

# **Site at Kildare County Library, Newbridge, Co.Kildare**

**Schedule 7A Information to support an  
EIA Screening Determination in relation  
to proposed redevelopment of Kildare  
County Library, Newbridge, Co. Kildare**

**September 2022**



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This report has been collated to provide information to support Kildare County Council in undertaking a screening determination for Environmental Impact Assessment in respect of the proposed redevelopment of the Kildare County Library, Athgarvan Road and Main Street, Newbridge, Co. Kildare to provide new enhanced cultural facilities at the subject site in the form of a new library and all associated ancillary elements.

The proposed development is the subject of a Part 8 proposal by Kildare County Council.

The proposal includes the renovation of the original library building (a protected structure), the demolition of a modern single-storey structure, and the construction of a new three-storey building, along with associated services, landscaping and public realm elements.

Due to its location, the proposed new library building will form an important landmark building which will contribute to the creation of the overall Cultural Quarter proposals within Newbridge.

The process to bring the proposed development forward must have regard to the conclusions of the EIA Screening report herein. This document has been prepared in order to assist Kildare County Council in the determination of the proposed development.

## 1.2 Legislation and Guidance

The EIA Screening Report has had regard to the following:

- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)
- Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU
- The European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018)
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Environmental Protection Agency, 2022
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening, European Commission, 2017
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, August 2018
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development, 2003
- Circular Letter: PL 05/2018 27th August 2018 Transposition into Planning Law of Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the EIA Directive) and Revised Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Circular Letter: PL 10/2018 22 November 2018 Public notification of timeframe for application to An Bord Pleanála for screening determination in respect of local authority or State authority development.

- Office of the Planning Regulator (May 2021) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note

### 1.3 Methodology

The EIA screening assesses the proposed scheme with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the EIA Directive, and Planning and Development Regulations. The methodology has particular regard to the '3-Step' assessment process set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Practice Note PN02 (June 2021). Regard is also had to European and National guidance documents.

This document has been prepared in order assist Kildare County Council with the determination of a proposal for the redevelopment of the Kildare County Library at Newbridge, Co. Kildare.

### 1.4 Data Sources

The information in this report has been obtained from review of several online databases and public sources including:

- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) online dataset – <https://www.gsi.ie>
- Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023
- Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 (extended to 2021)
- Kildare County Council website
- An Bord Pleanála website
- GeoHive – <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html>
- Office of Public Works (OPW) – <http://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps>

In addition to the above, reference is made to the Appropriate Assessment Screening prepared by NM Ecology, the bat survey prepared by NM Ecology, Engineering reports and Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Aecom, JCA Conservation Architects Architectural Heritage report and the plans and particulars prepared by Metropolitan Workshop as well as background documentation prepared by Mac Cabe Durney Barnes.

### 1.5 Qualifications

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared by Patrena Slowey a Chartered Town Planner with over 20 years' experience in private sector planning consultancy in Ireland. During that time Patrena has successfully delivered a wide range of professional planning consultancy projects and services, including the preparation of inputs into EIARs and EIA screenings for infrastructure, commercial, recreational/cultural facilities and residential development projects. Patrena holds an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law from Kings Inns, a Post Graduate Diploma in Town and Country Planning and a BSc. in Environmental Planning from Queens' University Belfast as well as a Diploma in Environmental Recourses Management from Dublin Institute of Technology. Patrena is a member of the RTPI and the IPI.

## 2 The Site and Surroundings

### 2.1 Site

The subject site (c.0.22 ha.) is located within an urban context within Newbridge, Co. Kildare. The site includes 2 no. existing structures which are connected, these include the original 1930s two-storey library building (a protected structure), and a modern single-storey building. In addition, the site includes car parks areas, pavements and other artificial surfaces, with some landscaping near the entrance to the library.

The Protected Structure is referenced as B23-41 of the Record of Protected Structures within the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023. There are no other Protected Structures within the immediate vicinity of the subject site, nor is the site within an Architectural Conservation Area.

The original Library building is included within the National Inventory Architectural Heritage (NIAH). It is referenced under NIAH ref. no. 11818036. It is rated as being of Regional Significance, with Architectural, Cultural, Historical and Social categories of Special Interest noted. In its appraisal, the NIAH entry notes that the building is an imposing landmark in the centre of Newbridge.

The 1930's Bridge over the River Liffey, to the east of the subject site, is also included on the NIAH (reg. no. 11818035).

An Architectural Heritage report has been prepared by JCA Conservation Architects which sets out a description of the Library building as follows:

*"The 1934 Library building is a detached, eleven-bay, two-storey building, built on a corner site adjoining the River Liffey. It has a north-facing, single-bay, two-storey canted entrance bay, with single-bay, two-storey flanking entrance bays and three-bay, two-storey flanking elevations facing north-east and north-west, with single-bay, two-storey advanced end bays.*

*The buildings has hipped roofs behind parapet walls, with a slate covering and terracotta ridge tiles. It has red brick chimney stacks, timber eaves and cast-iron rainwater goods. Painted, rendered walls to entrance bay, with rendered, profiled stepped parapet above entrance. Painted roughcast walls to flanking elevations with rendered dressings marking bays and parapets.*

*Square-headed window openings with stone cills and painted red brick dressings. Original iron multipane casement windows, apart from rear elevation, where there are replacement uPVC casement windows in curved projecting bays. Entrance bay has squareheaded openings in recessed panels with rendered advanced surrounds.*

*The main entrance doors are recent replacement glazed timber doors. The building is set back from the road on a corner site. There is a roughcast boundary wall to the front with sections of iron railings above. The boundary has rendered piers and iron folding gates."*

The AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology sets out the following in terms of existing drainage arrangements:

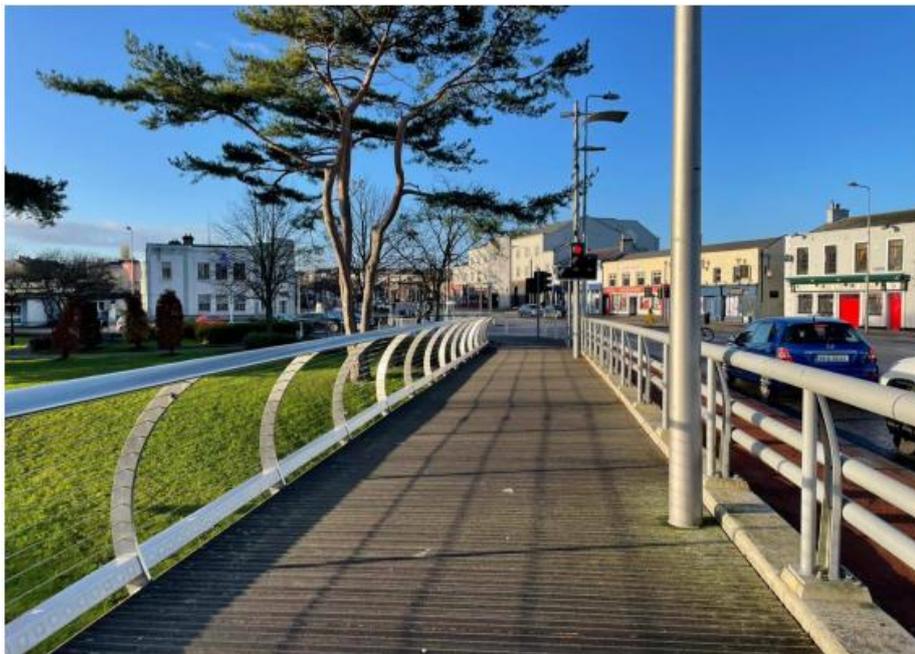
*"Almost all of the Site consists of buildings and hard surfaces. Rainwater flows into a network of gutters and drains, from which it is discharged to the River Liffey. Foul water is discharged to a combined sewer on Athgarvan Road"*.



