PROPOSED LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, GALWAY PORT AT LOUGH ATALIA ROAD, GALWAY CITY

EIAR Volume 1 Non-Technical Summary

The Land Development Agency

Date: 04-09-2025

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) non-technical summary has been prepared by Synergy Environmental Limited T/A DNV (hereafter referred to as 'DNV') for the Land Development Agency (LDA) (The Applicant), who is seeking a planning permission from Galway City Council (GCC), for a Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) of 356 no. residential apartments, a crèche and 2 no. café/restaurant units and 1 no. retail unit on 1.621 hectare site in Galway Port at Dock Road and Lough Atalia Road, Galway City.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process of identifying and assessing the likely environmental, social and economic effects of a proposed development project, considering both negative and positive effects. EIAs also involve finding ways to reduce negative effects and further improve beneficial effects. It ensures that planning decisions are made taking into account the environmental effects and with engagement from stakeholders.

This EIAR presents the EIA process which has been undertaken in line with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

The structure of the environmental impact assessment that accompanies the planning application is set out in the following three volumes:

- Volume 1: Non-technical summary;
- Volume 2: Environmental impact assessment report; and
- Volume 3: Supporting technical appendices.

Purpose of the Non-Technical Summary

This Non-Technical Summary is a requirement under the European Union Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive) for all projects that have been subject to an EIA.

This EIAR describes the Proposed Development, the EIA process and summarises the likely significant environmental effects that would be caused by the Proposed Development and the associated mitigation measures arising as a result of the Proposed Development.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Process

An EIAR has been carried out on behalf of the LDA based on desktop studies, site visits, surveys and site-specific investigations.

The EIAR outlines any necessary mitigation and monitoring measures required to avoid, reduce or offset any potentially significant effects identified.

Following the consideration of mitigation measures, the EIAR will describe any residual effects that may occur from the Proposed Development.

The EIAR and accompanying planning application are being submitted for consideration to GCC, which is the Competent Authority for the Proposed Development.

The EIAR authoring team is set out in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1 EIAR Project Team

No.	Chapter	Consultant Name and address	Specialist Area
1	**Introduction and Methodology**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9T Laura Griffin	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
2	**Description of the Proposed Development**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9T Laura Griffin	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
3	**Planning and Development Context**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Gráinne Ryan	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
4	**Population and Human Health**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Michelle Gaffney	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
5	**Biodiversity**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Ciara Barry-Hannon	Ecological Consultancy
6	**Land and Soils**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Nuria Manzanas	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
7	**Hydrology and Hydrogeology**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Nuria Manzanas	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
8	**Air Quality**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Laura Griffin	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
9	**Climate**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Aoife Gillen	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
10	**Noise and Vibration**	Wave Dynamics, Unit 202, Nesta Business Centre, Old Airport Rd, Santry, Dublin, D09 HP96 Cathal Reck	Acoustic Consultancy Services
11	**Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**	Model Works, The Old Courtyard, Newtownpark Ave, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, A94 YD61 Richard Butler	Full-service architectural presentation and analysis studio
12	**Material Assets - Traffic and Transport**	NRB Consulting Engineers, First Floor, Apollo Building, Dundrum Road, Dundrum, Dublin 14 Barry McMahon	Traffic and Transporation Assessment, Roads Design and Consulting Engineers

No.	Chapter	Consultant Name and address	Specialist Area
13	**Material Assets – Waste and Utilities**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Darragh Grant and Michelle Gaffney	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
14	**Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**	John Cronin and Associates, No. 3A Westpoint Trade Centre, Ballincollig, Co. Cork Martin McGonigle	Archaeology and Heritage Consultancy
15	**Risk Management**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Laura Griffin	Multi-disciplinary environmental, planning and heritage resource management consultancy
16	**Interactions**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Aisling Jones	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
17	**Mitigation and Monitoring**	DNV, 3D Core C, The Plaza, Park West, D12F9TN Darragh Grant	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
NTS	Non-Technical Summary	Input from all above consultants and compiled by DNV	Multidisciplinary Planning and Environmental Consultants
App	Appendices		

2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Site Location

The site of the Proposed Development is approximately 1.621 hectares and is located within the existing operational area of Galway Port at Dock Road and Lough Atalia Road, Galway City. The site also extends to include parts of Dock Road and Lough Atalia Road to the southwest and northwest, respectively for road infrastructure works and water services and infrastructure works.

Figure 2-1 shows a drawing for the site location.

The site is somewhat irregular in shape and is generally bound by the Lough Atalia inlet/outlet to the east; by Dock Road to the south and southwest; and by lands in use for port activities and as a service station to the west. The site extends to include part of Lough Atalia Road and Dock Road for road infrastructure and water services infrastructure works.

The site is currently used for storage of wind turbine parts and bus parking, with the depot building for the latter present at the site's northeastern extent. Previously, it was used as a fuel storage compound with tanks for petrol, diesel and kerosene, although these features have been removed to ground level. Structures currently on-site include a 2-storey office-type building at the site's northern extent (the aforementioned bus depot), a single-storey sub-station building to the southwest (understood to be a substation) and a pump-station to the south (adjacent to the bridge traversing the Lough Atalia inlet/outlet).

Galway Bay Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (000268) and Inner Galway Bay Special Protection Area (SPA) (004031) are adjoining the Proposed Development site boundary, while Lough Corrib SAC (000297) is located directly downstream of the site.

While mapping data indicates some overlap with the Annex I - 1130 estuaries habitat (see Figure 2-2), this is considered a digitisation error, as the site comprises built land and does not support any Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats associated with these designated European sites.

In reality, the site is characterised by artificial surfaces, disturbed ground, and species-poor vegetation, and is not functionally connected to the surrounding SACs or SPAs. This confirms that the site does not support habitats of European conservation importance.

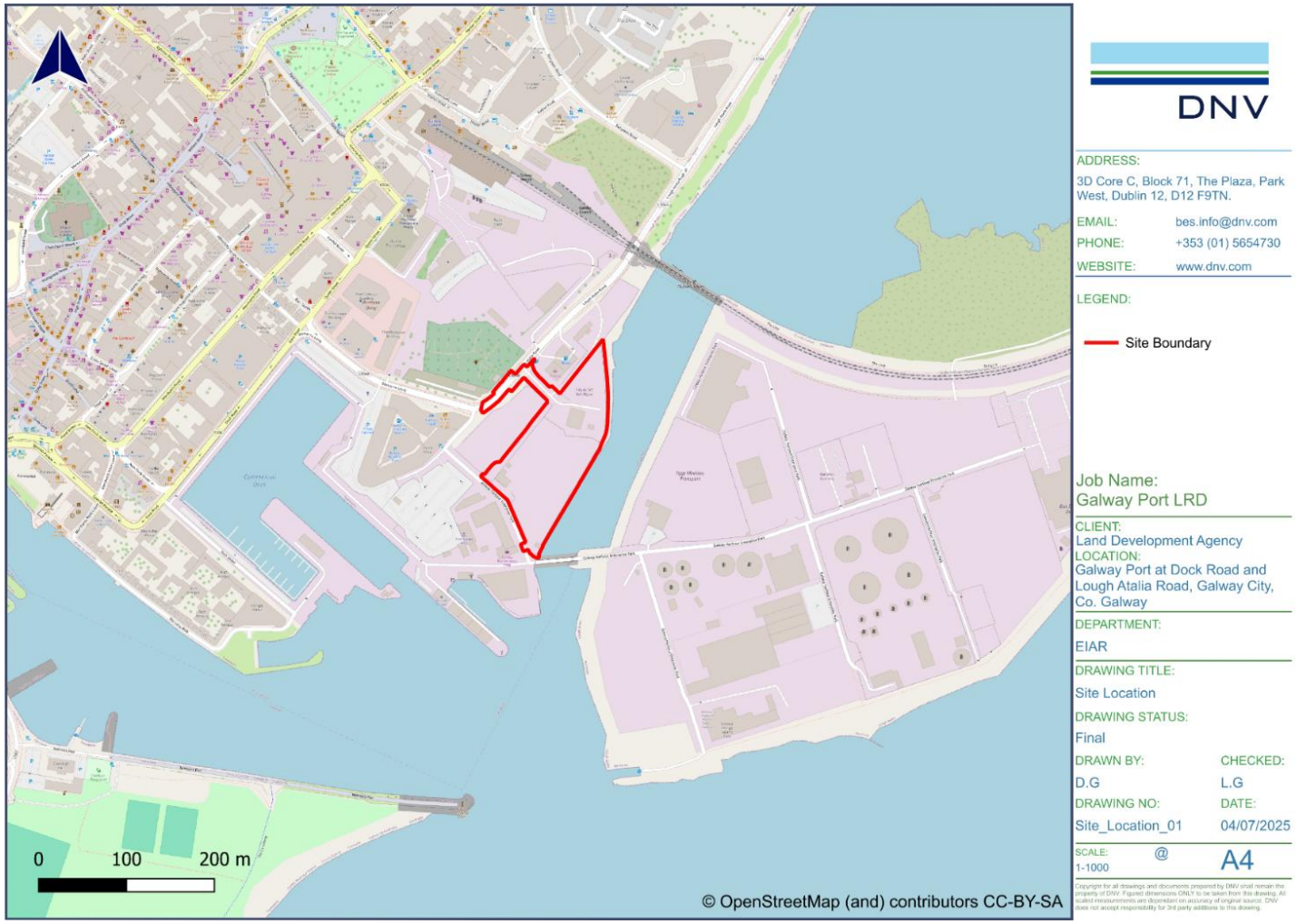

Figure 2-1 Site Location

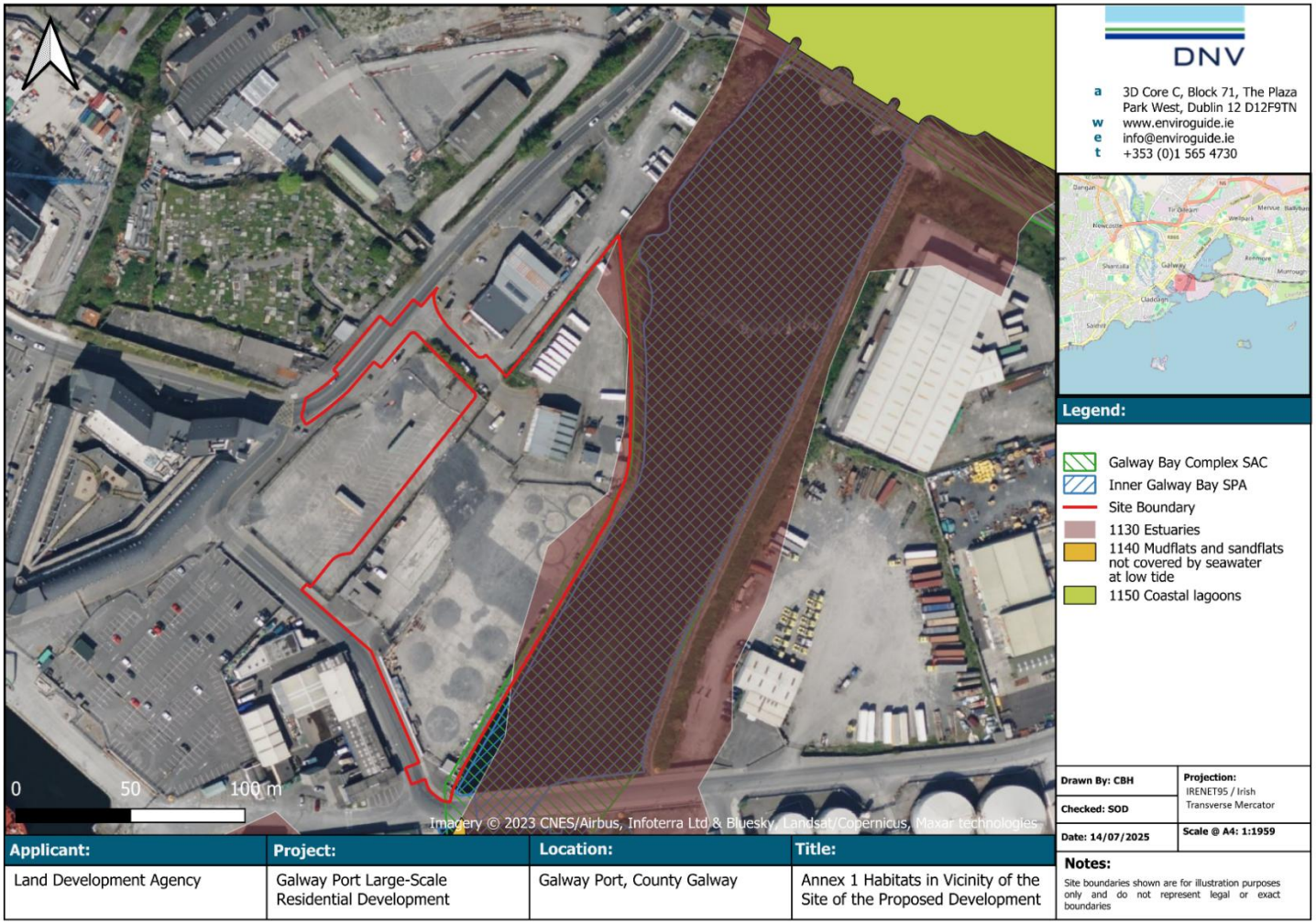

Figure 2-2 Annex 1 Habitats in Vicinity of the Proposed Development

Project Description

The Proposed Development principally consists of:

- The demolition of the existing office / bus depot building (370.2 sq m) and ancillary building (26.0 sq m);
- The partial demolition of the existing ESB sub-station and ancillary building (67.4 sq m);
- The demolition of existing boundary walls at the south-west and north-west; and
- The construction of a mixed-use development.

The proposed mixed-use development primarily comprises:

- 356 No. residential apartments (172 No. 1-bed, 169 No. 2-bed and 15 No. 3-bed);
- Crèche (255.9 sq m);
- 2 No. café/restaurant units (totalling 428.4 sq m) and 1 No. retail unit (156.0 sq m).

The Proposed Development has a total floor area of 32,096.0 sq m and is primarily proposed in 4 No. blocks (identified as A–D) that generally range in height from 6 No. to 13 No. storeys: Block A ranges from 6 No. to 9 No. storeys; Block B ranges from 6 No. to 11 No. storeys; Block C is 6 No. storeys; and Block D ranges from 6 No. to 13 No. storeys.

The Proposed Development also includes:

- New internal street and pedestrian network, including a one-way vehicular route at the north-western side of the site and new junctions with Dock Road at the south-west and with the access road from Lough Atalia at the north-west;
- Upgrades to Lough Atalia Road and the access road from it at the north-west of the site, including the provision of a new toucan pedestrian/cycle crossing at Lough Atalia Road; upgrades to the footpath and road interface with Dock Road to the south-west;
- 37 No. car parking spaces;
- 1 No. set-down/delivery bay;
- 741 No. cycle parking spaces;
- Hard and soft landscaping, including as public open spaces and communal amenity spaces;
- Private amenity spaces as balconies and terraces facing all directions; boundary treatments;
- Public lighting;
- Bin stores;
- Double sub-station;
- Plant rooms; green roofs;
- Rooftop lift overruns and plant;
- Rooftop telecommunications, plant and enclosure at Block C;
- Recladding of the existing sub-station and pumping station; and

- All associated works above and below ground.

The proposed site layout is detailed in Figure 2-3. This figure is included in Appendix 2-2, for further reference.

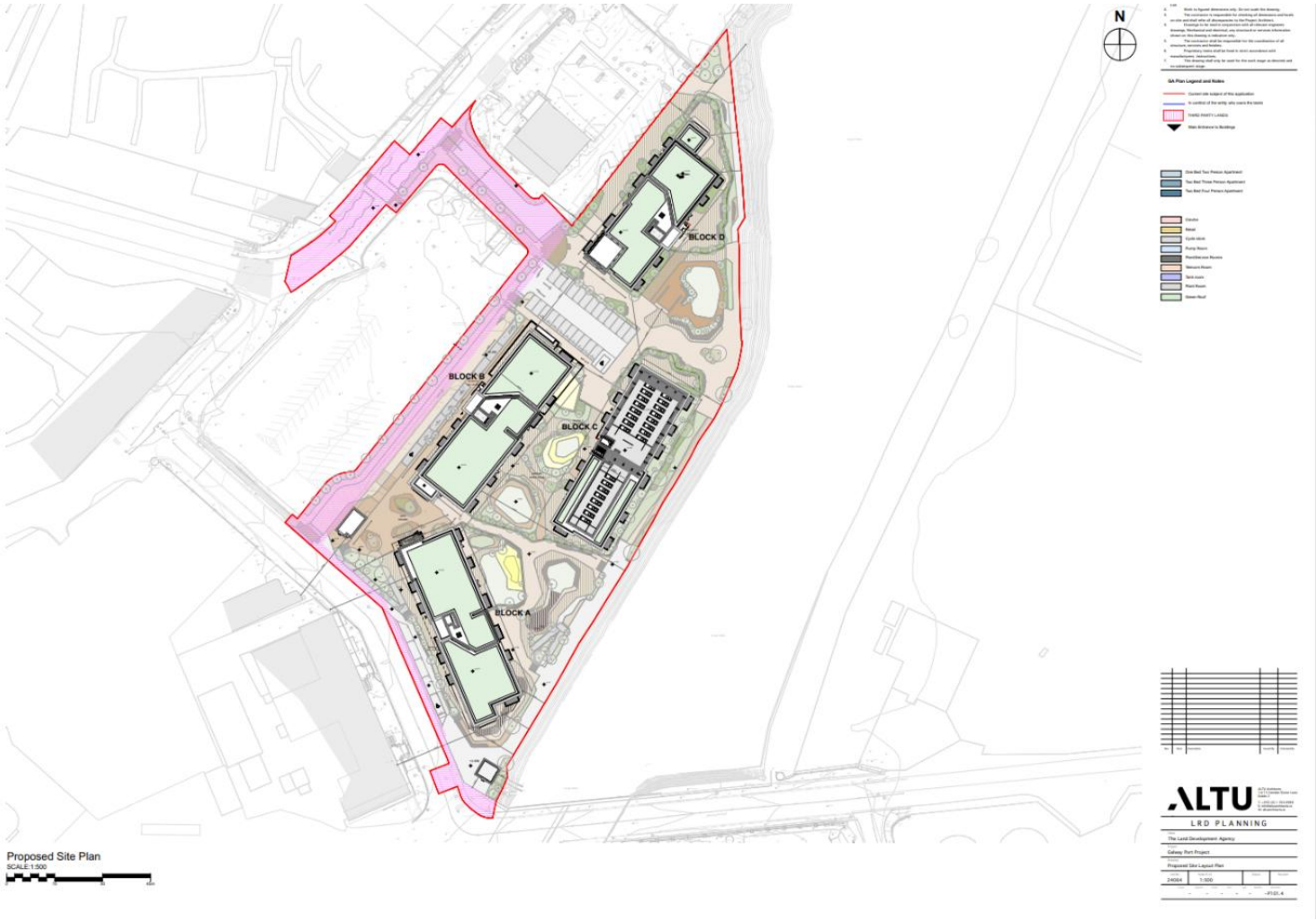

Figure 2-3 Proposed Site Layout (Altu Architects, 2025)

Construction Phase

The Proposed Development will be executed in three distinct phases to facilitate a staged completion and occupation. The proposed sequence of construction outlined below is subject to confirmation once the building contract has been awarded and on completion of the Detailed Construction Management Plan for agreement with Galway City Council (GCC). The duration of the demolition phase is anticipated to span approximately 3 months, and the overall construction phase is anticipated to span approximately 27 months, starting with Blocks A and B, followed by Blocks C and D.

