

# Cork County Council Part 8 Planning Application Report

## Project Title:

## **N72 / R639 CHRIST CHURCH JUNCTION, FERMOY – ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME (RSIS)**

Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) –  
Part XI

Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as  
amended) – Part 8



**February 2024**

**22148-01-003**



Oifig na mBóithre Náisiúnta Chorcaí  
Cork National Roads Office



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Project Overview**

Cork County Council is proposing to carry out works to improve the existing junction at Christ Church in Fermoy, Co Cork, in the townland of Carrignagroghera, between the N72 national secondary route and the R639 regional road.

This junction was identified by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) as a 'Type A' HD15 High Collision Location as part of Network Review Round L for the period 2016 to 2018 in which the junction is included as Site ID N72CK\_112.0. TII publication DN-GEO-03030 states that "Road Safety Improvement Schemes should be designed to improve road safety and make better use of the existing road network." The main objective of this scheme is to improve safety for all road users and to reduce collisions in the scheme location by focusing on the provision of attractive, accessible, and safe routes for pedestrians in connecting the town centre to its arrival points on the N72. Following on from this, the scheme has progressed through the Feasibility and Options assessments and Preliminary Design, with the Phase 3 Design Report submitted to and approved by TII during 2023.

The proposed scheme aims to improve safety at the junction by reducing all approaches to single lane approaches, reducing the carriageway widths and pedestrian crossing distances, incorporating a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches and providing a controlled pedestrian crossing along the N72 west (*where the raised table commences*) and providing uncontrolled pedestrian crossings at three locations: across Allen's Walk, Church Hill and the N72 west (*adjacent to the tie-in with the existing N72*).

The revised junction needs to cater for considerable vehicular traffic from all approaches, including a large percentage of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). The R639 links Fermoy with the M8 to the north and is a key entry route for traffic travelling to and through Fermoy. Additionally, the completed scheme needs to cater for pedestrians travelling to and from Fermoy town centre, the adjacent town park and playground, and nearby rugby and GAA clubs.

### **1.2. Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is to set out the Cork County Council Part 8 development proposal for the planning application for the N72 / R639 Christ Church Junction, Fermoy - Road Safety Improvement Scheme (RSIS).

### **1.3. Site Location**

The proposed project is in close proximity to Christ Church, Fermoy, Co. Cork and is located at ITM Grid Reference 581093 598915, in the townland of Carrignagroghera. The R639 to the N72 north/south is the mainline, with the N72 west/east forming the arm of the T-junction. See Figures 1-1 and 1-2 on the next page.

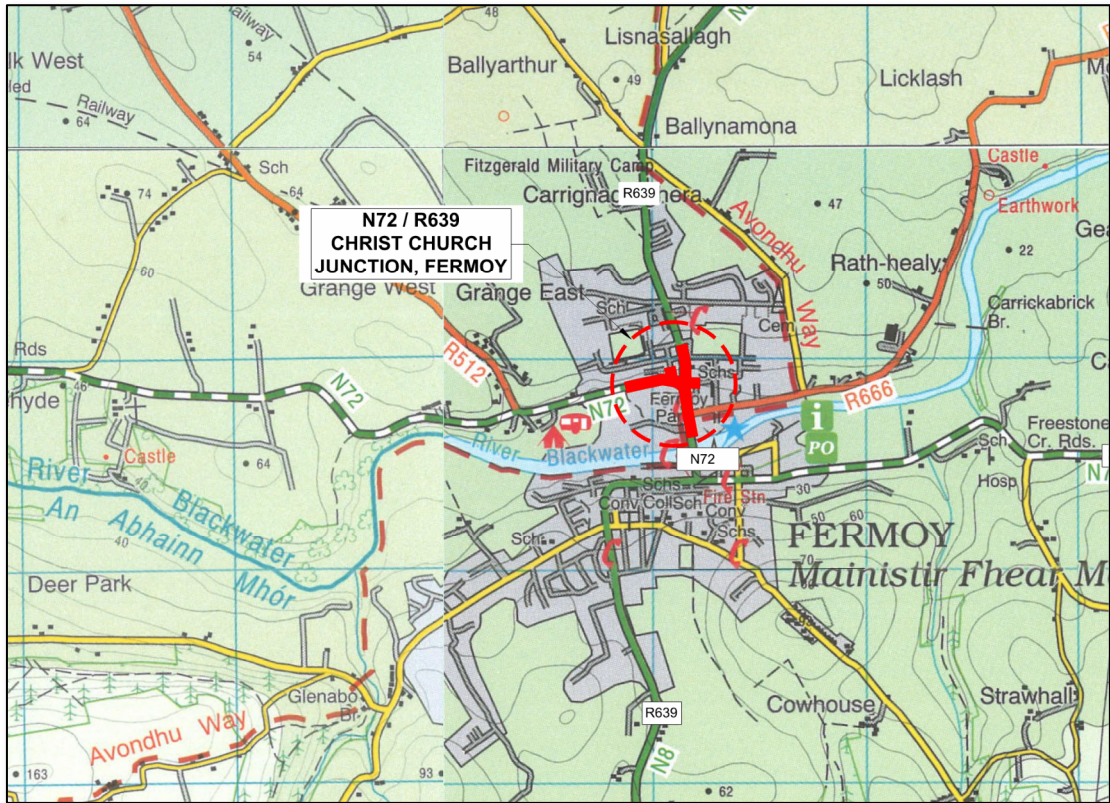


Figure 1-1: Site Location - Overview

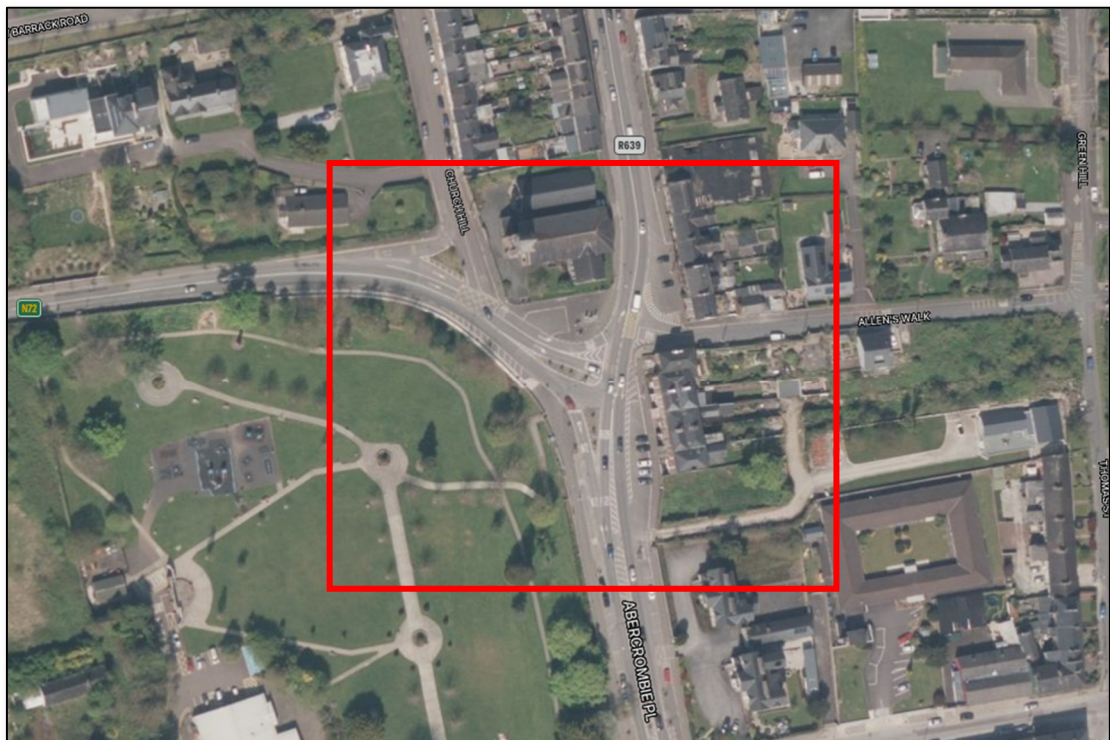


Figure 1-2: Site Location - Detail

#### 1.4. Land Requirements

It is envisaged that there will be no land purchase requirements for the implementation of the scheme.

## 2. PART 8 PROCESS

Section 179 of Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended); and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, (as amended) set out the requirements in respect of certain classes of development by, or on behalf of, local authorities. Part 8 of the Regulations comprises 7 Articles – 79 to 85. Article 80(1) lists the type of Developments to which Part 8 is required. The proposed development is covered under the above article.

### 2.1. Site Notices

In accordance with the Article 81 the Local Authority shall:

- a) give notice of proposed development in a newspaper;
- b) erect site notices on the land on which the proposed development would be situated.

Cork County Council published a notice of the project proposals in The Avondu newspaper on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.

Six site notices (*3 in English and 3 in Irish*) were erected at various locations across the study area and will be maintained for the duration of the submission period. A copy of the Site Notice / Newspaper Advert is attached (see 7.1 Appendix A).

### 2.2. Part 8 Consultations

Article 82(3) prescribes Statutory bodies to which a local authority should send notice of the proposed development. These are summarised in 7.2 Appendix B: Notification of Statutory Consultees.

### 2.3. Part 8 Documents

The following is the list of Part 8 documents contained in this application:

- Cork County Council Part 8 Planning Application Report (this document);
- Cork County Council Planner’s Report (see 7.3 Appendix C)
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Determination & Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report and Determination (see 7.4 Appendix D and 7.5 Appendix E respectively); and
- Part 8 Drawings (as listed below in the drawing schedule).

Drawing Number	Rev	Status	Drawing Title
22148-01-0110	C	Approved	Cover Sheet
22148-01-0111	C	Approved	Schedule of Part 8 Drawings
22148-01-0112	D	Approved	Project Location Map (1 of 2)
22148-01-0113	D	Approved	Project Location Map (2 of 2)
22148-01-0120	D	Approved	Plan Layout
22148-01-0121	C	Approved	Typical Cross Sections

### 2.4. Submission Process

**Locations and offices at which plans and particulars may be inspected from Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February to Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2024:**

1. Online on the Cork County Council website by going to the planning section at [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie)

2. Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council, Richmond, Glanmire, Cork T45 WA44 (*from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday – excluding public holidays (hard copy format)*).
3. Fermoy Municipal District Office, Cork County Council, Town Hall, Fermoy, Co Cork P61 AW63 (*from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday – excluding public holidays (hard copy format)*).

Alternatively, a copy of the documents will be posted on request by emailing [info@corkrdo.ie](mailto:info@corkrdo.ie) or by writing to: **Senior Engineer, Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council, Richmond, Glanmire, Cork T45 WA44.**

**Submissions or Observations** with respect to the proposed development, dealing with proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, may be made using the **online submission form** on [www.yourcouncil.ie](http://www.yourcouncil.ie) or in writing to **Senior Engineer, Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council, Richmond, Glanmire, Cork T45 WA44** or emailed to [info@corkrdo.ie](mailto:info@corkrdo.ie) so as to be received **on or before 4pm on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2024.**

All submissions must include a contact name and address. Submissions made as part of the process are to be accessible on request.

Any submissions or observations received by the Council are considered in the Part 8 Chief Executive's Report which is prepared and presented to the Councillors for adoption. The Chief Executive's Report lists those who made a submission together with the summary of their points made in the respective submission. The Report addresses each point and forms the local authority's response.

Arising from consideration of the representations, the Chief Executive's Report sets out whether or not it is proposed to proceed as originally planned or to proceed with a modified proposal. It is then a matter for the members of the Council (*i.e. the Councillors*) to grant or refuse planning.



### 3. NATURE AND EXTENT OF PROPOSED SCHEME

#### 3.1. Project Context and Existing Conditions

The site is located on the N72 Mallow Road/R639 Oliver Plunkett Hill (previously the N8) junction on the northern side of Fermoy Town, just north of Kent Bridge which spans the river Blackwater. The junction is in close proximity to Christ Church, Fermoy, and is located at ITM Grid Reference 581093 598915, in the townland of Carrignagroghera.

The R639 to the N72 north/south is the mainline, with the N72 west/east forming the arm of the T-junction. There is one lane in either direction on the mainline with a right hand turn lane provided on the northern approach and a left turn yield lane on the southern approach. The N72 on the western approach has dedicated left and right turn lanes. The junction is not signal controlled and there are no pedestrian crossing facilities except for dropped kerbs.

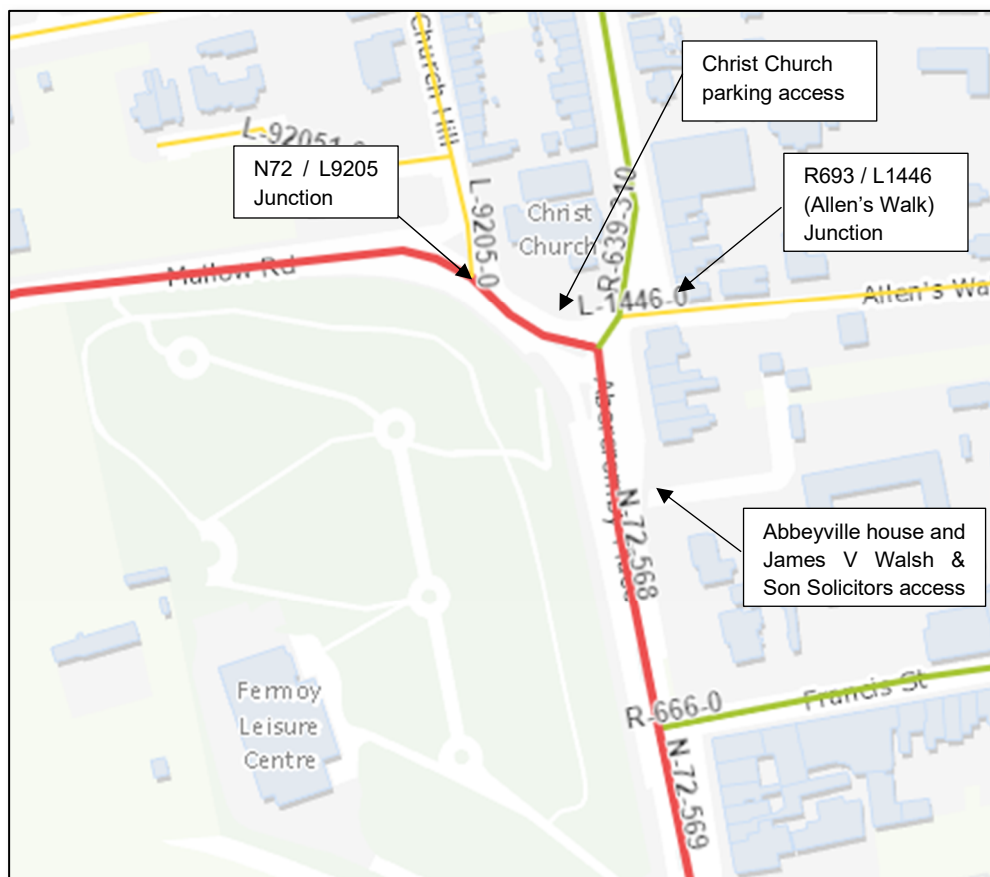


Figure 3-1: Existing junctions and significant accesses

The collision rate at the existing junction is above the average expected for the location as confirmed via it's designation by TII as a High Collision Location.

This project seeks to address the identified safety issues at the junction, thus improving safety for all road users.

#### 3.2. Project Objectives

TII DN-GEO-03030 states that the following are the primary objectives of Road Safety Improvement Schemes:

*“The objective of a Road Safety Improvement Scheme is to achieve a reduction in the frequency, and severity of collision. Road Safety Improvement Schemes should be*

*appropriate to and consistent with the characteristics of the adjacent sections of the route having regard to collision history, road user demand collision history and design speed.”*

*“Road Safety Improvement Schemes should be designed to improve road safety and make better use of the existing road network.”*

The proposed scheme aims to improve safety for all road users and to reduce collisions in the scheme location by focusing on the provision of attractive, accessible, and safe routes for pedestrians in connecting the town centre to its arrival points on the N72.

The revised junction has been designed taking cognisance of the considerable vehicular traffic from all approaches, including a large percentage of HGVs. The R639 links Fermoy with the M8 to the north and is a key entry route for traffic travelling to and through Fermoy. Additionally, the completed scheme needs to cater for pedestrians travelling to and from Fermoy town centre, the adjacent town park and playground, and nearby rugby and GAA clubs.

### **3.3. Project Specific Proposals**

The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). The DMURS provides guidance relating to the design of urban roads and streets.

The following changes are being made:

- Removal of left turn slip road from N72 (S) to N72 (W)
- Removal of left turn lane from N72 (W) to R639
- Removal of traffic islands throughout
- Reduction in carriageway widths and turning radii via extension of public realm areas and revision of kerb lines aligning with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, as much as possible, considering the requirement to accommodate large numbers of HGV's on the N72
- Incorporation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities across the N72 (W)
- Incorporation of a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches
- Modification of the junction between the N72 (W) and Church Hill comprising realignment of the Church Hill approach, removing the left turn slip lane and right turning facility from the N72, narrowing the junction mouth, and providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing
- Modification of the junction between the R639 and Allen's Walk comprising realignment of the Allen's Walk approach, narrowing the junction mouth, providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, and extension of the kerb line at the junction mouth to define the junction and improve pedestrian facilities
- Incorporation of uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities across the N72 (W), at the scheme extent
- Incorporation of 3 no. 'Age Friendly' parking spaces in front of Christ Church
- Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and enhancement of public realm areas
- Resurfacing the vehicular carriageway within the scheme extents
- Relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system.

## 4. PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal is compliant with the priorities and objectives for the South-West Region outlined in the document “Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework”;

- National Policy Objective 18a: *To support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed development in rural towns that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal, including interventions in the public realm, the provision of amenities, the acquisition of sites and the provision of services.*
- Measures to support the integrated development of remoter parts of this region, particularly rural peninsular areas and towns on its western seaboard, including the ongoing investment in the transport and communications area, particularly in the roll-out of the national broadband scheme and further promotion and development of attractions to capitalise on underutilised potential in the tourism and local enterprise areas.

### 4.1. Planning Context

#### 4.1.1. County Development Plan (CDP)

The adopted Cork County Council’s County Development Plan (2022 – 2028) which came into effect in June 2022 promotes sustainable transport infrastructure that strengthens the connections between rural and urban areas.

Volume 3 of the CDP specifically addresses North Cork and within section 1.4 regarding Fermoy, includes the intent to implement measures including “implementation of traffic calming measures, provision of junction improvements, revision to parking supply and management regime.” It further specifies that “road widening and junction improvement works will be required to overcome road safety issues on some roads serving zoned lands”.

The General Objectives for Fermoy which support this scheme include *FY-GO-05 Support implementation of the Fermoy Traffic Management Study and the Fermoy Walking and Cycling Strategy set out in Active Travel Towns.*

Relevant objectives set out in the County Development Plan, 2022 include TM 12-8 Traffic/Mobility Management and Road Safety which aims to:

- e) Improve the standards and safety of public roads and to protect the investment of public resources in the provision, improvement and maintenance of the public road network.
- f) Promote road safety measures throughout the County, including traffic calming, road signage and parking.

#### 4.1.2. Project Funding

The funding for the project has been secured by Cork County Council from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

## 5. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEME

### 5.1. Appropriate Assessment

A report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening was carried out for the Project by Moore Group Environmental Services in January 2023 in compliance with the relevant European Commission and national guidelines. The potential impacts during the construction and operation of the proposed scheme have been considered in the context of the European (EU) Sites potentially affected, their Qualifying Interests, Special Conservation Interests and Conservation Objectives.

The report concluded that:

- ‘1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of, the European sites considered in this assessment.*
- 2. The Proposed Development is not likely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying Interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.*
- 3. The Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have significant effects on a European site.*
- 4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.’*

Therefore, from the screening exercise, as there is no direct connectivity to any European sites within or outside the potential Zone of Influence, an Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) is not required.

This is also the conclusion of the AA Screening Determination carried out by Cork County Council which states:

*‘In accordance with Section 177S of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant negative effects on any EU site for the following reasons:*

- No works are proposed within any EU sites;*
- No direct loss, alteration or fragmentation of habitats will occur within any EU sites;*
- No discharges of surface water are proposed to any watercourse. The drainage network will be cut off at the initial stages of construction, and reconnected and commissioned nearing completion and, therefore, removes the pathway to the River Blackwater during the construction phase. Once fully operational, all surface water run off will be contained on site and discharged to existing urban drainage systems. Therefore, there is no likely risk of contaminated surface water run off reaching the river and impacting Qualifying Interest habitats and species of the Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Blackwater Callows Special Protection Area (SPA) during the construction phase.*
- No potential for in-combination effects have been identified.*

*It is, therefore, determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) is not required.’*

The report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening and the associated Determination can be found in 7.4 Appendix D of this report.



## 5.2. Ecological Assessment

The nearby Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation is identified in Figure 5-1 below. The proposed works are not expected to directly impact the site as the drainage discharge is not proposed to change.

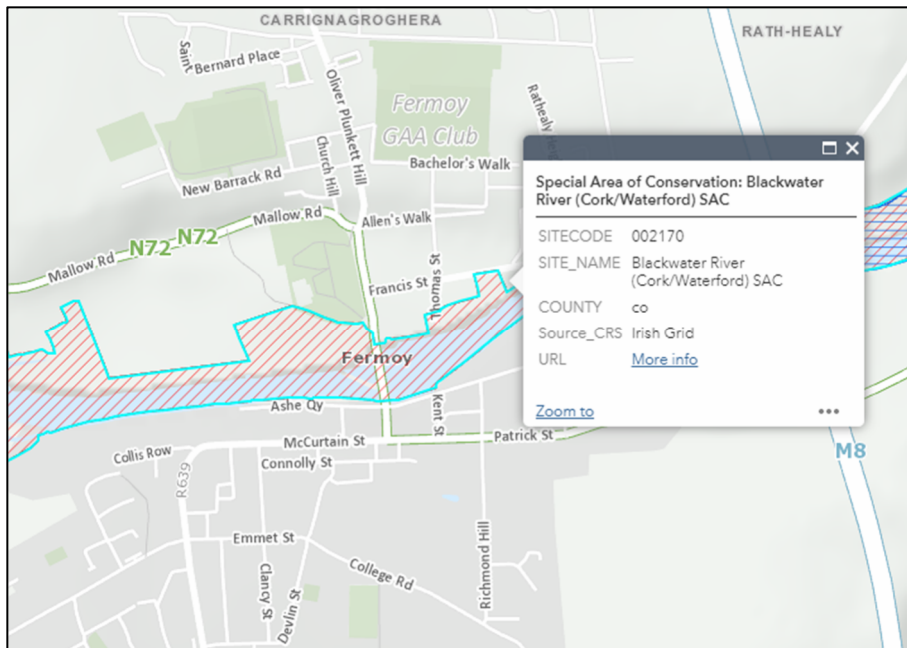


Figure 5-1: Special Area of Conservation south of scheme location

This has been considered as part of the Appropriate Assessment Screening undertaken which has confirmed that the proposed scheme would have no significant impacts on the surrounding environment.

There are no Natural Heritage Areas within the scheme extents.

It can be concluded that the proposed scheme, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have no effect on any ecological sites within the scheme location.

## 5.3. Other Environmental Surveys

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report was undertaken by Panther Environmental Solutions Ltd. in February 2023. This report, along with Cork County Council's EIA Determination, can be found in 7.5 Appendix E of this Part 8 Planning Application Report. The exercise confirms that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is not required, however, recommended that "a detailed Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment" be carried out for the project. This was duly progressed by Cork County Council as part of an archaeological desktop study carried out by the TII Project Archaeologist. This Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Report can be found in 7.6 Appendix F of this report. This study specified that measures are to be put in place to address the following:

- Safeguard the Limestone Kerbing at Church Hill/St. James Place, which is listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS ID 2246). The current design proposes new footpath/public realm that will intersect with the line of the protected limestone kerbing.
- Safeguard Site of Potential No. 1 (former on-street well, Figure 14) .
- Safeguard other identified structures in Record of Protected Structures, including their curtilages and attendant grounds.
- Safeguard Christ Church (SMR CO035-021) and any associated features.
- Safeguard all structures which are included in the NIAH for County Cork, that are not currently included in the Record of Protected Structures.

In addition to this, it is noted that a condition has been included by Cork County Council Planning department on planning application reference No. 20-5774 relating to the kerbing on the eastern side of the R639. The condition is as follows:

4. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall provide measures to preserve and protect the existing stone kerb in front of the proposed vehicular entrance to the satisfaction of the planning authority. Details in this regard shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development.
- Reason:** In the interest of protecting architectural heritage.

The Cork County Council Planning Report includes recommendations of the Archaeological Officer relating to materials, protection and mitigation measures and concludes that:

*‘detailed design and materials should be agreed with Conservation Officer at next stage of design / development process.’*

The EIA Determination by Cork County Council’s Senior Planner on the N72 / R639 Christ Church Junction, Fermoy – Road Safety Improvement Scheme states that:

*‘The proposal is considered not subject to EIA Directive. Cultural – Built Heritage is the primary issue of concern.’*

*‘It is considered that the potential impacts and mitigation of the proposed project are discrete and would be appropriately addressed within a specialised report completed by a qualified expert. Additional investigation within an EIAR for archaeological and cultural heritage impacts from the development would not be required.’*

In accordance with Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), a screening examination has been carried out and a determination has been made pursuant to Article 120(1B)(b)(i) that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required. In accordance with Article 120 (3) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), any person may, within 4 weeks from the date of publication of this notice (15<sup>th</sup> February, 2024), apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Such a submission should be addressed to the Secretary, An Bord Pleanála, 64, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The proposals which are the subject of this Part 8 Planning Application Report will improve safety and enhance pedestrian facilities, and the public realm, at the location of the N72 / R639 Christ Church Junction, Fermoy.

The proposed works are consistent with proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## **7. APPENDICES**

## **7.1. APPENDIX A – Site Notice / Newspaper Advert**

# SITE NOTICE



## Cork County Council

### DEVELOPMENT UNDER PART XI, SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000 (AS AMENDED) AND NOTICE PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF PART 8, ARTICLE 81 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 (AS AMENDED)

Notice is hereby given that Cork County Council proposes to carry out the following development:

**Project Title:** N72 / R639 Christ Church Junction, Fermoy – Road Safety Improvement Scheme (RSIS)

**Location:** Existing N72 / R639 junction at Christ Church, Fermoy, County Cork in the townland of Carrignagroghera.

**Nature & Extent of Development (Overview):** Proposed redesign and construction works to the existing N72 / R639 junction at Christ Church, Fermoy, County Cork to improve safety for all road users and to reduce collisions in the scheme location. The scheme extends c.117m along the western arm of the N72, c.63m along the southern arm of the N72 and c.71m along the northern arm of the R639, with minor extensions into Church Hill and Allen's Walk. Key changes include:

- Removal of left turn slip road from N72 (S) to N72 (W); Removal of left turn lane from N72 (W) to R639; Removal of traffic islands throughout; Reduction in carriageway widths and turning radii via extension of public realm areas; Incorporation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities across the N72 (W); Incorporation of a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches; Modification of the junctions between the N72 (W) and Church Hill, and between the R639 and Allen's Walk; Incorporation of uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities across Allen's Walk and the N72 (W), at the scheme extent; Incorporation of 3 No. 'Age Friendly' parking spaces in front of Christ Church; Resurfacing of the vehicular carriageway within the scheme extents; Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system.

**Locations and offices at which plans and particulars may be inspected from Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February to Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2024:**

1. Online on the Cork County Council website by going to the planning section at [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie)
2. Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council, Richmond, Glanmire, Cork T45 WA44 (from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday – excluding public holidays (hard copy format)).
3. Fermoy Municipal District Office, Cork County Council, Town Hall, Fermoy, Co. Cork P61 AW63 (from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday – excluding public holidays (hard copy format)).

Alternatively, a copy of the documents will be posted on request by emailing [info@corkrdo.ie](mailto:info@corkrdo.ie) or by writing to: **Senior Engineer, Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council, Richmond, Glanmire, Cork T45 WA44**

**Submissions or Observations** with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, may be made using the **online submission form** on [www.yourcouncil.ie](http://www.yourcouncil.ie) or in writing to **Senior Engineer, Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council, Richmond, Glanmire, Cork T45 WA44** or emailed to [info@corkrdo.ie](mailto:info@corkrdo.ie) so as to be received **on or before 4pm on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2024.**

In accordance with Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), a screening examination has been carried out and a determination has been made pursuant to Article 120(1B)(b)(i) that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required. In accordance with Article 120 (3) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), any person may, **within 4 weeks** from the date of publication of this notice (15<sup>th</sup> February, 2024), apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Such a submission should be addressed to the Secretary, An Bord Pleanála, 64, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

Any personal information collected by Cork County Council in compliance with its statutory obligations under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) shall be processed in line with the Council's privacy statement, which is available to view at [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie).

