offices (new corporate headquarters for Monaghan County Council); and,

These proposals have been finalised and public consultation on the proposed variation to the County Development Plan is ongoing. It is anticipated that this development will be brought forward by the Council or third parties, at a later date in the future, and subject to separate planning application. Any relevant environmental assessments required, would be requested as part of the planning process, when a full level of design detail would be available.

Figure 1.4: Draft Final Conceptual Design Proposals – The Roosky Lands

1.5 Nature and Extent of the Proposed Development

The proposed development works that will be the subject of the EIAR process are outlined in the planning drawings included in Volume III Technical Drawings & Figures, as summarised below:

- Drawing LA0001-01 Site Location

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- Drawing LA0002-01 Topographic Survey (Existing Levels)
- Drawing BU1001 Demolitions & Removals
- Drawing SC1001 Site Clearance
- Drawing GA1001 Proposed General Arrangement
- Drawing A-20-001 Existing & Proposed Elevations
- Drawing A-20-002 Proposed Gable Return Elevations
- Drawing CS1014 Long Sections
- Drawing DR1001 Drainage
- Drawing KP1003 Construction Details
- Drawing EW0001 Earthworks
- Drawing RM1001 Road Markings
- Drawing SK0013 Proposed ESB Sub-Station
- Drawing KP1004 Northern Standard Elevation

A summary of the proposed development is outlined below:

- The demolition of buildings and structures, including street frontage buildings No's 8-11 Dublin Street and associated outbuildings and structures; the building to the rear of No.24 Dublin Street; partial removal of the rear section of the Northern Standard building fronting the Lower Courthouse car park; storage sheds, walls, and fencing.
- New building façades/side elevations to No's 7 and 12-13 Dublin Street, likely to be a masonry wall with piers finished in render (for structural stability) to facilitate creation of the new junction onto Dublin Street;
- **Creation of a fully pedestrianised public space to connect Dublin Street through to its backland areas, opening up new sites for development and enhancing pedestrian linkages throughout this area. This area is formed by the demolition of existing structures fronting Dublin Street and their associated backland areas. The proposals focus on fully pedestrianised high quality public realm, to encourage activity, social interaction and provide connections to a new reimagined urban place. New building frontages along No's 7 and 12/13 Dublin Street provide a strong urban form, animated edges to the new space, and an element of natural surveillance at this gateway location. The new space will benefit from a southerly orientation and will increase light onto Dublin Street. This area is intended as a multi-use space that can host events, open-air markets, pop-up commercial/retail uses, or occasional festival events. Vehicular access will be restricted to deliveries to commercial premises and waste collection for residential and commercial units. The proposed space creates a new setting and enables new opportunities for future infill development and reuse / adaptation of existing underutilised buildings on either side of the new space, creating opportunities for new commercial and residential activity. The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 suggested that this area might be known as 'Charles Gavan Duffy Place'. It is proposed that this space will be dedicated to Charles Gavan Duffy, in recognition of his historical connections to this area, with aspirations to provide an appropriate high quality 'totem' information sign commemorating Charles Gavan Duffy at a later date.**
- Creation of new streets:
 - New street connecting Charles Gavan Duffy Place to the Courthouse, to be known as Church Walk;
 - Realignment of an existing road to create a promenade, and to be known as The Mall;
 - Realignment of an existing road, to be known as Farney Road;
- Creation of new urban civic spaces, streets, junctions, pedestrian pavements, steps, and cycle routes

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- Construction of new public realm comprising new surfaces, kerbing, street furniture, public street and feature lighting, soft landscape planting, cycle parking and signage
- Clearance, regrading and creation of two potential development areas with supporting embankments, hardcore surfacing and boundary fencing
- New boundary treatments comprising walls, railings and fencing
- Alterations to the existing car parking layouts within the Courthouse car park and Lower Courthouse car park, and a reduction in long stay parking spaces
- Upgrading and installation of new utility services, CCTV, and a new ESB sub-station
- All associated site development works.

It is estimated that the proposed work will take between 12- 24 months to complete on site.

1.6 Scoping and Consultations

A request for a formal scoping opinion in relation to the proposed development was made to An Bord Pleanála on the 23rd December 2020. The Bord provided their opinion to this scoping request on the 8th June 2021. All items raised by the Bord were taken in consideration in the preparation of each chapter specified in this EIAR.

As part of the design process, the Council and the design team undertook stakeholder and public consultation in respect of the draft design proposals. An online consultation was held during April and May 2021, with the draft design proposals published on the Council website, and submissions and representations invited from stakeholders, landowners and the public. A one-day consultation event was also held in May 2021, where members of the public could discuss any aspect of the project with the design team. 48 submissions were received, covering a range of issues.

In parallel, RPS held meetings with An Garda Síochána and Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection. They also engaged with a range of stakeholders including:

- Elected Representatives
- Internal Monaghan County Council Departments Government Departments / Prescribed Authorities i.e. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in regard of Dublin Street as the N54 National Secondary Route
- Public bodies likely to have an interest in the proposals
- Umbrella organisations, such as the Monaghan Town Team, Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Other interested parties, such as utility and service providers, public transport operators
- Local Groups / organisations, such as Monaghan Tidy Towns, and Monaghan Disability Network, Monaghan Public Participation Network.

The issues raised by the local community, key stakeholders, and landowners in respect of specific design queries and issues have been thoroughly reviewed and addressed through scheme amendments where appropriate, in the final design proposals submitted as part of this application. Monaghan County Council is committed to on-going liaison and effective engagement with elected representatives, the local community and other stakeholders to address any emerging issues during both the construction and operational phase of this project.

All issues raised during all consultations have been taken into consideration in the finalisation of the development proposal, and for the purpose of the environmental assessment set out in the accompanying EIAR.

1.7 Noise and Vibration

This Chapter sets out the noise impact assessment for the proposed development. The chapter assesses the potential impacts from the construction activities of the proposed development on the nearest noise sensitive

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receptors. During the construction phase, there is potential for noise impacts at the nearest noise sensitive properties from the use of plant and equipment, from construction traffic and vibration impacts from the use a certain construction phase activities including demolition of buildings along Dublin Street. The construction noise targets are set out along with the assessment methodology and results of the noise level calculations. Noise mitigation measures are discussed such that noise targets are met throughout the construction phases. The assessment of operational noise includes an assessment of the noise impact from road traffic noise.