**Figure 1: Site Location, Newbridge town centre (Source: Metropolitan Workshop)**



**Figure 2: Existing Library building (a Protected Structure) viewed from the bridge**



**Figure 3: Library viewed from St Conleth's Bridge at town entrance**

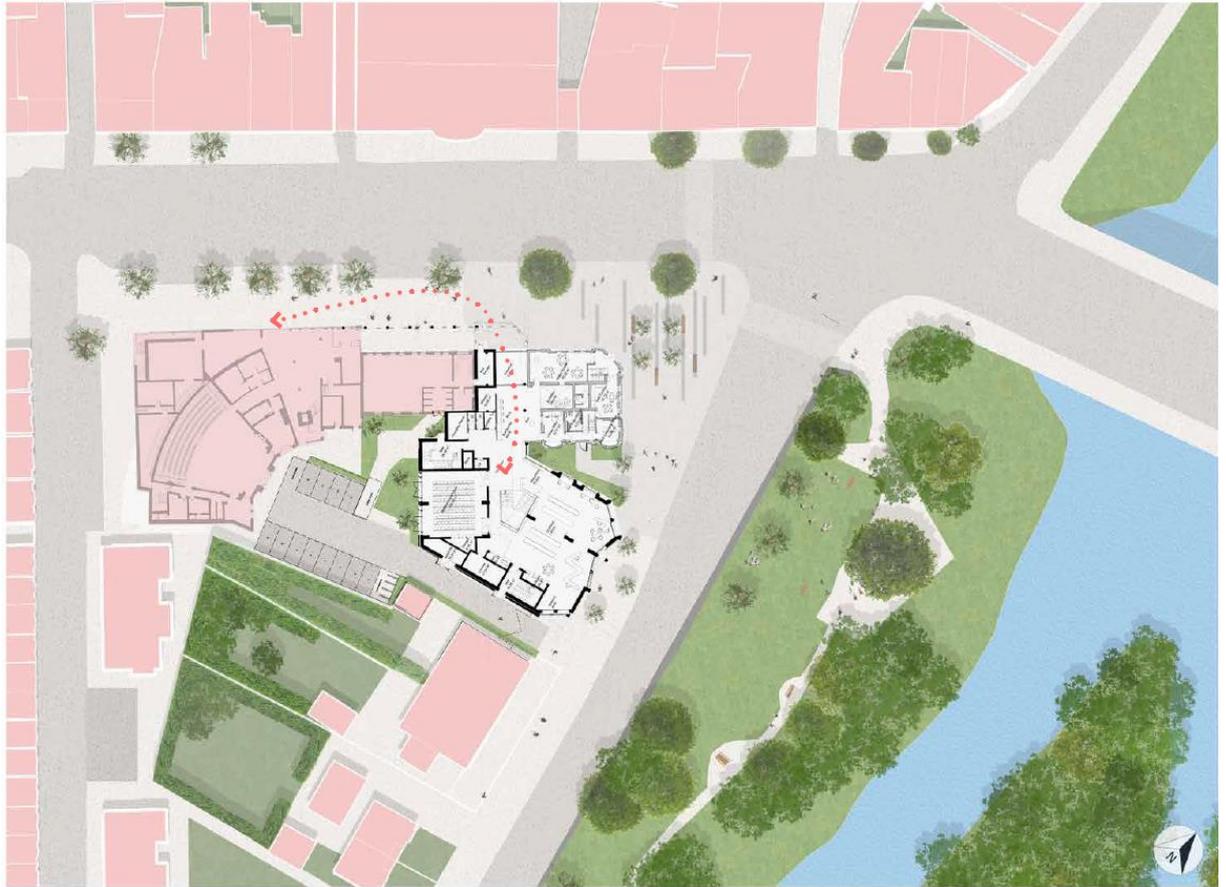


**Figure 4: Existing elevation to Athgarvan Road showing single-storey library extension**

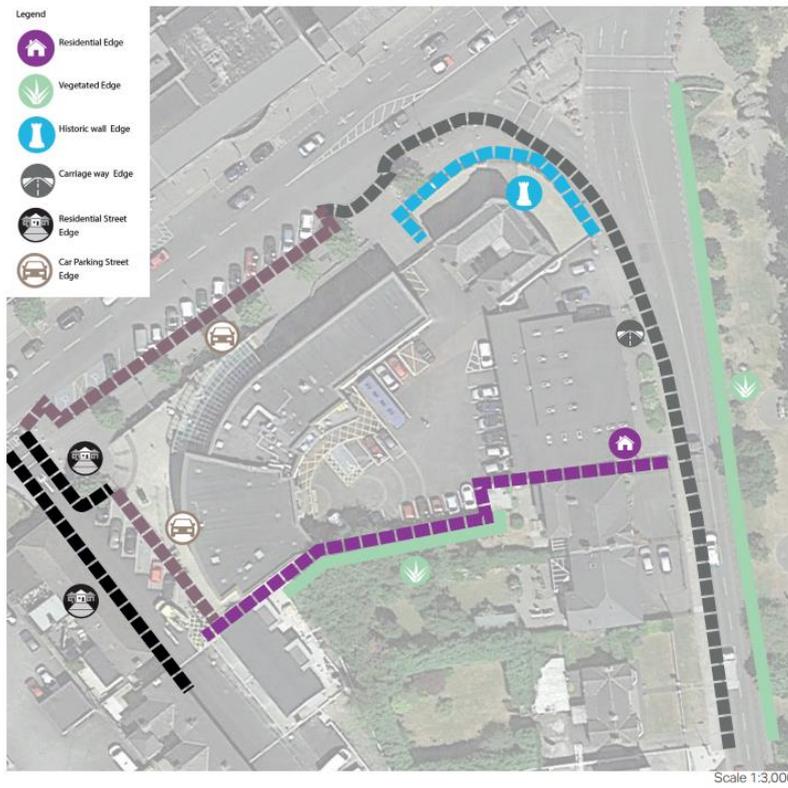
## **2.2 The Surroundings**

The subject site is bound: to the north by Main Street (R445), to the east by Athgarvan Road (R416), to the west by the Riverbank Arts Centre (this does not form part of the subject site) and to the south by residential properties. The River Liffey is located approximately 40 m east of the site.

There is a pedestrian entry point directly opposite the existing library and further southwards that gives access to the riverside walk as part of a riverside park.



**Figure 5: Subject site showing preliminary layout (source- Metropolitan workshop)**



**Figure 6: Subject Site Edge Conditions (source – Aecom)**



Northern Boundary - It is a mixture of car parking and carriageway edge. Carriageway edge, the pavement that has a mixture of herringbone paving and setts and the asphalt Main Street characterise this area. Car parking street edge is currently characterised by herringbone parking along the street.



Eastern Boundary - Carriageway edge along the eastern boundary consists of a concrete paving, cycleway painted onto R416 road.



Western Boundary - Residential street edge is characterised by a 1.5m herringbone paved area that is flush to the asphalt street. The paving marks the front of residential houses facing on to the street and is often demarkated with planters.



Southern Boundary - Residential edge is separated from residential houses with a 1.2m high concrete wall with a white wash and vegetation growing on the residential side.

**Figure 7 : Site context images (Source: Aecom)**

The subject site is located within Newbridge, the wider site context includes a wide range of town centre facilities including schools, shops, cafés, pubs, amenities facilities (playing pitches/leisure centres) and amenity areas. The subject site is bound on its north-eastern side by the river Liffey and its associated park. Although cut off by heavy traffic volumes from the Library, it and its bankside (which is well maintained) provide a natural amenity and serves as a visual contrast to the hard urban nature of the town’s morphology.



**Figure 8 :Analysis of the subject site (source Aecom)**

Newbridge has the benefit of a range of public transport services. The railway station is located c. 800 metres generally to the north-west of the subject site. It captures an extensive national network including the Dublin to Cork, Limerick, Galway and Westport routes. The commuter Arrow service to Dublin provides a peak time frequency to Dublin of two trains per hour on weekdays. Bus Eireann route 126 serves Dublin, Naas, Newbridge/ Kildare/ Portlaoise and a bus stop is located on either side of Main Street, Newbridge.

There are two local bus services the number 129 between Kilcullen and Newbridge with 15 stops within Newbridge town. Route No. 826 operating between Naas and Monasterevin has seven stops in Newbridge. In addition, there are services operated by local link Kildare South Dublin. The main spine of Newbridge and areas to the north are well served but the south-east has limited services. The users of the redeveloped Library facilities will have access to a range of public transport provisions on offer within Newbridge.



**Figure 9: Public Transport Network in Newbridge** (Source: Metropolitan Workshop)

The population of the Newbridge and its environs has grown by 189% between 1986 and 2016 and to reach 22,543 in 2016. Estimates from the CSO in 2020 envisaged a growth in County Kildare of 6%. The preliminary Census results for 2022 shows the County has grown by 11%. Between 2016 and 2022, Newbridge Rural Electoral Division (ED) and Morristownbiller EDs grew by 4% and 8% respectively, while Newbridge Urban ED grew by 1% (1,390 persons in total). As population growth in Newbridge has exceeded the county average in the past, it can be anticipated that the population has now reached c. 24,000. The NTA has indicated that they expect the population to reach 31,167 by 2035.

The economic dynamism of the Dublin Region is likely to increase the population further and this was reflected in the County Development plan in its core strategy. The immediate area in the vicinity of the subject site includes residents and a working population in the businesses and in the cultural facilities. It is considered that the subject sites location and the surrounding site context will create a demand for more facilities including cultural facilities and should provide a firm basis for an expansion of those already present in the town (such as the enhanced cultural facilities proposed within the subject site).

### **2.3 Environmental sensitivities of the site**

The information set out below was derived from the data available within GeoHive, the Kildare County Council website and the relevant local statutory planning documentation (the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the Newbridge Local Area Plan extended to 2021, herein referenced as the Newbridge LAP). In addition information set out in the project documents prepared by NM Ecology (AA Screening and the Bat Surveys) and Aecom are referenced herein.

#### *2.3.1 Bedrock*

GeoHive identifies the subject site is part of the Rickardstown Formation. The AA Screening report (p.5) prepared by NM Ecology sets out that:

*“The Site is underlain by limestone (cherty, often dolomitised), which is a regionally-important gravel aquifer.”*

#### *2.3.2 Soils*

The AA Screening report (p.5) prepared by NM Ecology sets out that:

*“Sub-soils are a mixture of limestone till and alluvium, and soils are made ground”.*

#### *2.3.3 Hydrology*

The AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology identifies that the River Liffey is approx. 40 m east of the Site. The AA Screening report (p.5) states that:

*“There are no other substantial watercourses (as per the EPA database of rivers and streams) in the vicinity of the Site (Figure 1). The Liffey flows north-east through County Kildare towards Dublin City, and ultimately meets the coast at Dublin Bay approx. 60 – 70 km downstream of the Site. It is currently of Good status (Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2013-2018) over much of its course, declining to Moderate status in some sections”.*

### 2.3.4 Aquifer and Groundwater

According to information available on GeoHive the subject site which is located within Newbridge town centre is underlain by a regionally important gravel aquifer referenced as Curragh Gravels.

GeoHive identifies that the groundwater vulnerability at the subject site is located within an area of High Groundwater vulnerability.

### 2.3.5 Radon

According to EPA data between 1 to 5 per cent of the homes in the area are estimated to be above the Reference Level and accordingly this is not a 'High Radon Area'.

### 2.3.6 Air quality

There is no place specific Air Quality information available for Newbridge on the EPA website.

### 2.3.7 Designated Sites

There are no designated sites within the subject site or directly adjoining the subject site. The nearest Natura 2000 sites as set out in the AA Screening report (p.6 and 7) prepared by NM Ecology are as follows:

**Table 1: Nature 2000 within 5km of subject site**

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
Pollardstown Fen SAC (site code 396)	2.3 km west	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> Petrifying springs with tufa formation, Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> , alkaline fens <b>Annex II species:</b> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> , <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> , <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (both are species of whorl snail)
Mouds Bog SAC (2331)	2.5 km north	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> active raised bogs, degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion

Source: Page 6 and 7 of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology.