Demolition Phase (Approximately 3 months):

- Demolition of the existing office / bus depot building (370.2 sq m) and ancillary building (26.0 sq m);
- Partial demolition of the existing ESB sub-station and ancillary building (67.4 sq m); and
- Demolition of existing boundary walls at the south-west and north-west of the site.

Construction Phase 1 (Approximately 15 months):

- Construction of Blocks A and B (186 no. units);
- Road works along Dock Road;
- New internal street and parking court;
- Upgrade of road adjacent to petrol filling station;
- Installation of toucan crossing and associated footpath; and
- Landscaping around public square, courtyard and Lough Atalia Walk.

Construction Phase 2 (Approximately 12 months):

- Construction of Blocks C and D (170 no. residential units); and
- Completion of landscaping, including the remainder of Lough Atalia Walk.

Operational Phase

Upon completion, the Proposed Development will consist of 356 No. residential apartments, a crèche, and 2 No. café/restaurant units, along with associated public realm and landscaping works, including the Lough Atalia Walk. The development will be connected to existing municipal services and infrastructure and managed in accordance with standard residential and commercial practices. Operational activities will primarily include day-to-day residential use, with associated traffic and pedestrian movement typical of an urban setting. No significant environmental impacts or operational risks are anticipated.

Alternatives

Consideration of reasonable alternatives is an important part of the environmental impact assessment process and is necessary to consider the likely environmental effects as a result of a range of development plans for the site within the restrictions in place by environmental and planning conditions.

Alternative Locations

Three possible alternatives have been considered in terms of alternative locations for the Proposed Development.

1. The Do-Nothing Alternative: This option involves leaving the site undeveloped. However, given the site's designation within the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 as part of the 'Inner Harbour Regeneration Site,' and its established role in city centre regeneration, this alternative would forgo substantial urban renewal opportunities and fail to address pressing housing needs.
2. Develop another greenfield site: Developing an alternative greenfield site was considered; however, such sites are typically located outside established urban areas and often lack the level of infrastructure and public services available at the Proposed Development site. The current site benefits from its designation within the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 as part of the 'Inner Harbour Regeneration Site', prioritising urban renewal and efficient use of existing serviced land. The Proposed Development makes optimal use of well-serviced, underutilised urban land in a sustainable location. Therefore, pursuing an alternative greenfield location is not considered the most appropriate option in this context.
3. Purchase another existing site with current planning permission for a similar development: The site's inclusion within the designated 'Inner Harbour Regeneration Site' and its status as a priority regeneration area provide a strong policy-led rationale for its selection.

Having regard to the above alternatives, the selected location is considered to most suitable location for the Proposed Development.

Alternative Uses

The majority of the site is zoned as 'CC – Centre' under the Galway City Development Plan 2023–2029, which seeks to support city centre activities and reinforce its role as the city's primary commercial area. A small portion of the site at Lough Atalia Road is unzoned due to its use for transport infrastructure; proposed development in this area is limited to road and water infrastructure works.

The CC zoning supports a wide range of uses including residential, retail, childcare, cultural, and recreational uses. The Development Plan allows flexibility in interpreting zoning objectives, with emphasis placed on whether a proposed use contributes to the overall zoning aim.

The Proposed Development includes residential units, a crèche, café, and retail space. These uses are either explicitly supported or considered compatible with the CC zoning objective. The mix of uses is intended to enhance city centre vitality, support community needs, and align with sustainable urban development principles such as the '15-minute city' concept. On this basis, alternative land uses were not considered necessary.

Alternative Designs and Layouts

Following receipt of the Large-scale Residential (LRD) Opinion from Galway City Council (GCC), the design team held a follow-up meeting to address architectural and urban design feedback on the Inner Harbour Masterplan. Three alternative site layout options were considered:

- Option 1 retained existing block positions and introduced a new public square but was rejected due to continued fragmentation of the site layout.

- Option 2 reconfigured Block D to enhance street frontage and spatial enclosure but was discounted due to reduced open space and increased visual impact.
- Option 3, involving a modest block realignment to improve permeability and connectivity with Lough Atalia Park, was generally supported by the Council and selected for further development.

Option 3 was chosen as the preferred design and layout alternative because it aligns with the wider masterplan objectives, enhances ecological connectivity, promotes active travel, and improves the quality of public realm and open spaces, thereby providing the most sustainable and contextually appropriate solution.

Alternative Process

Due to the nature of the Proposed Development (i.e. mixed use / primarily residential) where the planning application will be submitted to Galway City Council (GCC) it was not considered necessary to consider alternative processes for the Proposed Development.

3 PLANNING CONTEXT

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the planning and policy context relevant to the Proposed Development at Galway Port. The assessment, carried out by DNV, considers the alignment of the Proposed Development with European, national, regional, and local planning frameworks.

Key policy documents reviewed include the National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region and the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029. The Proposed Development has been evaluated against the objectives and policies outlined in these documents, as well as relevant planning legislation including the Planning and Development Act 2009 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The assessment concludes that the Proposed Development is consistent with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. It supports national and regional growth objectives, aligns with local land use zoning, and contributes to the delivery of compact growth and housing supply. Accordingly, the Proposed Development is considered to be in accordance with the relevant planning and policy framework.

4 POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH

A comprehensive assessment of population and human health has been carried out by DNV to evaluate the potential effects of the Proposed Development. The baseline environment was established by examining the Eyre Square Electoral Division (ED), where the Proposed Development is located, along with the adjacent Lough Atalia ED. These areas were selected to define the study area due to their proximity and relevance to the site, as illustrated in Figure 4-1.

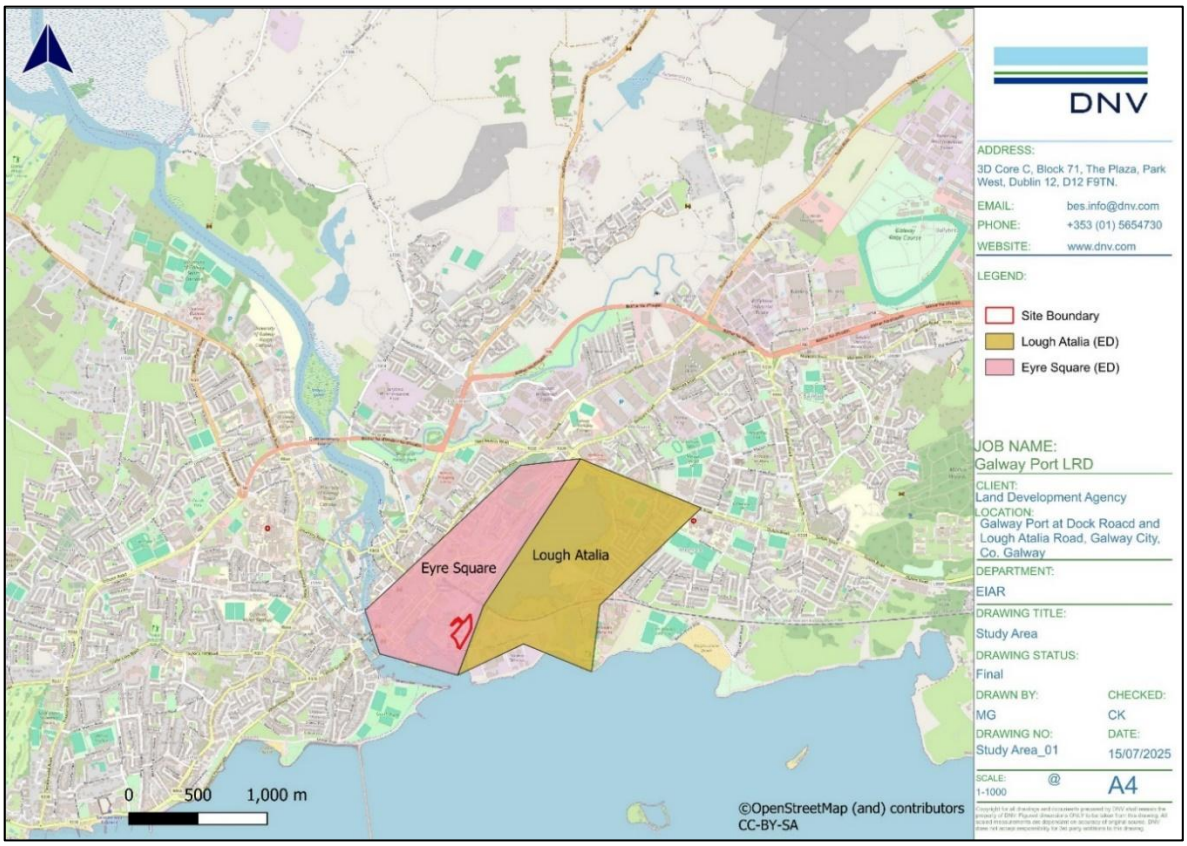

Figure 4-1 Study Area

Overall, the baseline assessment found that the study area broadly reflects population trends in Galway City and the state. The baseline population analysis can be summarised in the points below.

- The study area presents a mixed demographic profile. Eyre Square ED has a high proportion of young, working-age residents, particularly those aged 25–34, while Lough Atalia ED has a more balanced age structure with a notably higher proportion of older adults, particularly those aged 75 and over.
- Employment levels in Eyre Square ED are higher than the Galway City and State averages, with a strong presence of students and young professionals. Lough Atalia ED has lower workforce participation and higher levels of retirement, reflecting its older population.
- Professional and associate professional occupations are the most common employment types across the study area, with both EDs exceeding State averages, highlighting a skilled and resilient workforce.
- Educational attainment is strong in both EDs. Eyre Square ED exceeds both Galway city and State averages in third-level qualifications, while Lough Atalia ED also performs above

the State average, though with slightly higher levels of lower secondary and no formal education.

- Commuting patterns vary between the Electoral Divisions (EDs). Eyre Square ED shows high rates of active travel, particularly walking, due to its central location. Lough Atalia ED has higher reliance on private cars. Most residents in both EDs have short commute times, typically under 45 minutes.
- General health across the study area is positive. While both EDs report slightly lower levels of very good or good health compared to State averages, the figures remain consistent with urban centres and reflect generally favourable health outcomes.

Construction Phase

Through construction activities approximately 100-150 construction jobs will be created. This will increase the number of people working in the study area and some employees may move to the study area to be closer to their place of work. This will have a short term and slight effect on the population statistics. The job creation will also have a positive slight effect on the socio-economic status of the study area as it will support employment levels and employee spending in the surrounding business. The construction phase will also have likely negative effects in the form of risk of contamination of water sources, air quality, dust climate, noise production, change of landscape, new and increased number of construction-related vehicles utilising the road network. Through standard best practice, control measures and mitigation measures identified in the relevant technical chapters, the effects of these disturbances will not be significant. All construction phase effects will be short term in duration as the phase is predicted to last 27 months. Overall, the construction phase is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse effects on population or human health.

Operational Phase

During the operational phase approximately 20 jobs will be created having a positive effect, both directly and indirectly to the local economy and employment. The Proposed Development will provide 356 residential units and will cater for a wide range of people including families, older persons and young couples. This will have a long-term positive impact on population due to the provision of a wide range of dwelling unit types and will cater for a wide cohort of persons. The inclusion of a crèche facility will support young families and working parents, contributing to a more balanced demographic profile.

The most utilised method of transport in the study area when travelling to work is by walking or car, either as a driver or a passenger. Employees and future residents travelling to and from work will increase the number of vehicle trips on the local road network. This has potential to negatively affect air quality, increase traffic related noise levels and cause congestion. These effects will be negative, long term but not significant effects on population and human health. Noise associated with traffic movements and operational phase activities can also negatively impact the population and human health of the surrounding residents. The likely effect of the Proposed Development on noise and vibration and subsequently human health will be direct, long term, negative and imperceptible. The development will support local socio-economic conditions by addressing housing demand and enhancing access to childcare, recreation, and active travel infrastructure.

Overall, the operational phase is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse effects on population or human health.

Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

Although there are no specific mitigation or monitoring measures relating to population and human health, measures detailed in other technical chapters relating to soil, water quality, air quality, climate, noise and vibrations, traffic and landscape and visual, will also work towards ensuring the effects of population and human health are minimised as far as possible.

Residual Effects

No significant negative residual effects on population and human health are anticipated following the implementation of mitigation measures. The Proposed Development is expected to result in long-term, slight, positive effects on the local community by supporting demographic diversity, enhancing access to services, and contributing to the overall quality of life.

Overall, there will be no significant adverse effects on, or associated with population and human health attributed to the Proposed Development.

5 BIODIVERSITY

An assessment of the likely effects on biodiversity (flora and fauna) arising due to the Proposed Development was undertaken by DNV.

The assessment involved several steps and was conducted by suitably qualified ecologists during the appropriate seasons. Firstly, baseline ecological surveys were undertaken to assess the nature conservation importance of the Proposed Development. Secondly, the direct, indirect and cumulative ecological implications or effects of the Proposed Development during its lifetime were assessed. Finally, where possible, mitigation measures to remove or reduce negative effects during the construction and operational phases the of the Proposed Development were proposed, along with proposed biodiversity enhancements.

For this biodiversity chapter, baseline ecological surveys were carried out using a combination of desk-based research and fieldwork. The desk study reviewed existing data and records from national databases to understand the site's natural environment. Field surveys included habitat surveys, breeding and wintering bird surveys, dedicated mammal surveys, bat surveys and invasive species surveys. All surveys followed standard and/or best practice guidelines.

The site is primarily comprised of artificial surfaces with low ecological value, located in a heavily urbanised area of Galway City. A small patch of dry meadow and grassy verge was recorded, along with a single sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) stand (which was located outside the redline boundary). No invasive alien species of high concern were found. The main ecological value of the site is its location adjacent to Galway Bay and Lough Atalia, which are designated conservation areas (which are addressed separately within the accompanying Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) reports, submitted under separate cover. They support a range of protected habitats and species including wintering birds, harbour seal, otters, and aquatic species including fish.

While the site is located within an area that has been assessed as having high suitability for bats, no bat roosts were identified on-site. The buildings on site were well sealed with no potential bat roost features observed during the initial assessment, resulting in an overall negligible suitability for roosting bats. As such, further bat surveys on the buildings were not required. While the habitats on site provided little suitability for commuting and foraging bats, a single bat activity transect was conducted, on a precautionary basis. The results of which determined that activity was low, with no visual or acoustic observations of bats recorded using the Site during the bat transect survey. This is considered to be consistent with the highly modified nature of the site, which lacks vegetation cover and is situated within the wider urban context of Galway City.

Bird surveys recorded several amber-listed species using adjacent habitats. While there are no suitable trees or hedgerows on-site for nesting or foraging, the single small building present could potentially be used by gull species for nesting in future, which are known to nest on rooftops in urban areas.

No rare or protected species or habitats were recorded within the site. No amphibians or reptiles were recorded, though common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) presence is presumed given it is a widespread species in Ireland and can be found in a range of habitats. Similarly, no mammals were recorded on site, although it is considered that the area could be traversed by mobile species such as otter (*Lutra lutra*), despite a lack of evidence being recorded for same.

The Proposed Development will involve the removal of the existing buildings and areas of hard standing as well as the grassy verge habitat to facilitate the Proposed Development.

Potential effects during the Construction Phase include habitat loss, disturbance to fauna from noise and lighting, and water quality degradation due to runoff. During the operational phase, increased lighting and human activity may disturb nocturnal species and birds. However, the site itself is of low ecological value and not functionally connected to designated sites.

The Proposed Development site itself is not designated. It should be noted, however, that while there is some overlap on the mapped boundary for Annex I - 1130 estuaries habitat, this is considered a digitisation error as there is no actual overlap in the real world as the Site comprises built land. Therefore, the Site does not support any habitats of European conservation importance, more specifically Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats associated with the Galway Bay Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (or Lough Corrib SAC which lies 5km north) and is not functionally connected to these designated European sites.

Regarding this overlap it is noted that SAC boundaries provided online by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) *Download Boundary Data – Designated Site Data,* are currently presented in the Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) projection. Most boundaries were originally digitised from Ordnance Survey of Ireland 1:10,560 six-inch raster mapping in the Irish Grid projection. While suitable for general planning and assessment, these legacy boundaries may contain minor inaccuracies such as gaps, overlaps, or misalignments, particularly near county borders. NPWS is actively updating SAC boundaries using modern 1:5,000 OSI vector mapping in ITM. These revised boundaries will be formalised through Statutory Instruments (SIs) as they are completed. Over time, the dataset will increasingly reflect this improved spatial accuracy.