The specific objectives of the noise and vibration assessment are to:

- describe the existing noise baseline;
- define the assessment methodology and significance criteria used in completing the noise and vibration impact assessment;
- describe the potential effects, including direct, indirect and cumulative effects;
- describe the mitigation measures proposed to address the likely significant effects; and
- assess the residual effects remaining following the implementation of mitigation.

The background noise assessment provides quantification and an understanding of the acoustic environment adjacent to and in proximity to the proposed development. A baseline noise monitoring survey consisting of attended noise measurements was conducted within and close to the proposed development site. The noise monitoring locations (NMLs) have been chosen to be representative of the nearest noise sensitive receptors within and in close proximity to the proposed development site. The purpose of the noise monitoring survey was to determine the baseline noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors to the proposed development site and assess these levels in accordance with the relevant guidance.

During the construction phase, the methods of working will comply with all relevant legislation and best practice in reducing the environmental impacts of the proposed works. By their nature, construction phase impacts will be short-term and localised. These impacts will be reduced as far as practicable through compliance with the mitigation measures identified within this EIAR and the relevant industry standards and guidelines.

The TII guidelines state that it takes a 25% increase or a 20% decrease in traffic flows in order to get a 1 dBA change in traffic noise levels. On this basis, the change in traffic noise levels associated with the construction phase of the proposed development will be significantly less than 1dB(A).

It is generally accepted that it takes an approximate 3 dB(A) increase in noise levels to be perceptible to the average person, the likely effect of traffic noise increases on the local road network will be imperceptible.

Some construction phase activities associated with the proposed development have the potential to result in vibration impacts at sensitive receptors. Activities included in the proposed construction phase that have the potential to result in vibration impacts include demolition activities.

While noise levels from the demolition and construction activities are predicted best practice measures will be employed to ensure that construction and demolition phase noise levels are reduced to the lowest possible levels.

Pre-mitigation, the predicted construction noise impacts are anticipated to result in effects ranging from negligible to major at construction noise receptors.

The preliminary construction environmental management plan (pCEMP) (Please refer to EIAR Volume II Appendix 2A) will include specific control measures and sets out the monitoring to be undertaken. Mitigation by careful scheduling of the works, timing of activities and using best practicable will be implemented such that no significant effects arise and levels are as low as possible. Residents will be informed of the timing and duration of activities that may produce high noise or vibration. Elevated levels can be tolerated if prior notification and explanation is given.

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Temporary slight adverse impacts due to construction noise have been identified at the closest receptors to proposed construction works. No permanent residual noise and vibration impacts are predicted during construction of the proposed development. No significant residual impacts will arise.

No residual significant effects are predicted for the operational phase of the proposed development at residential receptors.

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1.8 Flood Risk and Drainage

This Chapter addresses the potential impact of the proposed development on flooding and drainage. It sets out the methodology employed in the assessment, summarises the baseline flood risk as defined through desk-based assessments, and then assesses the potential impact of the development and the residual impact following mitigation. The assessment has been prepared in accordance with 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. These Guidelines introduce comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process.

The Shambles River flows to the south of the site, and a tributary of this flows through the site in a 900mm diameter culvert. A review of the river flood maps from Floodinfo.ie shows that areas of the site are presently estimated to be at risk of flooding from fluvial events with a frequency of 0.1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) and greater, as identified during the North Western Neagh Bann (NWNB) Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. The areas affected are Castle Road and a section of the adjacent car park. Historically there have been several flood events recorded in the area, the worst being on 24th October 2011. Based on the flood maps (Figure 5.2 Flood Zone Map located in EIAR Volume III Technical Drawings & Figures), the site can be considered to be affected by areas of Flood Zone A (high probability of flooding) and Flood Zone B (moderate probability of flooding) as described in the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. The existing surface water sewer that serves the area outfalls into the existing 900mm culvert, which then discharges directly into the Shambles River.

There are no construction works proposed to the Shambles River or its tributary that runs through the site. During construction it is important that existing culvert through the site is protected from damage. The storm runoff from the development area under construction will be the same as at present, so there will be no change in the volumes of surface runoff at the construction stage. During the construction phase, any runoff from the construction site will be collected and controlled by the Contractor as described in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

While there are areas of the site that are affected by river flooding, there will be no change in ground levels to the areas of the proposed development in the floodplain and therefore these areas will still be available to receive flooding. The new roads, streets and spaces have been designed so that there will be no negative impacts if the area floods. The proposed development will therefore have no increase in fluvial flood risk. Due to its nature, no flood emergency procedures are proposed specifically for this development. Higher ground outside of the floodplain is available to the north, within easy pedestrian access. No mitigation measures have been proposed.

All surface water from the proposed development will collect in a new surface water network that drains to attenuation units in the southern car park. The existing surface water sewer is to be removed but the existing 900mm culvert will remain in place. The attenuation cells will outfall to a single point on the Shambles River which will have a hydrobrake chamber installed to limit the discharge.

The design proposals have included a 20% additional flow in the simulations for the surface water networks to account for Climate Change.

The proposed development will therefore have no increase in surface water flood risk, and in fact it may be possible to decrease the current runoff rate to the river using the proposed attenuation. No mitigation measures have been proposed.

The 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines' classify different types of development in terms of their vulnerability class. Amenity open space is classed as a Water-compatible development. The Guidelines identifies the type of development that would be appropriate to each flood zone and those that would need a Justification Test. Water-compatible development is appropriate in all flood zones and therefore a Justification Test is not required. The proposed development has therefore been shown to be compliant with the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines'.

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1.9 Water Quality

The baseline water quality was defined through desk based assessment and consultation with relevant statutory organisations. Information on the water bodies that could potentially be impacted by the proposed development have been collated from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Catchments.ie web GIS Portal to ensure the potential impact from the development is considered based on the most up to date information on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of these water bodies and to ensure that the development does not compromise the achievement of the WFD objectives. The water bodies that could potentially be affected by the proposed development are the Shambles_010, within which the development is proposed and the Blackwater (Monaghan)_040 and the Cor River which are the receiving water bodies downstream of the Shambles River.