It is note that the AA Screening document states that:

<sup>1</sup> We consider 5 km to be a proportionate zone of influence due to the moderate scale of the development and its urban setting.

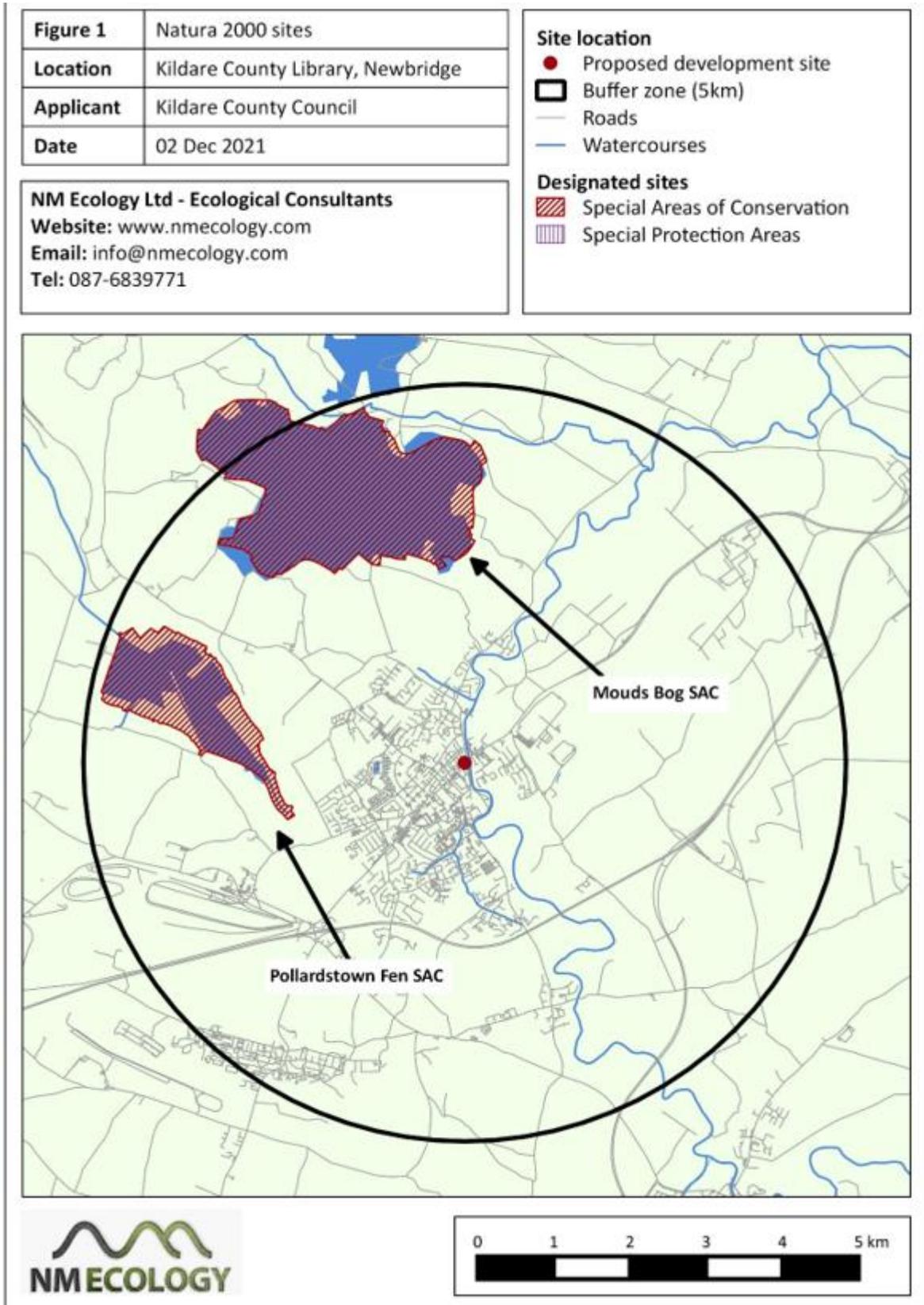


Figure 10 – Natura 2000 sites

Section 3.3 of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology sets out the following:

*“An appraisal of potential pathways for impacts on Natura 2000 sites is provided below. As part of this appraisal it is important to note that the Site consists almost entirely of buildings and hard surfaces, which alter natural surface water and groundwater processes. All rainwater on the Site is collected in gutters and drains and discharged to the River Liffey. **This effectively isolates the Site from underlying groundwater.**”*

*The Pollardstown Fen SAC is located 2.3 km west of the Site. It has been designated to protect fen habitats (wetlands fed by mineral-rich water) and whorl snails that occupy these habitats. The Mouds Bog SAC is located 2.5 km north of the Site, and has been designated for the protection of raised bog and associated habitats. **Neither SAC is associated with the River Liffey, so there is no surface water pathway.** As discussed above, the existing surface water drainage network within the Site will negate any potential pathways via groundwater. Pathways via land or air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.*

*The River Liffey could potentially provide a very distant hydrological connection to some Natura 2000 sites in Dublin Bay. However, there is more than 60 km of intervening watercourse between the Site and Dublin Bay, so any pollutants would be reduced to negligible concentrations before they could reach the Natura 2000 sites. **Therefore, this is not considered to be a viable surface water connection.** All other pathways can be screened out due to the distances involved.*

*In summary, no potential pathways were identified to any Natura 2000 sites”.*

*(bold – our emphasis)*

The conclusion of the AA Screening report (section 5, p. 9) prepared by NM Ecologists sets out that;

*“In Section 3.2.5 of *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (NPWS 2010)*, it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:*

**1. AA is not required**

*Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.*

**2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required**

*Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.*

**3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**

*The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected.*

*Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct, indirect or in-combination effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. As a result, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required.”*

**2.3.8 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)**

There are no NHA's or pNHA's in the site or in the immediate vicinity of the subject site.

**2.3.9 Archaeology**

The subject site includes the existing Library building and associated ancillary external areas. The proposal to redevelop the subject site in order to provide enhanced Library facilities at the general location of the existing Library building will include the demolition of an existing modern extension to the Library and the conservation of the existing original Library building (a Protected Structure) within the subject site. The new Library facilities will integrate the Protected Structure as part of the creation of a new Kildare County Library within Newbridge.

There are no recorded monuments situated within the site boundaries. However, during the course of the project the applicant will ensure that in the event that archaeological material is found that the appropriate measures will be undertaken by the applicant (in this case Kildare County Council).

### 2.3.10 Planning Context at the subject site

#### **Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023**

The policies of direct relevance to the subject site are ACO1 and ACO 6 where it is stated that Kildare County Council will seek to further expand Kildare's arts and cultural facilities through the physical enhancement of arts spaces in libraries, including visual arts, gallery performance and workshop facilities.

The Library is reference as no. B23-41 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2019-2023).

Other policies and objectives relating to the topics set out within the screening document and these are referred to as appropriate within this document.

#### **Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 (extended to December 2021)**

The Library (the subject site) are within an area zoned for Town Centre use within the LAP's Land Use Zoning Objective Map. The existing use and the redevelopment of the library are considered compatible with the uses permitted with the town centre zoning. The subject site is located outside of the core retail area which is identified in the LAP.

It is noted that the LAP is supportive of the redevelopment of town centre sites within Newbridge.

The library is identified as a Protected Structure referenced under B23-41 of the LAP (as per the Development Plan).

Policy CF 9 within the LAP is of relevance to the proposed redevelopment of the Kildare County Library at Newbridge, the policy seeks: *"To encourage and assist the development of the arts and to support the ongoing development of cultural infrastructure."*

Other policies and objectives relate to the topics set out within the screening document and these are referred to as appropriate within this document. Of particular note is Figure 18 with the LAP, which shows a new built form/edge to the southern section of the subject site at the Kildare County Library. This has been already achieved by the construction of new architecturally attractive housing.

### 2.3.11 Protected Structure, Conservation Areas and Protected Views

The subject site includes a Protected Structure, the original library building which dates from the 1930's. A description of the existing Protected Structure presented by JCA Conservation Architects is set out in section 2.2 of this report.

The Protected Structure within the subject site (RPS reference no. B23-41 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2019-2023). The original library building within the subject site is to be maintained and conserved as an integral part of the redeveloped cultural facilities by way of the provision of upgraded, enhanced Library facilities, the Protected Structure will be the subject of repair and refurbishment under the supervision of conservation specialists.



**Figure 11: Extract from– Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 (extended 2021)– Location of the Protected Structure within the subject site**

### *2.3.12 Ecological nature of site*

The site includes existing Library buildings (a Protected Structure and a modern extension), hard standing with limited landscaping. There are no identified habitats or species of ecological note within the site. There are no ecological habitats of note within the site.

### *2.3.13 Other Site Environmental Sensitives*

The proposed development includes the demolition of a modern extension to the original Library building (a Protected Structure). A construction and demolition plan will be prepared to ensure that all best practice measures and appropriate standards are implemented at the subject site.

An Asbestos Survey has been prepared by OHSS Safety Consultants on behalf of Kildare County Council which identifies the presence of asbestos on all internal ceilings of building 2 and the ceiling of the link to building 1. The report details procedures for the safe removal Asbestos Containing Material in accordance with Regulation 15(10) of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006-2010)

No other environmental sensitivities associated with the subject site are noted (such as existing storage tanks etc).

### 3 Proposed Development

The statutory notices associated with the proposed development sets out the nature and extent of the proposed development.

In summary the proposal provides for the delivery of a newly upgraded cultural facilities for Newbridge:

The proposed redevelopment of the Kildare County Library within Newbridge will consist of the repair, refurbishment and fabric upgrade works to the existing 1930's protected structure and the construction of a new 3 storey building to the south. The project will deliver new Library facilities with an area of c.2260 sqm (TBC).