Senior Engineer, Cork National Roads Office, Cork County Council

15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

# FÓGRA SUÍMH



## Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

**FORBAIRT FAOI CUID XI, ALT 179 DEN ACHT UM PLEANÁIL AGUS FORBAIRT, 2000 (ARNA LEASÚ) AGUS FÓGRA DE BHUN CHEANGLAIS CHUID 8, AIRTEAGAL 81 DE NA RIALACHÁIN UM PLEANÁIL AGUS FORBAIRT, 2001 (ARNA LEASÚ)**

Tugtar fógra leis seo go mbeartaíonn Comhairle Contae Chorcaí chun an fhorbairt seo a leanas a dhéanamh:

**Teideal an Tionscadail: N72 / R639 Acomhal Theampall Chríost, Mainistir Fhear Maí – Scéim Feabhsúcháin um Shábháilteacht ar Bhóithre (RSIS)**

**Láthair:** Acomhal reatha an N72 / R639 ag Teampall Chríost, Mainistir Fhear Maí, Contae Chorcaí i mbaile fearainn Charraig na gCrochairí

**Nádúr & Méid na Forbartha (Achoimre):** Oibreacha athdheartha agus tógála molta ar acomhal reatha an N72 / R639 ag Teampall Chríost, Mainistir Fhear Maí, Contae Chorcaí chun sábháilteacht a fheabhsú do gach úsáideoir bóithre agus chun imbhuailtí i láthair na scéime a laghdú. Síneann an scéim c.117m ar an ngéag thiar den N72, c.63m feadh an ghéag theas den N72 agus c.71m ar an ngéag thuaidh den R639, le mionsintí ar Chnoc an Teampaill agus Siúlán Ailín. I measc na bpríomhathruithe tá:

- Cas ar chlé den sliosbhóthar ón N72 (S) go dtí an N72 (W) a bhaint; Lána cas ar chlé ón N72 (W) go R639 a bhaint; Oileáin tráchta a bhaint ar fud; Laghdú ar leithead carrbhealaí agus gathanna casaídh trí leathnú a dhéanamh ar limistéir an fhearainn phoiblí; Saoráidí trasrianta coisithe rialaithe a ionchorprú trasna an N72 (W); Ionchorprú bord ardaithe trasna an acomhail a shíneann isteach i ngach bealach isteach; Mionathrú ar na hacomhail idir an N72 (W) agus Cnoc an Teampaill, agus idir an R639 agus Siúlán Ailín; Áiseanna trasrianta coisithe neamhrialaithe a ionchorprú trasna Siúlán Ailín agus an N72 (W), ag fairsinge na scéime; Ionchorprú de 3 spás páirceála 'Aoisbháula' os comhair Theampall Chríost; Athdhromchlú ar an gcarrbhealach feithicle laistigh d'fhairsinge na scéime; Córais Inbhuanaithe Draenála a ionchorprú agus lintéir atá ann cheana féin a athlonnú le naisc nua leis an gcóras draenála uisce dromchla atá ann faoi láthair.

**Suímh agus oifigí inar féidir pleananna agus sonraí a iniúchadh ón Déardaoin 15 Feabhra go Déardaoin 14 Márta, 2024:**

- Ar líne ar shuíomh idirlín Chomhairle Contae Chorcaí trí dhul go dtí an Rannóg Pleanála ag [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie)
- Oifig Bóithre Náisiúnta Chorcaí, Comhairle Contae Chorcaí, Richmond, Gleann Maghair, Corcaigh T45 WA44 (ó 10rn go 1in agus ó 2in go 4in Luan go hAoine – gan laethanta saoire phoiblí san áireamh (formáid cruachóip)).
- Oifig Cheantair Bardasach Mhainistir Fhear Maí, Comhairle Contae Chorcaí, Halla an Bhaile, Mainistir Fhear Maí, Co. Chorcaí P61 AW63 (ó 10rn go 1in agus ó 2in go 4in Luan go hAoine – gan laethanta saoire phoiblí a áireamh (formáid cruachóip)).

Nó, seolfar cóip de na doiciméid má iarrtar é trí ríomhphost a sheoladh chuig [info@corkrdo.ie](mailto:info@corkrdo.ie) nó trí scríbhinn chuig: **Innealtóir Sinsearach, Oifig Bóithre Náisiúnta Chorcaí, Comhairle Contae Chorcaí, Richmond, Gleann Maghair, Corcaigh, T45 WA44**

Is féidir **Aighneachtaí nó Tuairimí** maidir leis an bhforbairt bheartaithe, a dhéileálann le pleanáil chuí agus forbairt inbhuanaithe an cheantair ina mbeadh an fhorbairt suite, a dhéanamh ag baint úsáide as an **bhfoirm aighneachta ar líne** ar [www.yourcouncil.ie](http://www.yourcouncil.ie) nó i scríbhinn chuig an **Innealtóir Sinsearach, Oifig Bóithre Náisiúnta Chorcaí, Comhairle Contae Chorcaí, Richmond, Gleann Maghair, Corcaigh T45 WA44** nó seol ríomhphost chuig [info@corkrdo.ie](mailto:info@corkrdo.ie) le bheith faighte **ar/roimh 4in Déardaoin 4 Aibreán, 2024.**

De réir Airteagal 120 de na Rialacháin um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2001 (arna leasú), tá scrúdú scagtha déanta agus tá cinneadh déanta de bhun Airteagal 120(1B)(b)(i) nach bhfuil aon chosúlacht ann i ndáiríre go mbeadh tionchar suntasach ag an bhforbairt a bheartaítear ar an gcomhshaol agus nach bhfuil gá le Measúnacht Tionchair Timpeallachta (MTT). De réir Airteagal 120(3) de na Rialacháin um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2001 (arna leasú), féadfaidh aon duine, **laistigh de 4 seachtaine** ó dháta foilsithe an fhógra seo (15 Feabhra, 2024), iarratas a dhéanamh chuig an mBord Pleanála ar cinneadh scagtha a dhéanamh ar cé acu an dóigh go mbeadh tionchar suntasach ag an bhforbairt ar an gcomhshaol. Ba cheart aighneacht dá leithéid a sheoladh chuig an Rúnaí, An Bord Pleanála, 64, Sráid Maoilbhríde, Baile Átha Cliath 1.

*Príoiseálfa aon eolas pearsanta a bhailíonn Comhairle Contae Chorcaí de réir a dualgais reachtúla faoin Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000 (arna leasú) agus na Rialacháin um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2001 (arna leasú) de réir ráiteas príobháideachta na Comhairle, atá le feiscint ag [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie).*

**Innealtóir Sinsearach, Oifig Bóithre Náisiúnta Chorcaí, Comhairle Contae Chorcaí**

**15 Feabhra 2024**

## **7.2. APPENDIX B – Notification of Statutory Consultees**



<b>Prescribed Bodies</b>
An Chomhairle Ealaíon
Fáilte Ireland
An Taisce
The Heritage Council
Inland Fisheries Ireland
Waterways Ireland
Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Uisce Éireann
Córas Iompair Éireann

### **7.3. APPENDIX C – Planner’s Report**



# Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

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## Cork County Council

28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### **Planning Report**

#### **Part 8 Preliminary design of N72 Christchurch Junction of the N72 with R639 at Oliver Plunkett Hill, Fermoy**

To whom it concerns, this proposal relates to the preliminary design of the junction between the N72 national secondary road and the R639 regional road adjacent to Christchurch in Fermoy. identified by TII as a 'Type A' HD15 High Collision Location (in accordance with the requirements of TII DN-GEO-03030 (April 2021) 'Design Phase Procedure for Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Urban Renewal Schemes and Local Improvement Schemes')

"The objective of a Road Safety Improvement Scheme is to achieve a reduction in the frequency, and severity of collision. Road Safety Improvement Schemes should be appropriate to and consistent with the characteristics of the adjacent sections of the route having regard to collision history, road user demand collision history and design speed."

"The main objectives of this scheme include: The provision of junction improvement works at the Christ Church Junction. Design of scheme drainage, traffic signs, road markings, reflectors and other minor ancillary works. Assessment of sightlines and tie-ins and the provision of appropriate remedial measures where deemed necessary. The revised junction needs to cater for considerable vehicular traffic from all approaches, including a large percentage of HGVs. The R639 links Fermoy with the M8 to the north and is a key entry route for traffic travelling to and through Fermoy. Additionally, the completed scheme needs to cater for pedestrians travelling to and from Fermoy town centre, the adjacent town park and playground, and nearby rugby and GAA clubs."

Currently, the quality of footpaths is generally good, however crossing facilities are limited within the study area. There are no pedestrian crossing facilities within the scheme extents, except for dropped kerbs.

The NRDO has prepared this junction proposal for the Planning Department to comment. This report outlines the key planning considerations with respect to the subject proposal.

#### **Nature of Proposal**

The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). The DMURS provides guidance relating to the design of urban roads and streets.

The following changes are being made:

- Removal of left turn slip road from N72 (S) to N72 (W)
- Removal of left turn lane from N72 (W) to R639
- Removal of traffic islands throughout
- Reduction in carriageway widths and turning radii via extension of public realm areas and revision of kerb lines aligning with the Design Manual for Urban Streets as much as possible considering the requirement to accommodate large numbers of HGV's on the N72
- Incorporation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities across the N72 (W)
- Incorporation of a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches
- Modification of the junction between the N72 (W) and Church Hill comprising realignment of the Church Hill approach, removing the left turn slip lane and right turning facility from the N72, narrowing the junction mouth, and providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing
- Modification of the junction between the R639 and Allen's Walk comprising realignment of the Allen's Walk approach, narrowing the junction mouth, providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, and extension of the kerb line at the junction mouth to define the junction and improve pedestrian facilities.
- Incorporation of uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities across the N72 (W).
- Incorporation of 3 no. 'Age Friendly' parking spaces, in front of Christ Church.
- Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and enhancement of public realm areas. Resurfacing the vehicular carriageway within the scheme extents
- Relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system

The horizontal alignments the existing N72 and R639 are maintained as much as possible, however key changes are facilitated by the reduction in carriageway widths, allowing better alignment with DMURS standards. On the N72 west of the junction, the first horizontal curve leading southwards is increased from 90m to 104m. The subsequent curve approaching the junction is approximately 55m, which is maintained over a distance of approximately 25m on approach to the junction. This is included to ensure separation between the N72/R639 junction and the R639/Allen's Walk junction. The N72/R639 road running from south to north includes radii of 104m and 245m, before reducing to a 90m radius on approach to the southern tie in. The vertical profiles of the existing N72 and R639 are generally being retained.

A controlled crossing is proposed to be incorporated on the western N72 arm of the junction to facilitate VRU movements across the N72 at this location. A Zebra crossing with belisha beacons and lighting is proposed.

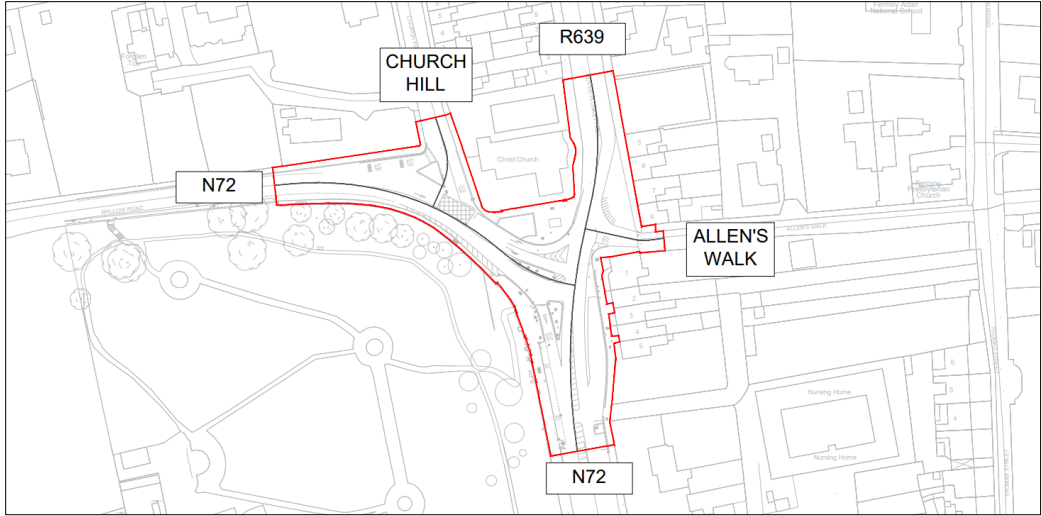


Fig 1. Proposed Site. 0.63Ha.

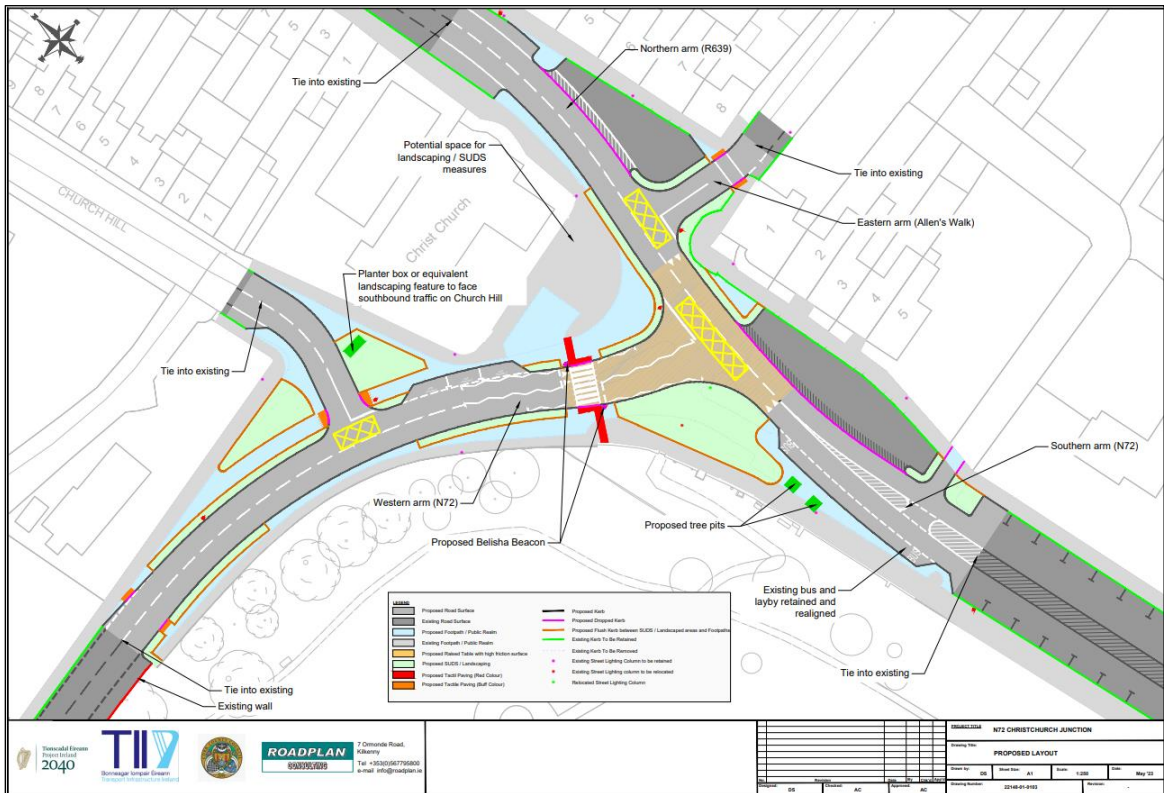


Fig 2. Proposed layout

**Site Description**

This site is located north of the River Blackwater within the historic edge of the town and adjacent to the Fermoy Architectural Conservation Area, (bounding the north and east of area) and is includes more than 18no. Protected Structures in the immediate vicinity, including RPS no. 2246, Limestone Kerbing to Church Hill, adjacent to RPS no. 2231 Christchurch, Church of Ireland at Church Place.

## Planning History

There is no recent relevant planning history on the site.

## Planning Policy

### Cork County Development Plan 2022

“The vision for Fermoy is to increase the population of the town in line with the targets established in the core strategy, optimise employment opportunities having regard to the location of the town adjacent to the M8, manage development in order to support the strengthening and rejuvenation of the retail function of the town; ensure all new development respects the significant build heritage of the town and its setting on the Blackwater River, and to deliver an enhanced natural and built environment and range of facilities to make the town a more attractive place to live.” The N72 route traverses the town (east – west) and provides good road links to Kerry and Waterford.

“Development in the town will require additional investment in ... pedestrian and cycle facilities to achieve good connectivity with the rest of the town and existing social and community services.”

The site is located within the settlement of Fermoy, north of the town centre, on lands zoned ‘Existing residential /mixed residential and other uses,’ with the objective “to conserve and enhance the quality and character of communities and protect their amenities.” The site is located adjacent to the Fermoy Architectural Conservation Area to north and east of N72.

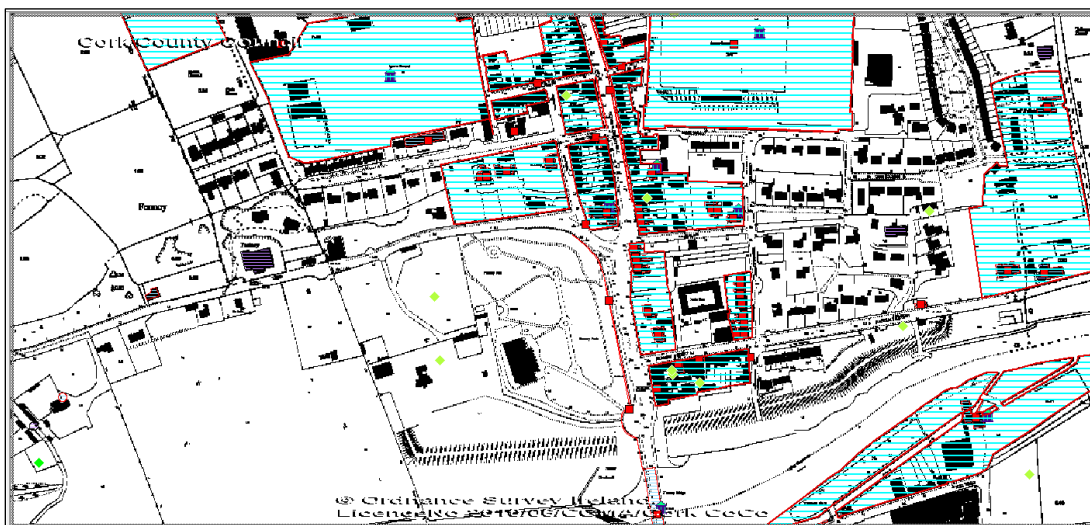


Fig 3. Planning Enquiry System featuring RPS and Fermoy ACA (blue hatch)





Fig 4 Protected Limestone Kerbing, (Google Maps Streetview)



Fig 6. View of Christchurch (northwards)

The lands to the south and west of the N72 and junction is 'Green Infrastructure,' with a specific mapped objective FY-GR-06 for a 'Town Parks and Amenity Area.'

The following local policies are considered of particular relevance:

PL3-1 Building Design, Movement and Quality of the Public Realm

PL3-3 Delivering Quality and Inclusive Places

HE 16-14: Record of Protected Structures

HE 16-18: Architectural Conservation Areas

HE 16-20 Historic Landscapes

The proposal re-assigns and re-balances modal space, with crossing options/ opportunities for pedestrians by reducing crossing distances, reducing vehicular lane, increasing hard and soft landscaping including SuDS infrastructure and so improving environmental quality and setting

for the RPS, the ACA and the town park. The said works align with the High Value Landscape designation.

The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the above listed policies/objectives.

#### **EIA**

EIA Screening report attached. The proposal is considered not subject to EIA Directive. Cultural – Built Heritage is the primary issue of concern.

I note the following within the screening report

*“There is a high density of protected structures within the vicinity of the site, however, these would be generally outside of works areas. The proposed development would also have potential to impact upon the protected structure RPS No 2246, Limestone Kerbing, Church Hill. However, it is likely that mitigation against potential impacts would be feasible through appropriate project design. There would be a potential to impact upon unrecorded or unknown sub-surface archaeological features during excavation. It is recommended that a detailed Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment be carried out for the proposed project. It is considered that the potential impacts and mitigation of the proposed project are discrete and would be appropriately addressed within a specialised report completed by a qualified expert. Additional investigation within an EIAR for archaeological and cultural heritage impacts from the development would not be required.”*

The views of the Conservation Officer should be ascertained to address the proposed surface materials, in particular, method statements around the protected Limestone kerbing (including retaining in-situ) and the public realm addressing RPS/ACA.

The recommendations of the Archaeological Officer as follows:

1. Since the design is ongoing and not finalised, measures should be put in place to allow the protection of the limestone kerbing RPS ID 2246 in accordance with CDP 2022 Objective HE 16-14: Record of Protected Structures, d) Ensure the protection of all structures (or parts of structures) contained in the Record of Protected Structures. Details should be provided to the conservation team of the Heritage Unit, Cork County Council regarding how the kerbing will be protected and be accompanied by a suitable method statement.
2. The Site of Potential No. 1 (former on-street well indicated on 1<sup>st</sup> Edition map) can be dealt with by way of archaeological monitoring (see below).
3. Furthermore, since the proposed works are located within the Zone of Archaeological Potential for two monuments listed in the SMR, archaeological monitoring of all ground works should take place. In this regard, the applicant is required to engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor under licence from the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage all ground works associated with the development. No ground works or construction works is to take place in the absence of the archaeologist. The ground shall be carried out under the direction of the appointed archaeologist. In the event that archaeological material is found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist shall have work on the site immediately stopped and notify the Local Authority Archaeologist and National Monuments Service. No further



construction works or topsoil removal shall take place pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the Local Authority Archaeologist and the National Monuments Service in regard to any necessary mitigating action (e.g. preservation in-situ or preservation by record (excavation). The applicant / developer will allow the appointed archaeologist adequate time and resources to facilitate implementation of the agreed mitigation measures. The Planning Authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with a report describing the results of the monitoring.

**AA**


AA Screening report attached. Cork County Council's evaluation and overall conclusion is that there are no significant effects on European Sites foreseen as a result of the proposal.

**Conclusion**

The proposed development should result in positive impacts on the streetscape/ townscape and amenities for users and improve safety.

However, detailed design and materials should be agreed with Conservation Officer at next stage of design / development process.

The proposed development accords with the policies and objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 and accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



Senior Planner

#### **7.4. APPENDIX D – Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and Determination**

## **Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**

Report for the purposes of  
Appropriate Assessment Screening

N72 Christchurch Junction Upgrade


Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

11 October 2023



On behalf of Cork County Council

<b>Project Proponent</b>	Cork County Council
<b>Project</b>	N72 Christchurch Junction Upgrade
<b>Title</b>	Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening N72 Christchurch Junction Upgrade

<b>Project Number</b>	23008	<b>Document Ref</b>	23008 N72 Christchurch Jn AAS1 Rev3
<b>Revision</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>
Rev2	LA Reviewed	G. O'Donohoe 	11 October 2023
<b>Moore Archaeological and Environmental Services Limited</b>			

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## Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographical Information System
LAP	Local Area Plan
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
pNHA	proposed Natural Heritage Area
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
WFD	Water Framework Directive

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. General Introduction

This report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in respect of the construction and operation of alterations to Christchurch Junction on the N72 at Fermoy, Co. Cork (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) to determine whether it is likely individually or in combination with other plans or projects to have a significant effect on any European sites, in light of best scientific knowledge.

Having regard to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2021 (the “Planning Acts”) (section 177U), the purpose of a screening exercise under section 177U of the PDA 2000 is to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

If it cannot be *excluded* on the basis of objective information that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site then it is necessary to carry out a Stage 2 appropriate assessment under section 177V of the Planning Acts.

When screening the project, there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no potential for the possibility of a significant effect and as such requires no Stage 2 assessment; or
- the project has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain and therefore cannot be excluded) and therefore a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the project is necessary.

This report has been prepared by Moore Group - Environmental Services to enable the competent authority to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development. The report was compiled by Ger O’Donohoe B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (ATU Galway, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999) who has over 30 years’ experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements on terrestrial and aquatic habitats for various development types.

## 1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive are transposed into Irish Law inter alia by the Part XAB of the Planning Acts (in particular section 177U and 177V) which governs the requirement to carry out appropriate assessment screening and appropriate assessment, where required, per Section 1.1 above.



The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the European Union (EU). Under the Habitats Directive, Member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in a EU context.

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds), transposed into Irish law by the Bird and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 as amended, and the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended, is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Birds Directive requires that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention.

SACs designated under the Habitats Directive and SPAs, designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. These sites are also referred to as European sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out an appropriate assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)). Article 6(4) establishes requirements in cases of imperative reasons of overriding public interest:

**Article 6(3):** *“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”*

## 2. Methodology

The Commission’s methodological guidance (EC, 2002, 2018, 2021 see Section 2.1 below) promotes a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

Stages 1 and 2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

**Stage 1 Screening:** This stage examines the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

**Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment:** This stage examines whether it is likely that the project, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, will have a significant effect upon a European site. In order to 'screen out' a project (i.e. in order to conclude that it is not necessary to move to the 'Stage 2' appropriate assessment stage (see immediately below), the possibility that the Proposed Development (individually or in combination with other plans or projects), will have a significant effect on a European site must be excluded on the basis of objective information.

**Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions:** This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

**Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain:** Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the sites will be necessary.

To ensure that the Proposed Development complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this report to enable the competent authority to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development to determine whether the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with another plan or project will have a significant effect on a European site.

## 2.1. Guidance

This report has been compiled in accordance with guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 rev.).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018).
- Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive (EC, 2021).
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021).

- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021).

## 2.2. Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites, and the environment within which they are located, are listed below:

- The following mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data sources, as required:
  - National Parks & Wildlife (NPWS) protected site boundary data;
  - Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) mapping and aerial photography;
  - OSI/Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rivers and streams, and catchments;
  - Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM);
  - Google Earth and Bing aerial photography 1995-2023;
- Online data available on Natura 2000 sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie) including:
  - Natura 2000 - Standard Data Form;
  - Conservation Objectives;
  - Site Synopses;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre records;
  - Online database of rare, threatened and protected species;
  - Publicly accessible biodiversity datasets.
- Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland. (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2019); and
- Relevant Development Plans;
  - Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

## 3. Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development consists of the construction and operation of a scheme to redesign the junction between the N72 national road and the R639 regional road at Christchurch, Fermoy Co. Cork.

Physical works will include breaking out and removal of existing traffic islands, relocation of existing lighting columns, construction of paved build outs at the N72/R639, R639/Allen's Walk, and N72 / Church Hill junctions, overlay of existing road surface and provision of raised table across N72 / R639 junction, provision of new road markings and signage, installation of new drainage gullies to connect to existing closed drainage network, and incorporation of low level planting strips to enhance the public realm and to accommodate public realm stormwater runoff.

The scheme will comprise the following changes:

- Removal of left turn slip road from N72 (S) to N72 (W)
- Removal of left turn lane from N72 (W) to R639
- Removal of traffic islands throughout
- Reduction in carriageway widths and turning radii via extension of public realm areas and revision of kerb lines aligning with the Design Manual for Urban Streets as much as possible considering the requirement to accommodate large numbers of HGV's on the N72
- Incorporation of a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches.
- Modification of the junction between the N72 (W) and Church Hill comprising realignment of the Church Hill approach, removing the left turn slip lane and right turning facility from the N72, narrowing the junction mouth, and providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing.
- Modification of the junction between the R639 and Allen's Walk comprising realignment of the Allen's Walk approach, narrowing the junction mouth, providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, modifying parking at the junction to improve visibility, and extension of the footpath at the junction mouth to define the junction and improve pedestrian facilities.
- Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and enhancement of public realm areas.
  - SuDS measures will include bioretention tree pits / rain gardens to collect runoff from the public realm areas.
  - Paved road area reduces from 18,098m<sup>2</sup> to 12,531m<sup>2</sup>.
- Resurfacing the vehicular carriageway within the scheme extents.
- Relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system.
  - The sequence of gully work to be followed is to close off and secure inlets and outlets prior to breaking out the chambers. This effectively removes the pathway to the River Blackwater. The gully is replaced and the drainage recommissioned.

Approximately 163m<sup>2</sup> of existing planting within a traffic island, in addition to 12 existing planted pots will need to be removed as part of the implementation of this project. These will be retained and reused within the design.

Proposed locations for material storage and/or construction compounds have not yet been determined and it will be the responsibility of the contractor to make appropriate arrangements to enable delivery of the works while complying with such waste management, material handling and traffic management requirements as set out in the specification.

The existing environment was surveyed on 26 July 2023 and the predominant habitat found to be Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) along with Flower beds and borders (BC4). There are no invasive species in the area. Figure 1 shows the Proposed Development location and Figure 2 shows a detailed view of the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography. Figure 3 shows the layout of the Proposed Development.