The WFD status classification between 2007 and 2018 for the Shambles_010 was classified as “Poor” Status, the Blackwater (Monaghan)_040 as “Moderate” Status, while the Cor River has not been assigned a status.

The core objectives of the WFD is for all water bodies to achieve ‘good status’ where they are currently at less than good status and to prevent the deterioration in status. In addition WFD objectives requires that the water dependent protected areas linked to the water bodies must not be compromised. It will be a requirement that this project does not result in any deterioration of the current status of the relevant water bodies and does not prevent the improvement in status where this is required under the WFD.

The key focus of the water quality impact assessment is to ensure whether the development can be undertaken in a way which is consistent with the objectives of the WFD. Therefore likely significant effects were assessed for construction and operational stages of the project with particular regard to the objectives of the WFD.

The potential construction phase impacts include increased suspended solids in the water environment, potential risks to water quality and WFD objectives as a result of pollution from concrete, oils and other chemicals. During the operational phase, there is a potential for impacts from contaminated storm water run-off and inadequate sewage infrastructure to service the development.

Proposed mitigation measures include careful management, implementation and adherence to best practice guidelines during construction and operation particularly when working in the vicinity of water bodies. The operational phase will include flow attenuation and storm water treatment prior to discharge of stormwater to the Shambles River. Foul water will be separated from storm water and discharged into an existing foul sewer network at N54 Macartan (Broad) Road. The foul water will then be treated at Monaghan WWTP prior to discharge to the Shambles River. Full implementation of the mitigations measures will ensure that no adverse impacts on the water environment will occur.

An assessment of the significance of the residual impacts for the construction and operational phases of the project with the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, resulted in a residual impact considered to be negligible with no likely significant effects on the objectives of the water bodies affected.

There are also no likely significant effects from the proposed development during the construction and operation which would result in either positive or negative cumulative effects with other proposed developments on the existing water resource in the area.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.10 Soils, Geology & Contaminated Land

This chapter provides an assessment of the effects of the existing ground conditions on the proposed development and addresses the potential effects of the proposed development on the soils, geology and hydrogeology of the site and surrounding areas.

The assessment is based on information gathered from an intrusive ground investigation to establish the soils, geology and groundwater conditions beneath the site.

IGSL Ground Investigation July 2021

A geotechnical ground investigation was undertaken in July 2021 by IGSL to aid understanding of the underlying ground conditions at the site. The full IGSL factual ground investigation report is included in EIA Volume II – Technical Appendices, Appendix 7B IGSL Ground Investigation Factual Report.

The intrusive ground investigation completed by IGSL in July 2021 comprised two cable percussion, two rotary boreholes, four machine excavated trial pits and eighteen slit trenches. Infiltration tests, soakaway tests and associated laboratory surveying and testing was also conducted.

Cable percussion boreholes were drilled by means of a Dando Terrier 2000 rig. The ground conditions encountered within BH001 Made Ground/Fill from 0.00m bgl to 0.90m bgl, comprising gravels and clays with sand. Made Ground from 0.25m bgl to 0.90m bgl contained brick, slate roof, mortar, pottery, scrap metal and coal/ash. Beneath the layer of made ground firm slightly sandy clay was encountered from 0.90m bgl to 1.10m bgl. From 1.10m bgl to 1.40m bgl a layer of medium dense yellow/brown silty fine to coarse sand with occasional gravel was encountered. Gravel here was predominantly of limestone. From 1.40m bgl to 2.00m bgl a layer of very soft dark brown sandy clay was encountered and from 2.00m bgl to 3.60m bgl there was firm to stiff dark brown slightly gravelly sandy silty clay.

The ground conditions encountered in BH003 comprised Made Ground to 3.40m bgl where an obstruction was met. Made Ground was generally made up of clayey sandy gravel with medium cobble content from 0.50m bgl to 2.20m bgl. From 2.20m bgl to 2.30m bgl Made Ground comprised brown clayey sandy gravel with medium cobble content. This was the same scenario from 2.30m bgl to 3.40m bgl but there was a change of colour from brown to grey.

Two rotary core drilled boreholes were also excavated during the ground investigation (RC01 and RC02). RC01 was drilled to 11.00m bgl and RC02 to 10.80m bgl, by means of a tracked Commachio Geo 205 rig. Ground conditions encountered in RC01 comprised Made Ground/Fill, into clay and sand. Limestone bedrock was encountered at approximately 5.10-6.10m bgl. A similar stratigraphic profile was observed for RC02 with Made Ground/Fill, into clay and gravel with Limestone bedrock being encountered at 4.80-4.90m bgl.

Across TP01- 03 Made Ground material was encountered from 0.25m bgl to 0.90m bgl in TP01 comprising slightly gravelly very sandy clay with a range of waste material including glass pottery, scrap metal, brick, slate roof tiles, lime mortar and ash. Gravelly sandy clay with limestone was found below this from 0.90m bgl to 1.40m bgl. From 1.40m bgl to completion depth of 1.90m bgl sandy very clayey gravel was encountered. TP01 comprised 0.70m of Made Ground with similar waste material to TP01. A layer of clay was encountered from 0.70m bgl to 0.90m bgl with clayey gravel with sands beyond this from 0.90m bgl to 1.70m bgl. TP03 comprised Made Ground with again similar waste material as above from 0.12m bgl to 1.05m bgl. From 1.05m bgl to 1.20m bgl gravelly clay with sand was found.

Groundwater strikes were encountered in BH001 at 3.60m bgl and RC001 at 5.60m bgl.

Eighteen slit trenches were also incorporated into the ground investigation at Monaghan. These were performed using a rubber tracked excavator to a maximum depth of 1.50m bgl.

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No groundwater strikes were encountered in any boreholes, trial pits or slit trenches throughout the ground investigation. A groundwater sample was taken from RC01 and sent to the laboratory for analysis. No specific soil remediation is required. No specific groundwater remediation is required.

The impact of the developments on soils and geology is considered to be **Neutral** as there will be minimal impact on geological conditions with a minor loss of urban soils due to the presence of Japanese Knotweed at six locations within the site and one location close to the western site boundary at Monaghan Shopping Centre. This invasive species issue is addressed fully in a separate EIAR Chapter 11 Waste.