The proposal will require the demolition of the 1970's single storey pre-cast concrete structure (550sqm) currently located to the south east of the protected structure, which connects to it via a small lobby area where the original 1930's porch once stood.

The protected structure was the original County Library, dating from 1936. This art deco building currently houses the local studies section which will be repurposed for staff accommodation. It offers approx. 292 sqm. Alterations to the protected structure will consist of thermal improvement works as set out in the documents prepared in support of the planning application, adjustment to the layout to incorporate enhanced provisions for staff and modifications to openings to better integrate with the new structure. Refurbishment works will include renewal and repair of internal and external finishes, plaster repair works, upgrading of services and the stabilising of the structure.

The proposals include all associated site development works, car parking and landscaping (including public realm improvements, a rain garden, a multipurpose courtyard area, sensory garden and outdoor reading area).

In terms of the proposed drainage arrangement the applicant can confirm that foul water will continue to be discharged to a local authority combined sewer on Athgarvann Road, and conveyed to the Osberstown Waste Water Treatment Works (part of the Upper Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme). Surface water will continue to be discharged to the River Liffey.



**Figure 12 : Site Layout Plan for the proposed redevelopment of the Kildare County Library, Newbridge. (Source: Metropolitan Workshop)**

## 4 Preliminary Examination

### 4.1 Guidance on Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) has issued guidance on EIA screening in the form of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note, May 2021 which aids planning authorities as the Competent Authority (CA) in this area.

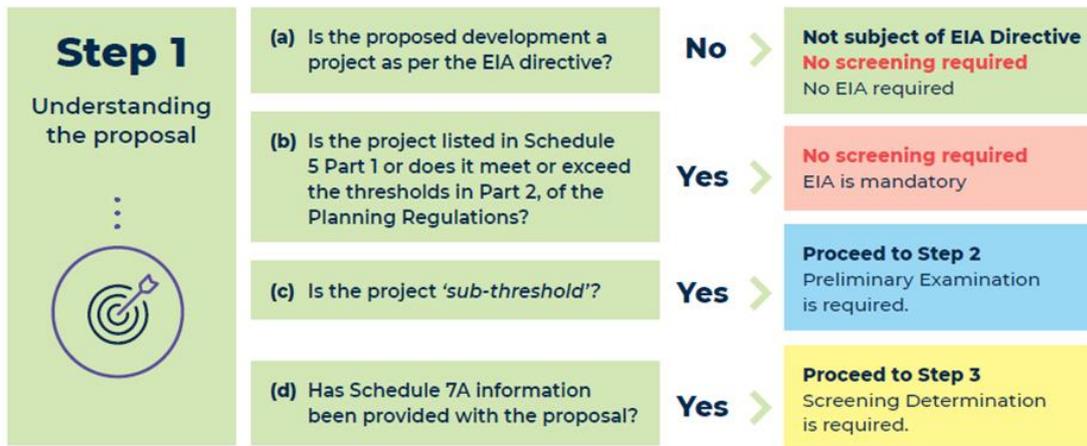


Figure 13: Extract from OPR EIA screening Guidance Note

This report has had regard to the OPR guidance and methodology.

The proposed application is a project for the purpose of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Stage1 stage (a) of the OPR guidance.

### 4.2 Sub-threshold Development

A list of the types or classes of development that require EIA or screening for EIA is provided in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. 'Sub-threshold development' comprises development of a type that is included in Part 2 of Schedule 5, but which does not equal or exceed a quantity, area or other limit (the threshold).

In Part 2 of schedule 5, the following is the relevant to assessment of sub-threshold development (with particular reference to those items in bold).

#### 10. Infrastructure projects

(b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.

(ii) Construction of **a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.**

(iii) Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres.

(iv) **Urban development** which would involve an **area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.**

(“business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

In relation to the proposed redevelopment of the Kildare County Library at Newbridge none of the thresholds above are exceeded, but those highlighted in bold indicate the thresholds of relevance to the subject proposal.

Accordingly, the project is sub-threshold development with reference to the above thresholds and under Step 1(c) of the OPR guidance a preliminary examination is required under Step 2.

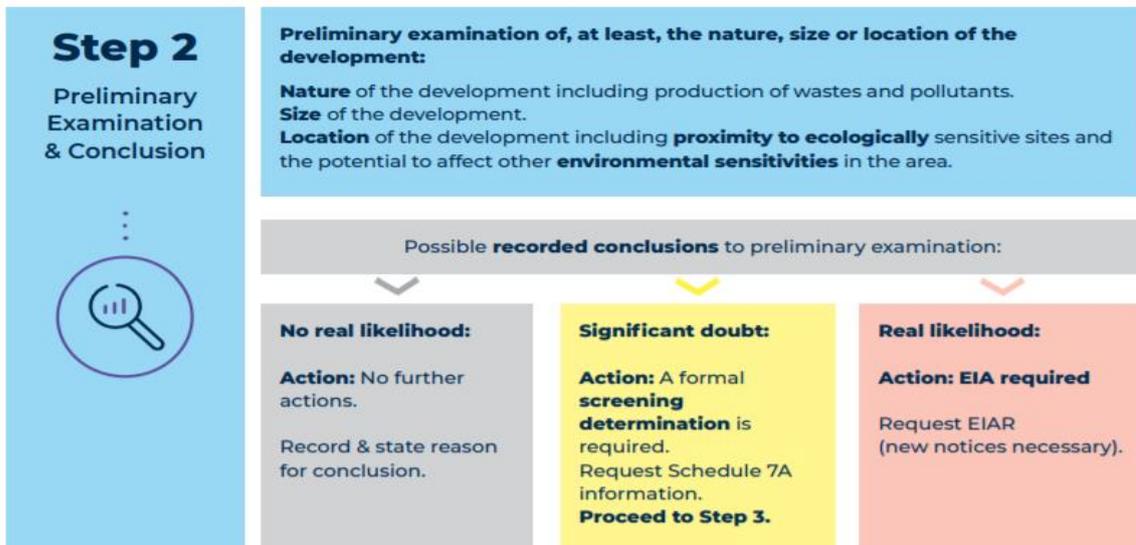


Figure 14: Extract from OPR Guidance Note

#### 4.3 Preliminary Examination considerations

Preliminary examinations must consider at least the following:

- The nature of the development including the production of wastes and pollutants;
- The size of the development; or
- The location of the development including the potential to impact on certain ecologically sensitive sites and the potential to affect other environmentally sensitive sites in the area.

This overlaps with the submitted Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening report and consideration of hydrological and other connections to European sites.

The OPR guidance states a number of questions to assist the preliminary examination.

#### 4.4 Nature of the development:

- i) ***Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?***

Given that the urban context of the subject site within Newbridge, it is considered that the proposed redevelopment of the existing Library at the subject site will represent a positive

contribution to the overall redevelopment of Newbridge Town Centre. The proposals are not exceptional in the context of the existing urban environment.

**ii) Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?**

The nature of the proposed development is the redevelopment of the existing Library facilities within Newbridge by its nature will not cause any significant emissions or pollutants during the operational. Any waste arising during the construction phase will be dealt with in the appropriate manner in accordance with the appropriate standards and best practice methodology. The Construction Management Plan which will be prepared for the development will set out measures/approach relating to the construction waste arising and any emissions or pollutants arising during construction.

**iii) Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?**

The size of the development is not exceptional in the context of the existing urban environment. The overall development will result in a Library building with an overall area of c. 2260 sqm on a site of c.0.22 ha. The development will enhance the existing urban environment by provided improved public realm and landscaped features including a rain garden, sensory garden, reading areas, in addition the proposal includes the provision of green roofs and SuDs measure which will contribute to the natural environment by providing additional native planting as identified in the Landscape Plan submitted with the planning application. The proposal seeks to redevelop the Library, retain the Protected Structure in Library use while adding existing Library facilities within the new build elements of the proposal.

**iv) Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?**

There are a wide variety of planning applications in the vicinity of the subject site, for the purposes of this EIAR screening, largescale developments in the vicinity of the site have been identified herein.

Notwithstanding the above, the following developments identified in Table 2 have been permitted in the vicinity of the subject site:

**Table 2: Examples of Recent Planning Permissions in the wider area**

Planning Ref. No.	Address	Description and Decision Date
181478	St. Conleth's Park, Newbridge, Co. Kildare	Permission granted on <b>5<sup>th</sup> October 2018</b> for development at the GAA grounds in Newbridge (these are generally to the south west of the subject site):  1) Demolition of the existing covered stand building, the club house, the scoreboard and section of the front boundary wall and turnstiles; 2) The <b>construction of a new 2-storey covered stand building, with facilities within the stand, comprising</b>

		<p>spectator seating, players' and officials' changing areas, spectators' concourses, circulation, toilet areas, first-aid administrative offices, multi-purpose room, VIP/meeting areas, hospitality and bar serving facilities; confectionery/snack-bar facilities, stores, plant room and associated ancillary areas:</p> <p>(3) Modification to external hard and soft landscaping;</p> <p>(4) Alteration to existing boundary treatment/external signage;</p> <p>(5) Alterations to the existing main entrance and provision of a new entrance plaza (adjacent to the public car park off Main Street), incorporating a single storey stand-alone ticket office (30 sqm) and turnstiles with associated hoardings and signage;</p> <p>(6) Re-instatement of access through the existing stone archway on Athgarvan Road, currently block-up, to provide pedestrian access;</p> <p>(7) Works to the playing pitch including the replacement of some of the existing pitch enclosures/ball netting and an increase of the playing field dimensions from 139m x 81.4m to approximately 143.5 x 83m;</p> <p>(8) Provision of new scoreboard;</p> <p>(9) Provision of flood lighting (3 No. lighting columns at 33.5m high and 1 No. column 27.4m high above pitch level);</p> <p>(10) Provision of associated support services and infrastructural works at the County GAA grounds,</p>
<p>17328</p>	<p>St. Conleth's Infant School &amp; St Conleth &amp; Mary's Primary School,  Naas Road, Co. Kildare</p>	<p>Permission granted on <b>18<sup>th</sup> September 2017</b> for development at the primary school grounds for the provision of <b>refurbishment and extension of primary school facilities</b> in Newbridge (these are generally to the north east of the subject site – across the bridge):</p> <p>a) <b>20 classroom temporary</b> system buildings of part 1 and part 2 storey, of 1,600sqm in area, to be removed on completion of the development.</p> <p>(b) the removal of existing single storey prefabricated structures of 992sqm on completion of the development.</p> <p>(c) the <b>refurbishment and extension of the primary school</b> will consist of:(a) new 2 storey building providing 9 no. classrooms and support spaces with floor area of 686sqm;</p> <p>(b) reconfiguration and refurbishment of 5 no. classrooms and associated support spaces in existing school building.</p> <p>(d) the refurbishment and extension of the infant school will consist of: (a) new 2 storey building</p>