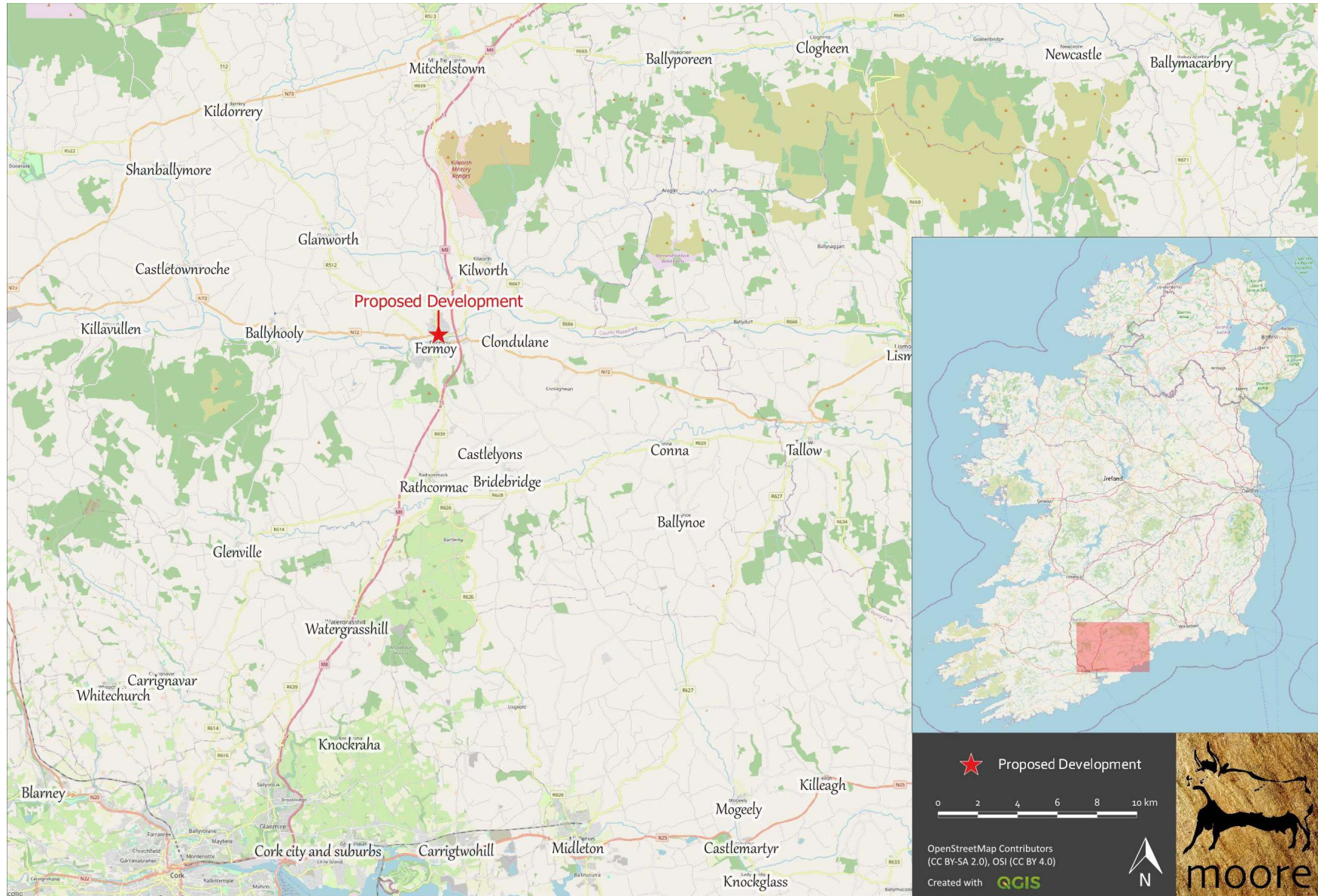


Figure 1. Showing the Proposed Development location at Fermoy, Co. Cork



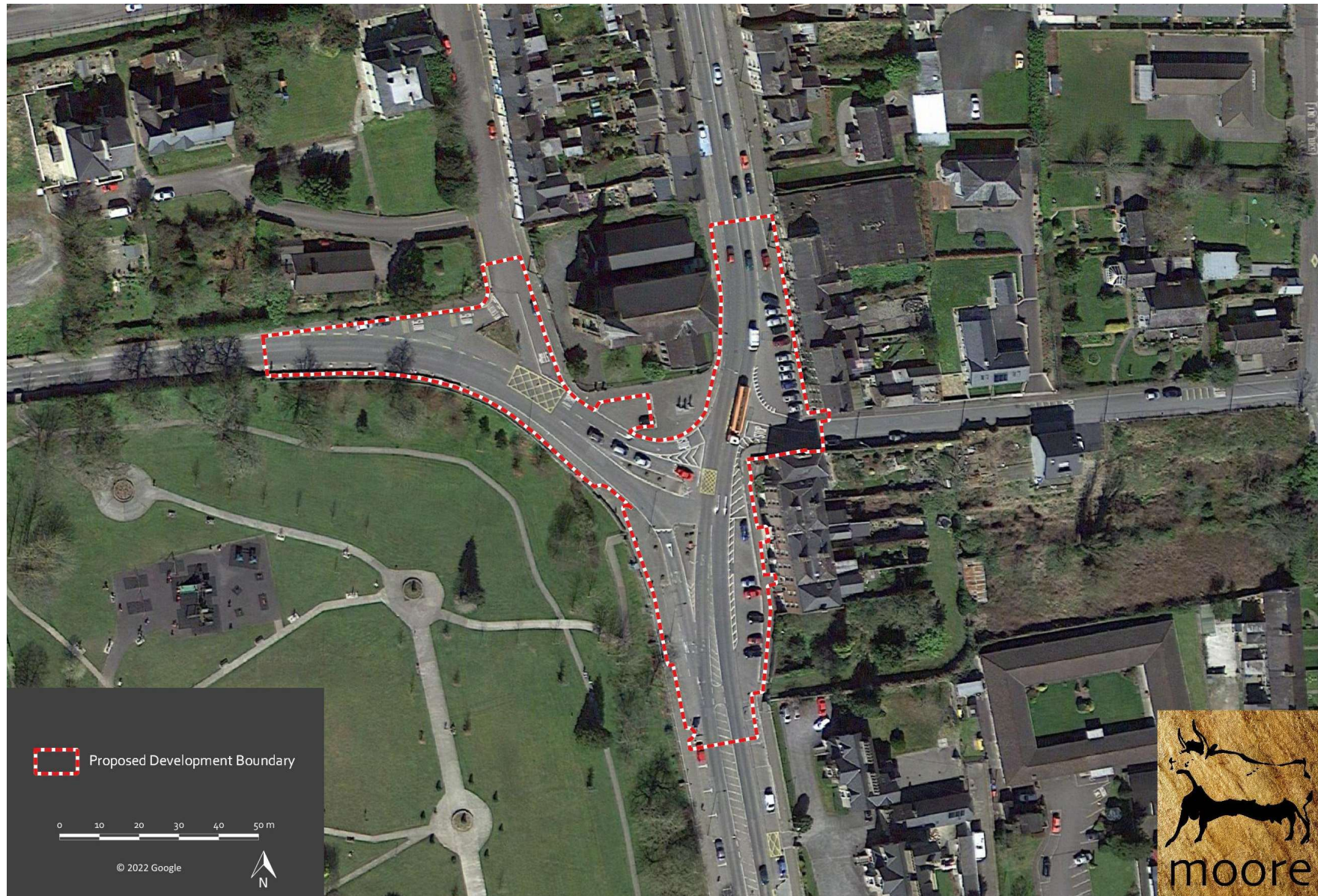


Figure 2. Showing the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography.



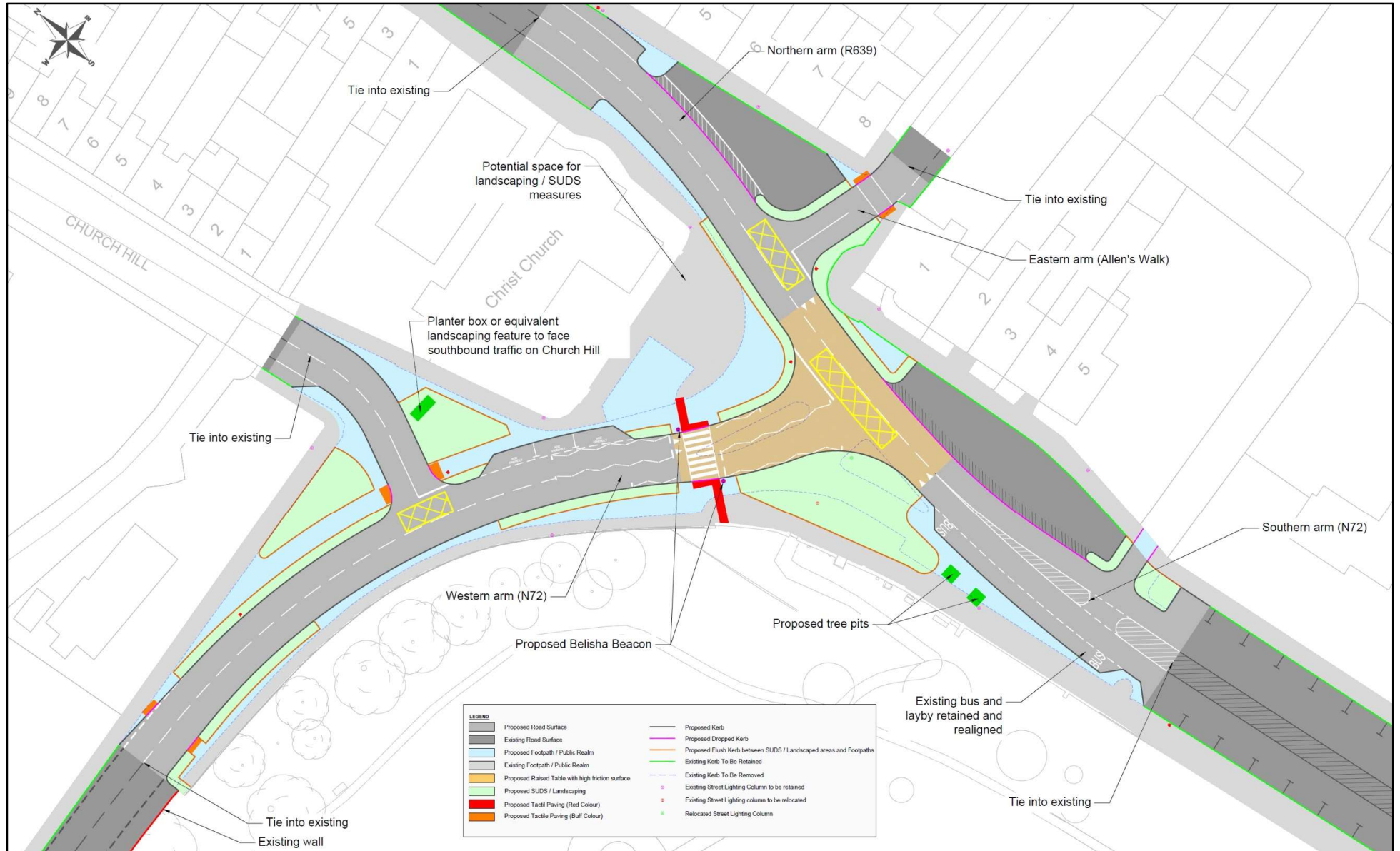


Figure 3. Plan of the Proposed Development.

## 4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

### 4.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Significantly Affected

A Zone of Influence (Zoi) of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. In accordance with the OPR Practice Note (2021), PN01, the Zoi should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source- Pathway-Receptor framework.

The European Commission's "Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Methodological Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC" published 28 September 2021 states at section 3.1.3, that:

*"Identifying the Natura 2000 sites that may be affected should be done by taking into consideration all aspects of the plan or project that could have potential effects on any Natura 2000 sites located within the zone of influence of the plan or project. This should take into account all of the designating features (species, habitat types) that are significantly present on the sites and their conservation objectives. In particular, it should identify:*

- *any Natura 2000 sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them;*
- *any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project Natura 2000 sites located in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) that could still be indirectly affected by aspects of the project, including as regards the use of natural resources (e.g. water) and various types of waste, discharge or emissions of substances or energy;*
- *Natura 2000 sites in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) which host fauna that can move to the project area and then suffer mortality or other impacts (e.g. loss of feeding areas, reduction of home range);*
- *Natura 2000 sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project".*

*The range of Natura 2000 sites to be assessed, i.e. the zone in which impacts from the plan or project may arise, will depend on the nature of the plan or project and the distance at which effects may occur. For Natura 2000 sites located downstream along rivers or wetlands fed by aquifers, it may be that a plan or project can affect water flows, fish migration and so forth, even at a great distance. Emissions of pollutants may also have effects over a long distance. Some projects or plans that do not directly affect Natura 2000 sites may still have a significant impact on them if they cause a barrier effect or prevent ecological linkages. This may happen, for example, when plans affect features of the landscape that connect Natura 2000 sites or that may obstruct the*



*movements of species or disrupt the continuity of a fluvial or woodland ecosystem. To determine the possible effects of the plan or project on Natura 2000 sites, it is necessary to identify not only the relevant sites but also the habitats and species that are significantly present within them, as well as the site objectives.*

The Zone of Influence may be determined by considering the Proposed Development's potential connectivity with European sites, in terms of:

- Nature, scale, timing and duration of all aspects of the proposed works and possible impacts, including the nature and size of excavations, storage of materials, flat/sloping sites;
- Distance and nature of potential pathways (dilution and dispersion; intervening 'buffer' lands, roads etc.); and
- Location of ecological features and their sensitivity to the possible impacts.

The potential for source pathway receptor connectivity is firstly identified through GIS interrogation and detailed information is then provided on sites with connectivity. European sites that are located within a potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development are listed in Table 1 and presented in Figures 4 and 5, below. Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)) on 11 October 2023. This data was interrogated using GIS analysis to provide mapping, distances, locations and pathways to all sites of conservation concern including pNHAs, NHA and European sites.

*Table 1 European Sites located within the potential Zone of Influence<sup>1</sup> of the Proposed Development.*

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) <sup>2</sup>
002170	Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	0.13
004094	Blackwater Callows SPA	1.25

The nearest European sites to the Proposed Development are associated with the River Blackwater; the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (Site Code 002170), 130m to the south, and the Blackwater Callows SPA (Site Code 004094), 1.25km to the east.

The Proposed Development is located at a junction in the northern part of the town of Fermoy, Co. Cork, approximately 200m north of the River Blackwater. A review of aerial photography, Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) mapping and OSI Geographical Information System (GIS) data for rivers and streams indicates that there are no notable surface water features onsite and no direct hydrological pathways to offsite surface water bodies.

The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites in the Zone of influence of the Proposed Development are provided in Table 2 below.

<sup>1</sup> All European sites potentially connected irrespective of the nature or scale of the Proposed Development.

<sup>2</sup> Distances indicated are the closest geographical distance between the Proposed Development and the European site boundary, as made available by the NPWS.

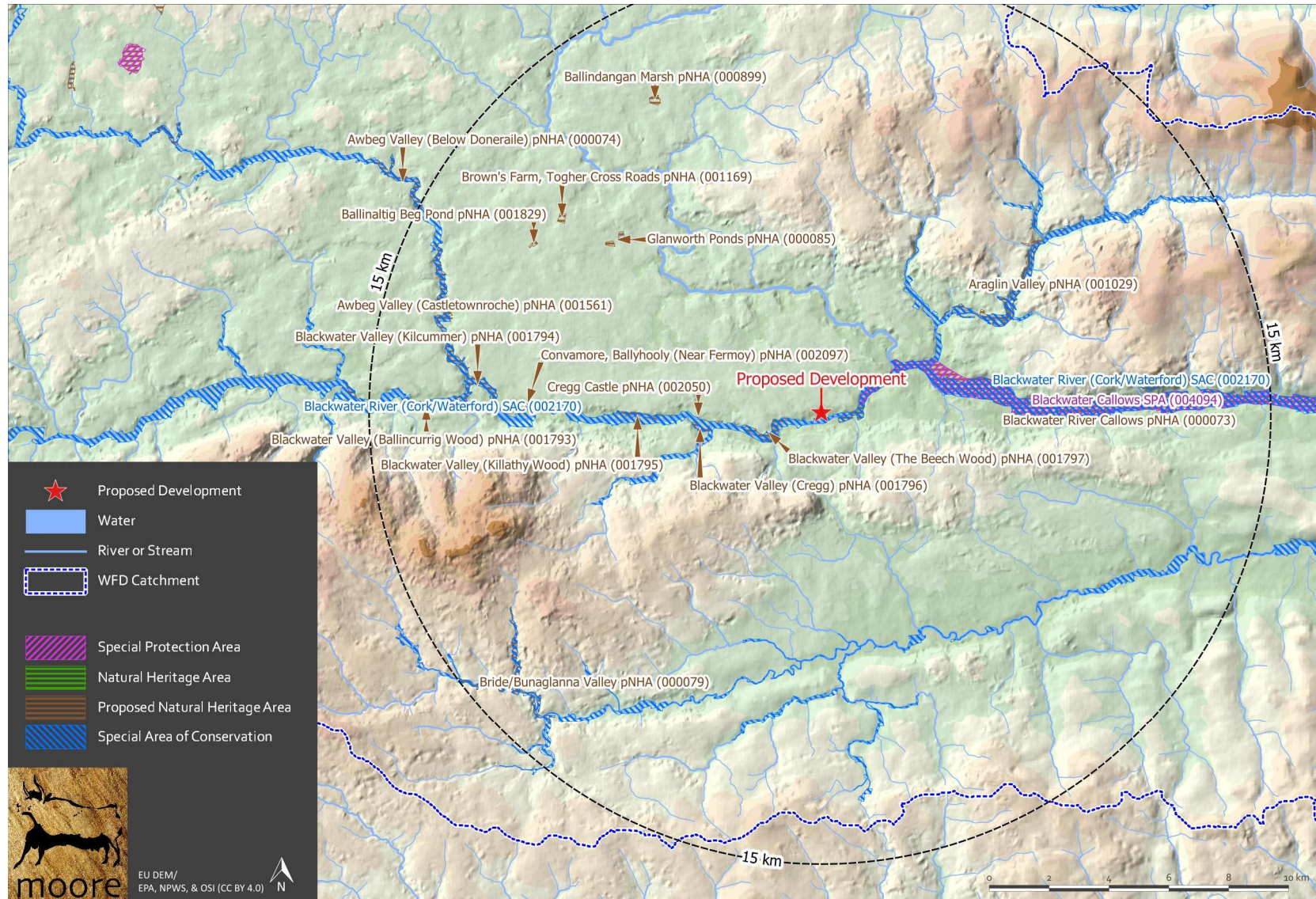


Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within the wider Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development.



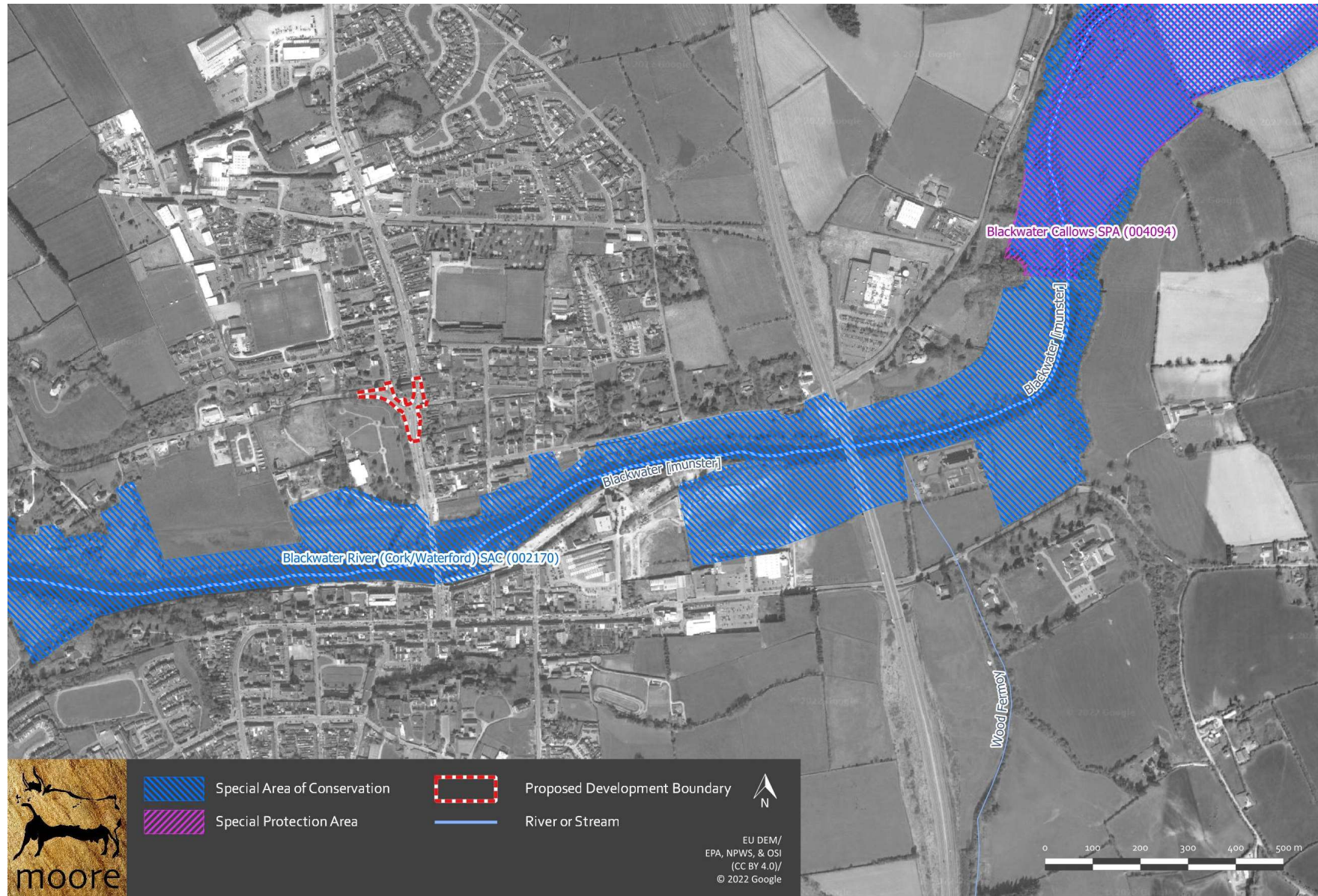


Figure 5. Detailed view of European sites in the nearer Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development.

Table 2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information QIs and conservation objectives. \*Priority Habitats

European Site name, Site code and Conservation Objectives	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p><b>Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (002170)</b></p> <p>The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest:</p> <p>1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i></p> <p>1092 White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i></p> <p>1095 Sea Lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i></p> <p>1096 Brook Lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i></p> <p>1099 River Lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i></p> <p>1103 Twaite Shad <i>Alosa fallax</i></p> <p>1106 Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> (only in fresh water)</p> <p>1130 Estuaries</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)</p> <p>1355 Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i></p> <p>1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>1421 Killarney Fern <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i></p> <p>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation</p> <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles</p> <p>91E0 *Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p> <p>91J0 *<i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles</p> <p>NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC 002170. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	0.13km to the south of the Proposed Development	No There are no direct pathways or connectivity to the habitats and/or species of this site.	Yes, considered in Table 3 below.

European Site name, Site code and Conservation Objectives	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p><b>Blackwater Callows SPA (004094)</b></p> <p>The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest:</p> <p>A038 Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i></p> <p>A050 Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i></p> <p>A052 Teal <i>Anas crecca</i></p> <p>A156 Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i></p> <p>A999 Wetlands</p> <p>NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Blackwater Callows SPA [004094]. First Order Site specific Conservation Objectives Version 1.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>	1.25km to the east of the Proposed Development	<p>No</p> <p>There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats and/or species of this site.</p> <p>Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to bird species or wetland habitat.</p>	Yes, considered in Table 3 below.

#### 4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

A concurrent GIS analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) and designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) in terms of their role in supporting the species using Natura 2000 sites was undertaken along with GIS investigation of European sites. These supporting roles mainly relate to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as ecological corridors or “stepping stones” between Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account in the decision process and during the preparation of this AA Screening report.

The NHAs and pNHAs identified in Figure 4 are located outside the Zone of Influence, and no areas of supporting habitat will be affected by the proposed development.

## 5. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

## 5.1. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

The Proposed Development is located at a junction in the northern part of the town of Fermoy, Co. Cork, approximately 200m north of the River Blackwater. A review of aerial photography, Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) mapping and OSI Geographical Information System (GIS) data for rivers and streams indicates that there are no notable surface water features onsite and no direct hydrological pathways to offsite surface water bodies.

There is no connectivity to the River Blackwater or to any European sites within or outside the potential Zone of Influence.

The consideration of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the Proposed Development are presented in Table 3.

*Table 3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects.*

<b>Identification of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project.</b>	
<b>Impacts:</b>	<b>Significance of Impacts:</b>
<p><b>Construction phase e.g.</b></p> <p>Vegetation clearance</p> <p>Demolition</p> <p>Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits)</p> <p>Dust, noise, vibration</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Impact on groundwater/dewatering</p> <p>Storage of excavated/construction materials</p> <p>Access to site</p> <p>Pests</p>	<p>None</p> <p>The Proposed Development site is located within the footprint of the existing roads and footpaths, and will not require mitigation to ensure there are no impacts on any European site.</p> <p>The sequence of gully work to be followed is to close off and secure inlets and outlets prior to breaking out the chambers. This effectively removes the pathway to the River Blackwater. The gully is replaced and the drainage recommissioned.</p> <p>The distance to the River Blackwater is significant and there are no likely risks of contaminated surface water run off reaching the river and impacting qualifying interest habitats and species of the Blackwater River SAC during the construction phase.</p>
<p><b>Operational phase e.g.</b></p> <p>Direct emission to air and water</p>	<p>All surface water runoff, once the facility is operational, will be contained on site and discharged to existing urban drainage systems.</p>

<p>Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Noise/vibration</p> <p>Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction</p> <p>Presence of people, vehicles and activities</p> <p>Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks)</p>	<p>There is no real likelihood of any significant effects on European Sites in the wider catchment area.</p> <p>The facility is located at a distance of removal such that there will be no disturbance to qualifying interest species in any European sites.</p>
<b>Describe any likely changes to the European site:</b>	
<p><b>Examples of the type of changes to give consideration to include:</b></p> <p>Reduction or fragmentation of habitat area</p> <p>Disturbance to QI species</p> <p>Habitat or species fragmentation</p> <p>Reduction or fragmentation in species density</p> <p>Changes in key indicators of conservation status value (water quality etc.)</p> <p>Changes to areas of sensitivity or threats to QI</p> <p>Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or ecological function of the site</p> <p>Climate change</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>The Proposed Development site is not located adjacent or within a European site, therefore there is no risk of habitat loss or fragmentation or any effects on QI habitats or species directly or ex-situ.</p>

On the basis of the information supplied, which is considered adequate to undertake a screening determination and having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development,
- the intervening land uses and distance from European sites,
- the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model,

It may be concluded that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above listed European sites or any other European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

## 5.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects

In-combination effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced alterations. In-combination effects can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the Proposed Development, other relevant plans and projects in the area must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with other such plans and projects on European sites.

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 300m of the Proposed Development within the last three years, these are presented in Table 4 below.

*Table 4. Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.*

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
186314	Renovation, alterations to elevations, partial demolition, extension and conversion of existing disused building from office and dwelling to 2 no. dwellings and construction of 1 number detached dwellinghouse to the rear of site and all ancillary site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
197026	Planning permission for retention of subdivision of 1 no. dwellinghouse to 2 no dwellinghouses, alterations to elevations and all associated site works and planning permission for completion of boundary walls to the rear of the dwellinghouses.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
204913	To alter the roofs of the existing dwellings at 15 & 16 Frances St, Fermoy. These alterations are proposed to eliminate the valleys which would arise following the construction, on the vacant infill site between the dwellings, of two town houses permitted under PA Ref 17/7420. The dwelling at 16 Frances St is a protected structure.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
205237	The demolition of existing structures on site including former dwelling and ancillary buildings and 1) the construction of 1 no. garden centre with ancillary homeware section and restaurant/café; 2) the refurbishment of an existing shed and cottage on site for reuse as ancillary structures to the garden centre. The shed will be used for ancillary storage and the cottage will be used as an ancillary multi-functional space; 3) the provision of a pedestrian footpath along the N72 and all associated ancillary development works including signage, lighting, parking, footpaths, landscaping and drainage. Access will be via the existing entrance on the N72 to the south east of the site and via the provision of a new entrance on the N72 to the north of the site. The proposed development consists of works to a protected structure ('Brian Boru Square – Boundary Walls and Gates' – Protected Structure Reference number 198). A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) will be submitted to the planning authority with the application.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
205774	1.)The demolition of a single storey existing commercial, and an existing three storey dwelling unit. 2) the construction of a three storey residential development with two own-door apartment blocks (Total 9	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.



Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
	no. units) consisting of 4 no.1 bedroom ground floor apartments, 1 no. 1 bedroom first floor apartment 4 no.2 bedroom first floor duplex units, the relocation of the existing advertising billboard, and the creation of a new vehicular entrance off of Oliver Plunkett Hill.	
214060	Permission for retention of the following: (1) single storey extension to existing dwelling (2) single storey unit for art/hobby use (3) single storey garden pavilion (4) shed for domestic storage and all associated site works and services.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
214542	The demolition of an existing open-air stand including ancillary site works and the construction of an all-weather playing pitch including a hurling wall with associated surrounding fencing, ball catching nets and floodlighting and a car park all with associated site works. This development consists of works in the curtilage of a protected structure.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
215459	Works to existing dwelling 1) construction of extensions to front, side and rear, 2) alterations to front elevation to include removal of door at first floor level and insertion of a window, construction of bay window extension at ground floor level and removal of veranda, 3) alterations to rear elevation to include altering height of window on stairs and insertion of a window at ground floor level, 4) demolition of attached domestic garage to rear and 5) construction of attached garage to side elevation and all associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
215840	Permission to (1) construct a single storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling, construct a zinc canopy porch to the front of the existing dwelling (2) alterations to windows and doors, upgrade external render (3) upgrade the existing boundary wall and increase width of driveway to accommodate 2 cars (4) and all associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
225866	Permission to erect 2 number single storey extensions to the eastern and western gables, of existing storey and a half dwelling house to carry out internal alterations to dwelling and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
226081	The construction of new single storey side and rear extensions to the existing dwelling house, alterations to elevations of the existing dwelling and associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

The Cork County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the proposed development area and surrounding townlands in which the proposed development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement with regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by Cork County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

## 6. Conclusion

There is no direct connectivity to any European sites within or outside the potential Zone of Influence.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The lack of direct connectivity between the Proposed Development and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the Proposed Development boundary and there is no connectivity between the Proposed Development site and any watercourses that lead to the River Blackwater;
- The sequence of gully work to be followed is to close off and secure inlets and outlets prior to breaking out the chambers. This effectively removes the pathway to the River Blackwater. The gully is replaced and the drainage recommissioned.
- There are no likely risks of contaminated surface water run off reaching the river and impacting qualifying interest habitats and species of the Blackwater River SAC during the construction phase.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is not likely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have significant effects on a European site.
4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.