Minor earthworks will be undertaken at the site. Details of which can be seen on the RPS Earthworks Drawing EW0001 showing the range of earthwork excavations to be undertaken across the site to meet the needs of the public realm. Varying excavation levels will be carried out ranging from 400mm bgl for landscaping, 1.2m bgl for the plantation of various trees, 570mm bgl for parking areas and up to 2.00m bgl excavations for attenuation and soakaways.

The impact of the development groundwater is considered to be **Neutral** as there will be no reduction in groundwater quality.

Construction impacts may also include noise, dust, odour and site traffic generation problems as well as potential contamination issues arising with the use of fuel storage tanks, vehicles and the use of paints and oils.

The Conceptual Site Model (CSM) developed in the PRA has identified that there are no significant pollutant linkages (SPLs) present.

The operational impacts are considered to be **Neutral** due to the absence of any SPLs and the fact that no new sources of contamination will be introduced in the operational phase of the public realm.

The operational impacts on groundwater are considered to be **Neutral** as the public realm scheme will not impact on groundwater quality.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.11 Terrestrial Biodiversity

The proposed development has been subject to Ecological Impact Assessment, which included an assessment of both the terrestrial impacts upon habitats and species within the site itself in addition to impacts upon designated sites which are hydrological linked to the proposals.

The application site has been subject to a suite of ecological surveys to establish the ecological baseline of the site, including extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and preliminary roost assessment and emergence/re-entry survey for bats. It is considered that this comprehensive suite of surveys has facilitated an accurate assessment of the ecological baseline to assess against the potential impacts of the proposals.

Ecological impact assessment and surveys have been undertaken by competent members of the RPS ecology team and in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Historical biological records were sought from the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

Potential effects upon sites designated for their nature conservation value were considered. A number of designated sites were considered relevant given their proximity to or the supported hydrological links to the application site. These sites include the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Special Protected Areas (SPA) and a number of potential Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs).

The proposals will give rise to a range of potential adverse impacts to the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA, in the absence of mitigation, including the potential for release of construction phase sediments and pollutants into the freshwater environment in addition to the potential for spread of scheduled invasive non-native species.

A range of mitigation measures will be put in place to ensure that potential releases to the freshwater environment are minimised or eliminated where possible, in addition to construction phase measures to prevent the spread of invasive non-native species.

A limited range of habitats were recorded within the project footprint including scrub, scattered trees, hedgerows, tall ruderal vegetation, amenity planting, amenity grassland, recolonising hardstanding, hardstanding and buildings. The majority of the site is however occupied by areas of hardstanding and buildings comprising existing development. The proposals will give rise to the loss of areas of habitat of ecological value at the site-level only.

The site provides habitat for a range of terrestrial protected species including bats and birds. Subject to the implementation of a range of mitigation measures it is considered that no significant impacts to these species will arise as a result of the proposed development.

The site supports a number of stands of Japanese Knotweed, a scheduled invasive non-native species. The proposals have potential to give rise to the inadvertent spread of the species at construction stage. An Invasive Species Management Plan will be implemented at construction stage to ensure that the proposals do not give rise to the spread of this invasive species.

A range of mitigation measures in respect of the proposed development will ensure that all other potentially significant effects will be fully mitigated. Potential enhancements for biodiversity can potentially be delivered through the provision of bat boxes and the implementation of an appropriate landscape planting plan.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.12 Traffic & Transportation

This Chapter of the EIAR considers the potential impacts on traffic and transportation. It outlines the key issues and provides an overview of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on transportation. The scoping report and subsequent scoping study was used as a basis of initial consultation with the transportation related statutory authorities including Monaghan County Council (MCC) as the statutory road authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland as the relevant authority for the strategic road network, including the N54, the closest strategic road to the site.

The key aim of the traffic and transportation chapter is to determine the potential impacts of the improved street works and the introduction of a new access on Dublin Street for all relevant modes of transport. MCC have defined a set of objectives for the scheme. Specifically, for traffic and sustainable travel, these are summarised as:

- Provide for a fine urban grain to optimise permeability and access for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular circulation and ensure that the public realm is characterised by high quality materials such as paving, street furniture, lighting, and planting.
- Create an urban structure which facilitates convenient pedestrian access to amenities and services by facilitating new routes for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicular movement, which contribute to ease of movement and connect existing and new spaces, Charles Gavan Duffy Place, Church Walk, The Mall, and Courthouse Square.
- **Charles Gavan Duffy Place will be a high quality, fully pedestrianised civic plaza with vehicular access restricted to essential service vehicles.**
- Reinforce identity and sense of place by promoting the development of character areas related to uses, focal points and heritage buildings. Courthouse Square has the potential to act as a multi-functional space, including car parking (as per its existing use), a temporary event space, farmers market etc. Charles Gavan Duffy Place can provide a space for outdoor seating, benefiting from a southerly orientation. Farney Road and The Mall can integrate with pedestrians and a cycleway through the town centre. The new public spaces should add to the sense of place and cultural identity of the Town.

To determine baseline traffic conditions within the study area, new traffic surveys were undertaken between 11th-18th October 2021. The traffic surveys identified the junctions and peak hours to be carried forward within the detailed traffic impact assessment.

As part of the overall EIAR, a scoping report was issued to An Board Pleanála (ABP) in December 2020. Following the EIAR scoping report response from ABP, a scoping study was prepared and issued to MCC Roads Department. The scoping report set out the methodology and parameters of the traffic and transportation chapter. ABP set out within their response that the chapter should consider the following:

- An assessment of the cumulative impact of existing and permitted developments in the vicinity.
- Impacts during construction and operational phases of the development should also be described and assessed by reference to baseline information which should be collected and presented.
- Provide details regarding proposed routes to and from the site, in particular during the construction phase.
- An accessibility assessment should be undertaken describing the permeability of the site with surrounding areas and the traffic arrangements which will facilitate such permeability, including pedestrian and cycle traffic.

It should be noted that the development proposals have been updated since the submission of the Scoping Study, with the Dublin Street / Charles Gavin Duffy Place access now consisting of a pedestrian and cyclists' access only, and therefore, all existing vehicle movements will remain as per the existing operation.