		<p>providing 9 no. classrooms and support spaces with floor area of 531sqm; (b) new double height general purpose hall and support spaces with a floor area of 272sqm; (c) reconfiguration and refurbishment of 7 no. classrooms and associated spaces in existing school building (e) new special needs unit 1 storey extension, providing 3 no. special needs unit classrooms and associated spaces with a floor area of 649sqm and a new 1 storey link corridor, with a floor area of 47sqm. (f) external works will include 4 no. ballcourts 2,340sqm, 2 no. junior play areas of 860sqm, a secure hard and soft play area of 200sqm, a sensory garden of 100sqm, a total of 66 car park spaces, widening and associated works to the existing vehicular entrance, proposed new 7000mm wide opening in existing boundary wall to accommodate re-configured road/exit off main Naas Road R445 to the South/Eastern boundary of the site, new gates and associated site landscape works (g) Temporary construction/school entrance to the South/Eastern corner boundary of the site formed off main Naas Road R445 for the duration of the construction period. Reinstatement of the existing boundary wall once works are complete (h) All associated and ancillary site works on an overall site area of 1.95 hectares</p>
211051	<p>St. Conleth's Infant Primary School,  St. Conleth &amp; Mary's National School, Naas Road, , Newbridge, Co. Kildare</p>	<p>Permission granted on 19 October 2021 for development at the primary school grounds for the provision of additional Autism facilities in Newbridge (these are generally to the north east of the subject site – across the bridge):</p> <p>An additional storey extension to the previously approved single storey (Ref. No. 17/328) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Building, providing 1 No. Special Needs Classroom and associated spaces, with a floor area of 370 sqm. Layout reconfiguration to the existing boiler and Staff Room, alterations including demolition of boiler chimney and rebuild of the existing dividing wall and all associated site works</p>

211388	Athgarvan Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare. , W12 PH01	<p>This site is located to the south of the subject site. This applicant has yet to be determined by Kildare County Council, a decision is due on <b>17<sup>th</sup> March 2022</b>:</p> <p>(a) demolition of existing single storey dwelling and outbuilding, (b) construction of 4no. two bedroomed apartments, and 4no. one bedroomed apartments in 2no. two storey blocks, (c) site development works on and below ground, including new access roadway, footpaths, car parking, landscaping, water network, foul and surface water drainage including surface water attenuation system, refuse storage areas, bicycle shelters all</p>
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#### 4.5 Location

***Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?***

The nearest designated Natura 2000 sites are as follows:

**Table 3: European Sites in the Wider Area (5km)**

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
Pollardstown Fen SAC (site code 396)	2.3 km west	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> Petrifying springs with tufa formation, Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> , alkaline fens <b>Annex II species:</b> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> , <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> , <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (both are species of whorl snail)
Mouds Bog SAC (2331)	2.5 km north	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> active raised bogs, degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion

Source: Page 6 and 7 of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology.

There are no proposed Natural Heritage Areas in the vicinity.

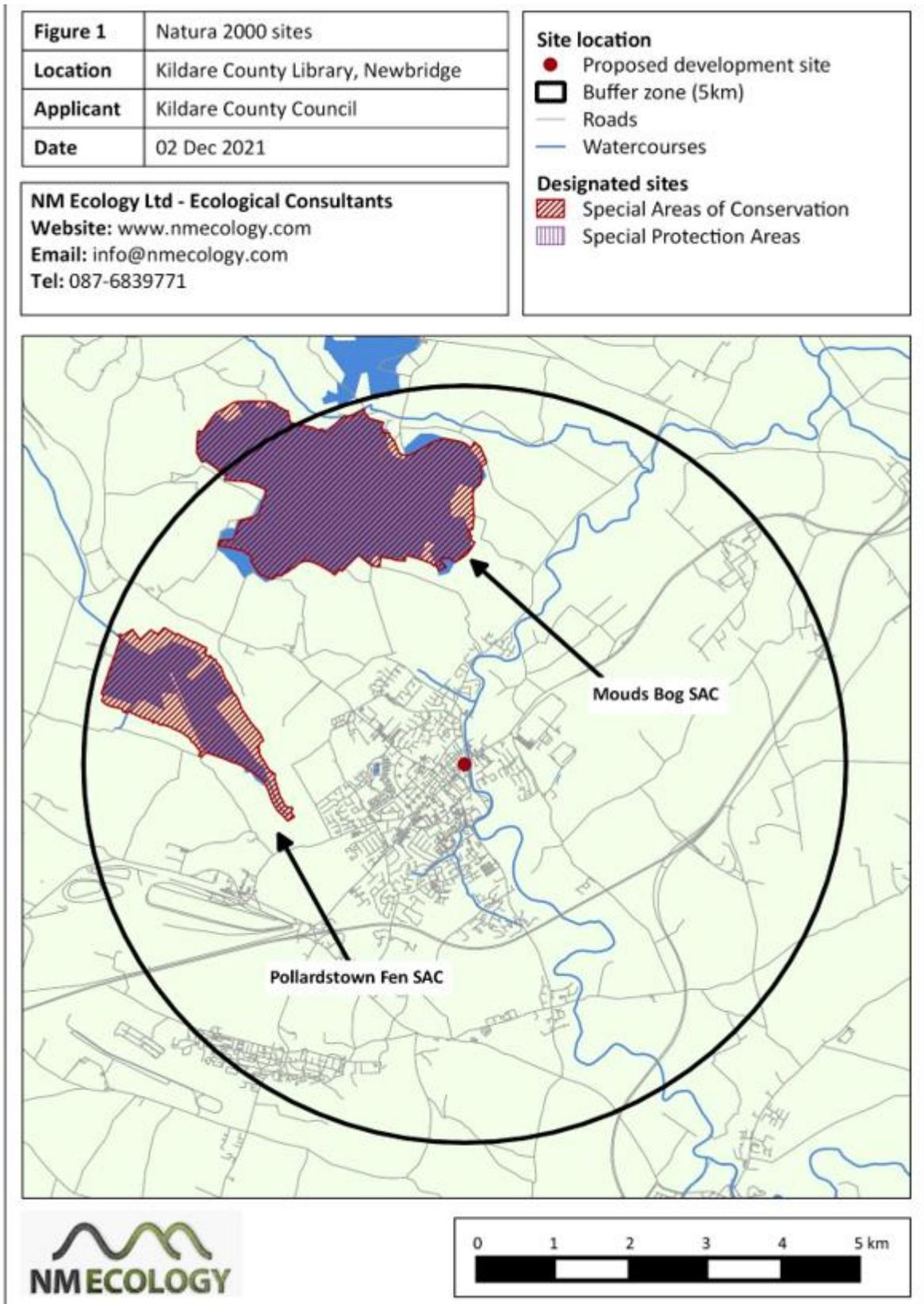


Figure 15: Special Areas of Conservation within 5km of the subject site

***Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?***

There are no recorded monuments situated within the site boundaries or immediately adjoining the site.

The subject site includes a protected structure (the original library building dating from the 1930's). The proposals provide for the repair, refurbishment and integration of the Protected Structure within the overall proposals for the delivery of the redevelopment of the Kildare County Library at Newbridge. All of the works to the Protected Structure will be undertaken in a sensitive manner under the supervision of appropriately qualified building conservation specialists in accordance with best practice conservation principles. The Protected Structure will be retained in active use as a result of the proposed development and the proposed development will ensure its sensitive upgrading, repair and refurbishment.

**4.6 Preliminary Examination Conclusion**

Following preliminary examination, the planning authority is recommended to conclude that there are doubts regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and to proceed to stage 3 a screening determination.

## 5 Schedule 7 Assessment and Schedule 7A Information

Where the requirement to carry out EIA is not excluded at preliminary examination stage, the planning authority must carry out a screening determination.

In making its screening determination, the competent authority must have regard to:

- Schedule 7 criteria,
- Schedule 7A information,
- Any further relevant information on the characteristics of the development and its likely significant effects on the environment submitted by the applicant,
- Any mitigation measures proposed by the applicant,
- The available results, where relevant, of preliminary verifications or assessments carried out under other relevant EU environmental legislation, including information submitted by the applicant on how the results of such assessments have been taken into account, and
- The likely significant effects on certain sensitive ecological sites.