A final determination will be made by the competent authority in this regard.

## 7. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (as amended February 2010).

European Commission (2000) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC: Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interests, compensatory measures, overall coherence and opinion of the Commission. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2018) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission (2021) Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Brussels 28.9.21.

European Commission (2021) Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive, Brussels 12.10.21.

NPWS (2019) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

NPWS (2023) National Parks and Wildlife Service Metadata available online at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data>

Office-of-the-Planning-Regulator (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management OPR Practice Note PN01. March 2021

## **Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination**

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment  
Screening Determination**

**Proposed upgrade to the N72 Christchurch Junction, Fermoy, Co. Cork.**



**Cork County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

**Completed by: Mairéad Maguire, Assistant Planner.**

**Approved by: Sharon Casey**

**Cork County Council.**

Date: September 2023

This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of an upgrade to the N72 Christchurch Junction, Fermoy, Co Cork. The determination is based on the information provided in the AA screening report prepared by Moore Group – Environmental Services. This screening determination should be read in conjunction with the AA screening report.

In accordance with Regulation 250 of the Planning and Development Regulations, Local Authorities are required to carry out screening for appropriate assessment of proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on one or more European<sup>1</sup> sites. The Local Authority is required to determine that appropriate assessment of the proposed development is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on one or more European sites.

These requirements derive from Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive which states that

*Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

EU and National Guidance sets out two main stages to the assessment process which are as follows:

### **Stage One: Screening**

The process which identifies what might be likely impacts arising from a plan or project on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. No further assessment is required where the risk of significant impacts on European sites can be objectively ruled out during the screening stage.

### **Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment**

Where the possibility of significant impacts has not been discounted by the screening process, a more detailed assessment is required. This is called an Appropriate Assessment and requires the compilation of a **Natura Impact Statement** by the project proponent, which is a report of scientific evidence and data relating to European sites for which significant negative impacts have not been previously screened out. This is used to identify and classify any implications of the plan or project for these sites in view of their Conservation Objectives. The Appropriate Assessment must include a determination as to whether or not the project would adversely affect the integrity of any European site or sites. The plan or project may only be consented if adverse effects on the integrity of European sites can be objectively ruled out during the Appropriate Assessment process. The plan or project may not be consented on foot of an Appropriate Assessment, if it is found that it will give rise

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<sup>1</sup>“European Site” means— (a) a candidate site of Community importance; (b) a site of Community importance; (c) a candidate special area of conservation; (d) a special area of conservation; (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area.

to adverse impacts on one or more European sites, or if uncertainty remains in relation to potential impacts on one or more European sites.

<p><b>Name of the project</b></p> <p>N72 Christchurch Junction, Fermoy Upgrade.</p>
<p><b>Description of the project</b></p> <p>The proposed development consists of the construction and operation of a scheme to redesign the junction between the N72 national road and the R639 regional road at Christchurch, Fermoy, Co, Cork.</p> <p>As per the information provided in the AA screening report prepared by Moore Group Environmental Services, the proposed development comprises of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removal of left turn slip road from N72 (S) to N72 (W).</li><li>• Removal of left turn lane from N72 (W) to R639.</li><li>• Removal of traffic islands throughout.</li><li>• Reduction in carriageway widths and turning radii via extension of public realm areas and revision of kerb lines aligning with the Design Manual for Urban Streets as much as possible considering the requirement to accommodate large numbers of HGV's on the N72.</li><li>• Incorporation of a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches.</li><li>• Modification of the junction between the N72 (W) and Church Hill comprising realignment of the Church Hill approach, removing the left turn slip lane and right turning facility from the N72, narrowing the junction mouth, and providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing.</li><li>• Modification of the junction between the R639 and Allen's Walk comprising realignment of the Allen's Walk approach, narrowing the junction mouth, providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, modifying parking at the junction to improve visibility, and extension of the footpath at the junction mouth to define the junction and improve pedestrian facilities.</li><li>• Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and enhancement of public realm areas.</li><li>• SuDS measures will include bioretention tree pits / rain gardens to collect runoff from the public realm areas.</li><li>• Paved road area reduces from 18,098m<sup>2</sup> to 12,531m<sup>2</sup>.</li><li>• Resurfacing the vehicular carriageway within the scheme extents.</li><li>• Relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system.</li><li>• The sequence of gully work to be followed is to close off and secure inlets and outlets prior to breaking out the chambers. This effectively removes the pathway to the River Blackwater. The gully is replaced, and the drainage recommissioned.</li></ul>

## Site Context

The proposed development site is located at junction in the Fermoy Town Centre, north of the River Blackwater. It is approximately 0.63 ha in size and the length of the road within the project area is approximately 385m.

The site is located within the development boundary of Fermoy. To the east of the junction is a row of terrace houses, to the north are religious buildings, while to the west is Fermoy Town park. The road leads south to Kent Bridge.

The site is located within the Blackwater WFD catchment. There are no watercourses on site. The nearest watercourse is the River Blackwater, approximately 200m south of the site. The River Blackwater has been assigned good water quality status. The site overlaps slightly on the southern boundary with flood zones A and B according to the Cork County Development Plan 2022.

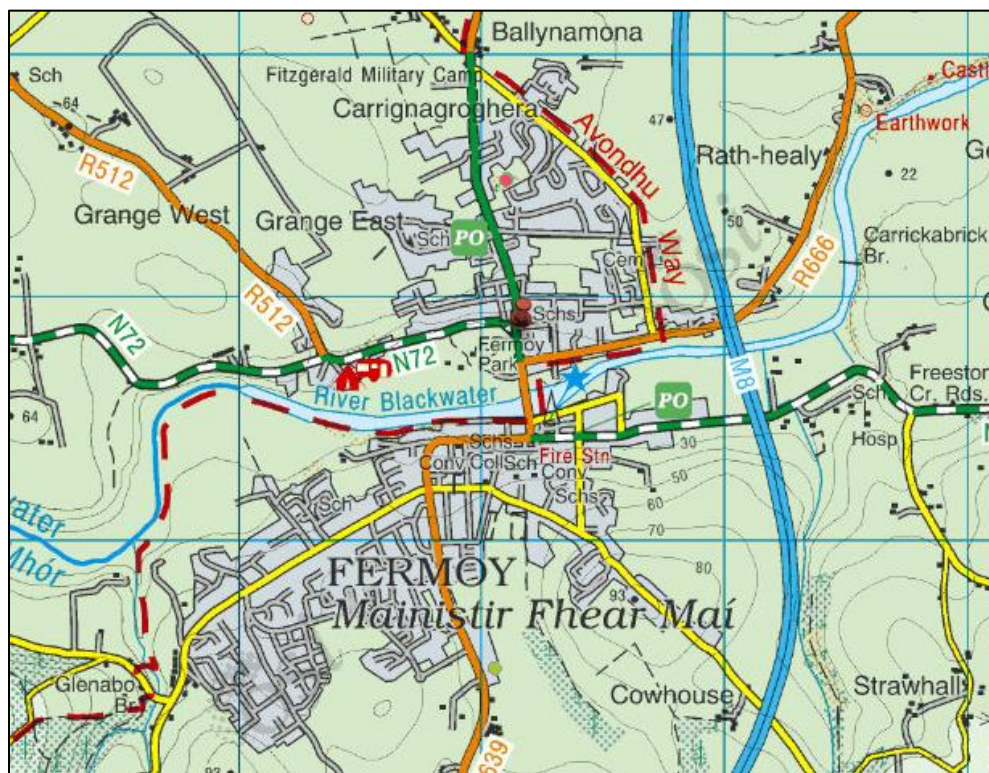
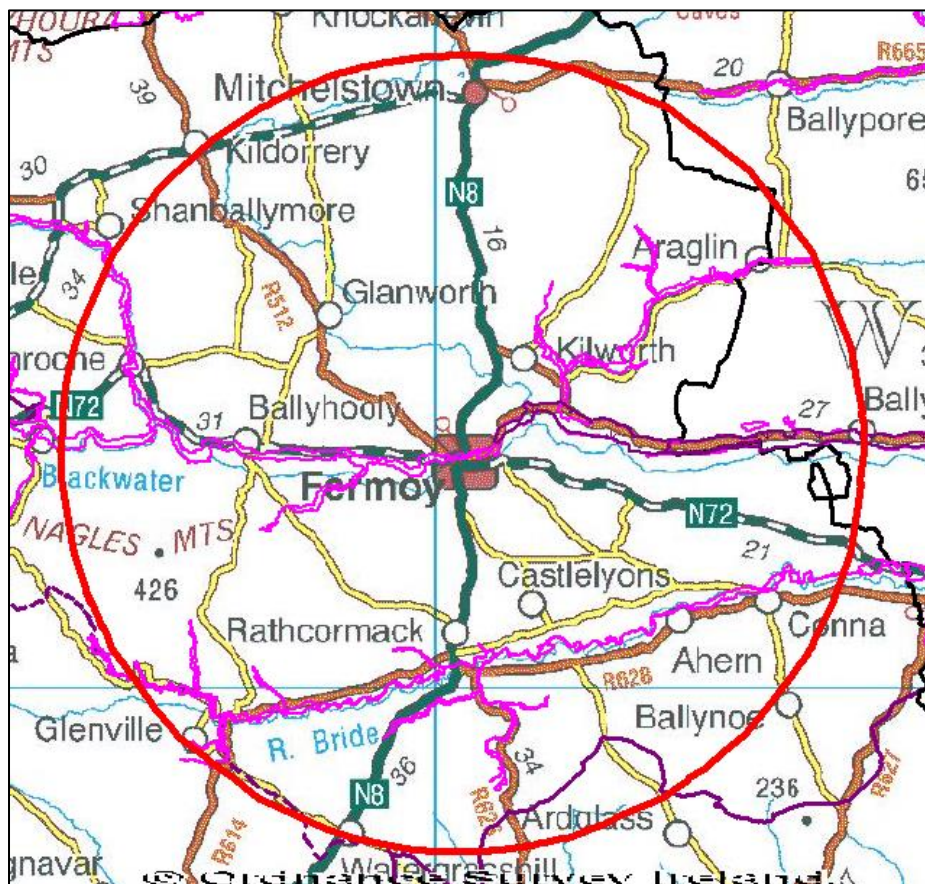


Figure 1: Site Context (Red pin drop indicates site location within the settlement)



**Name and location of EU sites subject to screening**



**Figure 2: Red buffer indicates all European sites within 15kms of the proposed development location.**

The subject site does not overlap with any European site. The submitted AA Screening Report identifies two Natura 2000 (European) sites located within a 15km radius of the site which are considered in this document. These are:

- Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (Site Code: 002170) - approximately 0.13km south of the site.
- Blackwater Callow SPA (Site Code: 004094) – approximately 1.25km east of the site.

The sites listed are identified in Figure 2 above relative to the proposed development site. There are no other Natura 2000 sites within the 15km radius of the proposed project.

The Blackwater River SAC is designated for the protection of a range of freshwater, coastal and terrestrial habitats and species including the following:

- Estuaries [1130]
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]
- Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]
- Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]
- Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima*) [1330]
- Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410]
- **Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation [3260]**

- Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]
- Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]
- **Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]**
- **Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]**
- **Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095]**
- **Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096]**
- **Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099]**
- Alosa fallax fallax (Twaite Shad) [1103]
- **Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]**
- **Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]**
- Trichomanes speciosum (Killarney Fern) [1421]

Those qualifying interests which are associated with the Blackwater River in the vicinity of the works and to which there is a potential link are highlighted in bold above.

The Blackwater Callows SPA extends along a stretch of the Blackwater River just east of Fermoy. This area is part of the natural floodplain of the river and supports a range of wetland bird species including the following species of special conservation interest for which the site is designated:

- Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus) [A038]
- Wigeon (Anas penelope) [A050]
- Teal (Anas crecca) [A052]
- Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) [A156]

The site is also designated for the protection of wetland habitat [A999]

A potential pathway for impact exists between the works site and these two EU sites given the proximity of the site to the Blackwater River and potential hydrological linkages connecting the site to the Blackwater River

**Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites listed above?**

No.

**Potential Impacts on EU Sites**

Aquatic habitats and species which are qualifying habitats of the Blackwater River SAC rely on the maintenance and protection of a high standard of water quality, the maintenance and protection of natural hydrological conditions and the maintenance and protection of the quality and extent of freshwater habitats to ensure protection/restoration of favourable conservation condition. The hydrological linkage between the SAC and the proposed works site represents a potential pathway for impact from the works site to the SAC.

Activities associated with the proposed development which could impact water quality including activities which have the potential to introduce potentially toxic contaminants or sediments to the Blackwater River could negatively affect water quality and thereby have the potential to impact negatively on some of the qualifying interests of the SAC.

The protection of favourable conservation condition of the SPA requires the maintenance of natural flooding patterns to ensure the protection of the wetland itself. The protection of the area from activities which could cause disturbance to the species for which the site is designated is also a key requirement. Activities which could impact on natural hydrological conditions within the callows or which could have the potential to cause disturbance to wetland birds using this area, could have the potential to give rise to significant negative effects on the SPA.

**Screening Report Assessment and Conclusion:**

The report as submitted states in conclusion that the proposed upgrade to junction either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required for the following reasons:

- No works are proposed in the SAC or in the SPA;
- The drainage network will be cut off during the construction phase and recommissioned nearing completion. No element of the proposed project has been identified which could negatively impact the qualifying interest species of the Blackwater Callows SPA.

**Are there other projects or plans that together with the project being assessed that could affect these sites (provide details)?**

No potential for impact on any EU site identified. Therefore, there is no potential for the project to contribute to negative impacts which could be significant when considered in combination with impacts on such sites arising from other sources.

**Cork County Council evaluation and overall conclusion that there are no significant effects on European Sites foreseen as a result of the proposal.**

In accordance with Section 177S of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant negative any EU site for the following reasons:

- No works are proposed within any EU sites;
- No direct loss, alteration or fragmentation of habitats will occur within any EU sites;
- No discharges of surface water are proposed to any watercourse. The drainage network will be cut off at the initial stages of construction, and reconnected and commissioned nearing completion and therefore removes the pathway to the River Blackwater during the construction phase. Once fully operational, all surface water run off will be contained on site and discharged to existing urban drainage systems. Therefore, there is no likely risk of contaminated surface water run off reaching the river and impacting qualifying interest habitats and species of the Blackwater River SAC OR Blackwater Callows SPA during the construction phase.
- No potential for in-combination effects have been identified.

It is therefore determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 is not required.

## **7.5. APPENDIX E – Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report and Determination**

## **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**





**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SOLUTIONS LTD**

# **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT**

**N72 CHRISTCHURCH JUNCTION,  
FERMOY,  
Co. CORK**

**2023**

## Declaration

Job Details	
Job Title:	E.I.A. Screening Report
Job Number:	21826-1
Issue Date:	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
Revision:	1
Client Details	
Client:	Roadplan Consulting Ltd
Site Address:	N72 Christchurch Junction, Fermoy, Co. Cork
Project Contact:	Aoidín Curran
Position of Contact:	Project Engineer
Record of Approval	
Details:	Prepared By:
Name:	Martin O'Looney
Title/Position:	Environmental Consultant
Date:	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
Signature:	
Details:	Checked By:
Name:	Mike Fraher
Title/Position:	Director
Date:	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
Signature:	

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**N72 CHRISTCHURCH JUNCTION, FERMOY, CO. CORK**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PROJECT BRIEF**

Panther Environmental Solutions Ltd (PES Ltd) were commissioned by Roadplan Consulting Ltd to carry out an environmental impact assessment screening report in support of a Part 8 planning application with Cork County Council.

The applicant is seeking permission for the redesign of the junction between the N72 national secondary road and the R639 regional road adjacent to Christchurch in Fermoy.

The subject site boundaries are clearly defined on the accompanying design drawings prepared by Roadplan Consulting Ltd.

This EIA Screening document has been prepared on behalf of and for the exclusive use of the applicant by PES Ltd with respect to the above proposed development and the corresponding application for planning to Cork County Council.

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared with regard to:

- Schedules 5 and 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended),
- Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended
- Roads Act 1993 as amended
- European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019)
- Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU
- The European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018)
- European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019)
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Environmental Protection Agency, 2022
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening, European Commission, 2017
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment August 2018
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development 2003
- Circular Letter: PL 05/2018 27th August 2018 Transposition into Planning Law of Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the EIA Directive) and Revised Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Circular Letter: PL 10/2018 22 November 2018 Public notification of timeframe for application to An Bord Pleanála for screening determination in respect of local authority or State authority development
- Office of the Planning Regulator (May 2021) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note

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**1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

**1.2.1 Site Location**

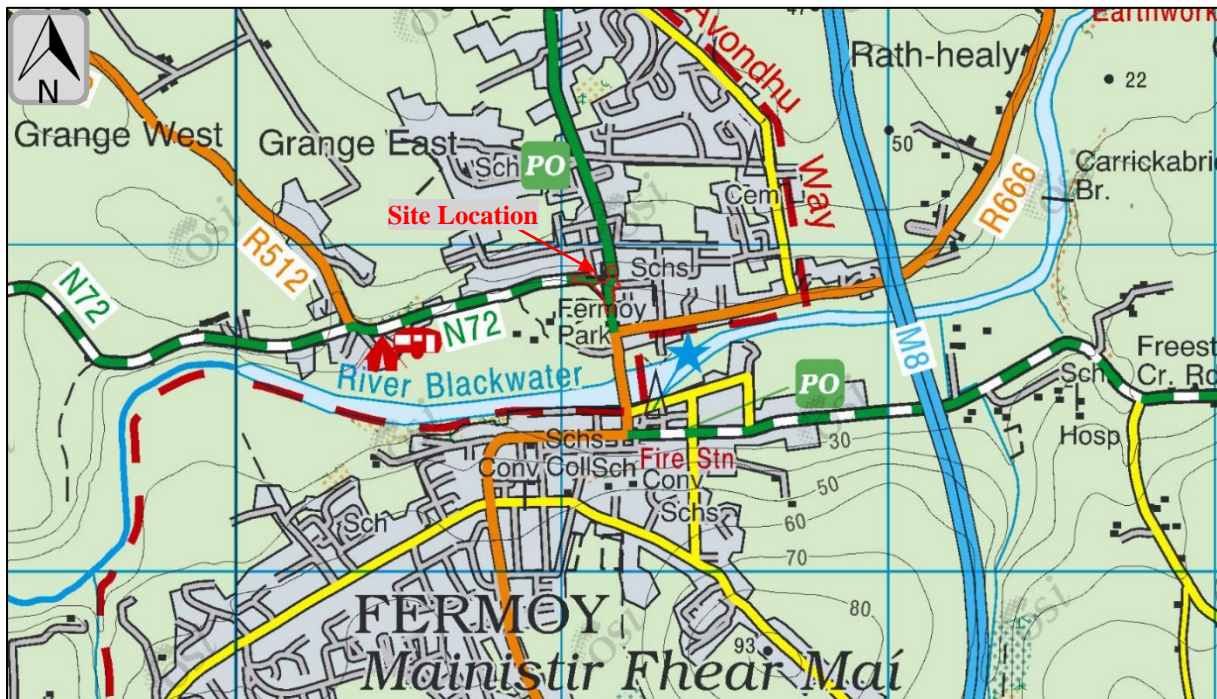
The proposed development site is located in Fermoy town centre, Co. Cork, which would be considered urban in nature. The site is located at approximate ING Coordinates E-181138 , N-098857.

The project site is comprised of the junction of the N72 national secondary road and the R639 regional road, adjacent to the Anglican Christ Church in Fermoy. The project site also includes minor sections of Church Hill and Allen’s Walk.

The R639 road leading north of the junction connects to Exit 14 of the M8 motorway, c.2.6km from the junction, and leads northward to Mitchelstown. The N72 west road leads to Castletownroche and Mallow, west of Fermoy. The N72 south road leads through Fermoy town then west to Tallow, Cappoquin and Dungarvan.

The surrounding area is primarily residential terraced housing fronting local roads, with religious buildings and recreational areas also comprising dominant features of the area. Entrances to businesses are present, but commercial activity density is higher outside of the project area.

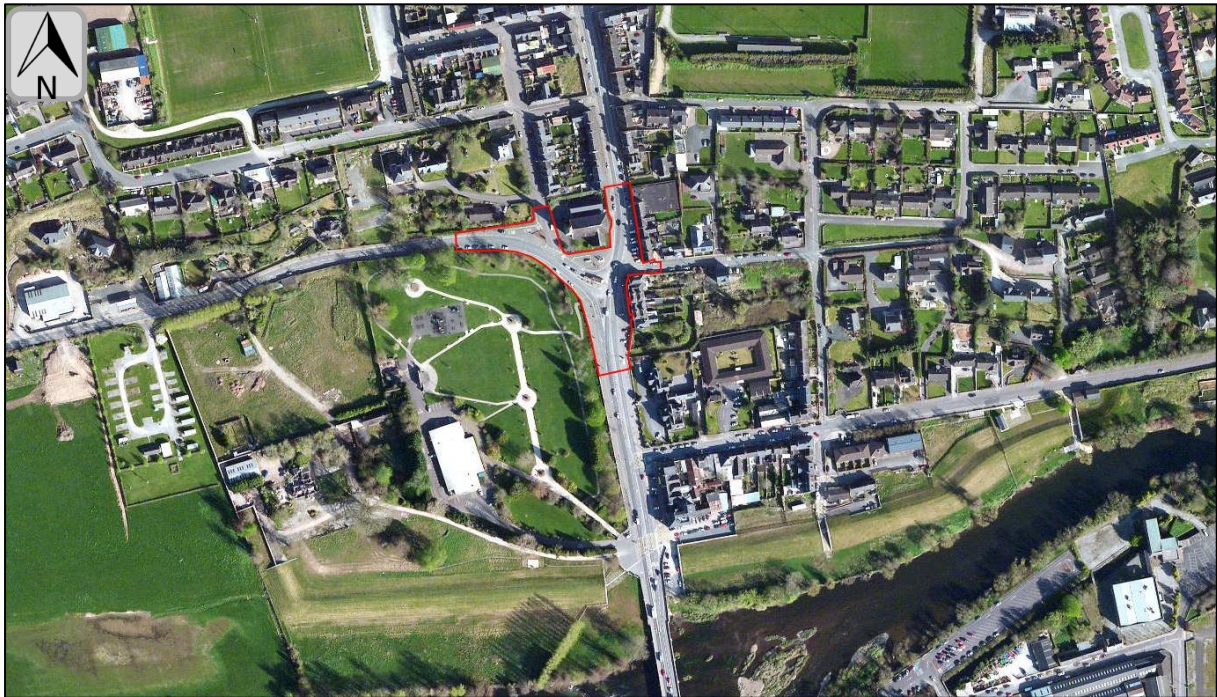
The topography of the site falls generally south from c.40m AOD above Christ Church to the River Blackwater.



**Figure 1.1:** Site Location (Discovery Maps)

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Prior to the commencement of the development, the site is in a state of existing made ground comprising of road and mixed pavement, as per **Figure 1.2**.



**Figure 1.2:** Aerial Image (OSI Digital)

### **1.2.2 Description of the Development**

The applicant is seeking permission for the improvement of N72 Christchurch Junction, Fermoy, to include:

- Junction traffic safety improvements
- Pedestrian improvements

The project area is approximately 6,330 m<sup>2</sup> or 0.63ha. The length of roads within the project area is approximately 385m.

The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). The DMURS provides guidance relating to the design of urban roads and streets.

The following design elements are proposed:

- Removal of left turn slip road from N72 (S) to N72 (W)
- Removal of left turn lane from N72 (W) to R639
- Removal of traffic islands throughout
- Reduction in carriageway widths and turning radii via extension of public realm areas and revision of kerb lines aligning with the Design Manual for Urban Streets as much



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as possible considering the requirement to accommodate large numbers of HGV's on the N72

- Incorporation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities across the N72 (W)
- Incorporation of a raised table across the junction extending into all approaches.
- Modification of the junction between the N72 (W) and Church Hill comprising realignment of the Church Hill approach, removing the left turn slip lane and right turning facility from the N72, narrowing the junction mouth, and providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing.
- Modification of the junction between the R639 and Allen's Walk comprising realignment of the Allen's Walk approach, narrowing the junction mouth, providing an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, modifying parking at the junction to improve visibility, and extension of the footpath at the junction mouth to define the junction and improve pedestrian facilities.
- Modifying existing parking on the eastern side of the N72, immediately south of the junction, resulting in a reduction of 6 no. parking spaces.
- Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and enhancement of public realm areas.
- Resurfacing the vehicular carriageway within the scheme extents
- Relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system.

The existing roadside gullies and carrier pipe system along the extents of the scheme will be utilised to drain the proposed scheme, with gullies relocated to suit the revised kerb lines. No new carriageway drainage systems are proposed.

Drainage of public realm areas will be accommodated within SUDS components. It is proposed that 1.5m roadside strips of low-level planting will be provided in the vicinity of the junction, with larger extents of both low level planting and some trees to be located outside visibility splays.

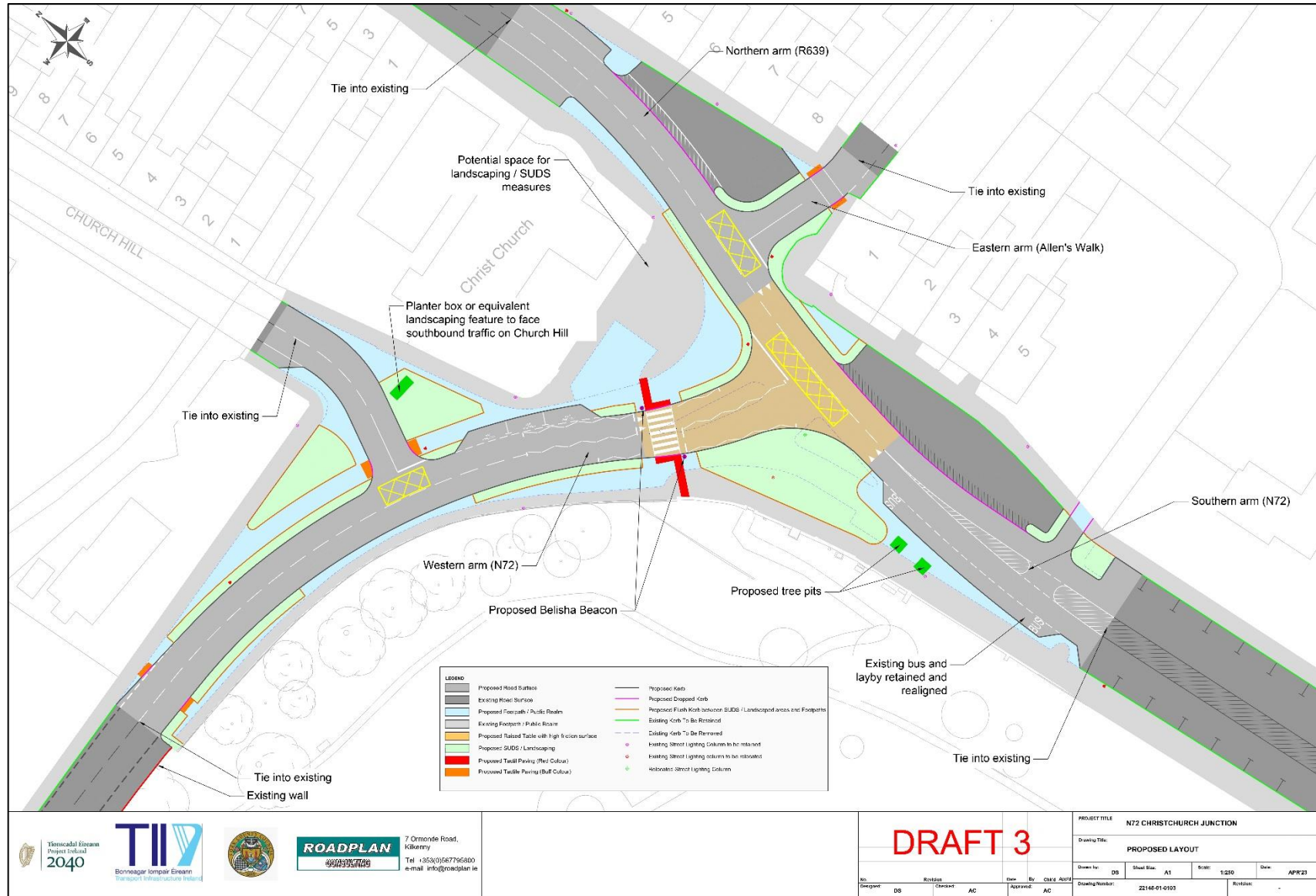
It is expected that construction will commence in the mid-late 2023, subject to approval. The expected duration of the construction works will be approximately 6 months. The construction works would occur on a phased bases, with separate sections of the project active at any one time to minimise traffic disruptions.