The site is located within Monaghan town centre, with the main vehicular access points provided on the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road to the south of the site and a segregated entry / exit priority junction at Church Square

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located to the north. The access points are linked via an internal road which provides access to the short term and long-term car parks. Additional pedestrian / cycle only access points are provided via Dublin Street.

A baseline accessibility assessment was undertaken to establish the existing transport provision serving the site and its surrounds. The assessment considered travel by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport; and provides an assessment of available infrastructure and service provision. It also recognises that walking and cycling are main modes of transport but are also secondary modes of travel for public transport users. The site is located within an existing and established urban centre and therefore benefits from good pedestrian and cycle links. The proposed development will significantly improve pedestrian and cycle facilities within the scheme area. The accessibility assessment was also informed via site visits throughout January 2020 to October 2021.

As the site is located within an existing urban centre, pedestrian and cycling facilities are well established. The accessibility assessment demonstrated that Monaghan Town centre and all its amenities, together with a number of existing residential areas and public transport facilities can be accessed within a 10-minute walking distance from the centre of the site. Furthermore, the Ulster Canal Greenway is located in close proximity to the site, off Castle Street. The proximity of the site to the Ulster Canal will further encourage access to the site by bike, which will be enhanced by the development proposals. New cycleways are proposed along Farney Road and these will help facilitate cycling movements to and through the site.

The nearest bus stops to the site are located on the Dawson Street and North Road, within a 5-minute walk of the site. The main bus operator serving the site is Bus Éireann, within the bus stops near the site providing direct services between the site and settlements of Cavan, Clones, Ballyhaise Scotstown, Knockatallon and Castleblayney, with a number of services arriving in Monaghan before 9am, making it a viable alternative to private car travel for commuters.

The recently published Monaghan Walking & Cycling Strategy states that currently 22% of commuters within Monaghan Town do so by foot, compared with 27% in Ballybay and 34% in Clones. The provision of dedicated pedestrian facilities within the site and improvements to the pedestrian access on Dublin Street will enhance pedestrian accessibility to and within the site.

Vehicular access to the site will continue to be provided via a modification of the existing priority junction on the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road. It is proposed that improvements will be made to pedestrian facilities in the form of dropped kerbs with tactile paving facilities along the site frontage. The design and layout of the development will facilitate ease of access to public transport, support walking and cycling and meet the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired through adherence to current design guidelines. The development proposals recognise opportunities to encourage use of sustainable modes of travel by:

- Promoting cycling and walking as viable sustainable transport modes for all members of the community; and
- Providing, where possible, traffic free pedestrian and cycle routes, especially where they would facilitate more direct, safer and pleasant alternatives to those used by the private car.

As there is no quantum of new floorspace proposed as part of the development, there will be no additional parking provided as part of the development. The development proposals do, however, propose to reduce the level of car parking within the site, with the spaces reallocated for urban realm and to facilitate walking and cycling to/from and within the site. As part of the development proposals, a total of 57 car parking spaces will be removed from the area. These spaces have been removed to maximise permeability of the site for walking and cycling. **As part of their wider car parking strategy, MCC have opened a new Council-operated car park on the former Eircom site, between the Margaret Skinner Roundabout N54 Macartan Road / Glen Road / Dawson Street signalised junction. The new carpark has 88 spaces (66 long stay, 18 short stay and 4 disabled spaces, it also has infrastructure for electric vehicle charging, although this is not operational as yet). The new MCC operated car park at this location provides a suitable replacement for the reduction of parking provision resulting from the development proposals that are the subject of this planning application.**

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It is estimated that the proposed construction work will take approximately 18-24 months to complete on site. Subject to the allocation of funding, land acquisition and the grant of planning approval, it is hoped that construction can commence in 2023. Although there is no contractor appointed at this stage of the scheme, a review of the anticipated volumes of construction traffic and likely routes to access was undertaken. It is anticipated that construction traffic would utilise the strategic road network to access the site via the N2 to the north and east, and N54 to the west. The construction traffic will then access the site via the existing priority junction access with Farney Road. This follows existing Heavy Goods Vehicle movements observed via the new traffic counts undertaken to inform the study. Once appointed, the contractor will prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan, to be agreed with the local authority.

A review of the Monaghan County Council Planning portal was undertaken to determine if there are any other significant cumulative development generators of traffic within the vicinity of the proposed development site which have received planning approval but are yet to be constructed. It was noted that planning permission was granted for a potential food store located at McNally's Car Park site. The traffic flows for this development were extracted from the traffic impact assessment undertaken by TPS Ltd. and added to the network.

As there will be no uplift in development floorspace as part of the proposals, there is no new vehicular traffic proposed to be generated by the development. The introduction of the new access on Dublin Street, will however, result in some localised redistribution and which forms the basis of the traffic impact assessment.

As well as having new traffic surveys to inform the study, additional Automatic Number Plate Recognition surveys were also undertaken in October 2021 to establish existing traffic route patterns to access the site via Farney Road and Church Square. These included traffic route observations from Glaslough Street and Mill Street/Church Square, that are likely to be redistributed via the new access on Gavin Duffy Place. A number of vehicles were also observed travelling through the site and these have also been considered within the redistribution assessment.

A detailed junction capacity analysis was undertaken using approved traffic modelling software to ensure that the existing road network could accommodate the traffic impacts resulting from the proposed development. The modelling results demonstrate that the site access points associated with the proposed development are predicted to operate within capacity for all assessment years and scenarios considered and with the cumulative development traffic added to the surrounding road network. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed development can be accommodated within the surrounding road network.

Due to the proximity of the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road / Glen Road / Market Street / Dawson Street signalised junction to the site access at Farney Road, these junctions were also considered within the traffic impact assessment. The modelling results demonstrate that the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road / Farney Road site access junction operates within capacity for all assessment year scenarios considered.

Although it is considered outside the scope of this assessment, as the junction is below the threshold traffic impact resulting from the development, there is an opportunity to improve the signal junction operation through optimising the cycle time, or through the introduction of a dynamic cycle time signal operation (MOVA or similar). At present, MCC are in the process of upgrading these signals to a dynamic cycle time system, which is due to be constructed and operational by 2022.