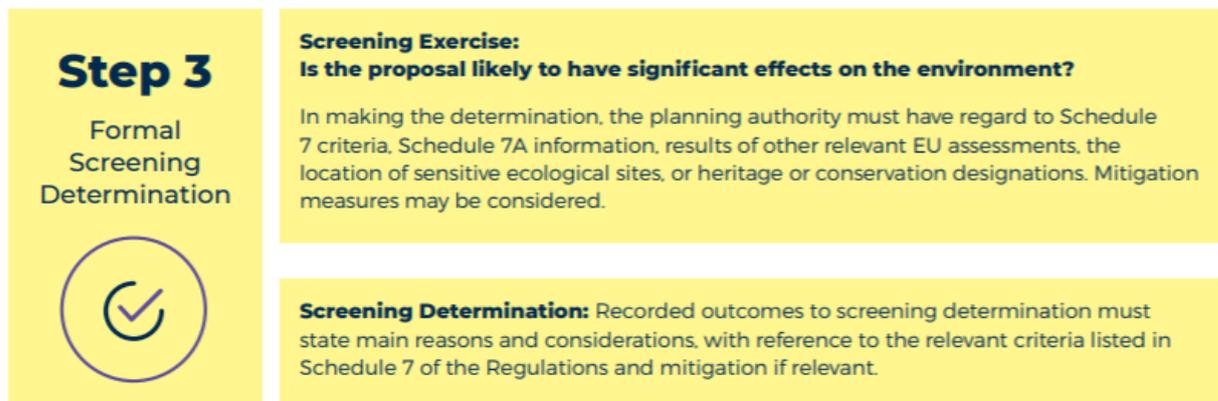


Figure 16: Extract from OPR Guidance Note

### 5.1 Schedule 7 criteria

#### 5.1.1 1. Characteristics of proposed development

OPR guidance –“If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent):

*The characteristics of proposed development, in particular—*

**(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,**

The full nature and extent of the proposed development are set out in the statutory notices.

The proposed development seeks the redevelopment of the Kildare County Library facilities. It provides for the repair and refurbishment of the existing Protected Structure within the subject site (the original library building), the demolition of a modern library extensions, the construction of a new 3 storey library extension and the provision of external associated

ancillary spaces including a rain garden, sensory garden, courtyard area, car parking and public realm improvements.

***(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,***

Section 4.4 (iv) of this report identifies relevant planning applications for the assessment of cumulative effects. Together, with the permission sought at the subject site and the other permitted developments in the vicinity of the site are not likely to give rise to significant effects.

***(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,***

The proposed development includes the demolition of an existing single storey element of the existing library facilities. The applicant and JCA Conservation Architects can confirm that the part of the library to be demolished is in a poor state of repair and does not form part of the original library building (which is a Protected Structure).

***(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,***

A flood risk assessment prepared by Aecom has been prepared in respect of the proposed development. The Flood risk assessment identifies that the subject site is located outside of flood events and is considered to be located within Flood Zone C.

The Flood risk Assessment report states that:

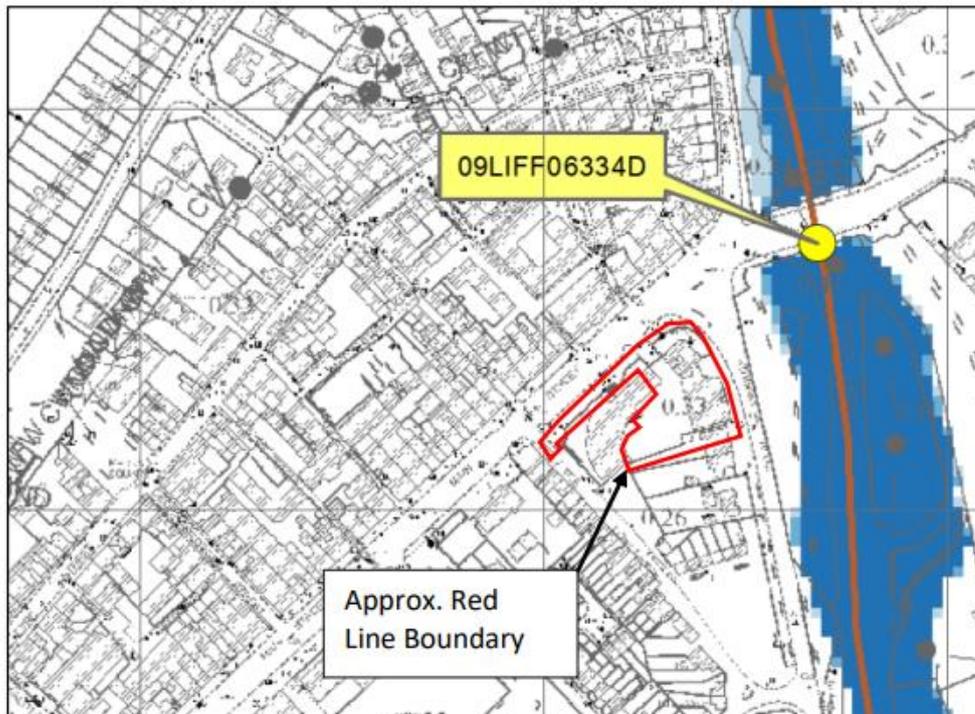
*“Nevertheless, it is noted that the water level for the Fluvial node 09LIFF06334D in Table 4.2.1 is 84.72m OD, for which it would be prudent to set all FFL’s within the site to minimum 85.22m OD, if possible, to allow a 500mm freeboard above the 0.1% AEP (1 in 1000- year return period) storm event”.*

Section 5.2.7 of Aecom’s Flood risk assessment states:

*“As part of this assessment, the risk of flooding has been reviewed from a number of possible sources including, fluvial, pluvial and groundwater. Flooding from coastal or tidal sources is not considered to be of significance to the proposed site due to the inland nature and distance from the coastline (47 kilometres).*

*Based on the information reviewed the site has been concluded as Flood Zone C, with the following comments:*

- A minimum proposed FFL of 85.22mOD should be used for all buildings in order to ensure the site is sufficiently protected against flooding and where possible, external levels should also be maintained above this freeboard. It is noted that the existing building has an existing FFL of 86.47mOD which is higher than the required freeboard level.*
- The ground investigation is to be reviewed, once received, for any Approx. Red indication of a high water table”.*



**Figure 17: Extract from CFRAM Fluvial Flood Extent Source: Extract from Figure 2.4.4 of the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Aecom -Extract from CFRAM Fluvial Flood Extents**

The proposed development seeks the creation of enhanced, modernised cultural facilities at the subject site. The proposals includes the careful refurbishment and conservation of the existing Protected Structure (the original library building) within the site, the demolition of an existing modern extension and the construction of a new library extension all of which will create a redeveloped County Library building within Newbridge. The proposal includes the provision of improved public realm areas as well as significant landscaped proposals inclusion the provision of a rain garden, a sensory garden and outdoor amenity spaces associated with the Library. The proposed development will maintain the existing cultural facility in the form of a Library use within the subject site and will make an efficient use of scarce development land that is aligned to the development patterns in the town centre of Newbridge.

The proposed development will be constructed with standard building materials, including concrete, timber, glass, and different forms of metals.

The development will generate water demands during the construction and operational phases of the development. Water will be supplied from the public watermain which has been agreed with Kildare County Council and Irish Water.

During the construction the contractor will be required to implement standard measures during the construction phase in order to minimise adverse effects to the sites water and to reduce runoff and prevent pollutants entering the any watercourses. During construction, the contractor will take all appropriate measures to protect against accidental spillages or pollution, details of measures which will be adhered to during the construction phase are set out in the Construction Management Plan which is to be prepared. This will set out measures to be taken in the event of a pollution incident (such as odour, dust and emissions). During the operational phase, the applicant can confirm that the that foul water will continue to be discharged to a local authority combined sewer on Athgarvann Road, and conveyed to the Osberstown Waste Water

Treatment Works (part of the Upper Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme). Surface water will continue to be discharged to the River Liffey.

***(e) the production of waste,***

The applicant can confirm that where it arises all inert material and non-hazardous waste will be disposed of from the site in accordance with the categorisation of waste and in accordance with the relevant licencing and regulatory requirements. This will be set out and confirmed within the Construction Management Plan associated with the proposed development.

Normal builders waste (rubble, excess building materials) will be generated during the demolition and construction phase.

During the operation, the proposed development will give rise to general non-hazardous waste including paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, electrical equipment and electrical waste commensurate with the redevelopment of the subject site .

As set out in the AA Screening report (section 2.2) prepared by NM Ecology:

*“Foul water will continue to be discharged to a local authority combined sewer on Athgarvan Road, and conveyed to the Osberstown Waste Water Treatment Works (part of the Upper Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme). Surface water will continue to be discharged to the River Liffey”.*

***(f) pollution and nuisances,***

The construction phase of the project which includes demolition and construction has the potential to be a source of pollution in relation to water, noise, vibration, dust and traffic. The applicant (Kildare County Council) will ensure that best practice methods and strategies are implemented and any management strategies and mitigation measures will be outlined in the Construction Management Plan relating to the proposed development. The dust control measures will relate to general site management, surrounding roads, earth removal/excavation and stockpiling.

A variety of items of plant will be in use during the demolition and construction. There will be vehicular movements to and from the subject site that will make use of existing roads road network. Due to the nature of these activities, there is potential for the generation of elevated levels of noise within the existing urban context at the subject site. Specific noise control measures will be set out as part of the Construction Management Plan.

There is some potential for noise pollution during the operational phase in the form of delivery vehicles and parking cars. However, the ambient noise levels at this urban site will mask this noise during the daytime.

The potential sources of pollution can be mitigated, and these measures will be addressed in the Construction Management Plan. With the implementation of mitigating measures at this urban site, there are no likely residual significant effects on the environment.

***(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge,***

Standard construction practices will be employed throughout the demolition and construction phase. The subject site is not located in close proximity to any Seveso site. A flood risk assessment report has been prepared by Aecom which sets out that the proposal is not located within a Flood Zone A or B and are not therefore at risk of fluvial flooding. Aecom have identified that the subject site is located within Flood Zone C. There is no significant risk of accidents or disasters.

***(h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).***

The subject site includes existing buildings and areas of hard standing. There is no waste in the soil and subsoil within the subject site. Contaminants have the potential to have significant effects on human health. The contractor at the subject site will ensure that in the event that any waste arises from the subject site that it will be removed in a manner which meets the appropriate standards and best practice. This will be addressed in the Construction Management Plan for the proposed development. It can be concluded that with these mitigating measures, there would be no significant effect upon human health.

