

**Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for residential infill  
development at Newtown House, Captain's Hill, Leixlip, Co. Kildare**

---

REPORT FOR KILDARE CO. COUNCIL APRIL 04 2022

**Mary O'Connor**

ECOLOGIST/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST | SHANACLOON NEWTOWN, CO. KILDARE

## **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for residential infill development at Newtown House, Captain's Hill, Leixlip, Co. Kildare**

**Mary O'Connor Environmental Scientist 04/14/2022**

### **1. Introduction**

The EIA Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended aims to determine the likely significant effects of a project on the environment. EIA Screening determines whether an EIA is required for a specified project. Projects requiring mandatory EIA are listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. In the case of development which is under these thresholds, planning authorities are required under Article 103 of the 2001 Regulations, (as amended) to request an EIS where it considers that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Screening involves appraisal of impacts from the proposed development according to three main criteria:

1. Characteristics of the project
2. Location of proposed project
3. Characteristics of potential impacts.

Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), outlines the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed development. These are: human beings, flora and fauna, soil and geology, water, air & climate, landscape, material assets, cultural heritage and the inter-relationships between the range of environmental criteria.

#### **Sources Used**

Plans and specifications for the proposed development including the Report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment Proposed residential infill development Confey House, Leixlip, Co. Kildare (2021)

Bedrock, soil, subsoil, surface water and ground water maps from the Geological Survey of Ireland web mapping service ([www.gsi.ie/mapping.htm](http://www.gsi.ie/mapping.htm)),

National Biodiversity Data Centre (<http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/>),

Environmental Protection Agency web viewer (<http://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>)

The Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023, and details of permitted or proposed developments from the local authority's online planning records.

#### **Statement of Authority**

The assessment is carried out by Mary O'Connor, who has a PhD. in plant ecology and over 20 years professional experience as an ecologist/environmental scientist. She has worked for public and private sector clients and has several years' experience of

ecological/environmental assessment and input into Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Report

**2. Project Description The proposed development comprises of the following works:**

The site is located in an urban setting in Leixlip Town, Co. Kildare. The proposed scheme consists of 4no. single storey semi-detached dwellings of two house types; 2no. one bed units and 2no. two bed units. The proposed site is bounded to the south and east by high stone walls and to the north and west by River Forest Estate. The site is in the grounds of the old Newtown House. The surrounding area is characterised predominantly by housing estates and public buildings, Library, Youth Confey Community Centre and Leixlip Youth Centre.

**Geology and soils**

The site is located within the Urban Area of Leixlip. Findings from the screening for appropriate assessment carried out for this site states that the underlying bedrock is dark limestone & shale, which is a locally-important aquifer (Geological Survey of Ireland). Subsoils are limestone till, and soils are a combination of made ground and fine loamy drift. The soils and subsoil appear to be moderately well- drained, so it is expected that most rainfall on the site would percolate to ground rather than flowing into surface water features.

**Hydrology**

There are no rivers, streams or drainage ditches within or adjacent to the proposed development site. The closest watercourse on the EPA Rivers Database is the Rye River, which is located approx. 450-500m south west of the proposed development site. There is no direct surface water connection between the proposed development site and this river. Water quality in the 'Rye Water' is monitored as part of the Water Framework Directive status assessments and has been assessed as of Poor Ecological status and as At Risk. The main threats in the sub-catchment of this waterbody have been assessed as domestic waste water, agriculture and urban run-off (EPA monitoring data). The closest watercourse is the 'Rye Water', a major tributary of the River Liffey. Findings from the appropriate assessment carried out for this site has found that the Rathleek stream (a tributary of the Rye Water) is also located approx. 500 m west of the proposed development site, and the Oranstown River (a minor tributary of the River Liffey) is located approx. 500 m to the east. The Rye Water merges with the River Liffey to the south of Leixlip, approx. 1 km downstream of the proposed development site. The Liffey then flows east through Dublin City, and reaches the coast at Dublin Bay approx. 25 km downstream. Under the Water Framework Directive status assessments 2013-2018, the Rye Water was found to be of Poor quality, as was the Rathleek Stream. The Oranmore River was not assessed, nor was the majority of the River Liffey. However, some sections of the River Liffey upstream of Dublin City were of Good status, while sections within Dublin City were of Moderate status. The transitional waters of the River Liffey and the coastal waters of Dublin Bay were both of Good status.