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1.13 Air Quality & Climate

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports real-time results of localised monitoring for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Ozone (O₃) and Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂), providing the public with indicative data on current ambient air quality throughout the country, with Monaghan Town being classed as Zone D for ambient air quality management and monitoring in Ireland. The Kilkitt monitoring station is the nearest and is located south of the proposed development. It should be noted that O₃ has not been identified as a contaminant of concern for this development, however, the EPA presents this data alongside NO₂. All levels recorded are below threshold levels, in addition, the concentrations of all contaminants of concern were below the World Health Organisation (WHO) limit values. The results from Monaghan Town site indicate that the recordings of particulate matter were considerably lower than their respective Air Quality Standard (AQS) limit values, indicating good air quality. In addition, the concentrations of all contaminants of concern were below the WHO limit values.

The occurrence of climactic events considered to be unique in intensity and/or abnormal weather patterns were recorded to define baseline climate change conditions in Monaghan. The County has experienced an increase in major climatic or severe weather events in more recent times. The following key objectives of the Monaghan City Council 2019 Climate Adaptation Strategy have been identified as being relevant to the proposed development are aspects such as flood risk mitigation, amenity enhancement, biodiversity opportunity, reduction/sequestration, waste reuse, potential for regeneration and recreational enhancement etc.

For the construction phase, an important consideration is dust. Without appropriate mitigation, dust could cause temporary soiling of surfaces, particularly windows and cars. The mitigation measures provided within this report should ensure that the risk of adverse dust effects is reduced to a level categorised as “not significant”. Another important issue during the construction phase is control of emissions from construction plant and machinery. Mitigation measures are detailed to help control air quality pollutants. Construction activities can be divided into four types (demolition, earthworks, construction and track-out) to reflect their potential impacts. These activities are rated by their potential dust emission magnitude (small, medium and large). Demolition scored a “large” potential dust emission magnitude, whereas the other three categories scored “medium”.

There is not predicted to be any significant change in traffic volumes when the proposed development is operational compared to the existing baseline scenario. There is no requirement to carry out an air quality assessment for the impact of the development on the local area, and the impacts can be considered as having an insignificant effect.

Following construction, the area will be utilised as a public space, car parking, with occasional limited access for service vehicles and delivery vehicles. Therefore, emissions to air from traffic within the proposed development will be negligible once operational, and these will not be assessed any further. Due to the type of the proposed development, i.e. new urban area with high quality public realm facilities and associated landscaping, it will have likely positive impact on air quality and climate due to the planting of trees and shrubbery in an urban environment, which will reduce dust levels and absorb carbon.

Pollutant concentrations are predicted to be within the relevant health-based air quality objectives. Therefore, air quality is acceptable at the receptors surrounding the development site, making it suitable for its proposed uses. The operational impact of the proposed development on existing receptors is predicted to be ‘negligible’ taking into account the changes in pollutant concentrations and absolute levels. Using the significance criteria adopted for this assessment together with professional judgement, the operational air quality effects are considered to be ‘not significant’ overall.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.14 Waste

This Chapter of the EIAR assesses the waste management aspect of the proposed development. It discusses the potential waste streams that will be generated during the construction of the proposed development. The potential effects from the forecast waste generation are assessed in the context of the effects on waste management infrastructure and legislation, policy and strategy targets. Mitigation measures are proposed where the potential for significant effects have been identified.

Effects from the forecast waste generation have been assessed in the context of the effects on regional waste management landfill infrastructure capacity, legislation, policy and strategy targets. Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce the impact of waste generated by the proposed development. Waste is legally defined in EU and Irish law as “any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard” under the Waste Framework Directive (European Directive 2006/12/EC as amended by Directive 2008/98/EC). Once a substance has become waste it will remain waste until it has been fully recovered and no longer poses a potential risk to the environment or human health.

From that moment onwards, the material ceases to be waste and it is no longer subject to the controls of the Waste Framework Directive. The principal objective of sustainable resource and waste management is to use material resources more efficiently, where the value of products, materials and resources are maintained in the economy for as long as possible and the generation of waste is minimised.

All waste types and amounts generated will be recorded and reviewed at regular intervals, to allow for continuous analysis and review of procedures that will be made to reduce waste to landfill, increase the percentage of recycling and reduce waste overall as much as possible.

Waste storage will take place in a secure area on-site and the contractor will monitor the amount of waste stored to ensure that the permitted limits of any Exemption are not exceeded. The construction environmental management plan (CEMP) will set out measures and procedures to monitor waste flows on site and update records.

The contractor will be required to appoint an Environmental Co-ordinator. The Environmental Co-ordinator will be trained in how to set up and maintain a record keeping system, how to perform, audit and how to establish targets for waste management on site. They will also be trained in the best method for segregation and storage of recyclable materials, have information on the materials that can be reused on-site and implement the Project C&D Waste Management Plan.

Waste storage will take place in a secure area on-site and the contractor will monitor the amount of waste stored to ensure that the permitted limits are not exceeded.

Training of staff on site is the responsibility of the Environmental Co-ordinator and as such, a waste training programme will be organised. A basic awareness course will be held for all crew to outline the construction waste management plan (CWMP) and to detail the segregation of waste at source. This may be incorporated with other training needs (e.g. general site induction, safety training etc.). This basic course will describe the materials to be segregated, the storage methods and the location of waste storage areas. A subsection on hazardous wastes will be incorporated if required and the particular dangers of each hazardous waste will be explained.

A carefully planned approach to waste management and adherence to a site waste management plan (SWMP) during the construction and installation phase will ensure that the waste effects on the environmental and on landfill void space capacity will not be significant.

From a waste management point of view the site will return to the baseline situation. There will be no discernible change to waste management practices required once the proposed development is operational. The residual impact of the operational phase in relation to waste management is predicted to be neutral.

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1.15 Population & Human Health

In regard to human health, the Health Ireland Survey (2019) states that only 46% of persons over the age of 15 are achieving the National Physical Activity Guidelines of 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 days a week. 60% of adults were reported to be either overweight or obese with these participants also referring to the fact they are getting less sleep/quality of sleep. Levels of depression and admissions to psychiatric hospital are higher among less affluent socioeconomic groups, with these problems being related to external issues such as deprivation, poverty, inequality and other social and economic determinants of health.