There are no Seveso / COMAH sites in the vicinity of this location.

AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology states that:

*“An appraisal of potential pathways for impacts on Natura 2000 sites is provided below. As part of this appraisal it is important to note that the Site consists almost entirely of buildings and hard surfaces, which alter natural surface water and groundwater processes. All rainwater on the Site is collected in gutters and drains and discharged to the River Liffey. This effectively isolates the Site from underlying groundwater.*

*The Pollardstown Fen SAC is located 2.3 km west of the Site. It has been designated to protect fen habitats (wetlands fed by mineral-rich water) and whorl snails that occupy these habitats. The Mouds Bog SAC is located 2.5 km north of the Site, and has been designated for the protection of raised bog and associated habitats. Neither SAC is associated with the River Liffey, so there is no surface water pathway. As discussed above, the existing surface water drainage network within the Site will negate any potential pathways via groundwater. Pathways via land or air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.*

*The River Liffey could potentially provide a very distant hydrological connection to some Natura 2000 sites in Dublin Bay. However, there is more than 60 km of intervening watercourse between the Site and Dublin Bay, so any pollutants would be reduced to negligible concentrations before they could reach the Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, this is not considered to be a viable surface water connection. All other pathways can be screened out due to the distances involved.*

*In summary, no potential pathways were identified to any Natura 2000 sites.”*

### 5.1.2 2. Location of proposed development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—

**(a) the existing and approved land use,**

The subject site currently provides for cultural use in the form of a long established library facility which has been at this location since the 1930's and has been the subject of modifications including the provision of a modern extension (which is to be demolished as part of the proposed development). The existing land use is to be maintained at the subject site, which is a town centre location within Newbridge. The proposed development provides for enhancement of the existing Library which incorporates the existing protected structure in line with best practice building conservation methods.

**(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,**

The construction of the project will be managed and carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced nominated contractor commissioned by Kildare County Council who will ensure that best practice measures are used in terms of the subject site and its environs to ensure the safeguarding of natural resources (such as soil, land and water).

The AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology states that:

*“An appraisal of potential pathways for impacts on Natura 2000 sites is provided below. As part of this appraisal it is important to note that the Site consists almost entirely of buildings and hard surfaces, which alter natural surface water and groundwater processes. All rainwater on the Site is collected in gutters and drains and discharged to the River Liffey. This effectively isolates the Site from underlying groundwater.*

*The Pollardstown Fen SAC is located 2.3 km west of the Site. It has been designated to protect fen habitats (wetlands fed by mineral-rich water) and whorl snails that occupy these habitats. The Mouds Bog SAC is located 2.5 km north of the Site, and has been designated for the protection of raised bog and associated habitats. Neither SAC is associated with the River Liffey, so there is no surface water pathway. As discussed above, the existing surface water drainage network within the Site will negate any potential pathways via groundwater. Pathways via land or air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.*

*The River Liffey could potentially provide a very distant hydrological connection to some Natura 2000 sites in Dublin Bay. However, there is more than 60 km of intervening watercourse between the Site and Dublin Bay, so any pollutants would be reduced to negligible concentrations before they could reach the Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, this is not considered to be a viable surface water connection. All other pathways can be screened out due to the distances involved.*

*In summary, no potential pathways were identified to any Natura 2000 sites”*

The AA Screening report states that:

*“There is no risk of direct impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Potential pathways for indirect impacts were considered, but none were found to be feasible. Therefore, we conclude that the proposed development will not cause direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites, and thus that Appropriate Assessment is not required”.*

**(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:**

*i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;*

The subject site is located in close proximity to the River Liffey and its banks. The AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology states that:

*“An appraisal of potential pathways for impacts on Natura 2000 sites is provided below. As part of this appraisal it is important to note that the Site consists almost entirely of buildings and hard surfaces, which alter natural surface water and groundwater processes. All rainwater on the Site is collected in gutters and drains and discharged to the River Liffey. This effectively isolates the Site from underlying groundwater.*

*The Pollardstown Fen SAC is located 2.3 km west of the Site. It has been designated to protect fen habitats (wetlands fed by mineral-rich water) and whorl snails that occupy these habitats. The Mouds Bog SAC is located 2.5 km north of the Site, and has been designated for the protection of raised bog and associated habitats. Neither SAC is associated with the River Liffey, so there is no surface water pathway. As discussed above, the existing surface water drainage network within the Site will negate any potential pathways via groundwater. Pathways via land or air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.*

*The River Liffey could potentially provide a very distant hydrological connection to some Natura 2000 sites in Dublin Bay. However, there is more than 60 km of intervening watercourse between the Site and Dublin Bay, so any pollutants would be reduced to negligible concentrations before they could reach the Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, this is not considered to be a viable surface water connection. All other pathways can be screened out due to the distances involved.*

*In summary, no potential pathways were identified to any Natura 2000 sites.”*

*(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;*

The site is not located proximate to a coastal zone or marine environment.

*(iii) mountain and forest areas;*

The subject site is not located in close proximity to a coastal zone or marine environment.

*iv) nature reserves and parks;*

The site is not proximate to nature reserves. The site is located to existing amenity areas along the river Liffey to the east of the site. The AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology sets out

that surface water from the development will be discharged to the River Liffey, as is currently the case and that there are no potential surface water pathways to any Natura 2000 sites.

*(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive;*

The following Natura 2000 sites have been identified in the NM Ecology report:

**Table 4 : Natura 2000 sites within 5 km of the proposed development site**

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
Pollardstown Fen SAC (site code 396)	2.3 km west	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> Petrifying springs with tufa formation, Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> , alkaline fens <b>Annex II species:</b> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> , <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> , <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (both are species of whorl snail)
Mouds Bog SAC (2331)	2.5 km north	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> active raised bogs, degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion

Source: Page 6 and 7 of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology./

The subject site is not used by any protected species for feeding purposes. Direct and indirect pathways to the Natura 2000 sites are examined in the AA screening prepared by NM Ecology.

The AA Screening (section 4.1) states that:

*“The Site is not located within or adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites, so there is no risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or any other direct impacts”.*

The AA screening sets out a conclusion of the stage 1 screening statement which states:

*In Section 3.2.5 of Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:*

**1. AA is not required**

*Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.*

**2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required**

*Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.*

**3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**

*The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected.*

*Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct, indirect or in-combination effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the*

*European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. As a result, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required."*

*(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;*

There are no failures to meet with environmental standards laid down in EU legislation that are relevant to the project.

*(vii) densely populated areas;*

The site is located within the existing urban settling of Newbridge town centre. The existing Library facilities have been located at the subject site since 1930's. Newbridge had a population of 22,543 in 2016 and the NTA anticipates that this will increase to 31,167 by 2035. The proposed development will result in the enhancement and delivery of upgraded cultural facilities in the form of a new County Kildare Library which incorporates the existing Protected Structure within the subject site as well as new built elements. The site is located in an urban context which is served with public transport, commercial, services and other community facilities. It is supported by existing educational, residential, retail, services, churches, in the broader area and recreational facilities.

The subject site includes outdoor areas which are ancillary to the library use and provided for improvements to the public realm surrounding the library .

*(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.*

There is a protected structure within the subject site (the original Library building) which will be conserved and integrated into the newly redeveloped Library facilities in line with best conservation practice principles. The design of the new built elements of the proposed development have been carefully considered in the context of the existing Protected Structure within the subject site. The applicant has engaged the services of a conservation architect (JCA Conservation Architects) as an integral part of the project team in order to ensure that best practice building conservation principles are adhered to. No noted archaeological monuments are located on the site or adjoining the site.

### 5.1.3 Types and characteristics of Potential Impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development relate to those criteria set out in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of section 171A of the Act, taking into account—

- (a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- (b) the nature of the impact,
- (c) the transboundary nature of the impact,
- (d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,
- (e) the probability of the impact,
- (f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,
- (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section

- 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,
- (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

The OPR's Practice Note on EIA Screening considers what are **likely significant effects**. Refer to Box 1 below.

### Box 1: Likely Significant Effects

**1. Are the effects identified likely to occur?**

This refers to the effects that are expected to occur, those that can be reasonably foreseen as normal consequences of project construction and operation, including where relevant associated demolition, remediation and/or restoration.

**2. Are the effects, which are likely to occur, significant?**

EPA draft guidelines define a '*significant effect*' as an effect, which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment. The same draft guidelines provide useful definitions in relation to quality of effects, significance of effects, context of effects, probability of effects and duration and frequency of effects.

**3. Will identified likely significant effects impact the environment?**

Likely significant effects should cover the direct and indirect, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the project.

The factors of the environment to be described and assessed are:

- **population and human health;**
- **biodiversity, with particular attention to protected species and habitats;**
- **land, soil, water, air and climate;**
- **material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; and**
- **the interaction between the factors.**

#### ***1. Population and Human Health***

The subject site is located within Newbridge centre which had a population of 22,543 in 2016. The EC guidance relating to the implementation of the 2014 EIA Directive considers issues of human health and states:

*“Human health is a very broad factor that would be highly project dependent. The notion of human health should be considered in the contexts of other factors in Article 3(1) of the EIA Directive and thus environmentally relates health issues (such as health effects caused by release of toxic substances to the environment, health risks arising from major hazards associated with the Project, effects caused by changes in disease vectors caused by the project, changes in living conditions, effects on vulnerable groups, exposure to traffic noise or air pollutants) are obvious aspects to study”*

The proposed development includes the demolition of a modern one storey extension to the library (the Protected Structure is to be refurbished) and there is no contaminated material (such as soil located within the subject site) at the subject site. Other general construction related impacts relate to noise, vibrations and traffic. Construction activities may require the use of potentially harmful material, such as fuels and other such substances and give rise to waste for disposal. Such use will be typical of construction sites. These impacts will be mitigated and measures indicated/set out in the projects Construction Management Plan.