During the construction phase, the breaking of kerbs, road-surface and removal of traffic islands will be undertaken. Aside from these activities, there are no demolition works required for the completion of the proposed development.

Given that Christchurch Junction is a heavily trafficked area, and that existing traffic will need to be facilitated during the works, the Construction Contractor will be required to develop and implement a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) at the outset to ensure that traffic disruption is managed.

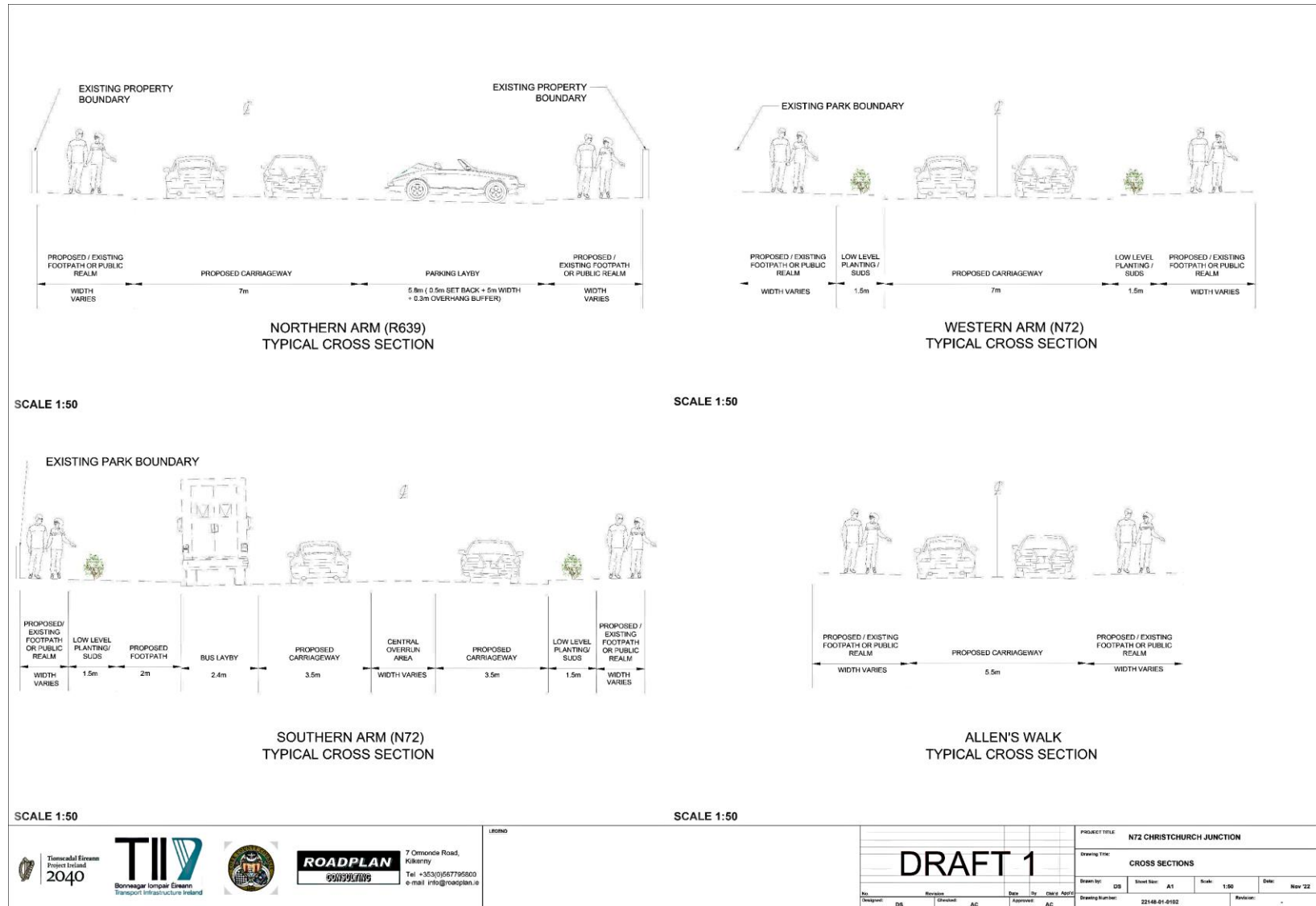
# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

## N72 CHRISTCHURCH JUNCTION, FERMOY, CO. CORK



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**Figure 1.4: Proposed Cross Sections (RoadPlan Consulting, Drawing No: 22148-01-0102)**

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**2.0 PES LTD - COMPETENCY & EXPERIENCE**

PES is a leading environmental consulting firm based in Carlow, Ireland. PES was formed in 2005 by environmental consultant Mr. Mike Fraher who has over three decades of experience working in the environmental consultancy industry, both in Ireland and in the United Kingdom.

The PES team are competent and experienced in preparing environmental planning documents. PES has completed environmental works in a wide range of industries including construction, waste management, industrial and intensive agriculture.

This Environmental Impact Assessment Report Screening has been prepared by experienced environmental consultants within PES Ltd.

Mr Mike Fraher has over 30 years of consultancy experience and has a B.Sc. Degree in Environmental Sciences from the University of Glamorgan, Cardiff in Wales and a Diploma in Food Sciences from Cork Institute of Technology.

Mr. Martin O’Looney has over nine years’ consultancy experience and has a B.Sc. Degree in Environmental Science and Technology from Sligo Institute of Technology.

Dr. Ross Donnelly-Swift has a BSc (Hons) Biology from Maynooth University NUI, a MSc Environmental Science from Trinity College Dublin and a PhD Biosystems Engineering from University College Dublin.

Mr. Nial Ryan has over six years’ consultancy experience and has a BSc. in Applied Physics from Dublin City University, an MSc. in Medical Device Regulatory Affairs, a Certificate in Introduction to AutoCAD, and a Certificate in Environmental, Health & Safety Management, all from Institute of Technology, Carlow.

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### **3.0 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT & MANDATORY EIA REVIEW**

The requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) are derived from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC, and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (amended in turn by Directive 2014/52/EU).

This EIAR Screening is drafted based on the requirements of EU Directive 2014/52/EU. Under the Directive, 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014 “*The assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment*” Annex I and Annex II class activities are described.

EIA Directives were transposed into Irish law under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

#### **3.1 SCHEDULE 5 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001.**

Schedule 5, of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 refers to development for the purposes of Part 10 (Environmental Impact Assessment Report) of the planning regulations.

The first step in screening is to determine whether a project is listed in either Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5, which describes the thresholds of Part 1 projects, which require a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), or Part 2 projects which may have the potential to pose a risk to the environment and require screening to determine if an EIAR is required.

Schedule 7 is to be used in the case of screening determination (i.e. information to be provided by the developer on projects listed in Part 2). Schedule 7A details the criteria for determining whether a sub-threshold development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment.



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**3.2 ROADS ACT 1993, AS AMENDED.**

Section 50 (1) of the Roads Act (1993) (as substituted by S.I No. 279 of 2019 and amended by S.I. 486 of 2019) specifies road developments for which an Environmental Impact Assessment is mandatory.

The thresholds for mandatory EIA of a road development are set out in section 50(1)(a) which states:

*“50. (1) (a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:*

- (i) the construction of a motorway;*
- (ii) the construction of a busway;*
- (iii) the construction of a service area;*
- (iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.”*

The ‘prescribed types of road development’ in section 50(1)(a)(iv) are set out in Part V Environmental Impact Assessment of the Road Regulations 1994 (S.I. No. 119 of 1994) (as amended) which states the following:

*“(8). The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of section 50 of the Act shall be—*

- (a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;*
- (b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.”*

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**3.3 SCHEDULE 7 OF THE IRISH STATUTORY INSTRUMENT (S.I. NO. 296 OF 2018)**

The Annex III EIAR screening criteria of Directive 2014/52/EU are transposed into Irish law as Schedule 7, (parts 1 to 3) of the Irish Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

Schedule 7, sets out the Irish Member States criteria used for determining the likelihood of significant impacts from a development on the environment.

**Part 1: Characteristics of the Proposed Development**

- The characteristics of proposed development, in particular;
- (a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,
  - (b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,
  - (c) the nature of any associated demolition works,
  - (d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,
  - (e) the production of waste,
  - (f) pollution and nuisances,
  - (g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and
  - (h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

**Part 2: Location of the Proposed Development**

- The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to;
- (a) the existing and approved land use,
  - (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
  - (c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
    - (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
    - (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;
    - (iii) mountain and forest areas;
    - (iv) nature reserves and parks;
    - (v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;
    - (vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;
    - (vii) densely populated areas;
    - (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

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**Part 3: Characteristics of the Potential Impacts**

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of ‘environmental impact assessment report’ in section 171A of the Act, taking into account;

- a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- b) the nature of the impact;
- c) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- e) the probability of the impact;
- f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and;
- h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

The flow chart below describes the EIAR Screening process. This infographic is commonly referred to in EIAR Screening reports and is taken from the Environmental Protection Agency’s 2017 “*Draft Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*”.

Schedule 7A, sets out the Irish Member States criteria used for determining the likelihood of significant impacts from a sub-threshold development on the environment.

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular;
  - (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
  - (b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from;
  - (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
  - (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

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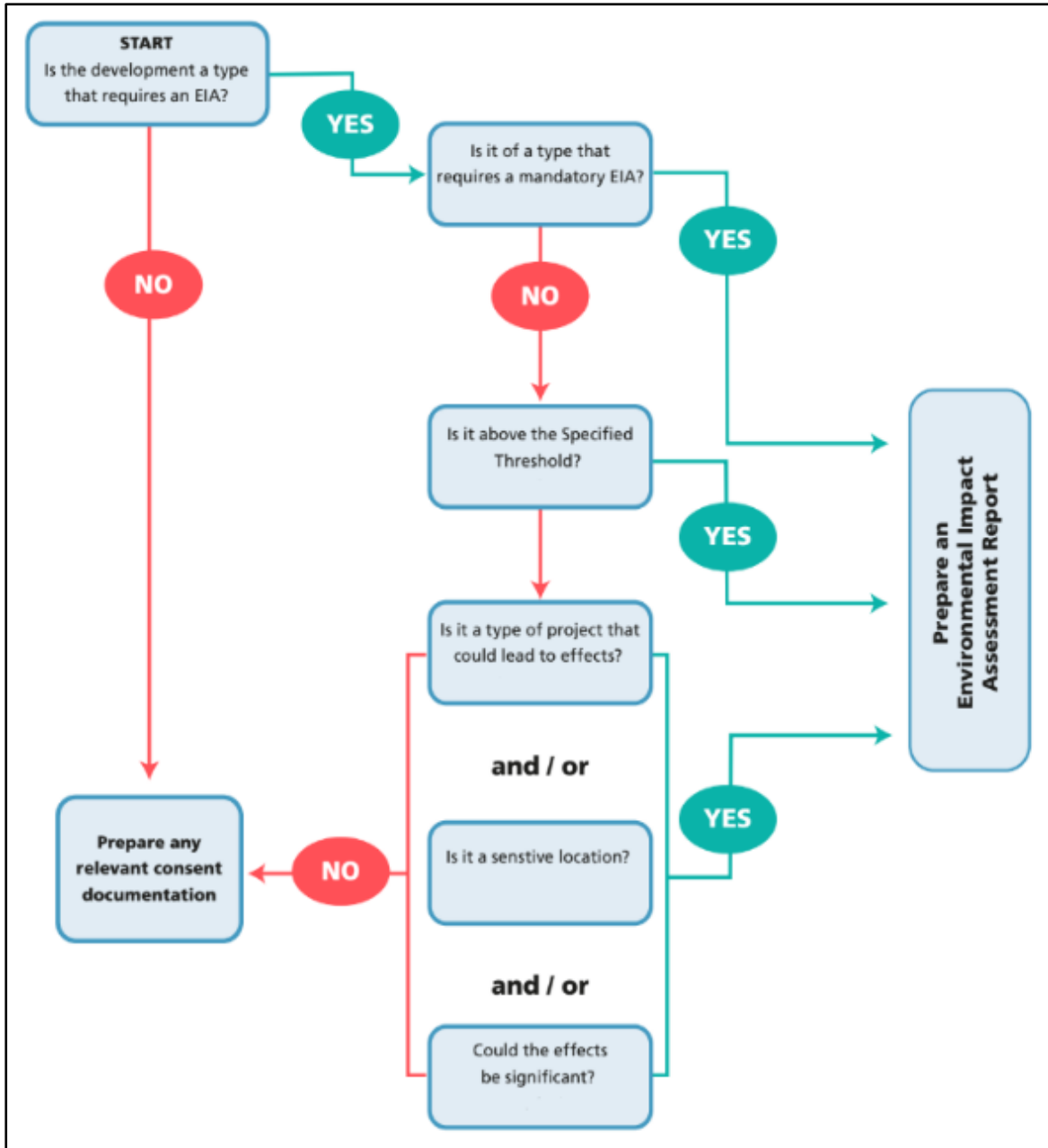


Figure 3.1: E.I.A. Screening Process Flow Chart

The overall purpose of this Screening Report is to identify and detail the findings of desktop and available field studies using the precautionary principle undertaken to analyse the impacts, if any, of the proposed development on the receiving environment and, based on the results, decide whether or not an EIAR is required.

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### **3.4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND EIA THRESHOLDS**

The development would not fall under any of the classes of development listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations and a mandatory EIA is not applicable.

The proposed development could be considered to be categorised under Schedule 5: Part 2:

*10. Infrastructure projects*

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

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

European Commission (2015) Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive suggest that projects with similar characteristics, but are not explicitly mentioned in the EIA Directive could include: bus garages, train depots; Construction projects such as housing developments, hospitals, universities, sports stadiums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls and other cultural centres. Projects to which the terms ‘urban’ and ‘infrastructure’ can relate, such as the construction of sewerage and water supply networks, urban transport schemes (i.e. bus lanes, tramlines, bus, tram and/or metro stops) could also be included in this category.

The road and pedestrian network within the project area are not specifically zoned within the Fermoy Town Development Plan, however, the surrounding area is zoned for residential, Open-Space – Sports – Recreational – Amenity, and Institutional – Civic – Educational, associated with existing land use. Therefore, this would not be considered a business district.

At approximately 0.63ha, the project would fall below all of the thresholds included in this development category. There is also no direct reference to traffic safety or pedestrian improvements and it cannot be presumed that the project is an ‘urban development’ that falls under this threshold definition.

The project would also not fall under the classes of development outlined in S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, or Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Road development prescribed for the purposes of S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993), as detailed in **section 3.2**. The project would not be a motorway, busway or service area. The length of roads within the project area is approximately 385m, would not be realigned, widened to provide for four or more lanes, or include a new bridge or tunnel.

This sub-threshold EIA screening assessment has been carried out in accordance with the criteria listed in Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A of the Planning Regulations, in consideration of the sensitivities of the area.

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**4.0 PART I – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

This section assesses the potential impacts of the development due to the scale and characteristics of the activities proposed to be carried out.

**4.1 SIZE AND DESIGN OF THE PROJECT**

The applicant is seeking permission for the improvement of N72 Christchurch Junction, Fermoy, to include junction traffic safety improvements and pedestrian improvements. The project area is approximately 6,330 m<sup>2</sup> or 0.63ha. The length of roads within the project area is approximately 385m.

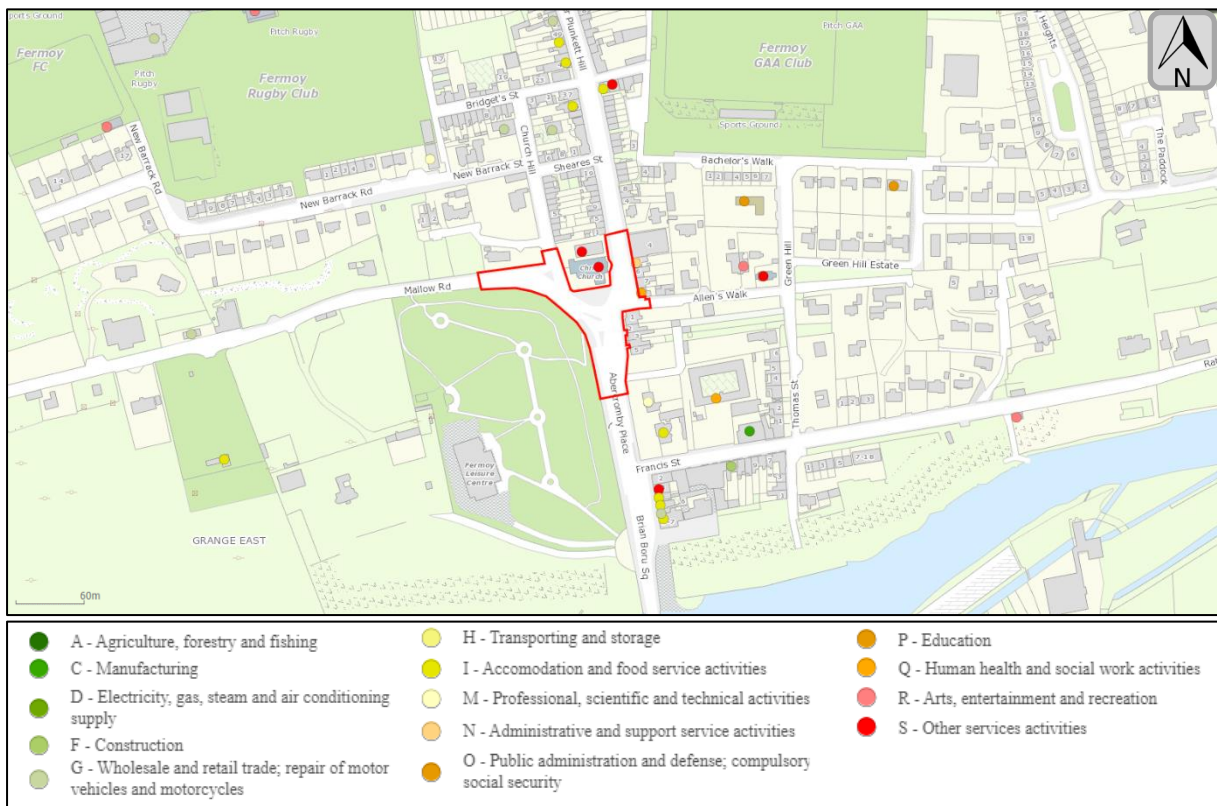
As stated within the Design Report (Report Ref: 22148-01-001) prepared by Roadplan Consulting Ltd, this scheme has been designed in accordance with the DMURS and there are no Relaxations or Departures from the DMURS standard associated with the design.

Therefore, it is not considered that the size or design of the rising main would necessitate the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

**4.2 CUMULATION WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

**4.2.1 Existing Activities in the Area & Operational Cumulative Effects**

The project site is located in Fermoy town centre, which would be considered urban in nature.



**Figure 4.1: Commercial Activities per NACE Code**

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Commercial and industrial facilities located in the vicinity of the project site are shown in **Figure 4.1** above. The data points are classified by the standard European nomenclature of productive economic activities. (NACE) code. These include a *Human health and social work activities (Q)*, *Other Services Activities (S)*, *Administrative and support activities (N)*.

The majority of the buildings in the locality consist of residential properties. Commercial premises include a GP Clinic, Physical Therapy Clinic, and Solicitors offices. Christ Church Presbyterian Church is also located adjacent to the project area. In the wider area there are further commercial activities, and of particular note Fermoy Rugby and GAA club grounds to the north.

The operational activity of the proposed development would be the conveyance of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It is not considered that there would be significant in-combination effects with the business and service activities and the completed project. While businesses and services in the area would contribute to the vehicular and pedestrian traffic, there would be no significant alteration pre- and post-development. The provision of controlled crossing facilities would improve pedestrian safety for patrons of local services.

There are no other known planned road improvement projects within the vicinity of the project.

**4.2.2 Cumulation with Construction Projects**

Local planning files were assessed to identify plans or projects in the area which would have the potential to commence during the construction phase of the project.

**Table 4.1: Potential In-Combination Planning Developments**

Planning Ref	Decision Date	Development Description	Approx. Distance from Project
205774	20/05/21	1.)The demolition of a single storey commercial and three storey dwelling unit. 2) The construction of three storey residential development (Total 9 no. apartment units) and the creation of a new vehicular entrance off of Oliver Plunkett Hill.	0m E
205237	15/06/21	The demolition of existing structures on site and the construction of 1) 1 no. garden centre with ancillary homeware section and restaurant/café; 2) refurbishment of an existing shed and cottage on site 3) the provision of a pedestrian footpath along the N72	(development) c.150m SW (footpath) 0m W
215929	30/08/21	Construction of 2 no. detached dwellings. Extension of duration to: 15/6583.	c. 60m E
214542	08/11/21	Demolition of an existing open-air stand, and construction of all-weather playing pitch, hurling wall, floodlighting and car park.	c. 60m NE
226081	04/11/22	The construction of extensions to existing dwelling house.	c.180m WNW

While it is not known at this time if the above approved developments will commence construction during the project construction phase, there is a potential for in combination construction effects. However, the construction phase of each project would be temporary and

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the adoption of standard construction management practices would prevent significant environmental impacts or nuisance.

Therefore, it is not considered that cumulative environmental effects from the proposed development requires further investigation within an EIAR.

#### **4.3 USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Natural resources are considered to be the physical resources in the environment, which may be either of human or natural origin. These include land, soil, water and biodiversity.

The construction process would include the use of various raw materials and should not require excessive levels of any one natural resource. Resources required for the development include minor use of energy and water, and the use of stone fill material, sand, concrete, aggregate stone, asphalt, pavement slabs, kerbing, signage and lighting materials, which would be sourced from standard suppliers and local quarries where available. Small quantities of topsoil and/or compost would be used for the installation of SUDS features along with plant saplings. Final quantities and specification of materials would be confirmed at the detailed design stage. There would be expected to be no uncommon use of natural resources for construction of the project.

The overall development would take place within a relatively small area (c. 0.63ha) with no significant land take or alteration of current land use.

The operational phase of the development would cause no significant use of natural resources.

It is not considered that the use of natural resources for the proposed development would require further investigation within an EIAR.

#### **4.4 GENERATION OF WASTES AND BY-PRODUCTS**

The management of waste is regulated under the Waste Management Acts, 1996– 2003, and associated regulations.

The anticipated volumes of waste generated as a result of the construction phase of the development are anticipated to be minor. Due to the nature of the proposed works, excavations would be expected to be limited and shallow. Wastes would comprise primarily of removed asphalt, kerbing, pavement bricks / slabs and metal signposts. C&D waste would be appropriately segregated, removed from site and disposed of in a suitable licenced facility via a suitably permitted waste contractor.

Other potential construction wastes may include general waste from workers. These wastes would be appropriately segregated and recycled or disposed of.

There would be no anticipated generation of wastes during the operational phase of the development.

As waste volumes generated on-site are anticipated to be very small, it is not considered that this would require an EIAR for further investigation of potential impacts.



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## **4.5 POLLUTION AND NUISANCE**

### **4.5.1 Pollution**

#### **4.5.1.1 Air Pollution**

Air quality in the region would be expected to be principally influenced by traffic, commercial and residential activities within Fermoy town.

The development site is located in Air Zone D (Rural Ireland) and within the Air Quality Index Region of *Small Towns (Fermoy – Zone ID 33)*, which has a status of '3 – Good' (last updated: Tue 25-May-2021 on <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>). However, there is no currently active monitoring station in Fermoy.

The main potential sources of air pollutants from the construction of the development would be combustion by-products from the operation of machinery and dust generated from excavations. Potential impacts from dust are discussed in **section 4.5.2**.

Air emissions from construction machinery would be expected to be minor in a regional context. The potential for construction dust emissions is discussed further under nuisances in this report.

There would be anticipated to be no significant alteration to emissions to air from the site during the operational phase, as the project would facilitate the same volume of traffic as existed prior to the project.

This would not be anticipated to require an EIAR for further assessment.

#### **4.5.1.2 Water Pollution**

There are no natural surface water features within the site boundary. Rain falling within the site would be collected within the existing municipal surface water network and discharge to the River Blackwater approximately 200m south of the project area.

Construction practice would follow Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) publications. TII (June 2015) Road Drainage and the Water Environment recommends following practice outlined within NRA (2008) *Guidelines for the Crossing of Watercourses during Construction of National Road Schemes* and CIRIA 648 *Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects*.

There would be no significant volumes of fuels, oils or other chemicals stored on-site during the construction phase of the development. The construction working area active at any one time would be limited as the project progresses in phases, limiting the potential for the generation of suspended solids or the entrainment of concrete into surface-water. Best practice construction measures such as silt and sediment controls will be installed prior to the commencement of any construction works. There would not be anticipated to be a significant risk to water quality during such works within the site boundary.

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The scheme will not involve any substantial changes to the roadside drainage network, reconnecting to the existing network, so there will be no change from the baseline scenario during the operational phase of the project.

It is not considered that risks of water pollution would require an EIAR for further assessment.

### 4.5.2 Nuisances

Nuisances can be defined as activities or emissions which are of a nature which can reasonably be expected to cause annoyance. As nuisances are defined on the basis of annoyance and infringement upon amenity, sensitive receptors are typically residences, service or amenity areas.

Typical nuisances which may occur from similar projects would include noise and dust during construction.

As per **Figure 4.2**, land use within the vicinity of the project area is primarily residential, with Fermoy Town Park and Playground on the western boundary and Christ Church Presbyterian Church on the northern boundary.



**Figure 4.2:** Residential and Commercial Distribution (MyPlan.ie)

#### 4.5.2.1 Noise

##### Baseline Noise Survey

The baseline noise survey was carried out on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 by PES Ltd. Weather during the survey was dry and cool, with temperatures ranging from 6-9°C. Wind conditions during the monitoring survey were principally calm to light air, from a south-westerly direction, with wind speeds of less than 5 m/s or 10 knots. The Sound Level Meter was also fitted with a windshield to minimise interference from meteorological conditions during all monitoring periods.

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The equipment used for the noise monitoring was a Cirrus CR:171B Sound Level Meter (serial No: G071199), a MK:224 Microphone (serial no: 216368A) and a CR:515 Acoustic Calibrator (serial no: 54060). The CR:171B and the MK:224 were both calibrated externally on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2022. The CR:515 was calibrated externally on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2022. A calibration check of 94 dB(A) at 1kHz was carried out on the instrument before and after measurement. The calibrator is a Class 1 grade, which conforms to IEC 60942:2003. The difference between the initial calibration value, any subsequent calibration check, and a final calibration checks on completion of measurements did not exceed 0.5 dB, and the instrument calibration was found to be satisfactory.

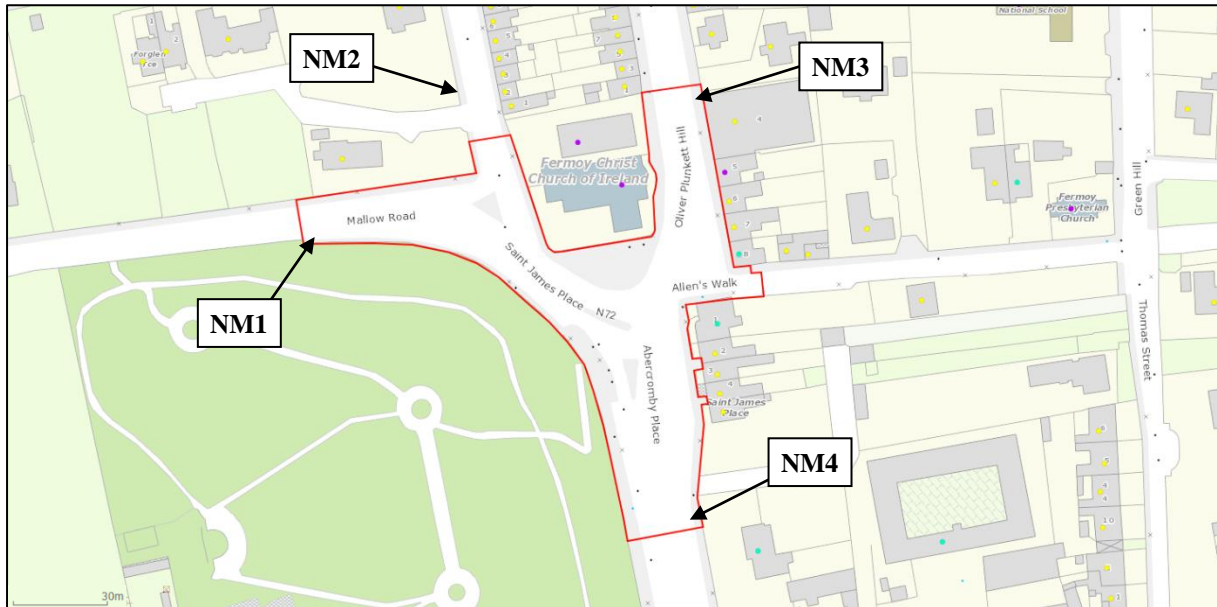
**Table 4.2:** Location of Noise Monitoring Points

Ref.	Grid Ref		Location Type	Location
	X	Y		
NM1	181042	098910	Noise Monitoring Location	N72 westbound, pavement on boundary of Fermoy Town Park.
NM2	181087	098956	Noise Monitoring Location	Church Hill Street.
NM3	181162	098943	Noise Monitoring Location	R639 Oliver Plunkett Hill
NM4	181157	098825	Noise Monitoring Location	Pavement beside residences on N72 southbound.