The closest designated site (excluding European sites) to the Proposed Development is Galway Bay proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA), the boundary of which overlaps with Galway Bay Complex SAC. As such, mitigation provided within the accompanying Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (which is also included as an appendix to the Environmental Impact Assessment Report(EIAR)), including water quality protection measures and protection from (human) visual and noise disturbance to bird species, will also secondarily protect this pNHA given it overlaps entirely with the associated Galway Bay Complex SAC.

Mitigation measures (measures to reduce or avoid impact) include best practice construction protocols, surface water management, lighting design to reduce light spill, and use of acoustic barriers to reduce potential noise disturbance for sensitive fauna. Biodiversity enhancements include native planting, installation of bird, and bat boxes, and the creation of wildflower meadows. A habitat management plan will guide long-term maintenance.

Potential effects of the Proposed Development were predicted to range from not significant to significant at the local scale and can be readily addressed with the mitigation measures proposed, along with any embedded design stage measures (e.g. landscaping for disturbance avoidance and enhancement of habitats, as-well as architectural design to minimise collision risk etc).

To address potential effects on surface and ground waters which travel downgradient to the receiving waterbodies, specifically Galway Bay and Lough Atalia, arising from surface or groundwater discharge during the construction phase, a range of mitigation measures to protect surface and groundwater quality are provided. Mitigations for the control and treatment of dust emissions during the construction phase have similarly been proposed, which will also serve to

protect the receiving waterbodies from contamination. These surface water mitigation measures will remove the pathway during the construction work. These measures include items such as the provision of silt fences, exclusion zones, best practice measures, designated refuelling and storage areas (of possible contaminants) and supervision by an Ecological Clerk of Works. During the operational phase, surface water runoff from the site will be treated via incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) into the project design.

Mitigation measures have also been proposed to mitigate against potential disturbance to noise sensitive species such as birds, and otter, during the construction phase such as the use of acoustic barriers.

The operational phase lighting plan has been designed to prevent potential impacts on light sensitive species which may occur in the adjacent Galway Bay, such as protected bird species, including migratory birds, bats, seal, and otter. While the proposed landscape plan comprises a suite of measures to enhance the site, making it a more attractive place for pollinators (important food source for birds, bats and small mammals), and providing greater commuting, foraging, and connectivity through the site and extending to the surrounding area.

Interactions between biodiversity and other elements of the project have been addressed in the interactions section of the biodiversity chapter, and the suite of mitigations included in said chapter, and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which accompany this submission.

Provided all mitigation and enhancement measures are implemented in full, no significant residual negative effects on local ecology or designated sites are expected. The Proposed Development is anticipated to result in an overall slight positive impact on biodiversity through habitat creation and ecological enhancements.

6 LAND AND SOILS

An assessment of the potential effect on the existing land, soil and geological environment was carried out by DNV for the Proposed Development site.

The assessment was carried out taking cognisance of appropriate national guidelines and standards for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It was informed by a comprehensive desk study, findings from ground investigations (included in Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) Volume 3: Appendix 6-1), site walkover surveys, review of all relevant drawings and other information provided by the Applicant and Design Team pertaining to the Proposed Development site. The assessment established the baseline conditions at the site and included a detailed evaluation of potential effects. Where necessary, appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures were identified to minimise any potential adverse effects associated with the Proposed Development site.

The Proposed Development site will require approximately 1.621 hectares (ha) of land, transitioning its use from a brownfield site to a mixed use. This change in land use is consistent with the Core Strategy outlined in the Galway City Development Plan 2023–2029 (Galway City Council, 2023).

Previous site investigations (RSK, 2009, MKO, 2019, MKO, 2022 and GII, 2024) undertaken within and outside of the boundary of the Proposed Development site have confirmed the geology beneath the site:

- Made Ground: Ranged in thickness from 2.65 metres (m) to 8.1m. It generally comprised clayey gravel, sandy gravelly clay, sandy clayey gravel, silty sandy gravelly clay, gravelly clayey sand, gravelly clay, or gravel;
- Possible Made Ground: Encountered beneath the Made Ground and comprised grey, pink, and green gravel, cobbles and boulders;
- Possible Estuarine Sediments (PED): Typically encountered at depths between 1.0 metres below ground level (mbgl) and 5.4mbgl below ground level, with thicknesses ranging from 1.2m to 3.1m and generally comprised very soft to very stiff greyish brown slightly sandy gravelly clay, sandy organic clay or silty clay; and
- Bedrock:
    - The Metagabbro and Orthogenesis Suite was encountered beneath the Made Ground and PED at depths ranging between 6.7mbgl and 9.45mbgl. It comprised un-weathered to partially weathered very strong massive pink and/or green, grey coarse grained porphyritic metagabbro, very strong foliated dark greenish grey coarse grained phaneritic metagabbro or very strong massive green coarse grained phaneritic metagabbro.
    - The Orthogneiss Suite was encountered beneath the Made Ground and PED at depths ranging between 7.1mbgl and 9.1mbgl. It comprised un-weathered very strong foliated dark greenish grey coarse grained phaneritic gneiss.

Previous site investigations have reported concentrations of lead and benzo(a)pyrene in excess of the applicable Generic Assessment Criteria (GACs) for residential (without gardens) land use scenario. Detectable concentrations of mineral oil, Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPHs), benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, m&p-xylene, o-xylene and methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE), other speciated Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) have also been reported in Made Ground soils beneath the site. The excavation of Made Ground soils impacted

with anthropogenic contamination and permanent removal offsite is a design requirement of the Proposed Development. Furthermore, as part of incorporated design measures for the Proposed Development site, in-situ soil validation samples will be collected to ensure that residual contamination in soil has been removed offsite.

It is anticipated that approximately 11,594.268m^3 of soil and subsoil, including contaminated made ground, will be excavated as part of remedial excavations at the site during bulk excavations for the Proposed Development and removed offsite in accordance with the Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) prepared by AWN Consulting Ltd (2025) and all statutory legislation. An additional 4,469.252m^3 of material will be excavated to achieve formation levels, which will be reused onsite within the Proposed Development site (i.e., for engineering fill and landscaping) and will be subject to assessment of their suitability for use, in accordance with the engineering and environmental specifications for the Proposed Development site.

It is anticipated that there will be no requirement for the excavation of bedrock during the construction phase of the Proposed Development site.

The construction phase of the Proposed Development will also require the importation of 5,884.268m^3 of aggregates for the construction of the Proposed Development (e.g., granular material beneath road pavement and for drainage and utility bedding / surrounds). Contract and procurement procedures will ensure that the importation of aggregates to the Proposed Development is sourced from reputable authorised suppliers operating in a sustainable manner and in accordance with the necessary statutory consents. All aggregates imported to the site for use in the Proposed Development will be subject to strict quality control procedures in accordance with the design specification and relevant building regulations.

Due to the presence of lead and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) within the Made Ground, proposed areas of communal soft landscaping that overlay the existing contaminated soils will be provided with suitable topsoil and subsoil to form a capping layer to act as a barrier to any underlying residual contamination. As recommended in the MKO report (2022), the capping layer will comprise, either 600mm of imported soil, including a minimum 150mm topsoil or 450mm imported soil, including 150mm topsoil over a geotextile (MKO, 2022). However, the details of these measures are to be developed during the detailed design stage. All imported soil will be sourced from a reputable supplier in compliance with appropriate statutory consents and verified as being suitable for use within a residential development and for landscaping.

During the construction phase, all works will be undertaken in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prepared by DNV (2025) and RWMP (AWN, 2025) (submitted with the planning application under separate cover). Following appointment, the contractor will be required to further develop the CEMP and RWMP and prepare and project specific CEMP and RWMP, for approval by Galway County Council (GCC) prior to any works commencing. The project specific CEMP and RWMP will provide detailed construction phasing, and methods to manage the contamination present within the shallow soils and prevent any potential emissions to ground and surface water with regard to the relevant industry standards (e.g., Guidance for Consultants and Contractors, CIRIA-C532', CIRIA, 2001). The project specific CEMP and RWMP will take cognisance of measures outlined in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), the CEMP and the RWMP submitted with the planning application. The project specific CEMP and RWMP will be implemented for the duration of the construction phase, covering mitigation works that will be adopted as part of the construction works for the Proposed Development.

The measures will address the main activities of potential impact which include:

- Control and Management of Earthworks;
- Control and Management of Soils, Subsoils and Stockpiles;
- Management and Control Procedures for the Exportation of Surplus Soils and Subsoils;
- Management and Control Procedures for the Importation of Aggregates and Materials;
- Control and Handling of Cementitious Materials;
- Control and Handling of Fuel and Hazardous Materials; and
- Accidental Release of Contaminants.

During the operational phase of the Proposed Development there is a limited potential for any direct adverse effect on the receiving land, soil and geological environment at the site taking account of the design for the Proposed Development.

The design and construction of the Proposed Development will be undertaken in accordance with current Building Regulations, which will ensure that the site will be suitable for use for the operational phase as a mixed-use development, taking account of the geological site setting.

Overall, considering the avoidance, remedial and mitigation measures, the residual effects regarding the construction phase and operational phase of the Proposed Development are considered ‘imperceptible’ to the receiving environment (land and soils) and considered non-significant in the context of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive.

7 HYDROLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY

An assessment of the potential effect on the existing hydrological and hydrogeological environment was carried out by DNV for the Proposed Development site.

The assessment was carried out taking cognisance of appropriate national guidelines and standards for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), refer to Chapter 7 and Section 7.2.1 of this Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). It was informed by a comprehensive desk study, findings from ground investigations (included in EIAR Volume 3: Appendix 6-1), site walkover surveys and review of all relevant drawings and documents pertaining to the Proposed Development. The assessment established the baseline conditions at the site and included a detailed evaluation of potential effects. Where necessary, appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures were identified to minimise any potential adverse effects associated with the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development will require approximately 1.621 hectares (ha) of land, transitioning its use from a brownfield site to residential and commercial. This change in land use is consistent with the Core Strategy outlined in the Galway City Development Plan 2023–2029 (Galway City Council, 2023).

The site is mapped by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (EPA, 2025) as within the Galway Bay Southeast Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment (Hydrometric Area 29), Carrowmoneash [Oranmore] WFD Sub-catchment (WFD name: Carrowmoneash [Oranmore]_SC_010 ID: 29_06) (EPA, 2025) and the Carrowmoneash [Oranmore]_10 WFD River Sub Basin (IE_WE_29C050400). The Corrib Estuary transitional waterbody (EU Code: IE_WE_170_0700) is located adjacent to the and eastern boundaries of the site.

The bedrock aquifer beneath the site is mapped by the Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) (GSI, 2025) to be within the Clarinbridge groundwater body (GWB) (EU Code: IE_WE_G_0008). The GSI (GSI, 2025) has classified the bedrock beneath the site as a Poor Aquifer, bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones. As documented in the MKO Phase 2 Report (MKO, 2022), the groundwater levels indicate that the groundwater in the response zone is likely to flow in a southeasterly direction towards Galway Bay. However, given the site's proximity to Galway Bay, the groundwater is likely to be tidally influenced.

Chemical testing results, from previous site investigations undertaken within and beyond the site boundary, indicate that shallow groundwater has been impacted by contamination (i.e., hydrocarbons, heavy metals and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)) in isolated areas.

Shallow groundwater may be encountered during excavations required to achieve the required formation levels for the site, including building foundations, surface water and foul water drainage, roads and all other associated infrastructure.

The excavation of made ground and impacted with anthropogenic contamination (i.e., residual contamination in soil) and permanent removal offsite is a design requirement of the Proposed Development. The permanent removal of residual contaminated soil will result in source removal and an overall site betterment, and an overall positive effect on receiving water quality.

In the event of a rainfall event, surface runoff entering the open excavations could result in mobilisation of identified hydrocarbon and other residual contamination in soil and leaching and migration to groundwater beneath the site. In addition, if existing monitoring wells are inadvertently

damage, there could be a potential for migration of surface runoff or other sources to migrate directly to groundwater.

Piling could also introduce a potential conduit to groundwater for any contaminants used during construction phase of the Proposed Development and depending on the piling method, materials used in piling such as grout and other materials.

In accordance with current UKWIR16 guidance (*Guidance for the Selection of Water Supply Pipes to be used in Brownfield Sites*), the design for the Proposed Development will include the use of barrier pipes for water supply in certain areas of the site to prevent potential permeation of contaminants into drinking water supplies.

During the construction phase, all works will be undertaken in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prepared by DVN (DNV, 2025) (submitted with the planning application under separate cover). Following appointment, the contractor will be required to further develop the CEMP and prepare and project specific CEMP, for approval by Galway City Council prior to any works commencing. The project specific CEMP will provide detailed construction phasing and methods to manage and prevent any potential emissions to ground and surface water with regard to the relevant industry standards (e.g., Guidance for Consultants and Contractors, CIRIA-C532', CIRIA, 2001). The project specific CEMP will take cognisance of measures outlined in the EIAR and the CEMP submitted with the planning application. The project specific CEMP will be implemented for the duration of the construction phase, covering mitigation works that will be adopted as part of the construction works for the Proposed Development.

- Control and management of contaminated soil;
- Control and management of surface water runoff;
- Control and management of water including potentially contaminated groundwater and management of dewatering activities;
- Piling;
- Borehole decommissioning;
- Control and handling of cementitious materials;
- Appropriate fuel and chemical handling, transport and storage;
- Management of accidental release of contaminants at the site;
- Flooding; and
- Welfare facilities.

As outlined in the Civil Works Design Report (TOBIN, 2025) (submitted with the planning application under separate cover), surface water from the Proposed Development will be managed in accordance with the principles and objectives of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) and Galway County Council (GCC) to treat and attenuate water prior to discharging offsite to the Corrib Estuary transitional waterbody. Ongoing regular operational monitoring and maintenance of drainage and the SuDS measures will be incorporated into the overall management strategy for the Proposed Development. This will ensure that there are no impacts on water quality and quantity (flow regime) during the operational stage of the Proposed Development.

In addition, there will be no discharges to ground other than rainfall infiltrating unpaved landscaped areas and limited recharge via SuDS measures incorporated into the surface water drainage network. As such, the rate of infiltration to groundwater beneath the site is expected to remain largely

unchanged or may be slightly reduced. Consequently, the impact on the underlying groundwater is considered to be a positive or neutral effect on the underlying aquifer due to the reduced potential for mobilisation or leaching of residual soil contaminants to groundwater.

As documented in the Civil Works Design Report (Tobin, 2025), foul water from the Proposed Development will be treated in the Galway Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) (Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Licence No. D0050-01) before ultimately discharging to the Corrib Estuary transitional waterbody, in accordance with the requirements from the Uisce Éireann (UÉ) confirmation of feasibility (CoF) (UÉ Reference: CDS24004596) and other applicable statutory consents verifying capacity at the WWTP for the Proposed Development. All watermain designs will be fully vetted by UÉ prior to receiving an offer to connect.

As documented in the Civil Works Design Report (Tobin, 2025), the proposed water supply for the Proposed Development will be made by connecting a 200mm diameter watermain to an existing 300mm diameter UÉ watermain, which is located running along the existing Lough Atalia Road, north of the proposed site entrance. The UÉ CoF confirmed that the connection to be feasible without infrastructure upgrade by Irish Water and there is also sufficient capacity for the Proposed Development.

Overall, considering the avoidance, remedial and mitigation measures, the residual effects regarding the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development are considered imperceptible to the receiving water environment (hydrology and hydrogeology) and considered non-significant in the context of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive.

There will be no effect on the existing Water Framework Directive (WFD) Status of water bodies associated with the Proposed Development, including the Clarinbridge groundwater body (GWB), and downstream waterbodies (i.e., the Corrib Estuary transitional waterbody and associated downstream coastal waterbodies) as a result of the Proposed Development, taking account of design avoidance and mitigation measures where required. Therefore, the Proposed Development will not jeopardise the objectives to achieve good surface water status or good ecological potential. The WFD Assessment Report (DNV, 2025b) is included in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) Volume 3: Appendix 7.1.

8 AIR QUALITY

The air quality chapter examines the potential for the Proposed Development to affect air quality within the vicinity of the site. This assessment was undertaken by DNV, who evaluated potential effects and informed the identification of appropriate mitigation measures.

A construction phase dust assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction (2024). The risk of dust impacts has been assessed separately for demolition, earthworks, construction and trackout and the dust emission magnitude has been classified for each of the four activities (this is known as 'Step 2A' of the dust assessment), using the definitions outlined for each activity within the IAQM guidance. The dust emission magnitude is based on the scale of the anticipated works and is classified as small, medium and large. The sensitivity of the area was determined for dust soiling and human health impacts, respectively, as per the guidance (this is known as 'Step 2B' of the dust assessment). In accordance with the IAQM guidance, the dust emission magnitude (Step 2A) and sensitivity of the area (Step 2B) have been combined and the risk of impacts from demolition, construction, earthworks and trackout have determined (before mitigation is applied) (this is known as 'Step 2C' of the dust assessment). This risk has then been used to inform the selection of appropriate mitigation measures.

Table 8-1 details the risk of dust impacts for demolition, earthworks, construction and trackout activities.

Table 8-1 Summary of Unmitigated Risks

Potential Impact	Sensitivity	Magnitude			
		Demolition	Earthworks	Construction	Trackout
		Small	Medium	Large	Medium
Dust Soiling Impacts	High	Medium Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk
Human Health Impacts	Low	Negligible	Low Risk	Low Risk	Low Risk
Ecological Impacts	High	Medium Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk

The IAQM recommends that significance is only assigned to effect after considering the construction activity mitigation. The risk of dust impacts has been determined in Step 2C and the appropriate dust mitigation measures identified, and the final step is to determine whether there are significant effects arising from the construction phase of the Proposed Development. The proposed mitigation measures will reduce the effects to be not significant.

Assessment of Specified Infrastructure Projects – PE-ENV-01106 (TII, 2022), states that road links meeting one or more of the following criteria can be defined as being 'affected' by a Proposed Development and should be included in the local air quality assessment. While the guidance is specific to infrastructure projects the approach can be applied to any development that causes a change in traffic.

- Annual average daily traffic (AADT) changes by 1,000 or more;
- Heavy duty vehicle (HDV) AADT changes by 200 or more;
- Daily average speed change by 10 kph or more;
- Peak hour speed change by 20 kph or more; or

- A change in road alignment by 5m or greater.