The Monaghan Walking & Cycling Strategy 2021 – 2026 takes into account Monaghan County Council's role as an important agent of change in driving a number of key national programmes. Local authorities were first directed to prepare walking & cycling strategies as an action of the National Physical Activity Plan, as a measure to combat Ireland's growing obesity crisis. Since then, walking and cycling have come to form important parts of transportation, climate change and tourism policies and strategies. The Strategy looks at walking and cycling both as recreational activities and at the crucial role that they play in helping to address Climate Change through the promotion of Active Travel.

This proposed development will have positive impacts on population and human health, which will include health benefits associated with the provision of a significant quantity of open space, a highly permeable layout which encourages walking and cycling and use of amenity space.

The human health effects from income and employment generation are predicted to be primarily of local spatial extent and short term duration, with the significance of effect predicted to be negligible. The construction phase will also have secondary and indirect 'spin-off' impacts on ancillary support services in the area of the site, such as retail services, together with wider benefits in the aggregate extraction (quarry) sector, building supply services, professional and technical professions etc. These beneficial impacts on economic activity will be largely temporary but will contribute to the overall future viability of the construction sector and related services and professions over the phased construction period. In regard to air quality, noise and transport nature/flow rate, it is predicted that there will be a negligible magnitude of impact on the high sensitivity receptor, which would result in a minor beneficial effect. This is not deemed significant in EIAR terms. In terms of population, the construction phase of the proposed development is unlikely to have any significant impact on social patterns within the surrounding area. Some additional temporary local populations may arise out of construction activity. However these impacts are imperceptible, temporary in nature and therefore not considered significant.

In relation to the operational phase of this EIAR, it is predicted that there will be a negligible magnitude of impacts related to air quality, noise and income/employed on the high sensitivity receptor, which would result in a minor beneficial effect. This is not deemed significant in EIAR terms. In terms of population, the operational phase will see an increase in pedestrians in the area which will enhance local spending power and support a wide range of local businesses, services, transport infrastructure and open space are for enjoyment.

For the overall impact of the development on population and human health, it is considered that the monitoring and mitigation measures outlined in regards to the other environmental topics such as water, air quality and climate and noise etc. sufficiently address monitoring requirements.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.16 Material Assets & Land Use

The proposed development is located within the central core of Monaghan town centre and the site extents are approximately over 2.11 hectares. The site currently comprises of several retail/ commercial buildings (both vacant and in use) and backland areas comprising vacant / derelict land and properties, storage areas and rear access points. It also contains extensive areas of existing car parking, roads/roads infrastructure, pedestrian alleyways and incidental greenspace. Given the sites location within the central core of the town centre, the wider context is dominated by town centre uses, including retail, business and commercial, residential, walking routes, and community / ecclesiastical uses. The site is located south / south west of The Diamond and the main arterial route, Dublin Street, which flows through the town centre, and due north of N54 Macartan (Broad) Road.

The proposed works will by their nature, create two large future development plots within the newly created backland areas. The main development plot is in the central area to the rear of those properties fronting onto The Diamond and 1-7 Dublin Street. It will be created by the construction of newly created streets named Charles Gavan Duffy Place, Church Walk and The Mall, which will involve clearance of this plot of land. A second development plot is proposed to the rear of the properties fronting onto 12/13 – 26 Dublin Street, which will connect with Charles Gavan Duffy Place and the upgraded linkages /alley ways from Dublin Street.

The current proposal involves the demolition of 4 properties along Dublin Street (No's 8-12), including all the associated outbuildings and structures, and a section of commercial buildings (currently underutilised at present) at the Northern Standard. None of the buildings and structures are Protected and are not considered of architectural merit, and a number are vacant / derelict / underutilised. It is anticipated that the commercial uses/ businesses currently operating at the buildings which are proposed to be demolished could relocate to vacant units elsewhere within the town centre, given the level of vacancy currently noted within the town centre (and within Dublin Street itself). The landowners will also be financially compensated through the Compulsory Purchase process.

New building facades and openings are proposed to No 7 and No 13 Dublin Street, which will provide new commercial frontage onto the new urban space. There will be impacts on the neighbouring commercial users during the construction process, in terms of noise, dust and potential disruption to business trading – however these will be short term and will be taken forward in consultation with the owners following regular engagement. New and improved frontage onto the new urban space will bring beneficial impacts to both the owners and new users in the area.

The 57 long stay car parking spaces will be relocated to another site within the town, and as such overall space provision will be maintained, as a new eircom carpark site is proposed to be constructed in 2022, which will provide circa 90 spaces so there will be no overall net loss of parking spaces in Monaghan town. There will be impacts and disruption to existing car parking spaces within the site area during the construction phase, it will be the responsibility of the appointed contractor to prepare construction stage traffic and pedestrian management plan in conjunction with management plans for the carpark spaces.

There are proposals to improve the services and utility infrastructure throughout the site – works to improve the water and sewage networks will potentially disrupt services during the construction period, however residents and businesses will be informed beforehand and the disruption will be temporary in nature. The area will benefit from improved flows, services, and discharges as a result of the new infrastructure, and with the design providing spare capacity for future development the impacts during the operational phase are deemed beneficial.

The majority of impacts are temporary, short term impacts during the construction process which can be adequately mitigated through a range of procedures, good practices on site, and early consultation with statutory consultees and the adjacent land owners.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.17 Townscape & Visual Impact

The proposed development site is comprised of off street surface parking and adjacent public footpaths, tree planting, new road access and new high quality civic spaces on backlands to the south of Dublin Street.

A review of the relevant county development plan (CDP) has established that the proposed development site bar one designation – Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) – the proposal is not located in proximity to any designations with no predicted effects on; Areas of Primary Amenity; Secondary Amenity; Scenic Routes/Views. With regards to the ACA the proposed development has also been designed to respect the scale of built form in this townscape albeit with newer elements to reflect and respect surrounding built form. The proposed public realm improvements at street level will have a beneficial impact in an area highly lacking in visual quality within the designated ACA.