### **Habitats of the proposed Development Site**

The habitats of the development site are entirely of an urban character, comprising buildings and artificial surfaces and urban gardens, the urban garden includes some tall trees.

### **Ecological Value**

The site is highly modified and urban with derelict buildings and walls and a small area of trees which have a low to moderate local ecological value.

### **Overall Ecological Value**

The location of the proposed is in a highly modified urban area which is of low habitat and species diversity and of low ecological interest.

No annexed habitats or species of conservation interest occur within the footprint of the development.

The main potential impact to the environmental quality of the zone of influence of the proposed development determined during the screening for appropriate assessment for this site found as follows.

Potential changes in water quality (construction phase) Construction works typically generate fine sediments, and may occasionally cause accidental spills of oil or other toxic (or other) pathways were identified between the proposed development site and any Natura 2000 sites, so there is no pathway for indirect impacts. Potential changes in water quality (operational phase) During the operation of the development, foul water will be discharged to an existing foul water sewer and treated in the Leixlip Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). The Annual Environmental Report of the WWTP was reviewed on the EPA website, and it was concluded that the WWTP is currently operating within its ELVs, but that it is nearing capacity, and upgrades have been proposed. The proposed development will represent only a negligible increase in load to the WWTP, and will be agreed with Irish Water in advance. Therefore, there is no risk that foul water generated by the development could have any impact on Natura 2000 sites. Surface water from roofs and hard surfaces will be channelled to a storm drain on River Forest road, and is likely to be discharged to a watercourse in the surrounding area. Rainwater is considered to be unpolluted, and the underlying soils are well drained, so there is no risk of any impacts to local watercourses or Natura 2000 sites

The proposed redevelopment is located at *circa* 0.5km from nearest SAC and impact to any European Site i.e. SAC or SPA was screened out in the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Document included with this application, which concluded no significant impact to any European Site as a result of this work.

### **Description of the proposed development**

The proposed scheme consists of 4no. single storey semi-detached dwellings of two house types; 2no. one bed units and 2no. two bed units. The proposed site is bounded to the south and east by high stone walls and to the north and west by River Forest estate. Existing space to side of Newtown House to be re-surfaced as a shared surface to facilitate/

accommodate 4no. parking spaces (including 1no. accessible space). A small number of old out-buildings will be demolished as part of the site preparation, the roofs of these old buildings contain some asbestos material.

Road access will be from 'River Forest' road to the south of the site. The dwellings will have private gardens, and some shared green space will be provided to the east of the dwellings.

Foul water will be discharged to an existing foul sewer on River Forest road, and will subsequently be treated in the Leixlip Wastewater Treatment Plant. Surface water will be discharged to an existing storm drain on River Forest road.

### Location and Layout

See Site Location, Layout and Architectural Drawings attached in **Appendix 1**.

## 3. Screening Assessment

**Table 1.** Characteristics of proposed development

Is the size and design of the proposed works significant?	No
Potential for impacts from project in cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects	No
Use of natural resources in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity?	No
Will the works produce waste?	<p>Yes the demolition of the old out buildings on the site will generate a very small amount of asbestos containing concrete roof tile waste. The handling and disposal of this waste will be in compliance with all regulations regarding disposal of this waste, and will therefore will be dealt with in a way so not to cause environmental pollution or hazard to human health, see note here.</p> <p>Asbestos waste is a hazardous waste, which must be disposed of properly. Waste disposal comes under the remit of the provisions of the Waste Management Acts 1996 (as amended). Asbestos cement waste is classified as hazardous waste under European waste legislation, and a specific code applies to waste construction material containing asbestos (LoW Code: 17-06-</p>