The construction stage traffic will not change by more 1,000 annual average daily traffic (AADT) or 200 heavy duty vehicle (HDV) AADT and does not meet the above scoping criteria. As a result, a detailed air assessment of construction stage traffic emissions has been scoped out from any further assessment as there is no potential for significant effects to air quality.

It can be determined that the demolition and construction stage traffic will have a *direct, short-term, negative* and *imperceptible,* i.e., not significant, effect on air quality and human health, which is overall not significant in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms.

There is the potential for traffic emissions to affect air quality in the long-term over the operational phase. The operational phase traffic has been reviewed, and a detailed air quality assessment has been scoped out as none of the road links affected by the Proposed Development satisfy the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) scoping assessment criteria.

It can be determined that the construction stage traffic will have a *direct, long-term, negative* and *imperceptible* effect on air quality and human health, which is overall not significant in EIA terms.

In terms of dust, no significant effects are predicted; good construction practice, which incorporates the implementation of the identified mitigation measures, will be employed at the site.

Assessment of road traffic emission impacts on air quality involved traffic data which is inclusive of traffic associated with other existing and permitted developments on the road networks surrounding the site. Therefore, cumulative effects have been assessed in this regard and the effect on ambient air quality has been determined as not being significant.

It is considered that the cumulative effect will be ‘short-term’, ‘imperceptible’ and ‘negative’, i.e., not significant.

No negative residual effects in the context of air quality are anticipated regarding the Proposed Development.

9 CLIMATE

The climate chapter addresses the potential climate effects of the Proposed Development. This assessment was undertaken by DNV.

The climate chapter examines the potential for the Proposed Development to effect upon climate (for example greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions) and its vulnerability to climate change.

The methodology adopted in this chapter covers two separate assessments – a greenhouse gas assessment (GHGA) and a climate change risk assessment (CCRA).

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment (GHGA): This evaluation estimates the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Proposed Development throughout its entire lifespan (60 years). It then compares these emissions against pertinent Irish carbon budgets, targets, and policies to help gauge their significance.; The Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Carbon assessment tool and the Irish Green Building Councils (IGBC) Lifecycle Assessment Tool have been used for this assessment. This assessment has been undertaken in line with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)[1] guide 'Assessing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Evaluating their Significance', 2nd Edition, 2022; and
- Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA): This analysis examines how a changing climate could affect a project and its surrounding environment. The assessment considers a projects vulnerability to climate change and identifies adaptation measures to increase project resilience. It has been conducted in accordance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) (2022a) PE-ENV-01104: Climate Guidance for National Roads, Light Rail and Rural Cycleways (Offline & Greenways) – Overarching Technical Document.

Existing Environment

Ireland's latest GHG emissions 1990-2023 (updated March 2025 and annually at this time) are based on the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland's (SEAI's) provisional energy balance released in July 2025 (Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2025). In 2023, Ireland's GHG emissions were estimated to be 58.82 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt carbon dioxide (CO2) eq), which is 6.1% lower (or 3.79 Mt CO2 eq) than emissions in 2022 (62.26 Mt CO2 eq) and follows a 3.0% decrease in emissions reported in 2022.

Impacts to the Proposed Development as a result of climate change involve increases in temperatures and increases in the number of rainfall days per year. Ireland has observed increases in the annual rainfall in the north and west of the country, with small increases or decreases in the south and east including in the region where the Proposed Development will be located.

Construction Phase Climate Change Risk Assessment

A detailed CCRA of the construction phase has been scoped out, as discussed in Section 9.6.4.5, which state that there are no residual medium or high-risk vulnerabilities to climate change hazards and therefore a detailed CCRA is not required. However, consideration has been given to the Proposed Development's vulnerability to the following climate change hazards with best practice mitigation measures proposed.

[1] The *Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) has since rebranded as the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP). However, references to IEMA are retained throughout this chapter as the guidance documents cited were published under the IEMA name.*

Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The total embodied carbon for the construction phase, including the maintenance and replacement of materials throughout the development's lifetime, has been calculated at 14,423 tonnes carbon dioxide (CO2e) (see Figure 9-1). Since the overall greenhouse emissions from the development cannot be directly compared to a single sector's 2030 carbon budget, the emissions are categorised into different assessment areas.

When annualised over the Proposed Development's 50-year lifespan, the estimated total greenhouse gas emissions amount to 0.0005% of Ireland's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 and 0.0009% of Ireland's non-European Union Emissions Trading System 2030 emissions target. Specifically, construction waste emissions represent 0.028% of the Waste budget, and industry-related emissions comprise 0.007% of the 2030 Industry budget.

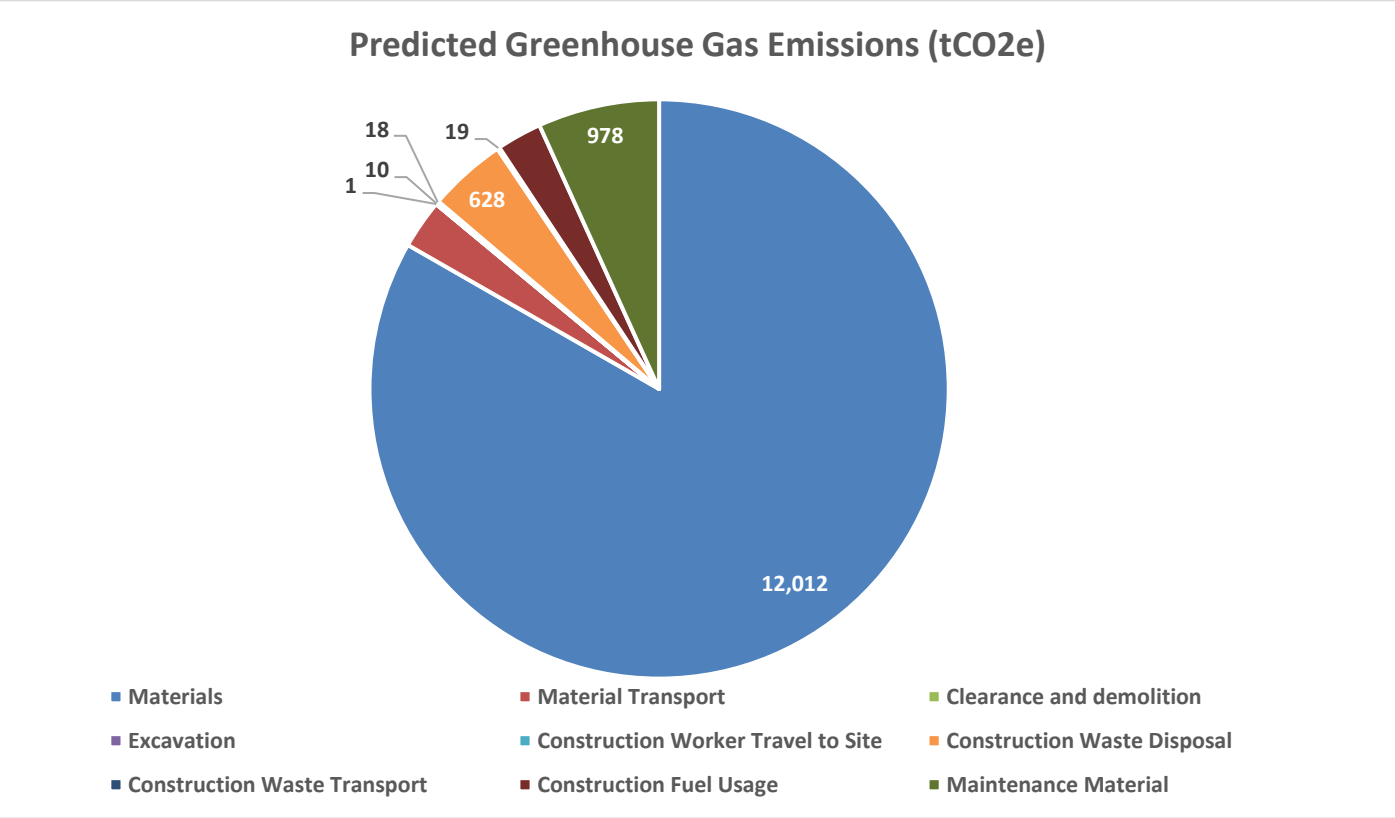

Figure 9-1 Construction Categories Greenhouse Gas Emissions tCO_2e

Operational Phase CCRA

A screening Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) i.e. vulnerability assessment, did not identify any residual medium or high risks to the Proposed Development as a result of climate change. Therefore, a detailed CCRA for the construction and operational phase were scoped out. While a CCRA for the construction and demolition phases were not required, best practice mitigation against climate hazards is still recommended within the climate chapter.

Table 9-1 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment/Climate Screening

Climate Hazard	Sensitivity	Exposure	Vulnerability
Flooding (Coastal, Pluvial, Fluvial)	1 (Low)	2 (Medium)	2 (Low)
Extreme Heat	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Extreme Cold	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Wildfire	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Drought	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Extreme Wind	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Lightning & Hail	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Landslides	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)
Fog	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)

Operational Phase Greenhouse Gas Assessment

There is the potential for a number of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to the atmosphere during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. The main sources of greenhouse gas emissions from the operational stage of the development arise from heating, domestic hot water, and lighting.

The estimated total greenhouse gas emissions, when annualised over the 50-year Proposed Development lifespan, are equivalent to 0.0006% of Ireland's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 and 0.0012% of Ireland's non-European Union Emissions Trading System 2030 emissions target. The total greenhouse gas emissions associated with residential-related activities are 0.0017% of the 2030 residential budget.

Cumulative Effect

The Transport Infrastructure Ireland TII PE-ENV-01104 (2022) states that a typical cumulative assessment in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not applicable for greenhouse gas assessments because the impacts on global climate are not geographically constrained. However, by evaluating a Proposed Development's greenhouse gas effect in relation to Ireland's net zero goals and sectoral carbon budgets, the assessment inherently becomes cumulative. This approach helps demonstrate the Proposed Development's potential influence on Ireland's ability to meet its national carbon reduction targets.

Cumulative effects, which result from the combined effects of the Proposed Development and other existing or planned developments, can intensify climate-related risks and environmental pressures. Understanding these interactions is crucial for developing effective mitigation and adaptation strategies that align with broader sustainability objectives. It is considered that there are no other potential significant cumulative effects associated with the Proposed Development and considered offsite permitted developments.

Construction Phase Mitigation

Climate Change

Regarding the development's resilience to climate change, the Contractor will be required to mitigate the effects of extreme weather, such as heavy rainfall, flooding, windstorms, and temperature fluctuations, through site risk assessments and method statements. The Contractor will also address

risks associated with fog, lightning, and hail through appropriate risk assessments and mitigation plans.

Pre/Construction Phase Greenhouse Gas Mitigation

Embodied carbon of materials and construction activities is the primary source of climate impacts during the construction phase.

Pre-construction carbon Avoidance, Remedial & Mitigation Measures include:

Design for Performance:

- Request a Design for Performance approach from design teams and contractors; and
- Include contractual targets for whole life carbon with a focus on Net Zero and nature-positive goals where possible.

Circularity in Design:

- Require design teams to develop a circularity concept for projects, focusing on adaptability, disassembly, and reuse; and
- Set a target for a percentage of reused and recycled materials in designs.

Carbon Literacy:

- Develop carbon literacy within design and construction teams by providing training on carbon literacy, Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) reporting, and disclosure;
- Incorporate sustainability and carbon considerations into site team talks, construction targets, and reporting; and
- Include training clauses for contractors and sub-contractors to upskill their teams in low-energy construction techniques.

Building Renovation Passports (BRPs):

- Request Building Renovation Passports for this asset as part of the roadmap to decarbonise each asset.

Cement Reduction:

- Specify the minimum amount of cement needed in concrete and substitute where feasible to reduce cement usage.

Sustainable Procurement:

- Review sustainable procurement and material choices during detailed design to identify and implement lower embodied carbon options;
- Request Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) and prefer products with Environmental Product Declarations where possible within procurement restrictions; and
- Drive demand for Environmental Product Declarations by increasing the percentage of products used in the Proposed Development with Environmental Product Declarations.

European Framework for Sustainable Buildings:

- Commit to using key indicators from the European Framework for sustainable buildings, Level(s), with support from the Irish Green Building Councils (IGBC); and

- Focus on indicators such as Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), Life Cycle Cost (LCC), Indoor Air Quality (IAQ), and Circularity.

Energy and Carbon Performance Reporting:

- Plan to disclose the operational energy and carbon performance of the Proposed Development in annual reporting.

Post-Occupancy Evaluation:

- Allow for post-occupancy evaluation of completed developments to ensure feedback is passed to the design team.

Demolition and Construction Waste Management:

- Create a demolition and construction programme allowing sufficient time to determine reuse and recycling opportunities for demolition waste;
- Appoint a competent demolition contractor to undertake a pre-demolition audit detailing resource recovery best practice and identifying materials for reuse and recycling; and
- Reuse materials on site in the new build areas where possible.

European Union (EU) Taxonomy Compliance:

- Commit to complying with EU taxonomy requirements on the circular economy, specifically reuse, recycling, and material recovery of demolition and construction waste; and
- Review and ensure compliance with the European Union Taxonomy Regulation (EU) 2020/852 regarding circular economy practices for demolition and construction waste.

Local Material Sourcing:

- Source materials locally where possible to reduce transport-related carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions.

Building Certifications:

- Quality for building certifications such as HPI (Home Performance Index), LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), or equivalent, to ensure sustainable and high-performance standards are met throughout the Proposed Development.

During the construction phase the following best practice measures shall be implemented on site to prevent significant greenhouse gas emissions and reduce effects to climate:

- **Energy-Efficient Equipment:** Use energy-efficient machinery and equipment on-site. Regular maintenance and proper operation can also help reduce fuel consumption and emissions;
- **Renewable Energy:** Incorporate renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, to power construction activities. This can significantly reduce reliance on fossil fuels;
- **Reduce Idling**: Prevention of on-site or delivery vehicles from leaving engines idling, even over short periods;
- **Sustainability Awareness**: Ensure that sustainability and carbon specifically is incorporated into site team talks, construction and reporting targets. Integrate training clauses for contractors and sub-contractors to upskill their onsite personnel including sub-

contractors in low energy construction skills. Appoint sustainability champions to ensure that the Proposed Development continues to perform in a sustainable manner;

- **Sustainable Transportation**: Encourage carpooling, use of public transportation, or electric vehicles for workers commuting to the site;
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Regularly monitor and report greenhouse gas emissions from the construction site. This helps in identifying areas for improvement and ensuring compliance with environmental standards Sustainability spot checks should be added to ongoing site inspections and feedback shared with all onsite to ensure measures are being adopted;
- **Maintenance**: Ensure all plant and machinery are well maintained and inspected regularly;
- **Waste Management:** Implement a robust waste management plan to reduce, reuse, and recycle construction waste. Proper waste management can significantly cut down on emissions Minimising waste of materials due to poor timing or over ordering on site will aid to minimise the embodied carbon footprint of the site. Application of the waste hierarchy to all waste material generated; and
- **Sustainable Procurement:** Sourcing low carbon materials locally where possible to reduce transport related carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions.

Operational Phase Climate Change Mitigation

A number of measures have been incorporated into the design of the development in order to mitigate against the impacts of future climate change. For example, adequate attenuation and drainage have been incorporated into the design of the development to avoid potential flooding impacts as a result of increased rainfall events in future years. These measures have been considered when assessing the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to climate change.

Operational Phase Greenhouse Gas Mitigation

The Proposed Development has been designed to reduce the impact on climate as a result of energy usage during operation. The Climate Action and Energy Statement (Axiseng; 2025) and Building Lifecycle report prepared by Aramark (2025) and submitted under separate cover with this planning application details a number of incorporated design mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the design of the development to reduce the impact on climate wherever possible.

Such measures included in the Proposed Development to reduce the effect to climate from energy usage are:

- The development will be in compliance with the requirements of the Near Zero Energy Building (NZEB) Standards;
- A renewable energy rating (RER) of 20% will be achieved to comply with Part L (2021) of the NZEB regulations;
- A Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2/A3 is being targeted;
- Improved building thermal transmittance (U-Values), air permeability and thermal bridging.
- Use of air source and exhaust heat pumps;
- Sustainability information provided to building occupants; and
- Smart building technologies.

In addition, electric vehicle and bicycle parking will be provided within the development which will promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport and reduce potential transport emissions. Full descriptions of the measures proposed, and their benefits are outlined within the Building Lifecycle Report submitted with this application.

Residual Effects

The Proposed Development will result in some impacts to climate through the release of Greenhouse gases. Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2022) state that the crux of assessing significance is "*not whether a project emits greenhouse gas emissions, nor even the magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions alone, but whether it contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions relative to a comparable baseline consistent with a trajectory towards net zero by 2050*". The Proposed Development has proposed some best practice mitigation measures and is committing to reducing climate impacts where feasible, the development will comply with the do-minimum standards set through regulation (Nearly Zero Energy Building and Part L 2021). As per the assessment criteria the impact of the Proposed Development in relation to greenhouse gas emissions is considered **long-term, minor adverse and not significant in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms.**

In relation to climate change vulnerability, it has been assessed that there are no significant risks to the Proposed Development as a result of climate change.

Construction Phase Monitoring

To optimise the reuse and recycling of demolition materials, a digital tracking system should be established to monitor materials identified for reuse or recycling. Weekly progress reports and regular on-site inspections are recommended to ensure proper handling and storage of materials. The demolition contractor's performance should be periodically reviewed to ensure adherence to the resource recovery plan and environmental standards.

To comply with European Union (EU) taxonomy for the circular economy, comprehensive documentation and independent third-party audits are necessary. Monitoring greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures include appointing sustainability champions, monitoring idle times for vehicles and machinery, maintaining digital logs for equipment, and tracking material waste minimization.

Waste management should be optimised through regular waste segregation audits and monthly waste management reports. To reduce transport-related emissions, a supplier distance monitoring database and transport-related carbon footprint analysis are recommended.

These strategies aim to ensure the Proposed Development meets its environmental commitments, supports sustainability goals, and complies with regulatory requirements through regular reporting, inspections, and audits.