Grid Ref source: <https://irish.gridreferencefinder.com/>

All measurements were taken at:

- 1.2 – 1.5m height above local ground level
- >3.5m away from reflective surfaces



**Figure 4.3:** Noise Monitoring Locations (MyPlan.ie)

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**Table 4.3:** Noise Monitoring Survey Results

Location Ref	Date / Time	Noise Results		Notes
NM1	30/01/23 10:15	L <sub>Aeq</sub>	70.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent traffic on adjacent N72 (4.9 passing / minute).</li> <li>• Continuous distant traffic within the town.</li> <li>• Frequent birds singing in surrounding trees.</li> <li>• Intermittent pedestrians passing and talking.</li> </ul>
		L <sub>10</sub>	74.6	
		L <sub>90</sub>	52.3	
NM2	30/01/23 10:48	L <sub>Aeq</sub>	58.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent traffic on N72 @ c. 50m (5.2 passing / minute).</li> <li>• Continuous distant traffic within the town.</li> <li>• Intermittent engine and knocking noise from forklift operating at tyre store at top of the hill.</li> <li>• Frequent birds singing in surrounding trees.</li> <li>• Intermittent pedestrians passing and talking.</li> </ul>
		L <sub>10</sub>	59.8	
		L <sub>90</sub>	50.5	
NM3	30/01/23 11:28	L <sub>Aeq</sub>	74.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent traffic on adjacent R639 (13.7 passing / minute).</li> <li>• Continuous distant traffic within the town.</li> <li>• Frequent birds singing.</li> <li>• Intermittent pedestrians passing and talking.</li> </ul>
		L <sub>10</sub>	78.0	
		L <sub>90</sub>	65.5	
NM4	30/01/23 12:02	L <sub>Aeq</sub>	73.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent traffic on adjacent N72 (17.2 passing / minute).</li> <li>• Continuous distant traffic within the town.</li> <li>• Frequent birds singing.</li> <li>• Intermittent pedestrians passing and talking.</li> </ul>
		L <sub>10</sub>	72.1	
		L <sub>90</sub>	63.9	

Total LAeq = 72.1 dB

Total LAeq (rounded to nearest 5 dB) = 70.0 dB

**Operational Noise Impact**

It is not anticipated that there would be a significant alteration to the existing noise environment following completion of the project.

Existing traffic volumes are expected to continue during the operational phase and the existing speed limit of 50 km/h would be maintained.

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**Construction Noise Impact**

This section analyses the potential impacts of the noise generated during the construction phase of the proposed development on local sensitive receptors.

**Relevant Noise Legislation & Guidance**

British Standard BS 5228-1:2009(+A1 2014)

Best practice guidelines are taken from the British Standard BS 5228 – 1: 2009 (+A1 2014): ‘Code of Practice For Noise And Vibration Control On Construction And Open Sites – Noise’. BS 5228 sets out an approach for setting appropriate construction noise limits for noise sensitive premises; occupied premises outside a site used as a dwelling (including gardens), place of worship, educational establishment, hospital or similar institution, or any other property likely to be adversely affected by an increase in noise level.

The BS 5228 ‘ABC Method’ calls for the designation of the noise environment into a specific category (A, B or C) based on existing ambient noise levels in the absence of construction noise. This then sets a threshold noise value that, if exceeded, indicates a significant noise impact is associated with the construction activities as summarised in **Table 4.4** below.

**Table 4.4:** Threshold of Potential Significant Effect at Dwellings (BS 5228)

Assessment category and threshold value period	Threshold value, in decibels (LAeq, T)		
	Category A <sup>(a)</sup>	Category B <sup>(b)</sup>	Category C <sup>(c)</sup>
Night-time (23.00–07.00)	45	50	55
Evenings and weekends <sup>(d)</sup>	55	60	65
Daytime (07.00–19.00) and Saturdays (07.00–13.00)	65	70	75
<p>NOTE 1: A potential significant effect is indicated if the LAeq, T noise level arising from the site exceeds the threshold level for the category appropriate to the ambient noise level.</p> <p>NOTE 2: If the ambient noise level exceeds the Category C threshold values given in the table (i.e. the ambient noise level is higher than the above values), then a potential significant effect is indicated if the total LAeq, T noise level for the period increases by more than 3 dB due to site noise.</p> <p>NOTE 3: Applied to residential receptors only.</p>			
<p>a) Category A: threshold values to use when ambient noise levels (when rounded to the nearest 5 dB) are less than these values.</p> <p>b) Category B: threshold values to use when ambient noise levels (when rounded to the nearest 5 dB) are the same as category A values.</p> <p>c) Category C: threshold values to use when ambient noise levels (when rounded to the nearest 5 dB) are higher than category A values.</p> <p>d) 19.00–23.00 weekdays, 13.00–23.00 Saturdays and 07.00–23.00 Sundays.</p>			

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### **Construction Noise Limits, Impact and Control**

As shown in **Table 4.3**, the average ambient noise levels (when rounded to the nearest 5 dB) are higher than category A values in **Table 4.4**.

Therefore, the site would be designated as *Category C* and the following recommended noise limits would apply to the site during the construction phase of the development:

<b>Assessment category and threshold value period</b>	<b>Threshold value, in decibels (LAeq, T)</b>
Night-time (23.00–07.00)	55
Evenings and weekends <sup>(d)</sup>	65
Daytime (07.00–19.00) and Saturdays (07.00–13.00)	75

There is potential for noise nuisance impacts during the construction phase of the development. However, this would be mitigated by the phased construction, with activities only occurring in close proximity of sensitive receptors for short periods of the overall project. The overall project is also temporary in nature, anticipated to occur over approximately 6 months. However, it is recommended that appropriate construction noise management is implemented for the project.

All construction activities should take place during standard working hours of Weekday Daytime (07.00–19.00) and Saturdays (07.00–13.00).

Any works which, by necessity, are required to be carried out outside of these times should be notified to any potentially effected local residents in good time and prior to specified works commencing.

It is recommended that guidance on control of noise, as per The National Roads Authority's 'Guidelines for the Treatment of noise and vibration in National Road Schemes' (2004) be followed during the construction phase.

It is not considered that further assessment within an EIAR would be required for nuisance noise risk.

#### **4.5.2.2 Vibration**

The main potential source of vibration during the construction programme is associated ground-breaking activities.

As detailed in **section 5.2.6**, the proposed development is located in immediate proximity to several protected structures and recorded monuments. Recorded monuments would be subject to statutory protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. However, the level of vibration caused during the construction phase is unlikely to generate any significant impacts on surrounding structures. Thus, significant impacts to protected structures within the vicinity of the proposed development are unlikely.

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Prior to the undertaking of any works within the vicinity of protected structures and monuments, relevant method statements will be prepared by the contractor and submitted to DCC for prior approval.

Residual vibration effects will be controlled by the implementation of best construction practice. Examples of measures to be employed include the use of suitable vibration isolators in equipment mountings and ensuring that materials are lowered rather than dropped from heights. A full list of proposed measures will be proposed and implemented by the contractor in advance of the construction works.

It is not considered that further assessment within an EIAR would be required for nuisance vibration risk.

#### 4.5.2.3 Dust

##### Operational

There would be anticipated to be no significant change in the current dust environment as a result of the proposed development, as the project site would continue to be used as a public road.

##### Construction

Dust may arise from the breaking of existing road surfaces and imported aggregate materials. The potential for dust emissions during the project would be expected to be minimised due to phasing the development, with smaller working areas active at any one time. Therefore, the quantities of materials available to generate dust would be small. The potential for construction dust dispersion depends on the local meteorological conditions such as rainfall, wind speed and wind direction.

The impact that dust from the site may have on the surrounding area may be assessed with the use of **Table 4.5** below.

**Table 4.5:** Assessing the Criteria for the Impact of Dust from Construction with Standard Controls in place. (National Road Authority)

Source		Potential Distance for Significant Effects from the Source (meters)		
Scale	Description	Soiling	PM <sub>10</sub> *	Vegetation
Major	Large construction sites, with high use of haul roads	100m	25m	25m
Moderate	Moderate sized construction sites, with moderate use of haul roads	50m	15m	15m
Minor	Minor construction sites, with limited use of haul roads	25m	10m	10m

\* Significance based on the 2005 standard, which allows 35 daily exceedances/year of 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup>



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The proposed development is of minor scale. Therefore, receptors beyond the 25m radius would not be expected to be significantly affected by dust as the bulk of any airborne particles will have settled and dispersed.

Works are proposed to be carried out within 10-25m of receptor locations, particularly along St. James Place, Church Place, Oliver Plunkett Hill and Church Hill.

The likelihood of these properties being impacted by soiling or PM<sub>10</sub> particulates would be lessened by the progressive phasing of development and short duration that works will take in the vicinity of the properties.

Construction dust control is a common part of construction management practices. Dust dispersal from the site could be further managed by implementing typical dust control methods such as using water bowsers, sprays or vapour mists in very dry weather and covering any stockpiles of sand, gravel or silt on site.

Cognisance should be taken of the guidelines published by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), "*Assessment of dust from demolition and construction 2014*"

Impacts associated with dust during construction would not be likely to be significant and would not be considered to require further assessment through EIAR.

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**4.6 RISKS OF MAJOR ACCIDENTS AND RISKS TO HUMAN HEALTH**

As noted in the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, precautionary actions need to be put in place for certain projects which, “*due to their vulnerability to major accidents and/or natural disasters (such as flooding, sea level rise or earthquakes) are likely to have significant adverse effects on the environment*”.

It is not anticipated that there would be a significant risk of environmental impacts as a result of accidents during the operational phase due to the nature of activities that will be taking place (operation of a public road).

The scale of construction occurring at any one time would be small, with limited quantities of materials present as the development of the site progresses. Typical construction methods and practices would be anticipated to adequately mitigate against accidents or risks to human health.

The site does not fall within the Seveso III Regulations or European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015.

It is not considered that the site is at a significant risk of natural disasters.

As shown in **Figure 4.4**, OPW National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) river flood maps show no part of the project site is in a zone of *High Probability* (1:10 year flood) or *Medium Probability* (1:100 year flood). A small portion of the south-eastern corner, nearest to the River Blackwater, is indicated as potentially being in a zone of *Low Probability* (1:1000 year flood).

Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 online map viewer indicates that designated Flood Zones A & B overlap the southern boundary of the site (**Figure 4.5**). However, the Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009-2015 details that the area benefits from the provision of flood defence (**Figure 4.6**).

National Indicative Fluvial flood mapping shows the site is not located within any fluvial, pluvial flood zones, as per **Figure 4.7**.

The proposed site is not in an area prone to landslides or earthquakes.

Risks to human health would not be expected to change significantly as a result of the construction or operational phase of the development. There are no recorded drinking water abstractions in close proximity to the site.

Therefore, risks associated with major accidents or human health would not be considered to require an EIAR for further assessment.

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Figure 4.4: OPW CFRAM River Flood Extents Map

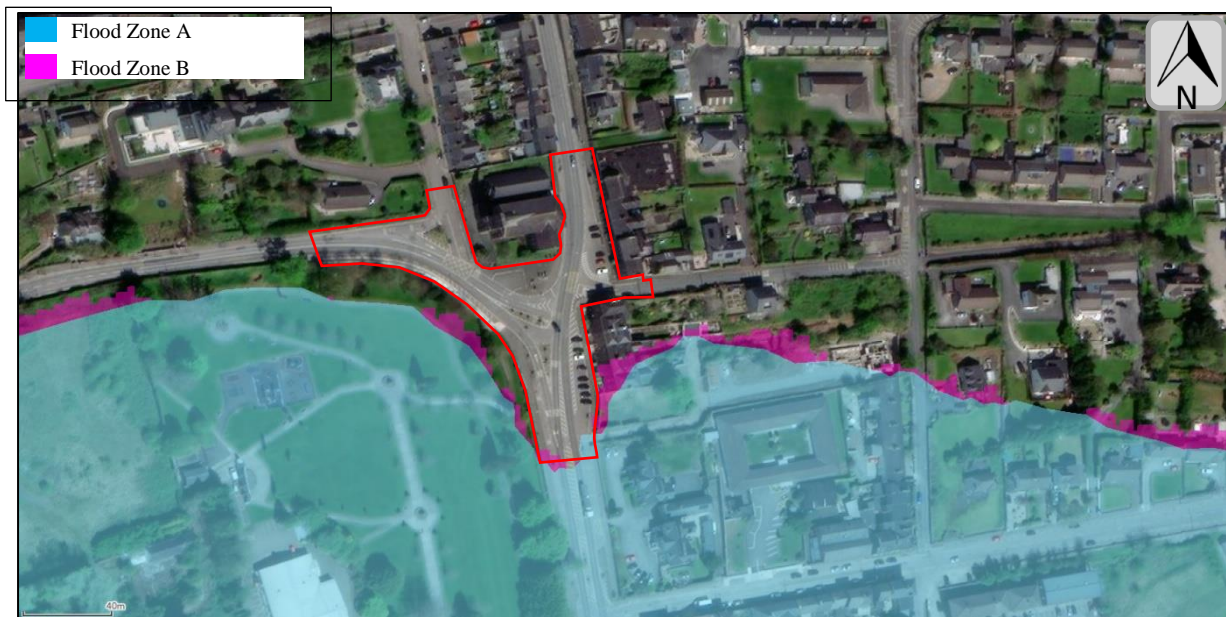
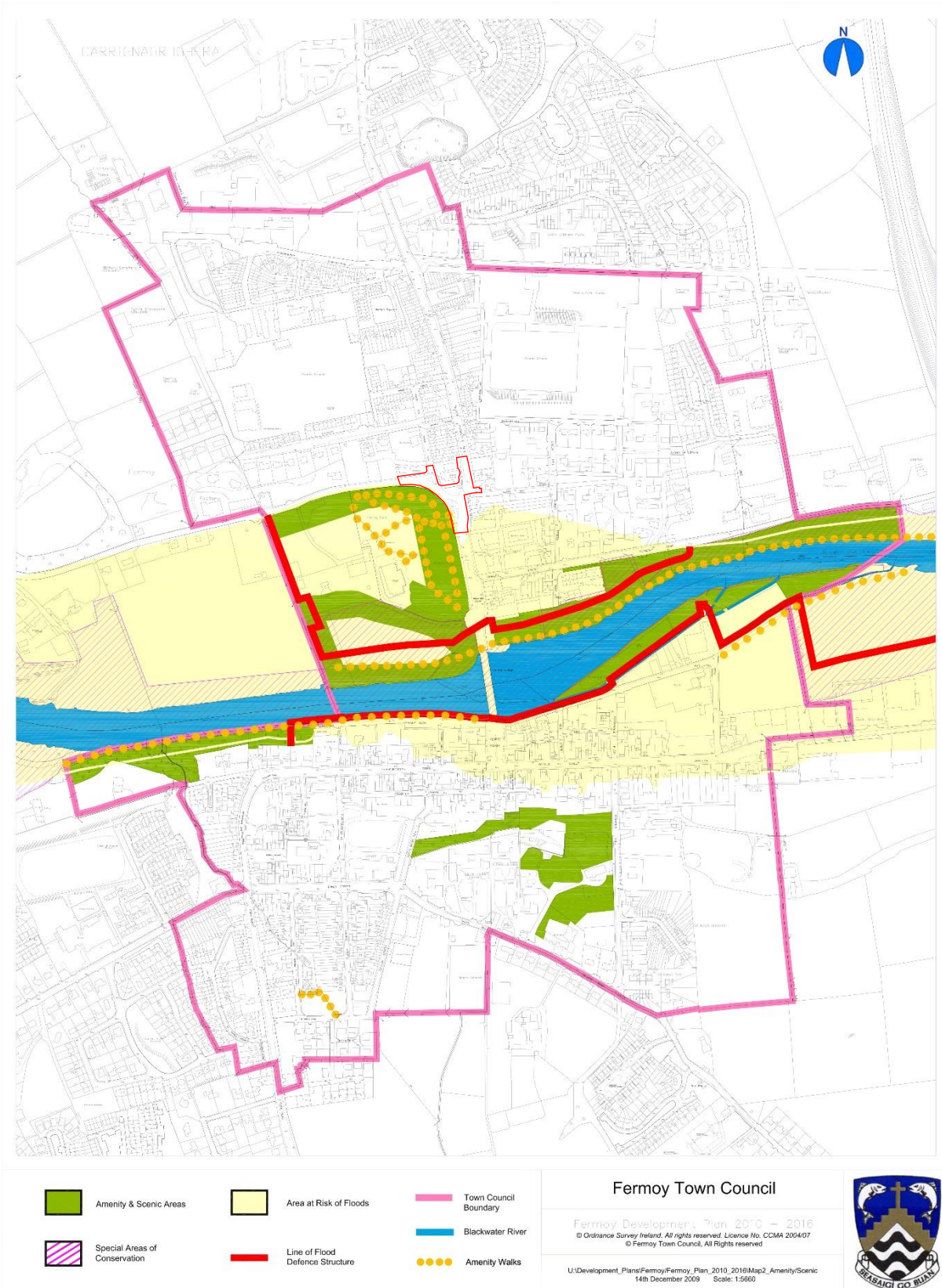


Figure 4.5: Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017

(<https://corkcoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=636e600103264fd4b1ba0ff1a73966e1>)

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**Figure 4.6: Constraints / Potential Map – Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009-2015**



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**Figure 4.7:** OPW National Indicative Fluvial Map (NIFM)

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**5.0 PART II – LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

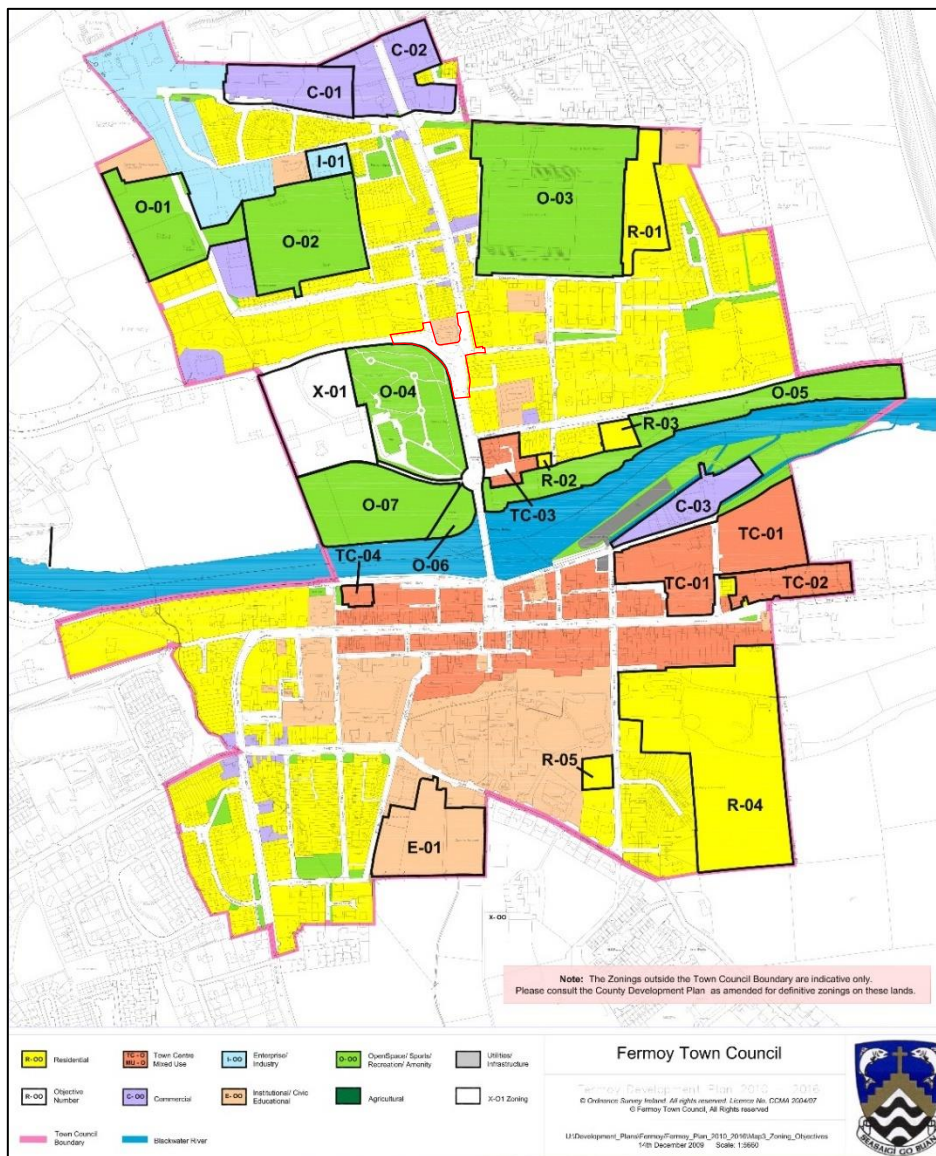
This section assesses the potential impacts of the development due to the sensitivities of the proposed location.

**5.1 EXISTING AND APPROVED LAND USE**

The development is located near the Fermoy Town Centre. The Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009-2015 shows surrounding areas zoned for Residential, Open Space / Recreation / Amenity and Institutional / Civic / Educational. The project area is not zoned.

Existing land use within the project area is currently public roads, pavement and parking. Land uses would not be altered as part of the proposed development.

Therefore, it is not considered that an EIAR would be required in order to further assess potential impacts on land use.



**Figure 5.1: Zoning Map – Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009-2015**

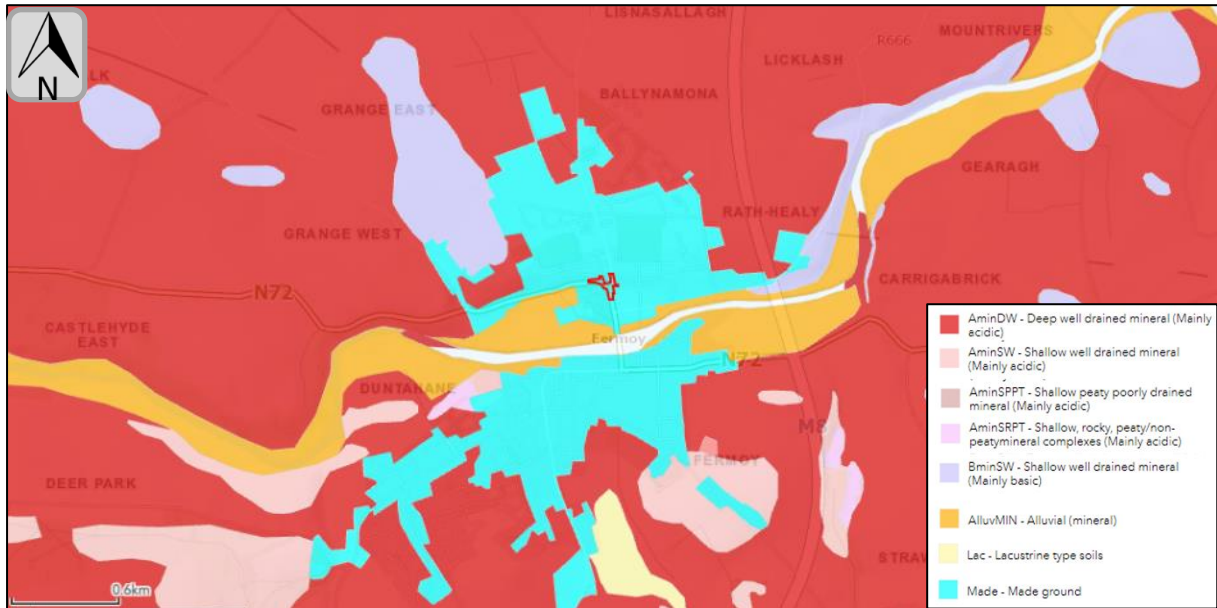
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**5.2 ABSORPTION CAPACITY OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

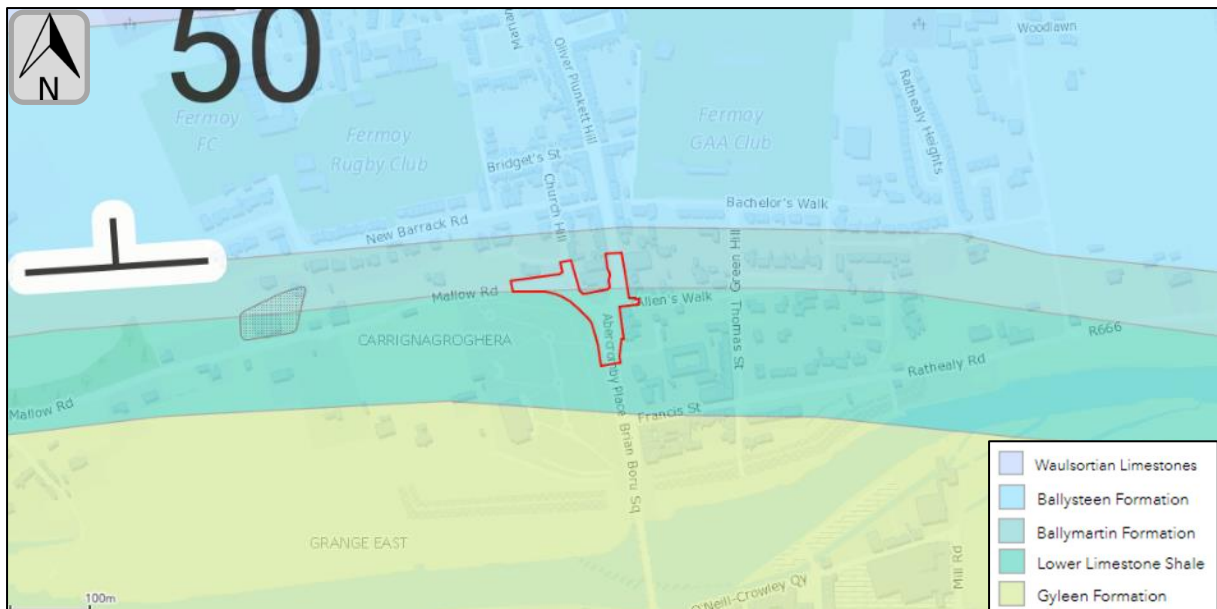
This section assesses the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.

**5.2.1 Soil & Bedrock**

The site is located on “made ground”, as per **Figure 5.2**. Below this layer, well drained mineral of alluvial type soils may be encountered.



**Figure 5.2: Teagasc Soils (GIS Maps)**



**Figure 5.3: Bedrock Geology 100k (GIS Maps)**

The site is underlain by interbedded limestones and shale of the *Ballysteen* and *Ballymartin* formations, as per **Figure 5.3**.



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The majority of proposed works would occur at the surface of the project site, within the “made ground” horizon. Some limited deeper excavations would be required in order to connect the surface water system with the existing network. If suitable, excavated soil and bedrock material would be used to refill excavations following installation of services.

Where excess soil or stone is generated, this would be disposed of to an appropriately licenced waste facility.

Construction works pose a risk of contamination of underlying soil and bedrock from fuels and oils contained in construction equipment. However this risk is considered minor due to the small quantities of such materials, the temporary exposure of the underlying soils and stones and standard construction practices that would be in place during construction.

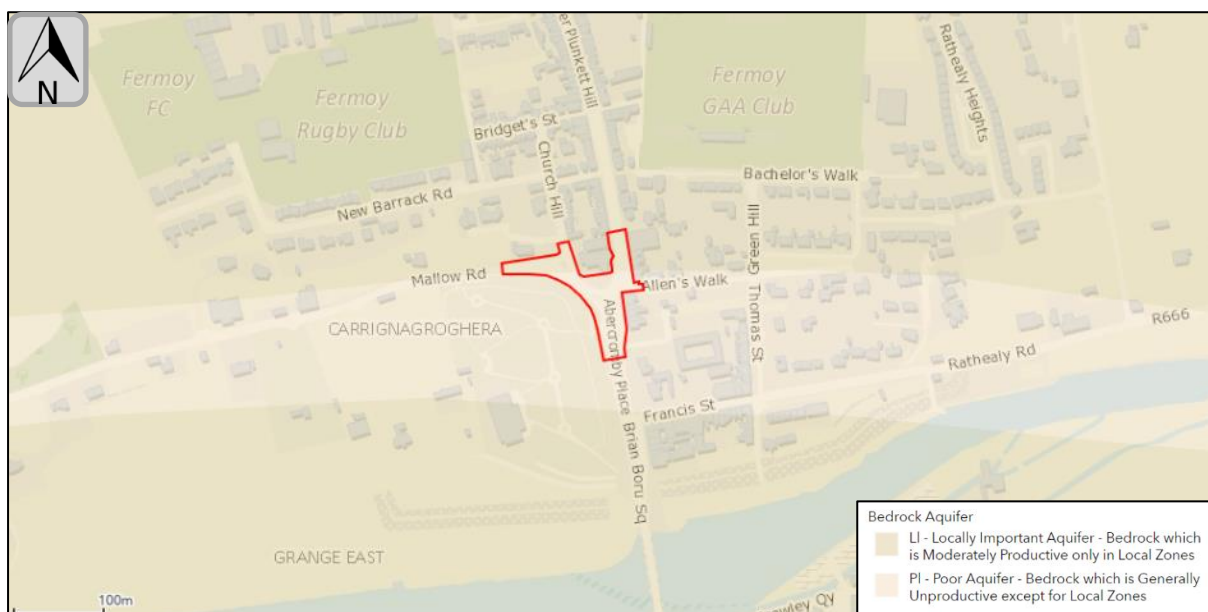
The completed development would be primarily composed of impermeable made ground. Small areas of exposed soils would be included in the completed development for provision of SUDS elements and planting. It is not considered that these exposed areas would pose a risk to soils or bedrock resources.