	<p>05*).</p> <p>Once the asbestos cement is removed safely, it should be wrapped in heavy gauge polythene (labelled “Asbestos”). Again, reference should be made to the Health &amp; Safety Authority regarding such work with asbestos. There must be strict adherence to any instructions given by a Local Authority or waste collection permit holder regarding the packaging of asbestos waste for removal.</p> <p>Asbestos cement waste must only be surrendered to a waste collection permit holder authorised under the Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations 2007 (as amended), to collect this type of waste.</p> <p>Within the State, asbestos cement waste can only be disposed of at a waste facility licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Asbestos cement waste can also be accepted at a hazardous waste transfer station licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Hazardous waste transfer stations accept asbestos waste and then arrange to have the waste disposed at an appropriate facility either in Ireland or abroad.</p> <p>As a hazardous waste, the movement of asbestos cement waste within the State is subject to a notification procedure, involving the provision of consignment notes to the Local Authorities of despatch and destination. This can be organised by the authorised waste collector.</p>
<p>Will the works create a significant amount of pollution or nuisance?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the project including those caused by Climate Change in accordance with scientific knowledge?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Risks to human health (water contamination, air pollution)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Potential for cumulative impacts with other</p>	<p>No</p>

existing and/or approved projects?	
------------------------------------	--

**Table 2. Location of Proposed Development**

Environmental Sensitivity of project in relation to existing and approved land use.	The site is at a significant remove and is not ecologically connected to any site designated for Conservation, the nearest European site is the Rye
Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	Development will not impact on site regenerative capacity for natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground
Absorption capacity of the natural environment including wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths, coastal zones and the marine environment, mountain and forest area	Not Applicable
Potential of works to impact directly or indirectly on sites designated for nature conservation (NHA/SAC/SPA)	None screened out during appropriate assessment of the site.
Potential for impacts directly or indirectly on Habitats or Species listed on Annex I, II and IV of the Habitats Directive	None (no annexed habitat or species occurs within the proposed development site)
Potential for impacts on breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	None
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on any listed ACA in the County Development Plan?	None
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structure or recorded monuments and places of Archaeological Interest	None
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on listed or scenic views or protected landscape in the County Development Plan?	None
Potential to impact on areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure	None

Potential to impact on densely populated areas.	None
---	------

**Table 3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts**

Human Beings	No impacts are identified
Flora and Fauna	No habitat loss will be incurred by the proposed development
Soils and Geology	No impact on existing soil characteristics by the proposed development
Water	The site development will use of the existing drainage systems
Air and Climate	No impact on air quality by the proposed development
Noise and Vibration	Noise and Vibration levels will be restricted during the works, no potential impacts following construction
Landscape	The site is within the core urban fabric of Naas and the proposed development will not have a negative impact on the existing landscape.
Material Assets	The proposed development will not have any significant impact on material assets including public utilities and natural resources
Cultural Heritage	None
Interaction of Foregoing	No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the potential impacts.



**Table 4. Discussion of Potential Impacts**

Will a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed works?	No
Will a large population be impacted as a result of the proposed works?	No
Are any trans-frontier impacts likely to arise from proposed works?	No
Is the intensity and complexity of impacts associated with the proposed works considered significant?	No
Is there a high probability that the impacts will occur?	Conservation led design will provide safeguards in relation to potential impacts ensuring low probability that impacts will occur
What is the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact?	Conservation led design will provide safeguards in relation to potential impacts ensuring low probability that impacts will occur
Cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects?	It is considered that no significant cumulative effects will arise
Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effects?	No

#### 4. Conclusion

The DoEHLG Guidance Document “Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development” notes that “The greater the number of different aspects of the environment which are likely to be affected and the greater the links between the effects, the more likely it is that an EIS should be carried out. Where 5 complexity of impacts is deemed to apply in the case of a specific sub-threshold development proposal, there should be a predisposition towards the preparation of an EIS”.

In consideration of the above involving appraisal of characteristics and location of proposed development and characteristics of potential impacts and having regard to Annex III criteria of the EIA Directive it is concluded that an EIAR is not required for the proposed development.

**Appendix 1. Site Location Map, Layout and Architectural Plans**