To ensure the Proposed Development meets its environmental objectives, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) with adaptive management principles will be implemented. This includes robust climate change resilience plans, ongoing monitoring of weather trends, and regular reviews of resilience measures.

Key monitoring strategies include:

1. **Climate Change Mitigation**: Regular inspections of attenuation and drainage systems, and periodic reviews of climate vulnerability assessments to ensure effectiveness and adequacy of mitigation measures.
2. **Energy Efficiency and Climate Impact Reduction**: Continuous monitoring to ensure compliance with Near Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standards, achieving energy performance at least 10% lower than NZEB requirements, and verifying the implementation of renewable energy systems. Regular energy audits and thermal performance monitoring are also recommended.
3. **Renewable Energy Systems**: Regular inspections and maintenance of air source heat pumps and providing comprehensive sustainability information to building occupants.
4. **Sustainable Transport Initiatives**: Monitoring the usage of electric vehicle charging stations and bicycle parking and assessing the impact of these facilities on reducing transport emissions.

These strategies aim to mitigate climate change impacts, enhance energy efficiency, and promote sustainable transport, aligning with best practices and regulatory requirements. Regular inspections, energy performance assessments, and occupant engagement are crucial for achieving the desired environmental outcomes.

Operational Phase Monitoring

Monitoring recommendations are designed to ensure that the Proposed Development's climate change mitigation measures, energy efficiency initiatives, and sustainable transport provisions are effectively implemented and maintained throughout the lifecycle of the Proposed Development. By adhering to these strategies, the development will not only comply with relevant regulatory requirements but also contribute to broader environmental sustainability goals. Regular inspections, energy performance assessments, and occupant engagement will be crucial to achieving the desired environmental outcomes.

10 NOISE AND VIBRATION

The noise and vibration chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared by Wave Dynamics Limited, an Acoustic Consultancy specialising in noise and vibration. Chapter 10 of the EIAR addresses the potential noise and vibration impact of the Proposed Development at Lough Atalia Road on the Galway Bay docklands, Galway.

The assessment considers the noise and vibration impact of the short-term construction phase and the long-term operational phase on the surrounding environment.

Existing Environment

The site is located on Lough Atalia Road on the Galway Bay docklands, Galway. The subject site extends to approximately 1.621 Ha. It is irregular in shape but generally bound by the Lough Atalia channel to the northeast and southeast; Dock Road to the south-west; and port lands, Lough Atalia Road and the Texaco filling station to the north-west. The site is bound to the northeast and southeast by the Inner Galway Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), with the Galway Bay Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Lough Corrib SAC in the locality also.

Figure 10-1 Site Location, Measurement Locations A1-A3, Noise Sensitive Locations 1-4 and the various Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation areas surrounding Galway Bay

Table 10-1 Noise Sensitive Locations (NSLs)

Noise Sensitive Location	Distance to the Centre of the Site (m)
NSL1 – Hotel	125
NSL2 – Residential	360
NSL3 – Residential	380
NSL4 – Residential	250
NSL5 – Inner Galway Bay SPA	50
NSL6 – Galway Bay Complex SAC	365
NSL7 – Lough Corrib SAC	270
NSL8 (Block A) [3]	40
NSL9 (Block B) [3]	28

Construction Phase Noise

For the construction phase the cumulative noise effect from construction was assessed based on a worst-case scenario i.e. all sites in construction at the same time with Blocks A and B considered as sensitive locations. The noise sensitive locations were considered in each direction from the site and their proximity to the construction works. The cumulative noise effect from construction noise was predicted at each noise sensitive location outlined in Table 10-1. The cumulative noise effect from the construction activities without mitigation was predicted not to comply with the project criteria. Mitigation measures have been specified to control the noise and vibration impact from construction activities. This includes the use of screening via hording, low noise plant and construction noise and vibration monitoring.

Construction Phase Vibration

Vibration from construction activities was assessed. The main source of vibration during the construction will be the piling which is a potential part of the construction methodology. It is not anticipated that the vibration will have a negative impact on the sensitive receptors however precautionary vibration monitoring has been recommended during the construction period to ensure any potential vibration impact is controlled. Vibration limits from the construction phase have been set for the development for the purposes of monitoring the vibration impact.

Assessment of Construction Phase Effects on Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Wildlife

There is potential for noise and vibration effects on the surrounding SPA and SAC habitats for birds, otters and seals. Based on the predicted construction noise levels and the various mitigation measures outlined in the chapter to control noise and vibration emissions, an Ecologist should be appointed to monitor and advise on the effects of construction noise on the surrounding wildlife habitat to ensure the mitigation measures outlined in the Noise and Vibration chapter are sufficiently reducing the effect of noise and vibration on the wildlife. In addition to the mitigation outlined in the chapter, the construction phase of the Proposed Development will be temporary and will not result in lasting noise or vibration effects on the wildlife habitats. There have been no observations made of otters actively using the site lands or the presence of holts on the site lands, however

consideration to the surrounding Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has still been given in terms of noise and vibration effects.

Operational Phase Noise

For the operational phase the main sources of noise is plant and equipment, traffic movements, car parking, creche play area, restaurant/café breakout noise and outdoor seating and external/public amenity spaces. Specifications for an acoustic louvre to surround the plant and equipment located in the Energy Centre on the roof of Block C, plant and equipment noise levels should be checked at detailed design stage by an Acoustic Consultant to ensure compliance with project criteria. The additional traffic generated during the Do-Something scenarios is predicted to lead to an increase in the range of 1dB at some sensitive receptors along Bothar na Long, this is an imperceptible magnitude of change as detailed in Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance.

Additional noise effects on the façades from 8th floor to roof level of Blocks A, B, and D are exposed to plant and equipment noise from the Energy Centre located at roof level of Block C. The predicted façade noise levels will have an effect on internal noise levels through open windows and will require mitigation through enhanced glazing specification which is detailed in the standalone Acoustic Design Statement and acoustic louvres surrounding the plant and equipment in the Energy Centre as detailed in the layout drawings.

Operational Phase Vibration

There are no predicted vibration sources during the operational phase, therefore, mitigation measures are not required to control operational phase vibrations.

Wildlife Effect Assessment (Operational Phase)

Based on the predicted worst-case operational phase noise emissions, there is likely no significant noise or vibration effect on the surrounding SPA and SAC habitats. The results of the assessment indicate that the noise emissions are below the maximum noise levels that effect various species inhabitants in the SPA and SAC areas in Galway Bay, therefore there will be no habitat abandonment or other significant noise effect on the wildlife during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.

Cumulation Effects

The assessment indicates that the Proposed Development, when considered alongside other major projects in the Galway Bay area, is unlikely to cause significant adverse noise or vibration effects on the surrounding environment. The proposed 15-storey hotel near Lough Atalia Road will not contribute to cumulative noise or vibration issues as its planning permission was refused. Furthermore, a large mixed-use development (Ceannt Station Urban Quarter) 270 meters away on lands to the rear of Ceannt Train Station, Station Road, Galway City is also not expected to cause cumulative noise or vibration effects, even if construction overlaps, due to the significant distance and existing sound screening.

While the Galway Harbour extension project may cause minor, short-term noise during its construction phase, particularly from activities like blasting and dredging, measures are recommended to mitigate impacts, such as avoiding high underwater noise activities during fish migration season. The operational phase of the harbour, however, is expected to reduce existing noise levels from shipping.

Lastly, the BusConnects Galway Cross-City Link construction may have temporary moderate to significant noise effects for properties within 10 meters of specific roadworks, but these are expected to be short-lived. Once operational, the BusConnects project is not predicted to cause negative noise effects. Therefore, the combined effect of these developments on noise and vibration in the area is anticipated to be minimal or manageable, with no lasting negative effect.

Construction Phase Noise Mitigation

Mitigation measures for construction noise include, using low noise equipment, controlling noise at the source with temporary screens, erecting site hoarding, temporary noise barriers, public engagement and noise monitoring at the closest sensitive receptors.

Construction Phase Vibration Mitigation

Mitigation measures include vibration monitoring at the closest sensitive receptors during the substructure stages of construction when piling operations are likely to occur.

Table 10-2 Summary of Construction Phase Effects Post Mitigation.

Quality	Significance	Duration	Type
Neutral	Slight	Short-Term	Noise
Neutral	Imperceptible	Short-Term	Vibration

Operational Phase Noise Mitigation

Based on the worst-case assessment outlined in Chapter 10 of the main Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) body, the development is compliant with the project criteria. Therefore, no mitigation for operational noise is required to control operational noise levels at the surrounding sensitive locations. Mitigation in the form on an enhanced glazing specification is recommended to control the onset noise levels on the façades of Blocks A, B and D from 8th floor upwards due to noise emissions from the Energy Centre.

Operational Phase Vibration Mitigation

There are no predicted vibration sources during the operational phase, therefore, mitigation measures are not required to control operational phase vibrations.

Table 10-3 Summary of Operational Phase Effects Post Mitigation

Quality	Significance	Duration	Type
Neutral	Slight	Long-Term	Noise
Neutral	Imperceptible	Long-Term	Vibration

Construction Phase Residual Effects

As the construction phase is temporary, there will be no long-term/permanent noise effects on the surrounding area from construction noise or vibration.

Table 10-4 Summary of Construction Phase Effects Post Mitigation

Quality	Significance	Duration	Type
Neutral	Slight	Short-Term	Noise
Neutral	Imperceptible	Short-Term	Vibration

Operational Phase Residual Effects

Operational noise sources include additional traffic on the roads surrounding the development, noise from activities on the site such as plant and equipment, traffic movements, car parking, creche play area, restaurant/café and external/public amenity spaces. Based on the noise impact assessment it is not likely that there will be any negative noise effect on the surrounding area.

Table 10-5 Summary of Operational Phase Effects Post Mitigation

Quality	Significance	Duration	Type
Neutral	Slight	Long-Term	Noise
Neutral	Imperceptible	Long-Term	Vibration

Construction Phase Monitoring

Based on the predicted noise and vibration levels during the construction stage, noise and vibration monitoring have been recommended to control the noise and vibration emissions of the construction phase and to protect the surrounding sensitive receptors.

Operational Phase Monitoring

Based on the predicted noise levels of the development in operation there is no noise or vibration monitoring required during the operational phase of the development.

11 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

The landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) chapter assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on the landscape/townscape character and visual amenity of the receiving environment. The chapter should be read in conjunction with the book of verified photomontages included in Appendix 11-1 – 11-6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

The Existing and Receiving Environment (Baseline Situation)

The Site

The site is located in the centre of the Galway urban area - outside of the historic city but within the city centre as defined/zoned in the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP). The site is in the harbour area, on the east side of Lough Atalia Road, fronting the channel to Lough Atalia. It is separated from Lough Atalia Road by another development site, but has frontage to New Docks Road to the southwest, adjacent to the bridge over the Lough Atalia channel. Just to the north of the site is the railway bridge leading to Ceannt Station.

The site is an area of reclaimed land east of Lough Atalia Road, in what was previously the marshy channel between Galway Bay and Lough Atalia. The area was reclaimed/constructed as part of a late 20th century project to create the New Docks on the east side of Lough Atalia. This involved the canalisation of the channel, which created the angular eastern waterfront boundary of the site.

The site was initially used as a storage depot and contained several large cylindrical tanks and small buildings. The tanks have now been removed leaving the site as a large, flat hard standing with four buildings (bus depot/office building and ancillary structure, ESB sub-station, pumping station). It has most recently been used as a bus depot and storage yard.

The site is zoned ‘City Centre’ (CC) in the GCDP, with the objective “To provide for city centre activities and particularly those which preserve the city centre as the dominant commercial area of the city”. Residential, retail, café and creche (the four uses proposed as part of the proposed development) are permitted in principle on CC-zoned land.

Section 3.8 of the GCDP, regarding city centre residential areas, states: “As a residential area, the city centre is a very attractive place to live. It has a high quality built and natural environment and easy access to services, employment opportunities and arts and culture activities. The compact urban form and the network of streets also enables easy access and good walkability. The Plan, reflecting national and regional policy, supports a strong objective to increase the residential population and employment activities in the city centre. This will add vitality to the city centre and represents a sustainable and efficient use of land that will reduce car dependency. Increased city centre living also supports the city centre as an employment hub for strategic investment and innovation activity.”

Inner Harbour Regeneration Site

The GCDP designates a number of Strategic Regeneration Sites, of which the Inner Harbour area - including the site – is one. The GCDP states: “These sites represent transformative opportunities for developments of scale with new residential communities and mixed uses complementing the experience of the city centre. They have potential to be developed in a sustainable manner while retaining the historic character and distinctiveness of the city centre.”

"The Inner Harbour Regeneration Site comprises approximately 7 hectares. It has potential for significant redevelopment providing an opportunity to re-establish links between the city centre and the sea, to create a high quality waterfront setting, a new city centre mixed use neighbourhood and include for water-related leisure uses. This area is already under transition with the current development of Bonham Quay contributing to the transformation of this part of the city centre and indicating a scale and density that could be achieved in the wider Inner Harbour."

Galway Harbour Company, which controls the lands surrounding the Inner Harbour, published a 'Vision Document' for the Inner Harbour Regeneration Area in 2021. This included an indicative masterplan for the area's redevelopment. The masterplan is currently in the process of review and amendment, and a draft has been issued to stakeholders. The draft masterplan includes the subject site.

The masterplan review and the preparation of the development proposal for the site (the subject of this assessment) have been coordinated, and the proposal is therefore in keeping with the draft masterplan.

Site Location, Condition and Development Potential – Summary

In summary, the site is:

- Located in the centre of the Galway urban/metropolitan area;
- On reclaimed land formerly in industrial use and occupied by large structures (now mostly removed);
- A waterfront site;
- Close to/walking distance from the city centre (approximately 500m from Shop Street);
- Close to/walking distance (approximately 500m) from the city's public transport hub at Ceannt Station;
- Adjacent to – and prominently located in relation on – three key routes of entry to the city centre, i.e. Lough Atalia Road, the railway line and New Docks Road;
- Zoned 'City Centre', with residential, retail, café and creche use permitted in principle and residential use specifically required/encouraged;
- Surrounded by lands of similar use/character and similarly zoned 'City Centre' or 'Enterprise, Industry and Related Uses'; and
- Part of the Inner Harbour Strategic Regeneration Site. These sites are described in the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) as "transformative opportunities for developments of scale with new residential communities and mixed uses".

The site is thus of substantial value as a land use/development asset strategically located in the city. It provides an opportunity to contribute to the realisation of (a) a high-density mixed-use harbour quarter, and (b) the expansion of the city centre to the waterfront. This potential is heightened by the fact that there are no sensitivities on the site (no vegetation, buildings of value or cultural heritage sites), and few sensitivities in the immediate environs. The nearest sensitivity (in townscape/visual terms) is Forthill Cemetery approximately 60m to the north west (from the main body of the site) across Lough Atalia Road, separated from the site by another development site. Lough Atalia, including the channel alongside the site, is a Natura 2000 site. This ecological sensitivity is addressed elsewhere in the Environmental Impact Assessment Repot (EIAR) (Chapter 5).

Site Location in Relation to Medieval City, Eyre Square and Long Walk Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Galway's medieval core is designated an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and described in the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) as "the most important area of built heritage in Galway". Its medieval street pattern and historic architecture generate a character that is unique to Galway and of significant cultural and economic value. Any change that harms the character of the medieval

The site is approximately 350m from the City Core ACA at its nearest point (it is the furthest part of the city centre Regeneration Sites from the ACA). There are several city blocks of modern development between the site and the ACA, including Bonham Quay and the developments along Dock Road and Merchants Road. Additionally, due to its fine grain and narrow streets, there is a high degree of built enclosure in the medieval city, which restricts visibility of the surrounding townscape. These factors combine to limit the potential of any development on the site to affect the medieval city core.

The site is a similar distance (300+ m) from the other ACAs in the city centre, including the Eyre Square ACA, Long Walk ACA, and Nos. 1-6 Dock Road ACA. The Inner Harbour and Ceannt Quarter Strategic Regeneration Sites lie between the site and these city centre ACAs, which further reduces the potential for any development on the site to significantly affect these ACAs - as (in the future) there will be a buffer of similar development between the site and the ACAs.

Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The proposal is described in detail in the Architectural and Landscape Design Statements and drawings accompanying the submission. The following are the aspects of the proposal most relevant to the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA).

Layout

The Proposed Development comprises four buildings (Blocks A, B, C, D) arranged to form a perimeter block, with the buildings locally offset/separated so that (a) strong built frontage/ enclosure is provided to Dock Road and a new street along the site's northwest boundary, and (b) two waterfront open spaces are created beside the Lough Atalia channel. Block C is positioned to provide built frontage to the waterfront (with the open spaces to either side), but the building is set back to allow for a new promenade, Lough Atalia Walk.

The design of the Proposed Development has been coordinated with the review of Galway Harbour Company's masterplan for the Inner Harbour. The proposed layout is thus in keeping with the emerging masterplan. Specifically, the positioning of Blocks B and D is intended to form one side of a new street, which will be completed by the future redevelopment of the lands between the site and Lough Atalia Road.

The positioning of the proposed non-residential uses is also intended to contribute to the creation of well defined, active streets. Three commercial units and a creche are proposed fronting Dock Road and the new internal street. These units would generate footfall and enliven the ground buildings' floor facades and the adjacent streetscapes and plazas.

Height and Massing

The Proposed Development ranges in height from 6 to 13 no. storeys. Block A is 6-9 no. storeys; Block B is 8-11 no. storeys; Block C is 6 no. storeys; Block D is 9-13 storeys. The development is lowest beside the Lough Atalia channel and highest towards Lough Atalia Road, Augustine Hill and the city centre.