Analysis of the Townscape Character within the immediate environs of the proposed development site has identified that the townscape character area (TCA) can be described as Monaghan Town Centre Townscape where large scale, mixed use buildings form the major influence on the area. The existing built form in proximity to the proposed development site is of generally poor quality, with gap sites and dereliction apparent along the rears of south Dublin Street.

Built form within adjacent TCA's restricts views of the proposed development site and as such predicted effects associated with the construction and operational phases of the proposed development are limited to close environs. Predicted direct effects upon the Monaghan Town Centre TCA during the operational phase of the proposed development are considered to be direct, moderate and positive.

Of the 5 viewpoints assessed for impacts during the operational phase and 3 viewpoints are considered to experience positive visual effects as the degraded backlands are replaced with a high-quality streetscape that represents positive regeneration in the area.

A range of mitigation measures have been proposed including enhancement of the existing streetscape around the proposal and material selection to complement the built form of this part of Monaghan.

Overall, the wider landscape and visual resources of the development's surroundings have the capacity to accommodate a development of this type and scale.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

1.18 Cultural Heritage & Archaeological Heritage

The Study Area of the Cultural Heritage assessment comprises the proposed development site boundary and the surrounding *Zone of Notification* for the Historic Town of Monaghan. The chapter focuses on archaeology and other cultural heritage but also references architectural heritage through cross-reference with the Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) (also contained within Chapter 15). The assessment included both baseline information and field survey. The baseline study included a review of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), previous archaeological excavations, historic cartographic and aerial photographic images, folklore, placenames, etc. The fieldwork that informed the assessment included site inspections and photographic survey of the development area and also a limited programme of archaeological investigation (archaeological testing of available greenfield areas and archaeological monitoring of selected site investigation trenches).

There are a number of recorded archaeological monuments and a number of NIAH structures/ protected structures recorded within or directly adjacent to the development area.

The works will take place within the Area of Archaeological Importance for Monaghan and the National Monuments Service Zone of Notification for the historic settlement of Monaghan. Much of this area has been subject to modern interventions and as such, the potential of this area to contain significant archaeological deposits subsurface can be considered moderate to low.

Any potential Operational Effects will be of a visual nature and will affect features of architectural heritage significance. There are no predicted cumulative effects on cultural heritage.

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA)

The AHIA has been carried out by a process of:

- Study of background Information and research,
- Communications with Lead Public Realm Designers and Project Managers,
- Site visit and survey to consider the existing Protected Structures within the context and consideration of any likely impacts by the proposed scheme,
- Consideration of context of the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA),
- Consideration of the conservation principles and policies contained within The Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.
- Assessment of the proposals for public realm works,
- Provision of a written report for submission in support of the Planning Application.

The proposed works aim to integrate with the historic streetscape in a manner which is contemporary and forward looking while complimenting the built heritage.

New connections and spaces are to be formed to integrate both the existing Dublin Street ACA and the new backlands areas, and to better enhance other connections around the town. A summary of the key interventions are:

- **Creation of a new fully pedestrianised civic plaza (Charles Gavan Duffy Place) that connects Dublin Street through to the backland areas, creating an enlivened, vibrant space that people will want to spend time in, will attract footfall, and that will encourage frontage development and other inward investment that will deliver the regeneration objectives for the area.**
- **Enhanced public realm proposals for 3 existing alleyways that provide inviting connections between Dublin Street and the backlands quarter that will also provide opportunities for new frontage development and encourage the reuse and adaptation of existing building in these locations.**
- **Enhanced vehicle and pedestrian/cycle connections from Macartan Road to the backland area, including improved connections between the Lower Courthouse area and the new Charles Gavan Duffy Place and the alleyways, and around the backland quarter to create new serviced development plots for**

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

future mixed use development, that are well connected to the both the historic town centre and the wider road network.

Additionally, by creating new streets (Church Walk and The Mall) within the unutilised backlands area, new opportunities for commercial, leisure and residential facilities will be created. Improved access from Broad Road will improve accessibility to the town centre and better utilise existing car parking. The implementation of a new high-quality public realm will form consistent and attractive routes between both Dublin Street and the backlands area, stitching both old and new together.

This report has outlined the context of the proposals in relation to the built heritage, Protected Structures and ACA's of Monaghan Town.

Specific comment has been made on the proposal's relevance and impact to the Protected Structures and ACA's, with a detailed analysis of the proposal's benefits provided.

As can be seen from the information presented, the proposed works are considered appropriate for both the setting of the Protected Structures and of the Architectural Conservation Areas as they will bring about significant improvements to the public realm in the way of high-quality surface finishes, street lighting and furniture. There are no significant and direct impacts to a Protected Structure.

Mitigation provisions for the resulting demolition within an ACA have been provided and, in the opinion of the Conservation Architect and Heritage Consultant, the proposed works for improvements to the public realm will not significantly impact the Architectural Conservation Area and will in fact serve to enhance it.

The proposed works will not have an adverse effect on any of the Protected Structures and will improve their overall setting and viability. In the opinion of the Conservation Architect, the Planning Application should therefore be recommended for approval.

1.19 Schedule of Environmental Commitments

As part of the EIAR, all of the mitigation measures arising from each of the individual assessments were summarised in an overall Schedule of Environmental Commitments, which Monaghan County Council are fully committed to implementing. The implementation of these measures will ensure that the proposed development will not result in any significant adverse impacts on the receiving environment.

1.20 Further Information

The particulars of the development, together with the EIAR and the NIS will be available for inspection free of charge, or may be purchased on payment of a specified fee (which shall not exceed the reasonable cost of making a copy) at:

- Monaghan County Council Planning Offices, 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan, H18 X982 Between 09:15-13.00hrs and 13.30-17:00hrs
- The Offices of An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, D01 V902 between 09:15hrs and 17:30hrs

The plans and particulars of the development together with the EIAR and the NIS may also be inspected online at the following website: <https://monaghan.ie/>

Any person may, within the period of 6 weeks from **Wednesday 7th September 2022 to Wednesday 19th October 2022** (inclusive of both dates), make a submission or observations in writing to An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 D01 V902 or online at www.pleanala.ie in respect of:

- a) the implications of the proposed development, if carried out, for proper planning and sustainable development in the area or areas concerned, and
- b) the likely effects on the environment or the likely effects on a European site, as the case may be, of the proposed development, if carried out.