In the unlikely event that contaminants are found within the subject site they will be removed from the site and dispose of arising waste in accordance with the relevant regulations and to licenced waste management facilities.

Other potential effects on the environment arising from the operation of the development is the management and collection of waste and additional traffic arising from the development. These are not deemed to be significant effects on the environment within the meaning of the Directive.

There are no likely significant residual effects resulting from the proposed development in relation to population and human health.

## **II. Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive**

The AA screening report indicates that:

*“The Site is not located within or adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites, so there is no risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or any other direct impacts”.*

*The AA screening concludes that:*

### **Conclusion of Stage 1 – Screening Statement:**

*In Section 3.2.5 of Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:*

#### **1. AA is not required**

*Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.*

#### **2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required**

*Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.*

#### **3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**

*The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected.*

*Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct, indirect or in-combination effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, it can be excluded on the*

*basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. As a result, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required.*

### **III. Land, soil, water, air and climate**

The impact upon land during construction will be temporary and not significant. There will be a long-term positive impact upon the land in that the existing Library use within the site will be maintained and enhanced cultural facilities in the form of a redevelopment of the County Kildare Library. This includes the refurbishment of the Protected Structure within the subject site.

Any hazardous material arising during construction will be removed to a licenced facility by the contractor as per the appropriate standards and best practice.

There are potential spills to ground water during the construction phase. These potential impacts will be mitigated through standard construction methods and the removal of any contaminated surface and ground water off site during construction (as necessary).

There is demolition arising from the proposed development which could potentially result in air borne pollutants arising. This will be addressed within the Construction Management Plan for the proposed development and all best practice measures will be implemented within the subject site.

There are no likely significant effects upon global or micro climate as a result of the development.

The Construction Management Plan will detail various measures for the control and management of issues arising.

There are no likely significant residual effects resulting from the proposed development in relation to land, soil, water, air and climate.

### **IV. Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape**

The applicant can confirm in terms of the proposed development: **Foul water** will continue to be discharged to a local authority combined sewer on Athgarvan Road, and conveyed to the Osberstown Waste Water Treatment Works (part of the Upper Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme). **Surface water** will continue to be discharged to the River Liffey.

The applicant can confirm that both the public water supply and foul sewerage have the capacity to accommodate the development without significant effects on the environment.

The proposed redevelopment of the existing Library facilities at the subject site will provide improved cultural facilities while at the same time refurbishing the existing Protected Structure (the original Library building).

There are no recorded monuments situated within the site boundaries or immediately adjoining. There is no Architectural Conservation Area located in the vicinity of the subject site.

It is considered that the layout of the new redeveloped development has taken into account the characteristics of this subject site (including the Protected Structure therein) as well as the wider area and will not result in negative visual impacts. The proposal will represent a positive

redevelopment of an existing cultural facility while ensuring that the existing Protected Structure is maintained in active use at the subject site.

No significant adverse effects have been identified, no measures are recommended to avoid or prevent such impacts.

**V. Interaction of Effects**

There is potential for interaction of effects during the construction phase in relation to soil, water, biodiversity and human health. The negative impacts arise from potential risk of pollution, dust and noise. However, the applicant can confirm that mitigation measures will be put in place during the construction phase and these measures will be employed in the demolition and construction of the proposed development which will ensure that there are no significant effects on the environment. This will be addressed in the Construction Management Plan relating to the proposed development.

There are no likely significant residual effects resulting from the interaction of effects.

**VI. Cumulative effects**

It is considered that cumulative impacts with other existing and/or approved projects are not likely to cause significant effects on the environment.

No significant adverse effects have been identified, no measures are recommended to avoid or prevent such impacts.

**VII. Transboundary effects**

The proposed development seeks the upgrading and enhancement of existing Library facilities at the subject site. Owing to the scale, nature and location of the proposed development it is considered that there will be no transboundary effects. No mitigating measures are required.

**5.2 Schedule 7A information**

**1 A description of the proposed development, including in particular—**

**(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and**

*Response*

Refer to Section 5.1.1 of this report.

**(b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.**

*Response*

Refer to Section 5.1.2 of this report.

**2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.**

*Response*

Refer to Section 5.1.3 of this report.

**3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—**

**(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant,**

*Response*

The Construction Management Plan relating to the proposed development will set out details of the project hazards/risk and methods of control relating (but not limited to) the following:

- *Smoke and odour*
- *Protection of the public*
- *Construction and Demolition Waste Management*
- *Dust and Emissions control measures*
- *Control and Disposal of Waste Measures*

Following mitigation, it can be concluded that there no likely significant effects on the environment.

The applicant can confirm that waste and emissions arising during the operational phase are not considered to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.

**(e) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.**

*Response*

Refer to 5.1.1. of this report.

**4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.**

*Response*

Please refer to section 5.1 of this report.

### **5.3 Any further relevant information**

***Response –***

Refer to the reports included as part of the proposals.

### **5.4 Any mitigation measures**

The following mitigation measures are proposed as part of the proposed development:

- The Construction Management Plan will set out a series of construction phase measures/mitigation measures which will be adhered to in accordance with best practice principles.

## 5.5 Available results under other relevant EU environmental legislation,

All list of the references/data used in the preparation of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology is set out on page 10 of the AA Screening report.

Other relevant EU environmental legislation may include:

- SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]
- Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]
- Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- Ambient Air Quality Directive and Heavy Metals in the Ambient Air Directive
- Industrial Emissions Directive
- Seveso Directive
- Trans-European Networks in Transport, Energy and Telecommunication
- EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC

**Table 5: Other relevant EU environmental legislation**

Directive	Results
SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]	The proposed development is located on lands which have been zoned within the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the Newbridge Local Area Plan (extended to 2021). These have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]	<p>An appropriate assessment (AA) screening report prepared by NM Ecology has been prepared:</p> <p><b>Conclusion of Stage 1 – Screening Statement:</b></p> <p>In Section 3.2.5 of <i>Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland</i> (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:</p> <p><b>1. AA is not required</b></p> <p>Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.</p>

Directive	Results
	<p><b>2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required</b></p> <p>Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.</p> <p><b>3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain</b></p> <p>The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected.</p> <p>Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct, indirect or in-combination effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the <i>European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011</i>, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. As a result, we conclude that <u>Appropriate Assessment is not required.</u></p>
<p>Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]</p>	<p>The subject site includes existing Library facilities.</p> <p>The AA Screening report (p.5) states that:</p> <p><i>“There are no other substantial watercourses (as per the EPA database of rivers and streams) in the vicinity of the Site (Figure 1). The Liffey flows north-east through County Kildare towards Dublin City, and ultimately meets the coast at Dublin Bay approx. 60 – 70 km downstream of the Site. It is currently of Good status (Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2013-2018) over much of its course, declining to Moderate status in some sections”.</i></p>

Directive	Results
	<p>In terms of the proposed development:</p> <p><b>Foul water</b> will continue to be discharged to a local authority combined sewer on Athgarvan Road, and conveyed to the Osberstown Waste Water Treatment Works (part of the Upper Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme).</p> <p><b>Surface water</b> will continue to be discharged to the River Liffey.</p>
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	The site is located inland, away from the coast, there is no likely impact given the distance.
Ambient Air Quality Directive and Heavy Metals in the Ambient Air Directive	n/a to proposed development
Industrial Emissions Directive	n/a to proposed development
Seveso Directive	There are no Seveso sites within the site nor in the vicinity of the subject site
Trans-European Networks in Transport, Energy and Telecommunication	n/a to proposed development
EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC	<p>A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared by Aecom in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the County Kildare Library at Newbridge, this has informed the design of the proposed development at the subject site. The development will be protected against flooding. No flood risk arises.</p>

## 5.6 Likely significant effects on certain sensitive ecological sites

Sensitive areas include:

### ***i) a European site,***

#### *Response*

An appropriate assessment (AA) screening report has been prepared in respect of the proposed development. The AA screening document prepared by NM ecology concludes:

*“In Section 3.2.5 of Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:*

#### **1. AA is not required**

*Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.*

#### **2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required**

*Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.*

#### **3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**

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*Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct, indirect or in-combination effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. As a result, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required”.*

There will be no potentially significant effects on a designated European site and that a Stage 2 NIS is not required as confirmed by the AA Screening prepared by NM Ecology.

### ***ii) an area which is the subject of a notice under Section 16(2)(b) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 (No. 38 of 2000),***

#### *Response*

No likely significant effects on areas subject to a notice under Section 16(2)(b) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 have been identified.

### ***iii) an area designated as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA) under Section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000),***

#### *Response*

No likely significant effects on a Natural Heritage Areas have been identified.

### ***iv) land established or recognised as a nature reserve within the meaning of Section 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act 1976 (No. 39 of 1976),***

*Response*

No likely significant effects on a nature reserve have been identified.

***v) land designated as a refuge for flora or as a refuge for fauna under Section 17 of the Wildlife Act 1976,***

*Response*

No likely significant effects on a refuge for flora or a refuge for fauna have been identified.

***vi) a place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation or protection of which is an objective of a development plan or local area plan, draft development plan or draft local area plan, or proposed variation of a development plan, for the area in which the development is proposed,***

*Response*

The AA Screening document has not identified any likely significant effect on a place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation or protection of which is an objective of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 or the Newbridge Local Area Plan (extended to 2021).

***vii) a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).***

The AA Screening document has not identified any likely significant effect on a pNHA.

## 6 Screening Conclusion

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development which is below the thresholds set out in Class 10 of Part 2 of Schedule 5, the criteria in Schedule 7, the information provided in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and the following:

- The scale, nature and location of the proposed impacts
- The potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures
- The results of the any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment

It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and it is recommended that environmental impact assessment report is not required.