- The proposed height of the buildings responds to a number of factors, including:
- The site being zoned City Centre and designated Strategic Regeneration Site;
- The site's central location in the Galway city-region (walking distance from the existing city centre and the public transport hub at Ceannt Station). The national policy of compact growth requires that the land use of such central, serviced, brownfield lands be maximised;
- The site falling into the area identified in the Urban Density and Building Height Study, 2021 as being most suitable for increased building height;
- The site is the furthest part of the combined Ceannt Quarter/Inner Harbour Strategic Regeneration Area from the historic city core. The site has the least potential of the entire city centre regeneration area to cause visible change or harm to the medieval city;
- The site's waterfront location. It is an objective of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) to bring the city to the waterfront. A development of scale is required to visibly trace the waterfront in the urban structure, thereby making it legible. Additionally, it is recognised (for example in the Building Height Guidelines) that sites with waterway or marine frontage have particular capacity to accommodate height; and
- The permitted Augustine Hill development. This development includes a landmark tower of 21 storeys fronting Lough Atalia Road nearby the site. It is an objective that the proposed development and Augustine Hill would provide favourable/ complementary context for each other.

As a result of its height, the proposal has a wide area of potential visual influence. It would be visible from around Lough Atalia (see Viewpoints 1-4 in the visual effects assessment), and for some distance west along the coastline (Viewpoints 15-17). However, importantly, the development would not be visible from Eyre Square (Viewpoints 11, 12) or elsewhere in the medieval city core.

A number of design measures are proposed to reduce the perceived scale/massing of the development. These include steps in height (in Blocks A, B and D), steps and recesses in building line, and variations in façade treatment and materials to emphasise the division of the buildings into smaller visual units.

Façade Treatment

The predominant façade material is brick, in a range of colours including light grey, buff, and dark grey. Brick was selected for its proven durability and quality as well as its texture, which softens the elevations. Patterned brick detailing is used for additional articulation and visual interest.

Pressed metal panels and detailing are used to give accent to certain volumes and contribute to the disaggregation of form. The balcony balustrades are variously of pressed metal, vertical bars or glazed. The different balcony designs respond to varying conditions (e.g. different level/height above ground affecting user comfort, aspect, exposure/privacy, etc.) and also add visual interest to the facades.

It was decided, following consideration of Galway City Councils (GCC's) Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) Opinion, not to employ stone cladding in the facades. The decision was taken principally on the grounds of affordability. The project is a cost-rental model. Stone cladding, particularly natural limestone (traditionally used in Galway), has a high installation cost, and has implications for structural loading, maintenance and weathering (all with associated additional cost).

The regeneration of the Inner Harbour area (which currently is a blank canvas in terms of architecture and materials) presents an opportunity to establish new townscape character – not only in terms of development typology and scale, but also architecture and materials. The Galway Inner Harbour Masterplan, currently in preparation, identifies three sub-areas of distinct character within the Inner Harbour area. The site is located in one of these, the Lough Atalia Walk area. The Applicant is proposing brick as the predominant material in this area as it is a natural, robust, high-quality material, and gives texture to large buildings, softening their presence.

Landscape/Public Realm Proposals

The key elements of the landscape proposals are as follows:

- Lough Atalia Walk: A pedestrian promenade is proposed along the east boundary alongside the Lough Atalia channel, from New Docks Road to the northern point of the site. This creates potential for a local 'Lough Atalia Channel Route (as proposed by Galway Harbour Company), and for a waterfront shortcut between New Docks Road and Lough Atalia Road. Trees and ornamental planting are proposed along the promenade to soften the built frontage to the channel. The Lough Atalia Walk would be a significant addition to the city's public realm and pedestrian network;
- Waterfront open spaces: The arrangement of the buildings creates two triangular waterfront open spaces that open onto the Lough Atalia Walk to the southeast. The spaces include patches of amenity lawn, play areas, ornamental planting, hedges and trees, seating and circulation routes. A café/restaurant on the ground floor of Block A is positioned to activate this space, which is accessible from New Dock Road; and
- Pedestrian entrance plazas: Pedestrian plazas are provided at each of the entrances to the site.

The site is currently devoid of vegetation. The proposed development would therefore result in a significant gain in vegetation cover including trees, and soft/permeable surface for water attenuation. Three of the buildings, Blocks A, B and D, also feature green roofs, for additional water attenuation and habitat provision.

Potential Effects of the Proposed Development

Construction Phase Effects

Over the course of the estimated 30 month construction period, the site and immediate environs would be disturbed by construction activities including the erection of site hoarding, site clearance (including demolition), haulage and storage of materials, construction activity (including the operation of cranes) and the incremental growth of buildings on site (refer to the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for specific breakdown of the construction process and timeline). Construction is inherently disturbing of the townscape, and unsightly.

The potential visual effects during construction are assessed in Table 11-1.

The potential townscape effects during construction would be of 'slight' significance (on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) scale of 'imperceptible' to 'profound', see Table 11-3 and Figure 11-1) and negative. This is based on a townscape sensitivity classification of 'medium' (see Section 11.6.3.1) and a magnitude of change of 'medium'-'high' (see Section 11.6.3.2 within Chapter 11 (Landscape and Visual Assessment) but takes account of the change being temporary. Using a binary classification of significance, the townscape effects during construction would be 'not significant' negative. While unsightly, construction is a necessary and normal activity in the urban environment. People tend to accept it, knowing that the effects are temporary. In the case of this project, it would also take place on a former industrial site, in a harbour-industrial area now designated for urban regeneration. These factors contribute to the 'not significant' classification of the construction phase effects.

Operational Phase – Visual Effects

19 no. viewpoints were selected for assessment of the proposed development's visual effects, informed by verified photomontages. The viewpoints were selected to:

a) represent the key receptors and sensitivities in the receiving environment;
b) address the relevant Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) protected views; and
c) provide photomontage views of the proposal from a range of distances and directions.

The selection of viewpoints also took account of Galway City Council's (GCC's) Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) Stage 2 Opinion, which requested additional views to show the proposed development's frontage to the adjacent and internal streets on the site. Viewpoints 05a and 09a were added to the set of views in response to this request.

The assessment should be read in conjunction with the verified photomontages provided under separate cover (Appendix 11-1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)). For each viewpoint the following images/visualisations are provided:

- Existing View (a photograph showing the existing scenario);
- Baseline/Permitted View (Existing View + the permitted Augustine Hill development, the Bonham Quay development and the Queen Street student accommodation development);
- Proposed View (Baseline/Permitted View + the proposed development); and
- Cumulative/Masterplan View (Proposed View + a massing model of the emerging masterplan for the Inner Harbour Regeneration Area).

The Cumulative/Masterplan View is not assessed in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as that scenario is not the subject of this EIAR; the view is provided to give an indication of a possible/likely future scenario given relevant national and city planning policy, specifically the policy for the Inner Harbour Regeneration Site.

The significance of the potential visual effects, including the effects during construction, are summarised in the Table 11-1.

Note on classification of effect significance: While the EPA's Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, 2022 allows for classification of significance on a scale of imperceptible to profound (see Table 11-3 and Figure 11-1 in Chapter 11 of the EIAR), the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) requires the identification of effects as significant or not.

Therefore, in the summary of the visual effects assessment in Table 11-1 below, there are two classifications of significance. One classifies significance on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) scale (Imperceptible, Not Significant, Slight, Moderate, Significant, Very Significant, Profound) and the other is a binary classification of either Significant or Not Significant.

Table 11-1 Effects Assessment Summary

Viewpoint	Viewpoint Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change		Significance of Effects		EIA Binary Significance
		Construction (temporary)	Operation (long term)	Construction (temporary)	Operation (long term)	
1: Old Dublin Rd	**Medium**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative*	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
2: Lakeshore Drive	**Medium**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
3: Railway approaching Ceannt Stn	**Low-Medium**	Medium-High	Medium-High	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
4: Lough Atalia Rd approaching city	**Medium**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
5: Lough Atalia Rd near site	**Low**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative	**Slight-Moderate positive**	**Not significant positive**
5a: Lough Atalia Rd at site entrance	**Low**	High	High	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
6: Forthill Cemetery	**Medium**	Medium-High	Medium-High	Slight negative	**Moderate neutral**	**Significant neutral**
7: Bothar na Long	**Low**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative	**Slight positive**	**Not significant positive**
8: New Docks Rd approaching bridge	**Low**	High	High	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
9: New Docks Rd bridge	**Low**	Very High	Very High	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
9b: New Docks Rd alongside site	**Low**	Very High	Very High	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
10: Dock Rd/ Inner Dock	**Low-Medium**	Low	Low	Not significant negative	**Slight positive**	**Not significant positive**
11, 12: Eyre Square	**Medium-High**	None	None	No effect	**No effect**	**No effect**

13: Wolfe Tone Br (Fr Griffin Road)	**Medium-High**	None	None	Not significant negative**	**No Effect**	**No effect**
14: Nimmos' Pier and Grattan Road	**Medium-High**	Low	Low	Slight negative	**Not significant neutral**	**Not significant neutral**
15: Nimmos' Pier	**Low-Medium**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**
16: South Park coastal greenway	**Medium**	Low-Medium	Low-Medium	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Not significant positive**
17: Grattan Road	**Medium**	Medium	Medium	Slight negative	**Moderate positive**	**Significant positive**

* Construction phase visual effects are of lower significance than the operational phase due to their relatively short duration (in this case 30 months estimated). The magnitude of change during construction is usually approximately the same as the magnitude during operation. The significance of the effects during operation is greater as the effects are long term.

** Cranes would be temporarily visible on the skyline.

Operational Phase – Townscape Effects

Townscape Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the receiving environment can be classified 'medium' (definition of medium (see Table 11-1 in Chapter 11 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)): *Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong, or has evidence of alteration, degradation or erosion of elements and characteristics. The landscape character is such that there is some capacity for change. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change)*.

The medium sensitivity classification reflects the following:

- The site is a brownfield land parcel previously in industrial use, zoned 'City Centre' and part of the designated Inner Harbour 'major regeneration site'.
- In its current state of underutilisation – and its previous use as a fuel storage facility - the site detracts from the townscape character, quality and visual amenity of its immediate environs.
- The site is the furthest part of the combined Ceannt Quarter and Inner Harbour regeneration area from Galway's medieval city core and other sensitive townscape areas such are Eyre Square and the Long Walk.
- The site is surrounded to the north, west and south by similarly zoned (City Centre) and designated (regeneration site) lands. These surrounding lands form a buffer between the site and the existing city centre – and the one sensitivity in the area, Forthill Cemetery.

- To the east is the Lough Atalia channel (making the site a 'waterfront site', providing an opportunity to expand the city centre to the waterfront), beyond which lies the New Docks industrial area.
- The site is within walking distance of the existing city centre, the Ceannt Station public transport hub, and various coastal amenities.
- The ongoing development of Bonham Quay and the grant of planning permission for the Augustine Hill development on the Ceannt Quarter regeneration site have initiated the area's transformation from a former industrial zone into a 21st century high density mixed use city quarter. These projects provide favourable context for a development of the type proposed on the site.

These factors are all indicators of the receiving environment's low sensitivity to change. There can be few sites in Galway more suitable than the subject site for high density urban regeneration and particularly high density residential-led mixed use.

This is supported by the *Galway City Urban Density and Building Heights Study*, in which the city centre, including the harbour area, is identified as the area of the city most suitable for higher density development. Importantly however, large parts of the city centre are covered by Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) designation, which in effect limits the area of Galway city centre that can accommodate meaningful compact growth. This places particular demand on the Ceannt Quarter and Inner Harbour regeneration sites to deliver the transformative change to Galway sought by city and national policy.

The following Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) policy is relevant to this assessment:

- Section 1.6: *"The major regeneration sites located in the city centre at Ceannt Station Quarter, Inner Harbour… are of such a scale and nature that can satisfy the demand for additional commercial uses and office technology of both an international and indigenous nature. These locations can provide high quality, attractive, city centre locations adjacent to sustainable transport links while also delivering on their potential for high density, residential development. They offer a sequential solution to the expansion of the city centre, close to a major transportation hub, reinforcing the prime role of the city centre in both Galway City and the MASP area."*
- *"Expanding the city in this direction not only responds to future enterprise floor space demand it also can, with good design enhance the image of the city, the tourism function and allow for an expansion to a scale commensurate with the designation of Galway as a NPF regional city".*
- *"the RSES also identifies the City and Metropolitan Area as the primary driver in strengthening the development of the region and reflects the ambition to grow the city as a globally competitive, successful city and metropolitan area which can contribute to re-balancing growth nationally to achieve more regional parity and viable alternatives to Dublin".*
- *"Expansion of the city centre into key regeneration sites at Ceannt Quarter, Inner Harbour… will add to the vitality and viability of the city centre. These sites represent transformative opportunities for developments of scale with new residential communities and mixed uses*

complementing the experience of the city centre. They have potential to be developed in a sustainable manner while retaining the historic character and distinctiveness of the city centre."

- *"The Inner Harbour Regeneration Site... has potential for significant redevelopment providing an opportunity to re-establish links between the city centre and the sea, to create a high quality waterfront setting, a new city centre mixed use neighbourhood…. This area is already under transition with the current development of Bonham Quay contributing to the transformation of this part of the city centre and indicating a scale and density that could be achieved in the wider Inner Harbour."*
- *"Where sites of scale are capable of generating their own character, in particular at the Ceannt Quarter, Inner Harbour…, scope for greater height is open for consideration where this additionality can demonstrate justification which may be based on outstanding architectural design and satisfy all other planning considerations"*.

While the townscape characteristics and policy noted above point to a low sensitivity to change, there are factors that require a considered response in the site's redevelopment. These include:

- The site's proximity (c. 60m) to Forthill Cemetery. The cemetery is a valued cultural heritage feature (indicated by its protected structure status), visitor attraction and open space/green infrastructure asset. It must be recognised however that (a) the cemetery has for decades been surrounded by an unsightly industrial townscape, (b) it has been hidden from the surrounding townscape by its high boundary walls, and (c) it is now located at the centre of Galway's city centre strategic regeneration area (the combined Ceannt Quarter and Inner Harbour sites). The planned transformation of the surrounding area from industrial zone to high-density, mixed-use city centre quarter has implications for the role of the cemetery in the future townscape. It is inevitable that the cemetery will experience a higher degree of built/visual enclosure as a result of the new buildings making up the surrounding high-density quarter. The cemetery will be no less valuable for this change; in fact, its value as an open space, green infrastructure and visual amenity asset will be increased in the future context;
- The site (or tall development on the site) is potentially visible from several key approaches to Galway city centre, including:
- Lough Atalia Road and a short stretch of the Old Dublin Road as it enters the city to the north;
- The railway line approaching Ceannt Station across Lough Atalia from the east;
- New Docks Road entering the city centre from the possible future Galway Harbour Extension (which includes cruise liner berths and a large marina, which would make the site a 'gateway site' on the route into the city for many visitors);
- Grattan Road approaching the city centre along the coastline to the west.
- The site (or tall development on the site) is potentially visible in several protected views, such as views from around Lough Atalia and from the coastline to the west (Grattan Road, South Park, etc.); and
- The site is a 'waterfront site', albeit in a currently industrial area. The site's redevelopment therefore has the potential to redefine the city's relationship to a part of the coastline.

These factors are expressed in the following statement from the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP): *"Notwithstanding the pursuance of compact growth, Galway's City Core is a historic environment with a sensitive and distinct character. This setting is complemented by both the river and coastline context which provides an impressive landscape and townscape features. As such, the impacts of new development on the city's character and setting will be a major consideration within the visibility envelope of the historic core and natural environment context".*

In conclusion, while the site and the immediate environs are unquestionably highly suitable for the type of development proposed, the potential visibility of that development in certain key views – and the related potential effect on the re-imaging of the harbour area and Galway city as a whole - demands a considered design response.

This does not mean that development on the site must be of 'landmark character' (i.e. a unique architectural expression); the Augustine Hill development will fulfil that role in the new quarter and there are other sites in the Inner Harbour regeneration area more suited to landmark buildings (refer to the Galway Harbour Vision Document and masterplan). However, the site's redevelopment should be of a quality commensurate with its importance as a waterfront site visible from several key approaches to the city centre.

Magnitude of Townscape Change

The magnitude of townscape change which would result from the proposed development can be classified 'medium-high'.

Definition of 'medium' (see Section 11.2.2.2 and Table 11-2 of the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)): *Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape*.

Definition of 'high': *Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape*.

The medium-high magnitude of change classification reflects the following:

- At 1.621 ha the site is relatively large (for an urban site);
- Comprised of four buildings ranging from six to 13 no. storeys, the proposed development is of substantial spatial extent and height. While tall for the current context, the development should not be considered 'substantially uncharacteristic' given (a) its location in the Inner Harbour strategic regeneration site, (b) its proximity to the permitted Augustine Hill development, and (c) its falling into the area deemed most suitable for increased density/height in the city by the *Galway City Urban Density and Building Heights Study*;
- The site is located alongside the Lough Atalia channel, making it a coastal or waterfront site, meaning that the proposed development would be visible from/along the coastline, e.g. Viewpoints 1-4 and 14-17;

- The development would redefine the character of a section of the city's waterfront (a section that is currently industrial in character); and
- The Proposed Development would be visible from certain key routes into the city centre, including the Old Dublin Road (Viewpoint 1), the railway line approaching Ceannt Station (Viewpoint 3), Lough Atalia Road (Viewpoints 4, 5), New Docks Road entering the city from the possible future Galway Harbour Extension – Viewpoints 8, 9), and Grattan Road (Viewpoint 17).

While the above factors point to a high magnitude of townscape change, there are factors that warrant an adjustment of the classification down to medium-high. These include:

- The proposed development is well removed from Galway's medieval city core and other Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) such as Eyre Square, the Long Walk and Nos. 1-6 Dock Road. The visual impact assessment (Viewpoints 10-14) reveals that the proposed development would have no significant effect on these sensitive areas. This is an important finding. It highlights the opportunity presented by the site – to deliver a new residential community of substantial scale in the city centre without causing any negative impact on the city's valued historic townscape areas; and
- The process of transformation of the Ceannt Quarter and Inner Harbour regeneration area is already underway (at Bonham Quay and with the grant of permission for Augustine Hill). Substantial further development of similar type (high density/tall) is planned in the area and facilitated by the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) and national policy. The proposed development would therefore (a) contribute to an ongoing trend of townscape change rather than initiating the change, and (b) in time be absorbed into an extensive new urban quarter.

Significance of Quality of Townscape Effects

Measuring the magnitude of change (medium-high) against the sensitivity of the receiving environment (medium), **the townscape impact is classified 'moderate'** (in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) scale of significance) (EPA definition of moderate significance: *"An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends"*). **Using a binary system of significance classification, the townscape effect is classified as 'significant'**. The townscape effects are likely and would be long term.