Therefore, it is considered that there is no significant risk to soils and bedrock as a result of the proposed project and further assessment in an EIAR would not be required.

### 5.2.2 Groundwater Environment

The northern section of the site is situated in a Locally Important Aquifer (Lm) – *Bedrock which is Generally Moderately Productive* and the southern section is located in a Poor Aquifer (Pl), as per **Figure 5.4**.

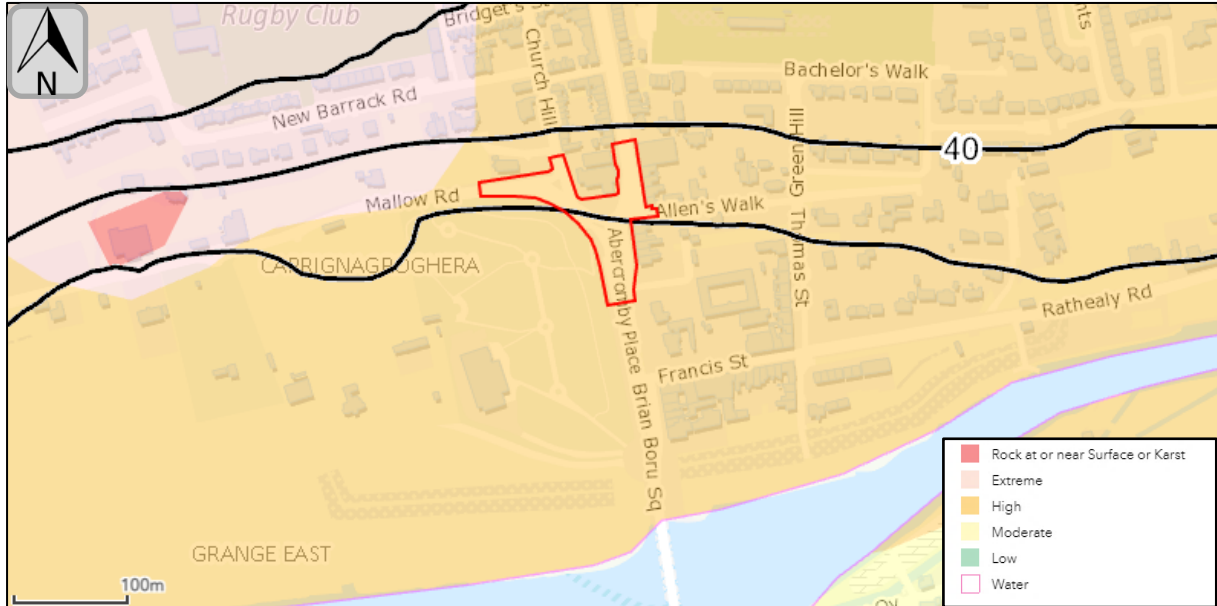
Small quantities of water may be used during the construction phase of the development. Where required, this would be supplied by the mains water supply. There would be no water usage during the operational phase of the completed development.



**Figure 5.4:** Bedrock Aquifer & Gravel Aquifer (GIS & EPA Maps)

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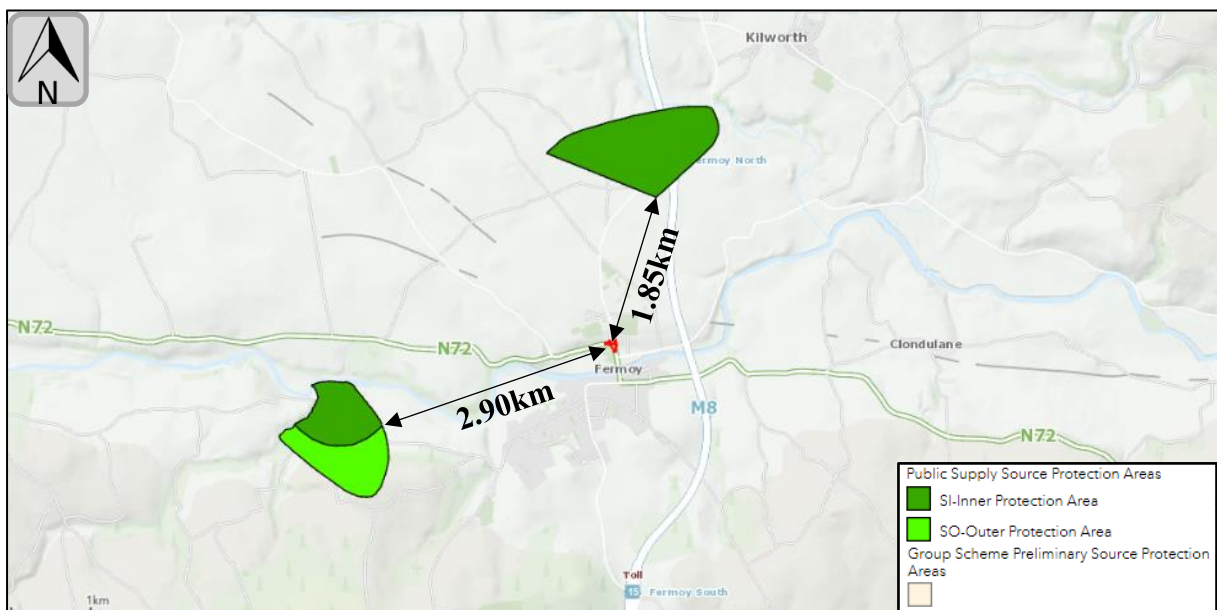
Groundwater vulnerability is classified as follows: Rock near surface or karst (X) Extreme (E) High (H) Moderate (M) Low (L). The site is located on an area which has a vulnerability classification of High (H), as per **Figure 5.5**. The topography of the site falls from a height of c.40m AOD north to c.20m south along the River Blackwater. Groundwater flow would be expected to generally flow south and contribute to the River Blackwater.



**Figure 5.5: Groundwater Vulnerability (EPA Maps)**

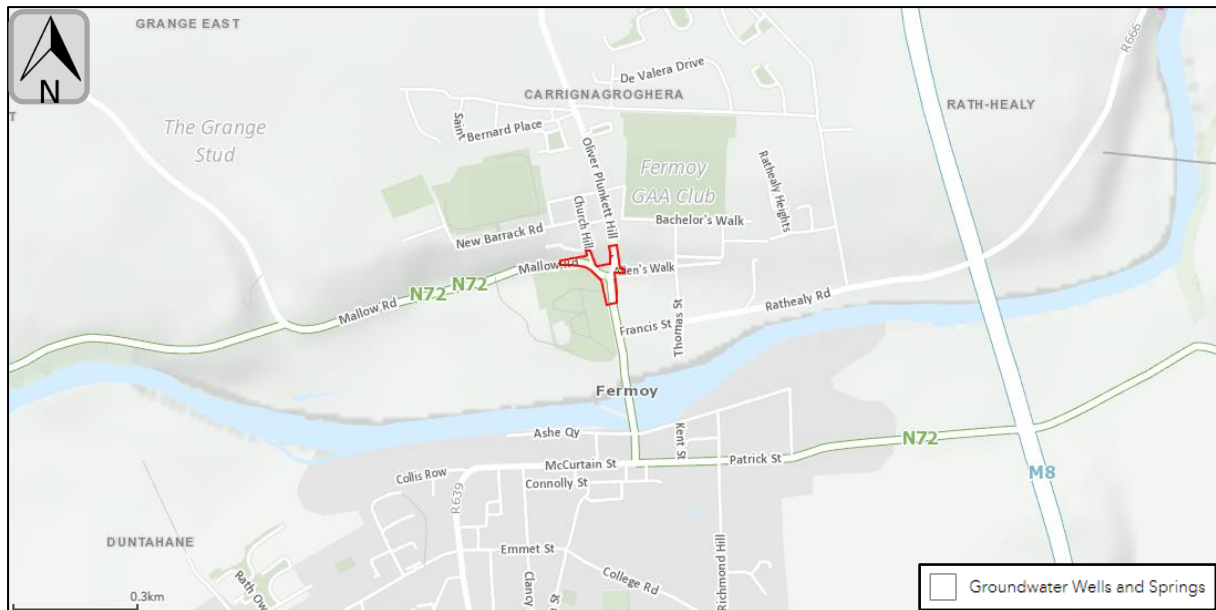
The development site is situated on the Mitchelstown (IE\_SW\_G\_082) groundwater body, which is described a *karstified limestone bedrock aquifer*.

This GWB is designated to have good overall Ground Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021 water quality status of “Good”, while the Ground Waterbodies Risk status is categorised as “At Risk”.



**Figure 5.6: Groundwater Source Protection Areas (GSI Maps)**

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**Figure 5.7: Groundwater Wells, Springs and Karst Data (GSI Maps)**

The Kilworth PWS (0500PUB1206) is located c.1.85km north and the Fermoy-Coolroe PWS (0500PUB1222) is located c. 2.9km south-west of the site boundary, as per **Figure 5.6**. No recorded groundwater wells, springs and karst features are recorded for the site, as per **Figure 5.7**. There is no direct hydraulic connectivity to groundwater source protection zones or recorded wells from the site.

There would be no significant volumes of fuels, oils or other chemicals in use or stored on-site during the construction phase. Exposure of the underlying groundwater would be short term. It is not anticipated that there would be a significant risk to groundwater during this phase.

The completed development would be primarily composed of impermeable made ground. Stormwater would be directed to the installed surface-water network, which would be connected to the existing municipal storm drain network. Small areas of exposed soils would be included in the completed development for provision of SUDS elements and planting. It is not considered that these exposed areas would pose a risk to groundwater resources.

It is not considered that the proposed development would require further assessment within an EIAR in terms of groundwater resource vulnerability.

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**5.2.3 Surface Water Environment**

The proposed development is located within Blackwater (Munster) catchment (ID: 18) and within the Blackwater[Munster]\_SC\_120 sub-catchment (ID: 18\_28). The closest mapped watercourse to the proposed development site is the River Blackwater (EPA Code: 18B02 – Order 5) located approximately 200m south of the proposed development, as per **Figure 5.8**.

The project area is serviced by the municipal stormwater network, discharging to the River Blackwater.



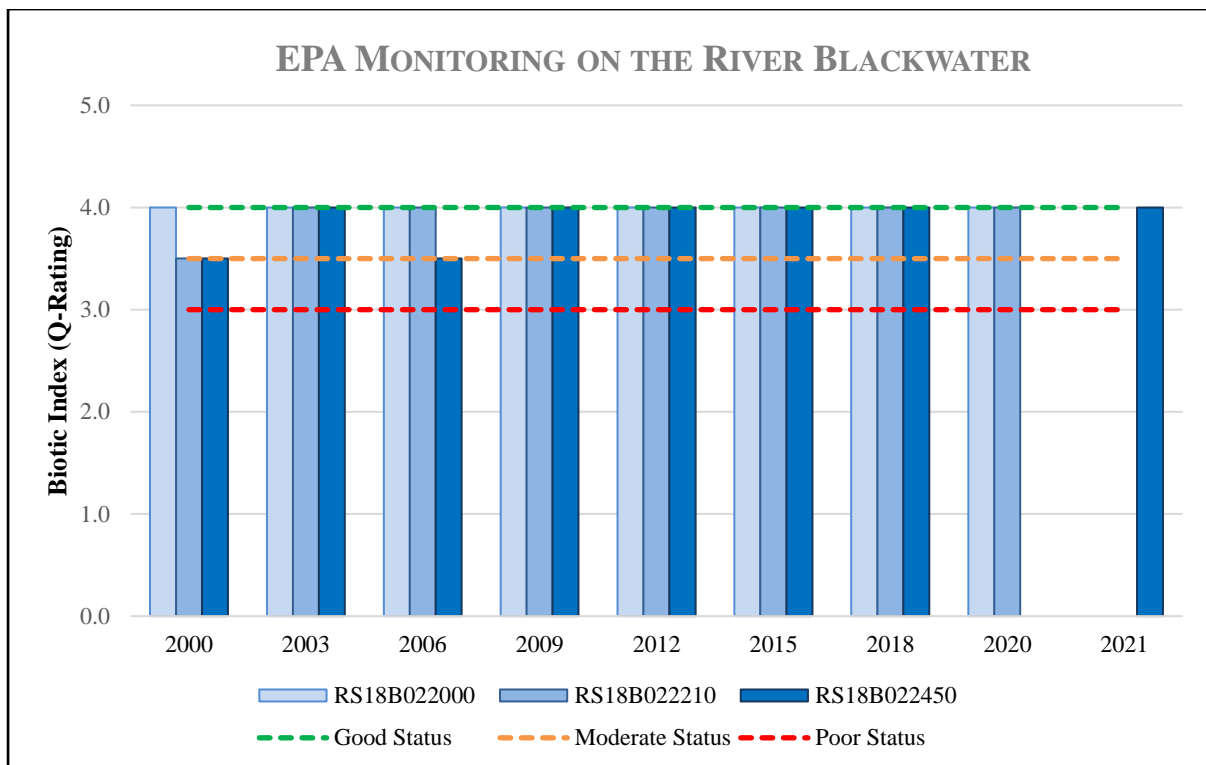
**Figure 5.8: Watercourses near the Proposed Development (EPA Maps)**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) undertakes regular surface water monitoring along the River Blackwater. The results for the nearest monitoring stations (as per **Table 5.1**) with available monitoring results for the period 1999 – 2020 are summarised in **Figure 5.9** below for indicative purposes.

**Table 5.1: Active Monitoring Stations of the River Barnakyle**

Station No.	Station Location	Easting	Northing	Approx. Location Relative to Proposed Site
RS18B022000	Ballyhooley Br	172921	098738	c.9.50 km Upstream
RS18B022210	Fermoy Br (RHS)	181275	098571	c.0.20 km South
RS18B022450	W of Kilmurry Ho	187524	099509	c.8.00 km Downstream

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**Figure 5.9:** EPA Ecological Monitoring of the River Blackwater 2000 – 2021

As can be seen in **Figure 5.9** above, the River Barnakyle is mainly achieving a water quality status of between Q3-4 (Moderate) and Q4 (Good) at the monitoring locations.

EPA comments on the most recent monitoring results for the Barnakyle Stream are as follows;

*‘The entire length of the Munster Blackwater was assessed in August 2018 and found to be in satisfactory condition with most sites at Good Ecological quality, apart from the uppermost station at Doctor’s Hill Bridge (0050) which was at moderate ecological quality. In August 2019, three formerly high quality sites along a stretch between Millstreet and Mallow were resampled and found to have returned to High quality. In July 2020, nine sites on the upper reaches of the river were sampled, from Doctor’s Hill bridge (0050) to the bridge in Fermoy (2210). All sites assessed were found to be at Good ecological quality, with the uppermost site improving from Moderate quality, and the remaining sites all maintaining Good quality.*

*In 2021 seven sites between Shamrock bridge and the Railway bridge in Mallow were sampled. Three (0600, 0750 & 1200) were found to have declined from High ecological status to Good ecological status. Station 1510 has declined from Good ecological status to Moderate. Stations 0900, 1300 and 1500 remain satisfactory with Good ecological quality and Station 1400 remains at High ecological status.*

*In 2021, five of the lower sites between Killavullen village to below Lismore village were also assessed with all five found to be maintaining Good ecological quality. A combination of the previous three years sampling finds all sites on the Munster Blackwater to be satisfactory except for Station 1510 at the Railway bridge RHS.’*

Construction practice would follow Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) publications. TII (June 2015) Road Drainage and the Water Environment recommends following practice



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outlined within NRA (2008) *Guidelines for the Crossing of Watercourses during Construction of National Road Schemes* and CIRIA 648 *Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects*.

There would be no significant volumes of fuels, oils or other chemicals stored on-site during the construction phase of the development. The construction working area active at any one time would be limited as the project progresses in phases, limiting the potential for the generation of suspended solids or the entrainment of concrete into surface-water. Best practice construction measures such as silt and sediment controls will be installed prior to the commencement of any construction works. There would not be anticipated to be a significant risk to water quality during such works within the site boundary.

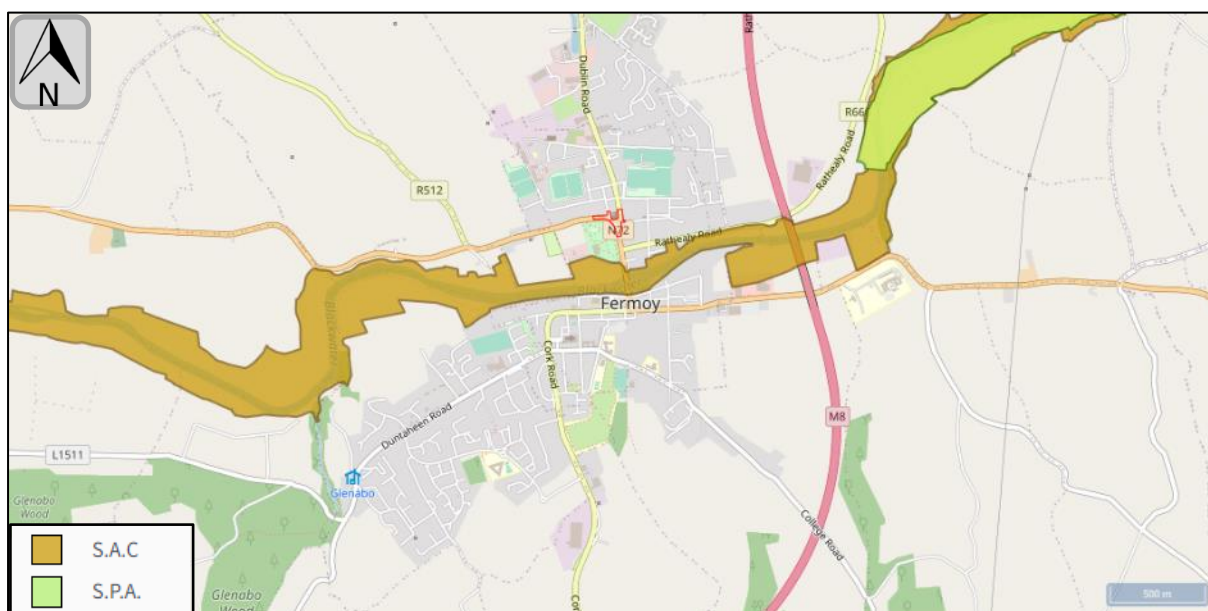
The scheme will not involve any substantial changes to the roadside drainage network, reconnecting to the existing network, so there will be no change from the baseline scenario during the operational phase of the project.

It is considered that there is no significant risk to surface water environment as a result of the proposed project and further assessment in an EIAR would not be required.

### 5.2.4 Bio-Diversity and Designated Sites

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been completed by Moore Group Environmental Service (Report Ref: 23008 N72 Christchurch Jn AAS1 Rev0), and is included with the planning submission. The report identifies two Natura 2000 sites within the potential zone of influence of the project site, as shown in **Figure 5.10** below.

The Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC is located approximately 0.12km south while the Blackwater Callows SPA is situated approximately 1.25km to the east of the site boundary.



**Figure 5.10:** Special Area of Conservations and Special Protected Area

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**Table 5.2:** Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Area within 15km

Site Name	Designation	Site Code	Distance from Proposed Site
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford)	SAC	002170	c.0.13 km North
Blackwater Callows	SPA	004094	c.1.25 km North

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report concludes the following:

*“There is no connectivity to any European sites within or outside the potential Zone of Influence.*

*There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:*

- *The lack of direct connectivity between the Proposed Development and any hydrological pathways;*
- *there are no watercourses within the Proposed Development boundary and there is no connectivity*
- *between the Proposed Development site and any watercourses that lead to the River Blackwater;*
- *The Proposed Development is to be connected to the existing public sewer network for the treatment of wastewater.*
- *There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.*

*It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:*

- 1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation*
- 2. management of the European sites considered in this assessment.*
- 3. The Proposed Development is not likely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.*
- 4. The Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have significant effects on a European site.*
- 5. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.*

*It can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.*

*An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.”*

The proposed development area is comprised entirely of made ground, *buildings and artificial surfaces* (BL3) habitat, as per Fossitt (2000) *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* classification. Therefore the site has no significant biodiversity value for habitats or species.

It is not considered that the proposed development would require further assessment within an EIAR in terms of bio-diversity and designated sites.

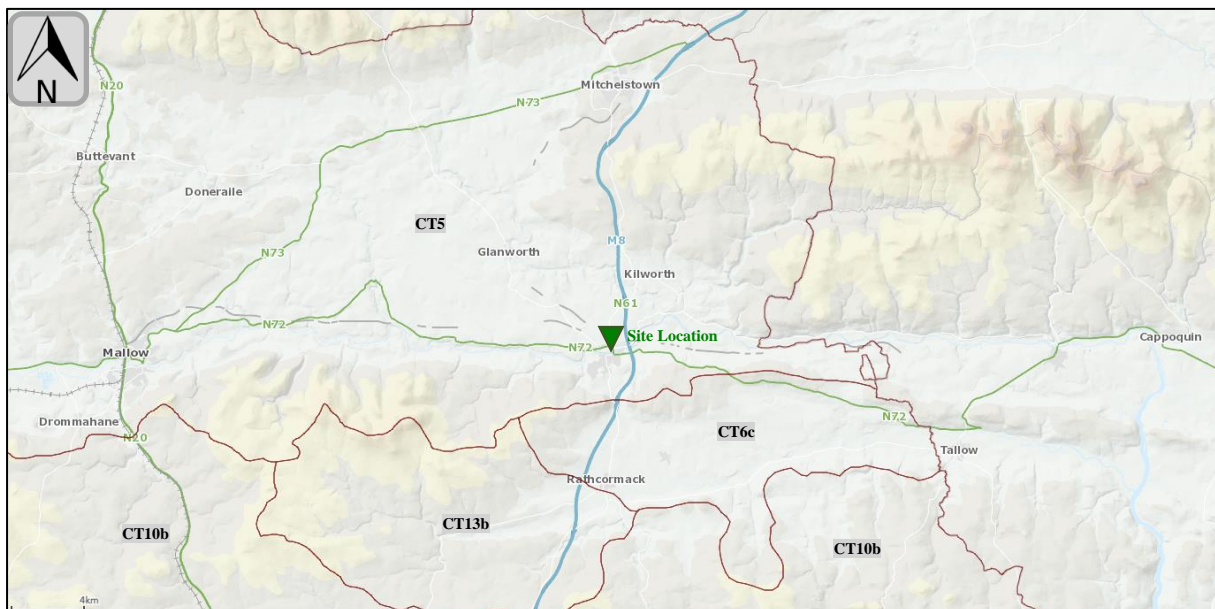


### 5.2.5 Landscapes & Visual Impact

The importance of landscape and visual amenity in the role of planning is recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The Act requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and prospects. It requires objectives for Landscape Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Amenity and also for the assessment of landscape character. This approach towards landscape issues (based on the Draft Landscape Character Assessment stresses the distinctiveness of differing kinds of landscape and how differing kinds of development can best be integrated within them.

A landscape character assessment was undertaken as part of the Cork County Draft Landscape Strategy (2007) which has been incorporated within the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028.

The proposed development site is located in the Landscape Character Type (LCT) 5 – Fertile Plain with Moorland Ridge, as shown in **Figure 5.11**.



**Figure 5.11:** Location of Site within Landscape Character Type

The landscape description of LCT5 from the Cork County Draft Landscape Strategy, 2007, includes the following:

*“This landscape is generally referred to as the “Golden Vale” and occupies a substantial proportion of northeast Cork. This is a low lying landscape, which comprises an extensive area of predominantly flat or gently undulating topography along the River Blackwater, and which is contained in its periphery by low ridges. The latter include the southern slopes of the Ballyhoura and Galtee Mountains to the north, the northern slopes of the Nagles to the south and the western ridges of the Knockmealdown Mountains. The bedrock of the plain comprises mostly of limestone while sandstone typically forms the underlying geology of the peripheral ridges. Lower ground comprises brown earths and the occasional gley while brown podzols are located at slightly higher levels.*”

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*These physical conditions create a fertile and verdant landscape well suited to intensive farming. It is this activity and the planar landform, which give the landscape its characteristic rectilinear mosaic of large sized fields. This mosaic is articulated by the field boundaries comprising mostly mature broadleaf hedgerows but also scrub species such as gorse. Articulation also results from the variation in colour arising from alternative use, whether dairying or arable. Occasional small blocks of coniferous plantations introduce a patchy landcover pattern to hills and ridge tops.*

*The landscape is also characterised by many old demesnes comprising, for example, high stone walls, broadleaf avenues and open parkland. Several large settlements are found within the area, including Mallow, Charleville, Mitchelstown and Fermoy, all of which developed on the basis of the high agricultural productivity of the surrounding countryside.”*

Landscape Character Type 5 – Fertile Plain with Moorland Ridge, is classed as being of “Very High” Landscape Value and of “County” Landscape Importance. This area is further classed as being of a “Very High” Landscape Sensitivity, i.e. “*Extra vulnerable landscapes which are likely to be fragile and susceptible to change.*”

The following are listed as key characteristics of the “Build Environment” within this LCT:

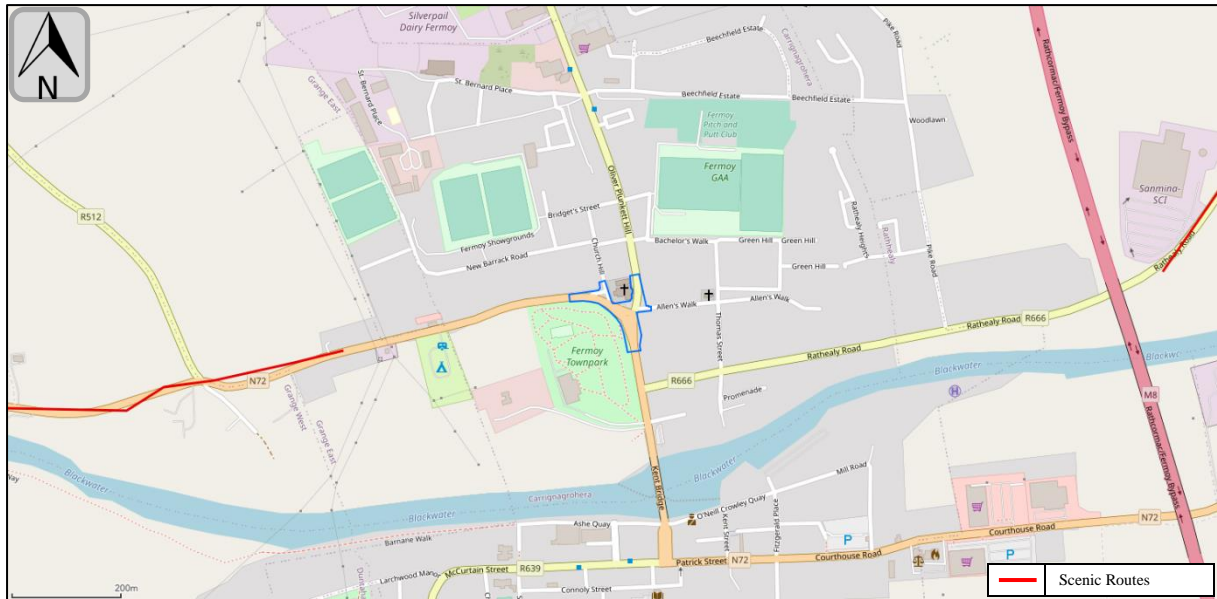
- *High quality vernacular built environment and this is portrayed by the high concentration of Protected Structures that are evident throughout the landscape.*
- *Strong vernacular quality in terms of range and quality of estate homes and farmsteads.*
- *Numerous attractive villages and towns in terms of setting and built environment e.g. Castletownroche and Mitchelstown.*
- *The town centres in many of the main towns have maintained their architectural heritage.*

The following general recommendations from the Landscape Strategy are relevant to the project:

- *Continue to promote and protect Mallow Racecourse and the River Blackwater as the primary visitor attractions in this Landscape Type.*
- *Have regard to the rich heritage in this area and the concentration of buildings that are protected under the list of protected structures*
- *Preserve the Blackwater Valley as a unique landscape setting for the main settlements of Mallow and Fermoy and improve public access by enhancing it as a key recreation and amenity source. Control development that will adversely affect distinctive linear sections of the Blackwater River Valley, especially its open flood plains, when viewed from relevant scenic routes and settlements*
- *Reflect existing vegetation species and patterns in new planting schemes in this LCT.*
- *Minimise disturbance of hedgerows in rural areas. Encourage appropriate landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by using predominately indigenous/local species and groupings.*
- *Ensure that the approach roads to the towns and villages in this LCT are protected from inappropriate development which would detract from the setting of these settlements.*

The project site is not located in the vicinity of a protected view. Scenic view Reference S9 (Castlehyde to Fermoy Bridge) begins approximately 400m west along the N72 from the project site.

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**Figure 5.12:** 2022 CDP designated Scenic Routes

During construction there will be some temporary disruption to the existing landscape during excavation or digging. However, as these works will be localised and of short duration, significant impacts to the existing landscape are not anticipated.

The proposed development comprises of alterations to the existing pavements and roads surrounding Christchurch Junction. As such, the development would be anticipated to have a similar visual character as the existing site condition and the character of surrounding area.

It is noted that, as part of the development shown in **Figure 1.3**, significant areas of soft landscaping are planned to replace existing hard surfaces. The planting of native species would align with planning policy and improve the biodiversity value of the project site.