Based on (a) the analysis of the townscape character of the receiving environment, (b) consideration of relevant national and Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) policy, (c) the analysis of the proposed development including its response to the context and its design objectives, and (d) the assessment of the visual impact on the 19 no. representative viewpoints, **the townscape effect can be classified positive**.

While the above conclusion is informed largely by the visual effects assessment (and the verified photomontages), it is also supported by the proposal's demonstrable alignment or compliance with key national and GCDP policy and particularly its potential to contribute to the realisation of the vision for the city's evolution. For example:

National Planning Framework (NPF)

- The development would contribute to the realisation of the NPF's 1st 'Shared Goal' and National Strategic Outcome of compact growth, by making better use of under-utilised brownfield land, delivering higher density and thereby encouraging more people and generating more activity within the existing footprint of the city;
- It would also contribute to the 'National Strategic Outcome' of enhanced amenities and heritage, by providing new, well-designed public realm linked to and integrated with the natural heritage of the receiving environment (specifically the Lough Atalia channel shoreline). The development uses its waterfront position to its own advantage (providing views of Lough Atalia and Galway Bay), and to the advantage of the public by providing a public promenade and park along the shoreline; and
- The Proposed Development would contribute to the NPF's goal of realising the potential of Galway to create a viable alternative to Dublin, and to become a 'city of sufficient scale and quality to compete internationally', through 'transformational urban rejuvenation'.

Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

- The Proposed Development would constitute a sequential expansion of the city centre, bringing the centre to the Lough Atalia shoreline where it would provide an opportunity for sustainable waterfront city living (with easy access to the city centre, the Ceannt Station public transport hub, and Galway's coastal amenities);
- By providing an attractive but affordable residential neighbourhood of scale in this location, the Proposed Development would make a significant contribution to the Galway City Development Plan's (GCDP's) (2023-2029) stated ambitions of (a) enhancing the image of the city, and (b) growing Galway as a competitive, successful metropolitan area, re-balancing growth nationally to achieve more regional parity and a viable alternative to Dublin;
- The Proposed Development would maximise the value derived from the waterfront site in three ways, thereby enhancing the new quarter's – and the city's – relationship with the sea, by:
- Positioning the buildings in response to the Lough Atalia channel shoreline;
- Providing many of the 356 no. apartments with views of Lough Atalia, Galway Bay or the evolving Inner Harbour area, and
- Providing a public promenade and public spaces alongside the Lough Atalia channel shoreline. This provision of access to the waterfront, and improved pedestrian permeability, are important planning and townscape gains.
- By adopting/adapting a recognisably urban typology, the perimeter block, the development would contribute to the establishment of a distinctly urban character in an area currently devoid of basic urban characteristics such as a clearly defined urban grain and built frontage/enclosure to streets and spaces - and the associated quality of legibility. The development would initiate the emergence of a legible urban structure in the Inner Harbour regeneration area;

- The palette of high quality, durable materials (brick, metal and glass) would contribute further to the establishment of urban character;
- The Proposed Development would contribute to key objectives stated in the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCDP) for the Inner Harbour Regeneration site, including:
- *"Ensure a high quality urban design, and demonstrate how redevelopment can connect into and extend the historic street pattern of the city centre. Show good relationship with the existing urban grain/structure and link public spaces…"* The development would do this by adopting a permitter block typology, thereby providing built frontage to - and improving the definition and legibility of - the Lough Atalia channel, New Docks Road and the new road along the site's northern boundary.
- *"Include for maximum public access and permeability throughout the site, give linkage and views to the waterfront and key coastal vistas and consider the challenge of transition areas bounding the site and anticipate opportunities for linkages and continuity in the design and layout of these sites…"*
- *Develop the public realm in a manner that maximises the benefits of the waterfront location, achieves a strong sense of place, achieves permeability and reflects a defined functionality and strong landscape impact…"*
- *Include measures to ensure connections to the green network, including green and blue links, city cycle and pedestrian networks and ensure biodiversity gain within the site…"*

The development would do this by (a) the provision of a public promenade across the site along the waterfront (the 'Lough Atalia Walk', creating the potential for a wider Lough Atalia shoreline walk), (b) provision of waterfront open spaces activated by café, and (c) the positioning of the apartment buildings for views of Lough Atalia, Galway Bay and the Inner Harbour area.

- *Demonstrate where taller buildings and/or landmark buildings are part of the composition, how existing important views, vistas and landmarks are respected and show how such buildings contribute to aspects of urban design such as accessibility, enclosure, character, permeability and adaptability…".* The site's location in the furthest part of the Inner Harbour regeneration site from the existing city centre, the Long Walk, etc. means that the development would not negatively affect existing important views, vistas or landmarks. The main effects of the proposed development's built form and height would be to (a) mark the Lough Atalia channel waterfront in the townscape (currently this stretch of the waterfront is lost to the city), and (b) to complement the taller Augustine Hill development nearby, combining with that development to form a pleasing composition of form (as illustrated by the photomontages for Viewpoints 1-4 and 15-17).
- The Proposed Development is aligned with the Galway City Development Plan's (GCDP's) (2023-2029) 'key principles in the consideration of good urban design', 'mechanisms to achieve principles of good design' and Policy 8.7 on Urban Design and Placemaking:
- *"The promotion of character by reinforcing local distinctiveness, identity and sense of place to enhance character. The typology of streets, layout of parks, open spaces, the natural heritage and the urban morphology…".* The development reinforces the existing urban grain and maximises the relationship with the waterfront by (a) adapting the perimeter block typology to provide built frontage/enclosure to the Lough Atalia channel (and New Docks

Road) while also opening the main public open space at the centre of the block to the waterfront, and (b) providing the maximum number of apartments with views of Lough Atali, Galway Bay or the Inner Harbour – thereby strengthening the sense of place.

- *"The creation of places that are easily recognisable* [with] *their own identity through recognisable landmarks and/or streets. New development should enhance the legibility of the surrounding place."* The proposed development would mark the position of the Lough Atalia channel waterfront in the townscape in views along the coastline (e.g. Views 1-4, 15-17), and provide public spaces for access to and enjoyment of this element of the cityscape which hitherto has been hidden in an industrial zone.
- *"Exceptional design quality, including height, massing, proportion, materials, detailing, site layout and its relationship with the surrounding area, which set it apart in terms of quality and distinctiveness, and which positively contributes towards the context and character of the area…".* The proposed layout and arrangement of built form and height are a considered response to the site's location with regard to the Lough Atalia waterfront, the Inner Harbour strategic regeneration site, the historic city centre and the Augustine Hill development. The built form incorporates both horizontal and vertical elements (representing the past and future of the cityscape), and steps in height, steps in the building line and variations in façade design are used to disaggregate and articulate the built form. The proposal does not seek to compete with Augustine Hill or other future 'landmark developments' in the Inner Harbour area, and as an affordable housing scheme it can't, however, by its responsive design (of the buildings and public realm) and the use of high quality materials it would contribute positively to the character and quality of the emerging high density city centre quarter.

Potential Cumulative Effects

Augustine Hill, Ceannt Quarter

The assessment has considered the potential in cumulative effects of the Proposed Development and the planning permitted Augustine Hill development (Galway City Council reg. ref. 20/47; An Bord Plenala ref. no. ABP-310568-21) on the Ceannt Quarter Strategic Regeneration site. Augustine Hill is depicted in the verified photomontages (Appendix 11 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)), allowing for the two developments' visual effects to be seen in combination.

Augustine Hill will initiate the transformation of the combined Ceannt Quarter and Inner Harbour regeneration area into a high-density mixed-use city quarter. The assessment found that the two developments would be complementary, each providing favourable context for the other, both incorporating buildings of contemporary urban typology, scale and architecture, and specifically tall buildings (for the context).

The Proposed Development responds to the Augustine Hill development in (a) its layout, specifically the alignment of Blocks B and D along the new road parallel to Lough Atalia Road, thereby creating a legible, orthogonal urban grain on the lands east of Lough Atalia Road, and (b) in the arrangement of height. The tallest proposed building, Block D, is positioned closest to the Augustine Hill tower, with the height stepping down towards the Lough Atalia channel waterfront.

Inner Harbour Masterplan

Galway Harbour Company has commissioned Scott Tallon Walker Architects to produce a masterplan for the Inner Harbour Regeneration site, which includes the subject site. This responds to a requirement of the Galway City Development Plan (GCDP) (2023-2029) ' for a masterplan to be produced to guide the redevelopment of the area. The masterplan is being prepared in consultation with stakeholders (including the applicant for the subject proposal), Galway City Council (GCC) and others. It has not yet been finalised, but the masterplan's proposed urban grain and arrangement of height are well advanced. The masterplan will have no statutory status. All developments in the area will be subject to detailed design and will require planning permission.

The emerging masterplan (building massing/height only) has been depicted in the Cumulative photomontages included in Appendix 11 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The inclusion of the masterplan massing in the views is solely to illustrate a reasonable, possible future scenario, and is not intended to allow for explicit cumulative impact assessment. Nonetheless, the Cumulative photomontages show that the proposed development and the remainder of the masterplan would be complementary, combining (with the adjacent Augustine Hill development) to generate a distinct new character area in the city. This is in keeping with the GCDP policy for the area (GCDP Section 10.2, p.249):

"Expansion of the city centre into key regeneration sites at Ceannt Quarter, Inner Harbour… will add to the vitality and viability of the city centre. These sites represent transformative opportunities for developments of scale with new residential communities and mixed uses complementing the experience of the city centre. They have potential to be developed in a sustainable manner while retaining the historic character and distinctiveness of the city centre."

Proposed Coal Yard Hotel

In 2024 a planning application (Galway City Council (GCC) Ref. 24/60108) was made for a hotel development of 14 no. storeys on the 'Coal Yard' site on Bóthar na Long and Lough Atalia Road, adjacent to Forthill Cemetery, c. 70m to the northwest of the site. The Coal Yard site falls into the Inner Harbour Regeneration site and is located across Forthill Cemetery from the Augustine Hill development.

GCC refused permission for the development, and the Applicant lodged a 1st Party appeal with An Bord Pleanála (now An Coimisiún Pleanála) (ABP-320100-24). The appeal is pending.

The potential cumulative effects of the Proposed Development and the proposed Coal Yard Hotel development have not been specifically assessed in this chapter. However, in concept the two developments are complementary (tall buildings in Galway's designated high density, mixed use regeneration area, seeking to maximise use of the centrally located former industrial sites), albeit contrasting in architectural character. Like the Proposed Development, the proposed Coal Yard Hotel seeks to employ building height to achieve a high yield in floorspace, and to reinforce the emerging urban structure, improve legibility and contribute to place-making – in the Coal Yard's case by marking the junction of Bóthar na Long and Lough Atalia Road at the centre of the new Inner Harbour quarter.

In the same manner that the Augustine Hill development and the Proposed Development would provide mutually favourable context for each other (combining to establish a contemporary, high

density city quarter), the proposed Coal Yard Hotel and the Proposed Development would be complementary.

Galway Harbour Extension

In 2014, Galway Harbour Company applied to An Bord Pleanála for planning permission for a 27 ha extension of the harbour – from the New Docks area south into Galway Bay. The plan for the harbour extension includes cruise liner berths and a new marina, with the objective of establishing a cruise and marine tourism sector in Galway. An Bord Pleanála/ An Coimisiún Pleanála has yet to make a decision on the application.

If the development is permitted, New Docks Road will provide the link between the new harbour and Galway city centre. The bridge over the Lough Atalia channel will become a gateway to the city, and the site - located beside the bridge and with frontage to the road - will be a 'gateway site' on the route into the city. This will elevate the site's status in the townscape. This assessment has taken account of that potential increase in status of the site, and three of the viewpoints for visual effects assessment (Viewpoints 8, 9, 9a) were selected to address this prospect.

The newly constructed elements of the harbour extension would however be well removed from the proposed development (on the far side of the existing New Docks area), and there is limited potential for cumulative townscape and visual effects other than the hew harbour's effect on the status of New Docks Road (and the site by extension).

BusConnects Galway Cross City Link

Planning permission has been granted for the BusConnects Galway Cross City Link scheme (University Road to Dubin Road) (ABP-314597-22). It is not considered that the Proposed Development and the permitted BusConnects development would have any significant cumulative townscape or visual effects.

Avoidance, Remedial and Mitigation Measures

Construction Phase

Construction is inherently disturbing of the landscape/townscape, and unsightly. The most effective mitigation for the potential townscape and visual impacts of construction is site hoarding. However, this is only effective for ground level activity. When buildings under construction rise above ground level they are exposed and unsightly. Negative impacts are unavoidable in the construction phase of multi-storey development.

Good practice in site management can reduce unnecessary visual impacts. These may include (a) considered layout of the construction site with regard to the most sensitive visual receptors, (b) dust control (e.g. water sprays to avoid dust plumes; spraying of vehicles before site departure to avoid dirtying roads), (c) waste control (e.g. netting/covering of storage bins/areas; regular site inspection for litter), and (d) considered positioning of security lighting.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been prepared and submitted with the Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) application. The CEMP includes measures – or a framework for the future agreement of measures - such as those identified above. No further mitigation measures for construction stage townscape and visual impacts are recommended.

Operational Phase

The development proposal has evolved through an iterative design process that included (a) pre-planning consultation with Galway City Council (GCC)through the Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) planning application process, (b) consultation with Galway Port Company, (c) cooperation with the architect (Scott Tallon Walker) responsible for preparation of the Galway Inner Harbour Masterplan 2025, and (d) ongoing, iterative assessment of the proposal's potential environmental effects – including its townscape and visual effects.

The development proposal has been informed by this, and this is reflected in the findings of this assessment.

- The operational stage visual effects would be positive or neutral for all 19 no. representative viewpoints assessed; and
- The operational phase townscape effects have been classified as 'moderate' positive (using the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) scale, see Table 11-4) or significant positive (using a binary classification of significant or not significant).

Therefore, no operation stage mitigation measures for townscape and visual effects are recommended.

Residual Effects

Since no construction phase or operation phase mitigation measures have been recommended, the residual effects are the same as those described above.

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12 MATERIAL ASSETS: TRAFFIC

This chapter has identified, described and evaluated the potential impacts arising from both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. The assessment has been carried out by NRB Consulting Engineers Ltd.

The site is located within Galway City Centre and benefits from strong accessibility to existing public transport services, and future infrastructure including the proposed Galway BusConnects Cross-City Link. Car parking is minimal (37 spaces) and cycle parking is substantial (741 spaces), aligning with national policy and the Galway City Development Plan's emphasis on sustainable mobility.

A formal detailed Traffic and Transport Assessment has been undertaken and submitted by NRB Consulting Engineers Ltd as part of the overall application and underpins this chapter. The Traffic and Transport Assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland's guidelines. The assessment is based on recent weekday AM and PM Peak classified traffic interval movement surveys of the adjacent road network, undertaken by specialist 3rd party data collection company.

During the construction phase, traffic generation will be limited and temporary in nature, with peak activity associated with the movement of excavated materials and deliveries. The number of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and staff vehicle trips will be modest and programmed to avoid the commuter peak periods. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), integrated within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), will be implemented to manage vehicle routing, delivery scheduling and site access arrangements. With these measures in place, no significant adverse impacts on the local road network are predicted during construction.

During the operational phase, the Proposed Development will generate a low volume of traffic owing to its city-centre location and deliberately low level of car parking provision (0.08 spaces per unit). Comprehensive pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is integrated into the scheme, consistent with national and local policy objectives promoting modal shift towards sustainable transport. Junction capacity modelling confirms that all assessed junctions, including those on Lough Atalia Road and Dock Road, will continue to operate within capacity in both the opening year (2028) and the design year (2043), even under worst-case and cumulative development scenarios.

This chapter concluded that the Proposed Development will result in a negligible impact on local road networks. All junctions within the study area are predicted to operate within capacity during both the opening year (2028) and the future design year (2043).

Mitigation measures have been embedded in the design, including:

- Very limited car parking provision to discourage reliance on private cars;
- Provision of 741 cycle parking spaces, exceeding national minimum standards;
- Delivery of new pedestrian and cycle links, including a Toucan crossing on Lough Atalia Road and a greenway connection;
- Designation of spaces for electric vehicles and shared mobility schemes; and,
- Implementation of a Mobility Management Plan (MMP) to encourage behavioural change and promote sustainable travel choices.

The chapter demonstrates that the residual impacts of the Proposed Development on traffic and transport are negligible. The combination of low trip generation, sustainable access measures and robust mitigation will ensure that the Proposed Development can be accommodated within the

capacity of the existing road network without giving rise to significant effects on traffic safety, road capacity, air quality or noise.

Cumulative effects with other planned developments, including the BusConnects scheme, the opposite “coal yard” site, the Augustine Hill project, and Galway Harbour Extension were considered and found to be insignificant. No significant residual effects are anticipated.

The proposed site access junctions are of sufficient capacity to accommodate the worst-case traffic associated with the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development layout reflects a sustainable design for residential developments, particularly in terms of accessibility to non-car modes of travel. It’s central location within Galway City Centre and proximity to a wide range of host of services and amenities are expected to support active travel and reduce reliance on private car use.

Overall, the assessment confirms that the Proposed Development can be accommodated within the existing transport infrastructure without significant adverse effects on traffic flow, safety or network capacity.

In conclusion, the Proposed Development represents a sustainable form of urban regeneration in a highly accessible location. It supports national and local policy objectives for compact growth, active travel and reduced car dependency. No significant adverse impacts on the surrounding transport network are predicted, and the Proposed Development will contribute positively to the promotion of sustainable mobility in Galway City.

13 MATERIAL ASSETS: WASTE AND UTILITIES

This chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) provides an assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Development on material assets including built services and waste. This assessment has been carried out by DNV.

During the construction phase, surface water runoff may become contaminated with sediment or hydrocarbons, particularly during rainfall events. This runoff could enter open excavations and mobilise existing hydrocarbon contamination in the soil. Mitigation measures including impermeable lining of attenuation zones and nature-based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features will reduce this risk. The effect is considered neutral to slightly positive, imperceptible, and short-term, and is non-significant in EIA terms. In the operational phase, increased impermeable surfaces will lead to surface water runoff that may contain contaminants. This runoff will be managed using SuDS, and the overall effect is expected to be neutral to slightly positive, long-term, and non-significant in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms.

The commencement of construction will increase foul water production at the site. Uisce Éireann (UÉ) has confirmed feasibility for connection, subject to a 140-metre extension and upgrade to the existing network infrastructure. Due to the temporary and phased nature of construction, the effect on the existing foul water network is expected to be neutral, slight, and short-term, and is non-significant in EIA terms. Foul water from the Proposed Development will be treated at the Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. Discharge will only occur under agreement from UÉ and other statutory consents. The effect on water quality from wastewater is expected to be neutral, imperceptible, and long-term, and is non-significant in EIA terms.

Site offices and construction activities will increase water demand, requiring a temporary connection for on-site works. UÉ has confirmed that the existing network has sufficient capacity to support the anticipated demand, and no upgrade works are required. The effect is expected to be neutral, imperceptible, and short-term, and is non-significant in EIA terms. In the operational phase, the proposed 200mm watermain will connect to an existing 300mm UÉ watermain, and the increase in demand will have a neutral, imperceptible, long-term effect that is non-significant in EIA terms.

Construction activities will require a temporary connection to the local electrical supply network. The Main Contractor will apply for power from ESB Networks, which may involve temporary suspensions of the local network. These suspensions will be managed by ESB Networks according to standard protocols. The effect on the local electrical supply network is expected to be slightly negative to neutral, slight, and temporary, and is non-significant in EIA terms. Electricity will be needed for public lighting, domestic lighting, power supply, heating, and electric vehicle parking for the Proposed Development. This will likely increase demand on the existing electricity supply network. The effect during the operational phase is expected to be slightly negative to neutral, imperceptible, and long-term, and is non-significant in EIA terms.

There is no gas supply proposed for either the construction or operational phase.

The operational phase will have a marginal increase in demand on the local telecommunications network. The site is located within an area where high-speed broadband is available and there are three mobile mast clusters in proximity to the site. The likely effect of the operational phase on the local telecommunications network will be neutral and imperceptible in the long-term and is non-significant in EIA terms.

Waste will be generated during both the demolition and construction phases, including materials such as concrete, timber, metals, packaging, and excavated soils. Approximately 16,063m³ of soil, stones, clay and made ground will be excavated, with 11,594m³ removed off-site due to limited reuse opportunities. The contractor will be required to minimise oversupply of materials and maximise reuse where possible. Waste from construction workers and site offices (e.g. food waste, recyclables, and office waste) will also be managed appropriately. The potential environmental effect of waste generation during construction is considered negative, slight, short-term, and non-significant in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms.

An Operational Waste Management Plan (OWMP) has been prepared to ensure waste management during the operational phase complies with legal and industry standards. The Proposed Development will increase municipal waste production, including general waste, recyclables, organic waste, and glass. Additional waste types like bulky items, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), and hazardous materials will also be managed. Implementation of the OWMP will ensure a high level of recycling, reuse and recovery at the Proposed Development. All recyclable materials will be segregated at source to reduce waste contractor costs and ensure maximum diversion of materials from landfill, thus contributing to the targets set out in the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy. Adherence to this plan will also ensure that waste management at the development is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Galway City Council Waste Bye-Laws. The potential effect from the operational phase on municipal waste disposal is likely to be long-term, negative and slight in nature, and is non-significant in EIA terms.

The assessment of likely effects resulting from the Proposed Development on built services and waste has identified the existing infrastructure in the surrounding area in relation to surface water, wastewater, water supply, electrical supply, gas supply, telecommunications and waste. Where relevant, appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures have been detailed. It is reasonably considered that following all mitigation measures and adherence to construction best practice that no significant effects to built services and waste will arise from the Proposed Development during the construction or operational phases in EIA terms.

14 ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Archaeology and Cultural Heritage chapter assesses the impact of the Proposed Development on the known and potential cultural heritage resource which includes assets relevant to both the tangible heritage resource (archaeology and architecture heritage); and non-tangible resources (history, folklore, tradition, placenames etc.). The recorded and potential cultural heritage resource within a study area encompassing the Proposed Development site and lands extending for 300 metres in all directions from its boundary, was assessed in order to compile a comprehensive cultural heritage baseline to inform the assessment. This assessment was carried out by John Cronin & Associates.

The assessment was based on a programme of desktop research combined with a number of field surveys of the Proposed Development site. The primary sources reviewed for the recorded archaeological resource were the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Galway City Council's (GCC) current Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) along with structures listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) were rereviewed in order to assess the designated architectural heritage resource. The desktop study also included reviews of historic mapping, publications and various online heritage sources.

The results of the field survey are described within the chapter and extracts from the photographic record compiled during the survey are presented in Appendix 14-1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Receiving Environment

The Proposed Development site is largely composed of reclaimed lands adjacent to where Lough Atalia connects with Galway Bay. A detailed review of cartographic and aerial photographic sources suggest that the majority of the subject site consists of land that was reclaimed during the latter half of the 20th century.

There are a total of five archaeological sites (as recorded by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI)) within the study area surrounding the Proposed Development site. However, three of these archaeological sites are located within and form Forthill Cemetery which is located to the north-west of the Proposed Development site; these three sites are:

- A 16th-century Augustinian Friary (Recorded Monument Number GA094-099003-);
- An early 17th-century bastioned fort (GA094-099002-), which was constructed around the friary site *circa* 1601-03; and
- Forthill Graveyard (GA094-099001-), which continued in use following the demolition of the fort.

In addition, the *zone of notification* for the historic town of Galway (GA094-100----) and part of the south-eastern line of the Town Defences (GA094-100001-) are located within 300 metres of the Proposed Development site

The Database of Irish Excavation Reports does not contain any entries for archaeological investigations within the Proposed Development site but does contain entries a number of licenced

investigations within the city centre area. The majority of the investigations undertaken in vicinity of the Proposed Development site revealed nothing of archaeological significance. These results, along with the fact that the site is reclaimed land, strongly suggests that the potential to find *in situ* archaeological deposits or artefacts in context/with provenance is low.

The Record of Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage for Galway City do not list any designated architectural heritage structures within the Proposed Development site. There are a total of 12 sites recorded by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage within 300 metres of the Proposed Development site. Of these, 11 are also listed on the Record of Protected Structures) and one, Forthill Graveyard (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage reg. no. 30319007) is also a recorded archaeological monument (GA094-099001-). There are 27 protected structures located within the study area surrounding the Proposed Development site. There is some overlap between the Record of Protected Structures sites and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage structures, with all but one of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage sites being protected structures.

Galway City Council have designated 11 Architectural Conservation Areas, and the Proposed Development site is not within any of these, but it is located within 300 metres of four. These four Architectural Conservation Areas are:

- Saint Nicholas Street Architectural Conservation Area;
- City Core Architectural Conservation Area;
- Eyre Square Architectural Conservation Area; and
- Long Walk Architectural Conservation Area.

It should be noted that Nos. 1 – 6 Dock Road Architectural Conservation Area is located just over 300 metres from the Proposed Development site.

The field survey of the Proposed Development site revealed that it is devoid of any extant structures or fabric of cultural heritage value. The main body of the Proposed Development site is reclaimed land, which was up to recently used for fuel storage, and was heavily disturbed during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the site. The *Ground Investigations Report* for the Proposed Development, compiled by Ground Investigations Ireland in October 2024, noted that the surface of the site consisted of concrete and tarmac, and in some areas crushed rock fill up to a depth of 0.9m. Under the surface was a deposit of ‘made ground’ which overlay the bedrock to a depth of between 5.8m and 9.45m. A further layer of ‘possible made ground’ was noted under the main deposit of made ground in some areas. The ground investigation works indicate that the main body of the site contains several metres of modern fill material and thus possesses a low archaeological potential.

Assessment of Potential Effects

A total of 33 cultural heritage sites have been identified within a study area that included the Proposed Development site and an area of up to 300 metres from the boundaries of the Proposed Development site. These sites include Record of Monuments and Places, buildings/structures identified by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, protected structures (Record of Protected Structures) and Architectural Conservation Area.

There are no Protected Structures or structures listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage located within the Proposed Development site and it is not within an Architectural Conservation Area. No mitigation measures for these elements of the cultural heritage resource are, therefore, required during the construction phase. No direct impacts on protected structures or Architectural Conservation Areas are expected. Indirect visual impacts on nearby sites, such as Forthill Graveyard, are predicted to be slight.

The main body of the site is situated to the southeast of Lough Atalia Road, built on reclaimed land and contains no recorded archaeological sites. However, a portion of the Proposed Development includes a portion of the approach (on Lough Atalia Road) to the main body of the site and this area encroaches into the zone of notification for historic town of Galway (GA094-100----) (this zone also includes the Augustinian Friary (GA094-099003-), bastioned fort (GA094-099002-), and Forthill Graveyard (GA094-099001-)). Ground works, including surface treatments and the establishment of site boundaries, which will be set within modern layers, along with the establishment of a foul water pipe to connect with existing foul water pipes within the carriageway of Lough Atalia Road will be within the zone of notification but will not interact directly with the recorded archaeological sites themselves.

As the existence, nature and extent of any unrecorded archaeological features or artefacts within the Proposed Development site are unknown; the significance of any potential construction phase impacts cannot be quantified but construction phase ground excavation works will have the potential to result in permanent, direct, negative effects on any such remains. Therefore, as a precautionary measure, licensed archaeological monitoring/supervision of ground development works will be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist during the construction phase. The programme of archaeological monitoring will be undertaken under an excavation licence from the National Monuments Service (NMS). In the event of any archaeological sites or features are identified during monitoring, ground works will halt at that location, and they will be recorded and will be left to remain securely *in situ* within a cordoned off area. The National Monuments Service and Galway City Council will be notified of the discovery and consulted to determine further appropriate mitigation measures, which may entail preservation *in situ* by avoidance or preservation by record through a licensed archaeological excavation.

No cumulative effects on the setting of the cultural heritage assets within the wider landscape are predicted.

Mitigation

The following mitigation measures will be implemented to address potential effects on archaeological and cultural heritage during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. Prior to commencement of site development works, the developer shall employ a Project Archaeologist to oversee the archaeological works undertaken by an archaeologist to be employed by the main contractor (i.e. the contractor's archaeologist). During the construction phase, the contractor's archaeologist shall undertake a programme of licensed archaeological monitoring during all ground reduction works within the Proposed Development site. The programme of investigations will be undertaken under a license from the National Monuments Service.

If archaeological material is uncovered, ground works will halt at the location, and the National Monuments Service and Galway City Council will be notified to determine further mitigation measures. These may include (a) preservation *in situ* (avoiding disturbance), (b) preservation by

record (archaeological excavation and documentation). If archaeological material is discovered, a post-excavation phase will involve analysis and reporting, with findings disseminated to the National Monuments Service and Galway City Council.

Subjection to the successful implementation of construction phase measures, no operational phase archaeological or cultural heritage mitigation measures are necessary.

The obligatory application and reporting processes required as part of licence applications to the National Monuments Service will allow for monitoring of the successful implementation of the mitigation measures.

Residual Effects

The mitigation measures presented in Section 14.6 of the chapter will provide for either the preservation *in situ* of any unknown archaeological features within the Proposed Development site or the proper and adequate recording of such features by full archaeological excavation. Preservation *in situ* shall allow for a negligible magnitude of impact resulting in a potential not significant/imperceptible significance of effect in the context of residual impact on the unrecorded archaeological resource. Preservation by record shall allow for a high magnitude of impact, albeit ameliorated by the creation of a full and detailed archaeological record, the results of which shall be publicly disseminated.

After mitigation, no significant effects on archaeological or architectural heritage are expected. Visual impacts on Forthill Graveyard are predicted to be low and slight.

15 RISK MANAGEMENT

It is critical that any project is screened against potential risks which it might encounter and/or impose on the nearby environment during its construction and operational phase. This chapter sets out the assessment of the vulnerability of the Proposed Development, which was carried out by DNV.

To understand the potential consequences and predicted effects of any major accident or disaster due to the Proposed Development and the vulnerability of the Proposed Development, a desk study was undertaken. The assessment reviewed:

- The vulnerability of the Proposed Development to major accidents or disasters; and
- The potential for the Proposed Development to cause risks to human health, cultural heritage and the environment, because of that identified vulnerability.

A methodology has been used including the following assessment:

- Identifying and screening the hazards;
- Screening the hazards;
- Identifying the effect;
- Assessing the likelihood of the major accident or disaster occurring; and
- Assessing any risks that remain.

The design has considered the potential for flooding, road accidents, invasive species or fire within the design methodology. From this, it is considered that the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to major accidents and/or disasters is not significant.

Fire Safety and Emergency Response

The Proposed Development will include fire alarms, extinguishers, fire blankets, and sprinkler systems in line with national fire safety standards. A fire evacuation strategy will be in place before occupancy, and fire drills will be carried out by the Management Company. Access routes have been designed to accommodate emergency services.

Public Safety Zones

The site is not located within a Public Safety Zone (PSZ), and the nearest operational airport (Shannon Airport) is approximately 65km away. Therefore, the risk of aircraft-related incidents is not considered relevant.

Major Accident Risk (Seveso/COMAH Sites)

Although the Proposed Development is not a Seveso site, it is located near several COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) establishments, including an Upper Tier site (Circle K) approximately 288m away. A Land Use Planning and Societal Risk Assessment concluded that both individual and group risks are within acceptable limits, and no further risk calculations are required.

Contaminated Land

The site is a brownfield location (1.621 ha) with a history of industrial use, including fuel storage. Site investigations (MKO, 2022) identified some contamination in Made Ground soils, including lead and hydrocarbons. The risk to future users and construction workers is considered low to medium.

A remediation plan will be implemented, including phased soil testing and off-site removal of contaminated material. With these measures in place, the residual risk is considered low.

Flood Risk

The Flood Risk Assessment prepared by TOBIN (2025) concluded that:

- Fluvial flooding risk is minimal due to the site's distance from the River Corrib;
- Coastal flooding may affect the southwestern portion of the site in extreme events. To mitigate this, the minimum finished floor level (FFL) will be raised to 5.05mOD;
- Pluvial flooding risk is minimal and will be managed through a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS); and
- Groundwater flooding is not expected. The Proposed Development passed the Justification Test for areas in Flood Zone B and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Invasive Alien Species

Surveys conducted in 2024 found no high-risk invasive plant species on-site, except for a single sycamore tree, which is not considered a significant ecological concern. The risk of invasive species spread is considered low.

Residual Effects and Monitoring

There is no monitoring required with regards to risk management. All monitoring proposals for the interacting chapters have been detailed in the relevant technical chapters and are included in Chapter 17 Mitigation Measures and Monitoring.

16 INTERACTIONS

Interrelationships between various environmental aspects must be considered when assessing the impact of the Proposed Development, as well as individual significant effects. The significant effects of the Proposed Development and the proposed mitigation measures have been detailed in the relevant chapters of this report. However, as with all developments that pose potential environmental effects, there also exists potential for interactions/interrelationships between the effects of different environmental aspects. The results may exacerbate or ameliorate the magnitude of impacts.

When considering interactions, the assessor has been vigilant in assessing pathways-direct and indirect-that can magnify effects through the interaction. In practice, many effects have slight or subtle interactions with other disciplines.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) concludes that inter-relationships are negligible, and no additional significant effects are identified through effect interactions.

17 MITIGATION AND MONITORING

The Proposed Development will be operated in a manner that will ensure that the potential effects on the receiving environment are avoided where possible. In cases where effects or potential effects have been identified, mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce the significance of particular effects. These mitigation recommendations are contained within each topic chapter exploring specific environmental aspects.

The mitigation and monitoring chapter of the environmental impact assessment collates and summarises the mitigation commitments made in Chapter 4 to Chapter 14.

CONCLUSION

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the Proposed Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) at Galway Port has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and European Union Directive 2014/52/EU. This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) provides a clear and accessible overview of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment, addressing both the construction phase (including demolition) and the operational phase.

The assessment has considered all relevant environmental topics, including population and human health, biodiversity, land and soils, hydrology and hydrogeology, air quality, climate, noise and vibration, landscape and visual impact, traffic and transport, waste and utilities, archaeology and cultural heritage, and risk management. Each topic has been evaluated in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022), identifying likely effects, proposing mitigation and monitoring measures, and assessing the residual effects in terms of quality, significance, and duration.

Following the implementation of all proposed mitigation and monitoring measures, the EIAR concludes that no significant adverse residual effects are anticipated across any environmental topic. The construction phase, including demolition works, is expected to result in short-term, slight to imperceptible effects, none of which are significant in terms of Environmental Impact Assessment. During the operational phase, the Proposed Development is anticipated to result in long-term effects that are either neutral or slightly positive, particularly in relation to population growth, climate resilience, and the regeneration of the urban environment.

The EIAR has further concluded that the Proposed Development is not vulnerable to the risk of major accidents or disasters and that no significant adverse impacts are expected on human health, cultural heritage, or the wider environment. The development is in alignment with national, regional, and local planning policies, and it is expected to contribute positively to the regeneration of the Inner Harbour area of Galway City.

In summary, the Proposed Development is expected to deliver lasting environmental, social, and economic benefits. Any potential adverse effects have been identified, assessed, and mitigated to a degree that ensures the project can proceed in a manner consistent with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The EIAR demonstrates that the development will have a beneficial impact on the receiving environment and can be delivered without giving rise to significant environmental harm.

About DNV

DNV is the independent expert in risk management and assurance, operating in more than 100 countries. Through its broad experience and deep expertise DNV advances safety and sustainable performance, sets industry benchmarks, and inspires and invents solutions.

Whether assessing a new ship design, optimizing the performance of a wind farm, analyzing sensor data from a gas pipeline or certifying a food company's supply chain, DNV enables its customers and their stakeholders to make critical decisions with confidence.

Driven by its purpose, to safeguard life, property, and the environment, DNV helps tackle the challenges and global transformations facing its customers and the world today and is a trusted voice for many of the world's most successful and forward-thinking companies