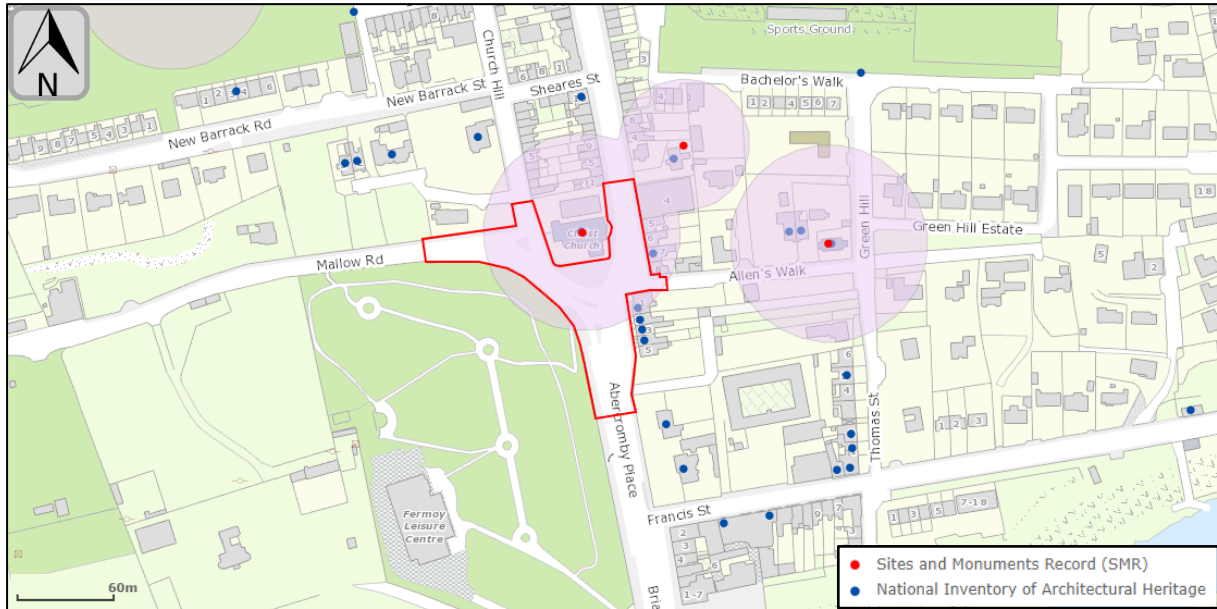
Overall, the proposed development would be anticipated to improve the visual amenity of the project site and align with the landscape character of Fermoy town centre.

It is considered that additional investigation within an EIAR for visual and landscape impacts from the development would not be required.

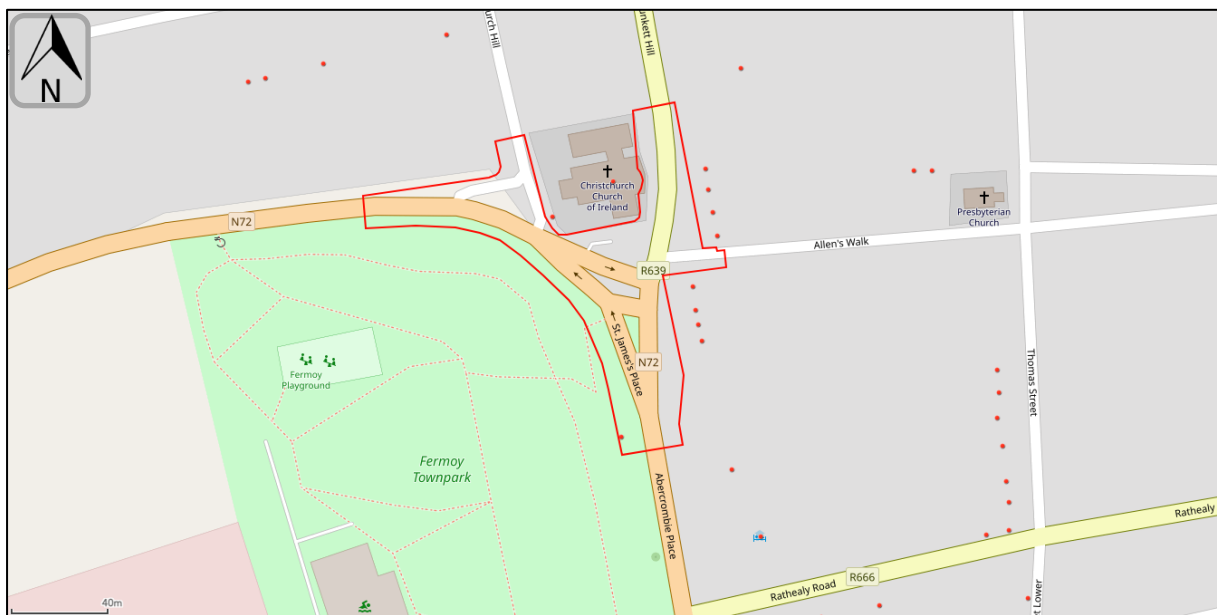
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5.2.6 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage

There are several national monument sites and architecturally protected buildings located within the area of the proposal site (see **Figure 5.13** & **Figure 5.14**).



**Figure 5.13:** National Monument and Architectural Heritage Sites



**Figure 5.14:** CDP 2022 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

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The following tables summarise the recorded archaeological sites and protected buildings within the area of the site as per the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage database and the 2022 Cork County Development Plan:

**Table 5.3:** Archaeological Heritage Sites

RMP No.	Description	Townland	Distance
CO035-021	Church	Carrignagroghera	300m NE

**Table 5.4:** Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

RPS ID	NIAH Reg	Name	Original Use	Rating	Proximity
2262	20821053	Fermoy House Walls & Gates	Boundary Walls & Gates	Regional	Adj, western boundary
2253	20821044	Tudor Revival-Style House. Ambercromby Place	House	Regional	c. 10m eastern boundary
2241		1 St James's Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2242		2 St James's Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2243		3 St James's Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2244		4 St James's Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2233		1 Church Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2234		2 Church Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2235	20821026	3 Church Place	House	Regional	Adj, eastern boundary
2236		4 Church Place	House		Adj, eastern boundary
2231	20821022	Christ Church (Fermoy)	Church	Regional	Adj, northern boundary
2246		Limestone Kerbing. Church Hill.			Adj, northern boundary



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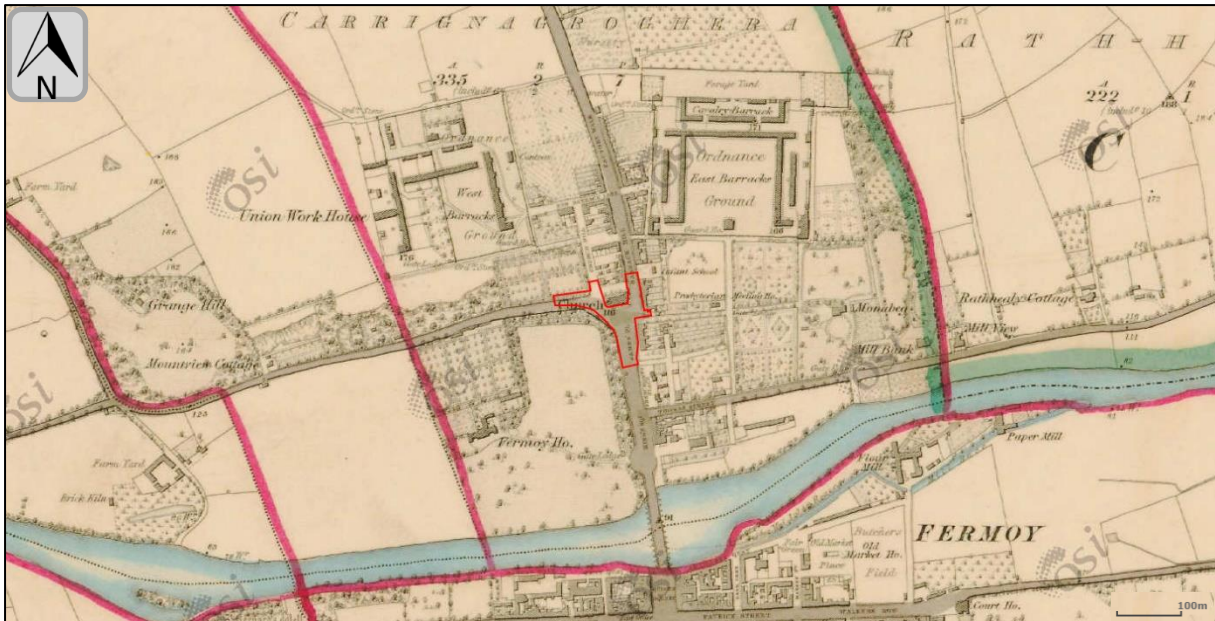


Figure 5.15: 6 Inch Colour (1829-41)

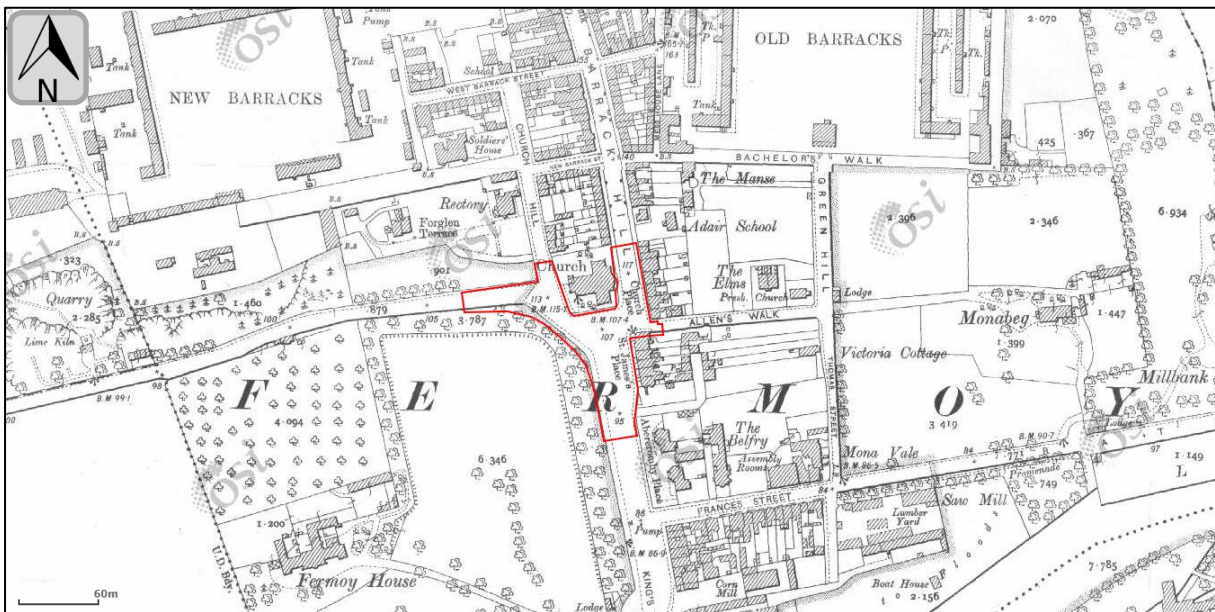


Figure 5.16: 25 Inch B&W (1897-1913)

The historical maps provided in **Figure 5.15** & **Figure 5.16**, ranging from 1829 - 1913 indicate that the immediate area of the project site has retained similar buildings and street layout.

The project area would be considered an area of significant archaeological potential. The majority of the development site is located within the “zone of notification” of Monument No CO035-021, Christ Church, and would require notification to the minister under section 12 (3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. The long term habitation of the area would also indicate an increased likelihood of archaeological finds.



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There is a high density of protected structures within the vicinity of the site, however, these would be generally outside of works areas. The proposed development would also have potential to impact upon the protected structure RPS No 2246, Limestone Kerbing, Church Hill. However, it is likely that mitigation against potential impacts would be feasible through appropriate project design.

There would be a potential to impact upon unrecorded or unknown sub-surface archaeological features during excavation.

It is recommended that a detailed Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment be carried out for the proposed project. It is considered that the potential impacts and mitigation of the proposed project are discrete and would be appropriately addressed within a specialised report completed by a qualified expert. Additional investigation within an EIAR for archaeological and cultural heritage impacts from the development would not be required.

## **6.0 PART III – CHARACTERISATION OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

### **6.1.1 Magnitude and Spatial Extent of the Impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)**

The project area is approximately 6,330 m<sup>2</sup> or 0.63ha. The length of roads within the project area is approximately 385m. This would be considered a small scale project.

The proposed development site is located within Fermoy Town Centre. Environmental effects from the development would generally be localised to the area of activities within the urban area. While potentially impacted population numbers would be moderate, the potential for significant impacts during the construction phase would be unlikely. The operational phase of the development would be similar to the pre-existing condition in terms of environmental impacts from traffic, which would extend to regional effects. There would be local benefits to traffic and pedestrian safety, biodiversity and visual amenity.

### **6.1.2 Nature of the Impact**

During the construction phase, potential environmental impacts would be common for construction projects and include:

- Potential noise impacts to sensitive receptors,
- Potential nuisance airborne dust,
- Potential contamination of surface waters with soil, concrete etc.

While such environmental risk can occur from all construction activities, it is considered that these risks would be appropriately controlled by standard construction practices. The phased construction allowing smaller active working areas would also reduce the potential for significant impacts.

The project area would be considered an area of significant archaeological potential. There would be a potential to impact upon unrecorded or unknown sub-surface archaeological features during excavation. The proposed development would also have potential to impact upon the protected structure RPS No 2246, Limestone Kerbing, Church Hill.

Potential environmental impacts as a result of the operational phase would be typical of road projects and include:

- Nuisances (noise),
- Air Quality,
- Water management and flood risk,

While such environmental impacts occur from all such developments, there would be no significant alteration from the pre-existing condition of the site.

### **6.1.3 Transboundary Nature of the Impact**

The proposed development is located a significant distance from international boundaries, and it is unlikely that emissions would have any significant transboundary impacts.

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**6.1.4 Intensity and Complexity of the Impact**

The site as a whole would be considered small in terms of area. Therefore, the potential intensity of impacts would be minor.

Potential impacts from the development would not be complex and would be amenable to control and mitigation. Standard design principals with regards to road construction are proposed and appropriate environmental controls during construction and operation would be in place.

Due to the nature of the development (i.e. pavement and road), it is not anticipated that activities related to this site during the operational phase, would have significant potential to cause complex interactions with the environment.

**6.1.5 Probability of the Impact**

During the construction phase, impacts in relation to noise, airborne dust and water quality are considered to be unlikely. The implementation of standard construction control practices, as detailed within this report, would ensure effective construction management.

Potential impacts to archaeological heritage and protected structures during construction would be considered likely in the absence of detailed further assessment.

Operational phase impacts would be of a similar scale and extent as occurs from the existing use of the pavement and roads.

**6.1.6 Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact**

Potential impacts during the construction of the development are likely to be temporary. The implementation of standard construction control practices, as detailed within this report, would ensure effective construction management.

Potential impacts to archaeological heritage and protected structures are likely to be preventable during the detailed design and construction planning stages.

Impacts during the operational phase of the development would be a continuation of the existing environment, as influenced by current levels of pedestrians and traffic. As such, impacts would be long term and largely unaltered by the proposed development.

The project would result in long term local benefits to traffic and pedestrian safety, biodiversity and visual amenity.

### **6.1.7 Cumulation of the Impact with the Impact of other Existing and / or Approved Projects**

There are no other known planned road improvement projects within the vicinity of the project.

As detailed in **section 4.2.2**, there are several approved planning developments in the area which would have the potential to commence during the construction phase of the project.

While it is not known at this time if the above approved developments will commence construction during the project construction phase, there is a potential for in combination construction effects. However, the construction phase of each project would be temporary and the adoption of standard construction management practices would prevent significant environmental impacts or nuisance.

### **6.1.8 Possibility of Effectively Reducing the Impact**

There is a high likelihood of reducing potential impacts from construction activities through the implementation of standard construction practices for the prevention of nuisances and the protection of surface waters.

Potential impacts to archaeological heritage and protected structures are likely to be preventable during the detailed design and construction planning stages.

Potential impacts which may occur as part of the operational phase of the development are not anticipated to require ongoing mitigation, beyond proposed built infrastructural controls.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT**  
**N72 CHRISTCHURCH JUNCTION, FERMOY, CO. CORK**

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

The proposed development is well situated and appropriate to the area.

An EIA Screening exercise was carried out to assess the proposed project in terms of environmental risks and location sensitivity. This exercise has been informed by a site visit and desk studies based on the best available information.

The completed development would result in the improvement of the existing road junctions traffic and pedestrian safety, biodiversity and visual amenity.

The development would not fall under any of the classes of development listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations and a mandatory EIA is not applicable. The project would also not fall under the classes of development outlined in S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, or Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Road development prescribed for the purposes of S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993).

This sub-threshold EIA screening assessment has been carried out in accordance with the criteria listed in Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A of the Planning Regulations, in consideration of the sensitivities of the area.

The project area would be considered an area of significant archaeological potential. There would be a potential to impact upon unrecorded or unknown sub-surface archaeological features during excavation. The proposed development would also have potential to impact upon the protected structure RPS No 2246, Limestone Kerbing, Church Hill.

It has been recommended that a detailed Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment be carried out for the proposed project. It is considered that potential risks are discrete and may be assessed individually should further information be required to clarify potential environmental impacts.

The potential for the proposed development to cause significant adverse environmental impacts by itself, or in combination with other developments, during the construction and operational phases of the project are anticipated to be minimal.

The proposed design of the development is considered to be in line with applicable standards and would pose no significant risk to the environment. It is considered that the development, as proposed, would not significantly impact upon the sensitivities of the existing environment.

Therefore, it is considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report would not be required to be completed for this project.

## **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Determination**





# Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

---

## Cork County Council

28/11/23

**RE: EIA Pre-Screening Assessment - Preliminary design of N72 Christchurch Junction of the N72 with R639 at Oliver Plunkett Hill, Fermoy**

To whom it concerns,

The site area is 0.63hectares, and 385metres of roadway and is adjacent to the **Fermoy Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)** to the north and east, which includes circa 18no. **Protected Structures, (RPS)** which address the road frontage of the project, including Limestone Kerbing, Church Hill, RPS ref. no. 2246

Having regard to the description (and nature, size and location) of the proposed development, I am satisfied that the proposed development does not fall within a class set out in Annex I or Annex II of the Directive; or (Schedule 5 Parts 1 and 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended) including class 10(b)(iv); nor fall under the classes of development outlined in S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, or Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Road development prescribed for the purposes of S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993),

and as such the proposed development is not subject to the EIA directive, and no screening is required.

### **Determination**

The requirement for EIA can be excluded at this pre-screening stage as the proposed development does not fall within Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations.

Thomas Watt  
Senior Planner

## **7.6. APPENDIX F - Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Report**

# N72 Christ Church Junction, Fermoy Road Safety Improvement Scheme

Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment report

**Rev.1 (update to design drawing)**

Prepared by:  
Ken Hanley, TII Project Archaeologist.  
11/5/2023

For:  
Cork County Council (National Roads Office)

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# 1. Introduction

This report provides a cultural heritage impact assessment of the preliminary designs for the proposed N72 Christ Church Junction (Fermoy Town, north County Cork) Road Safety Improvement Scheme. The works relate to the junction between the N72 national secondary road (Mallow Road/St James Place/Abercromby Place) and the R639 regional road (Oliver Plunkett Hill/Allen’s Walk), south of Christ Church in Fermoy. The works are confined to the townland of Carrignagroghera, north of the River Blackwater, ITM Grid Reference 581088E/598924N. (Figures 1 and 6). The proposed scheme aims to improve safety at the junction by reducing all approaches to single lane approaches and reducing the carriageway widths and pedestrian crossing distances.

# 2. Proposed development

## 3.1 Nature of proposed works

Cork County Council requires to provide road safety improvements at N72 Christ Church Junction, Fermoy Cork ((Figures 1 and 6). There is no requirement for land acquisition. The vertical profiles of the existing N72 and R639 are generally being retained, the key changes relating merely to:

- The reduction in carriageway widths
- Corresponding revision of kerb lines.
- Relocation of existing gullies with new connections to the existing surface water drainage system. No new carriageway drainage systems are proposed.
- Incorporation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities and a raised table across the junction
- Resurfacing the vehicular carriageway

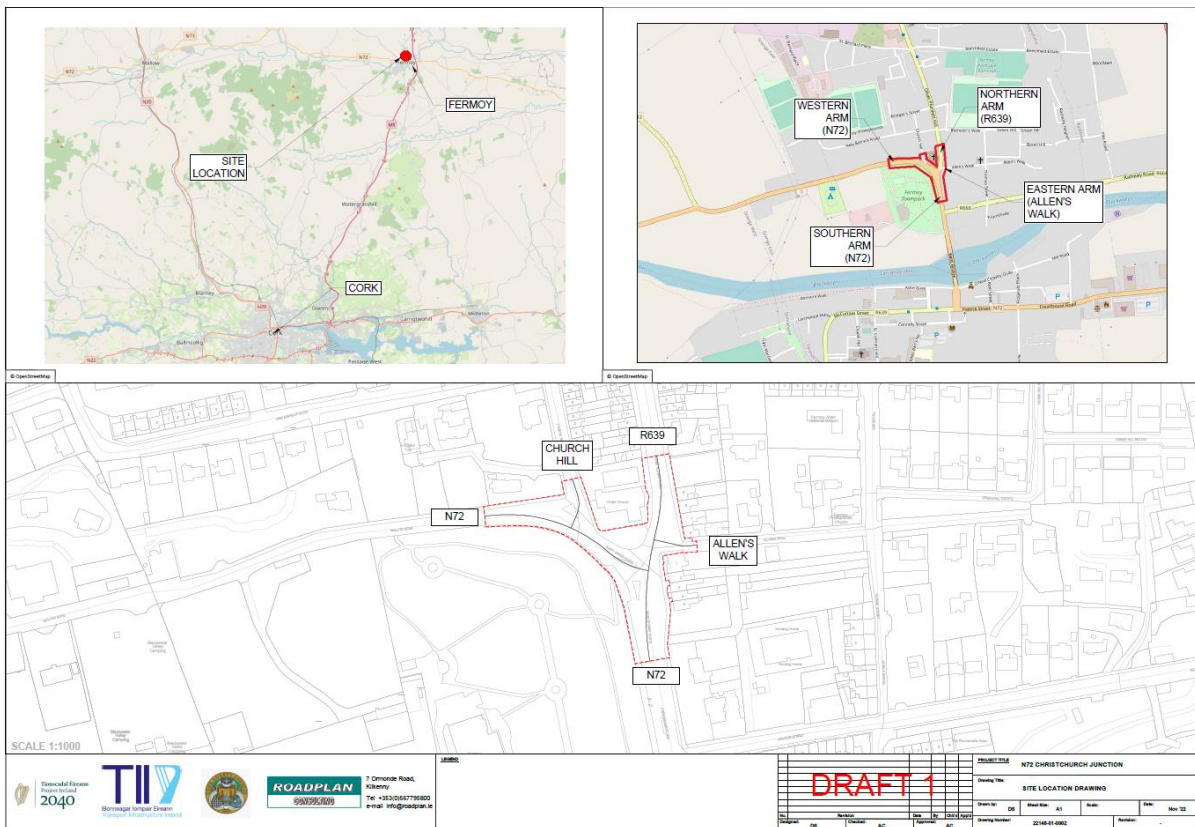


Figure 1—Composite plan showing location of proposed N72 Christ Church Junction works.

### 3. Cultural heritage within the environs

#### 3.1 Fermoy area and town

The soils around Fermoy are dominated by Acid Brown Earths/Brown Podzolics (Teagasc 1969). These deep, well-drained, fertile soil types are known to have developed from extensive oak forests that developed across the region following the retreat of last ice sheets. Such resource-rich environments soon attracted human settlement along the alluvium-rich river valleys, such as the River Blackwater. All evidence suggests that the region was settled since the early prehistoric period.

The earliest recorded archaeological site from the immediate environs of the proposed works area relates to ringfort enclosure (SMR CO035-074 in the townland of Duntahane, on the south side of the River Blackwater).

The foundation of Fermoy town derives from the Cistercian monastery (SMR CO035-024), that is believed to have been located in the general area between what is now Pearse Square and Abbey Street, south of the Blackwater.



Figure 2—Extract from Historic Environment Viewer ([www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) showing sites on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR, red dots) and on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH, blue dots) in the environs of N73 Christ Church Junction



While a wooden bridge was built over the River Blackwater in 1626—washed away in 1628, replaced by substantial 13-arch bridge in the 1687, then widened by Anderson in 1799, then replaced by the present bridge in 1865 (Power et al. 2000, 634-5)—it is clear from the cartographic and historical evidence that Fermoy town developed to the south of the river initially and only developed north of the river, to any meaningful degree, in the late 18th/early 19th century, following the Scottish immigrant John Anderson’s purchase of land and his construction of barracks for the military, an event that ignited the subsequent economic prosperity of Fermoy (Dickson 2005, 428).

The branching of the road in the area that now comprising the N72 Christ Church Junction is potentially discernible in Smith’s map of 1750 (Figure 11). If correlated, it would suggest that the junction has been in use ever since. Anderson’s development of a coach route from Cork, via Fermoy, to Dublin that got travellers from Cork to Dublin within 24 hours was regarded as one of his great achievements (Dickson 2005, 431).



Figure 3—Extract from Historic Environment Viewer ([www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) showing SMR and NIAH sites in the environs of N73 Christ Church Junction

## 4.2 Designated sites–Archaeological

The proposed works will intersect with the Zone of Notification for two recorded monuments, as follows (Figure 3):

- Christ Church (SMR CO035-021), built in 1802 on a new site . The SMR notes record the following:

CO035-021----

*Scope note*

Class: Church

Townland: CARRIGNAGROGHERA

Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP: Yes

Description: In Fermoy, in commanding position on N side of Blackwater River. C of I parish church of Fermoy, known as Christ Church. Built in 1802 on new site to the design of A. Hargrave, and consecrated in 1809 (Brunnicardi 1984, 4-6). Built of random-rubble dark stone with lightly coloured stone detail. Wide rectangular nave (long axis E-W) with tower at W end and shallow apse at E end roofed with hipped continuation of main roof. Triple-light round headed E-window of limestone. Large round headed window in side walls of nave have limestone surrounds; at W end of side walls is blind rectangular window-like niche with oval niche overhead, both outlined in light stone; similar features form sides of apse. Tall 2-storey tower at W end topped by spire; original spire removed in 1820s and replace sometime later with the present one. Tall round-headed door in S wall of tower is main entrance. Access to interior not gained. Mortar, or water stoup (H 10in; diam. 11in; D 6in) discovered in nearby garden in early 20th century, now in church; this has four carved faces, one damaged, set between vertical rolls (see Zajac et al. 1995, 38-9, plate 4); described by Day as a 13th/14th century mortar (Abbot 1928, 48); according to local tradition, came from nearby Cistercian abbey (14384). The above description is derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume 4: North Cork' (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2000). In certain instances the entries have been revised and updated in the light of recent research. Date of upload/revision: 14 January 2009

The proposed works will impact on the streetscape setting only of this structure.

- Fermoy 'Infant School', c. 1836

CO035-102----

*Scope note*

Class: School

Townland: CARRIGNAGROGHERA

Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP: Yes

Description: Single-storey school in Fermoy; indicated on 1842 OS 6-inch map as rectangular structure, named 'Infant School'. Entrance front (W) of 4 bays, off-centre porch entrance with limestone plaque reads 'A.D. 1836'; large rectangular window opens with modern frames. Modern addition to

rear. The above description is derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume 4: North Cork' (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2000). In certain instances the entries have been revised and updated in the light of recent research. Date of upload/revision: 14 January 2009

The proposed works will have nil impact on this structure.

### 4.3 Designated sites—Built Heritage

#### (a) Architectural Conservation Areas

In terms of built heritage, the proposed works will not directly intersect with any Architectural Conservation Areas associated with the Fermoy Conservation Area but will serve to improve the streetscape are of St. James Place (Figures 4 and 6).



Figure 4—Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022 mapping of Fermoy Conservation Area (in blue). None are intersected directly by the proposed works. <https://corkcoco.maps.arcgis.com/>

#### (b) Record of Projected Structures

The proposed works (Figure 6) will impact directly on the following structure listed on the Record of Protected Structures (Figure 5):

- RPS ID 2,246: Structure—Limestone Kerbing. Church Hill.

With respect to RPS ID 2,246 (Limestone Kerbing at Church Hill/St. James Place), a proposed new footpath/public realm intersects with the line of the protected limestone kerbing.

The proposed works will also intersect with the streetscape of the following structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures:

- RPS ID 2231: Structure—Christ Church - Church of Ireland. Church Place.
- RPS ID 2233: Structure—Terraced House. 1 Church Place.
- RPS ID 2234: Structure—Terraced House. 2 Church Place.
- RPS ID 2235: Structure—Virginia House. 7 Church Place.
- RPS ID 2236: Structure—Terraced House. 4 Church Place.
- RPS ID 2241: Structure—1 St James's Place.
- RPS ID 2242: Structure—2 St James's Place.
- RPS ID 2243: Structure—3 St James's Place.
- RPS ID 2244: Structure—4 St James's Place.
- RPS ID 2262: Structure—Boundary Walls/Gates. Fermoy House. Brian Boru Sq.
- RPS ID 2253: Structure—Tudor Revival-Style House. Ambercromby Place.

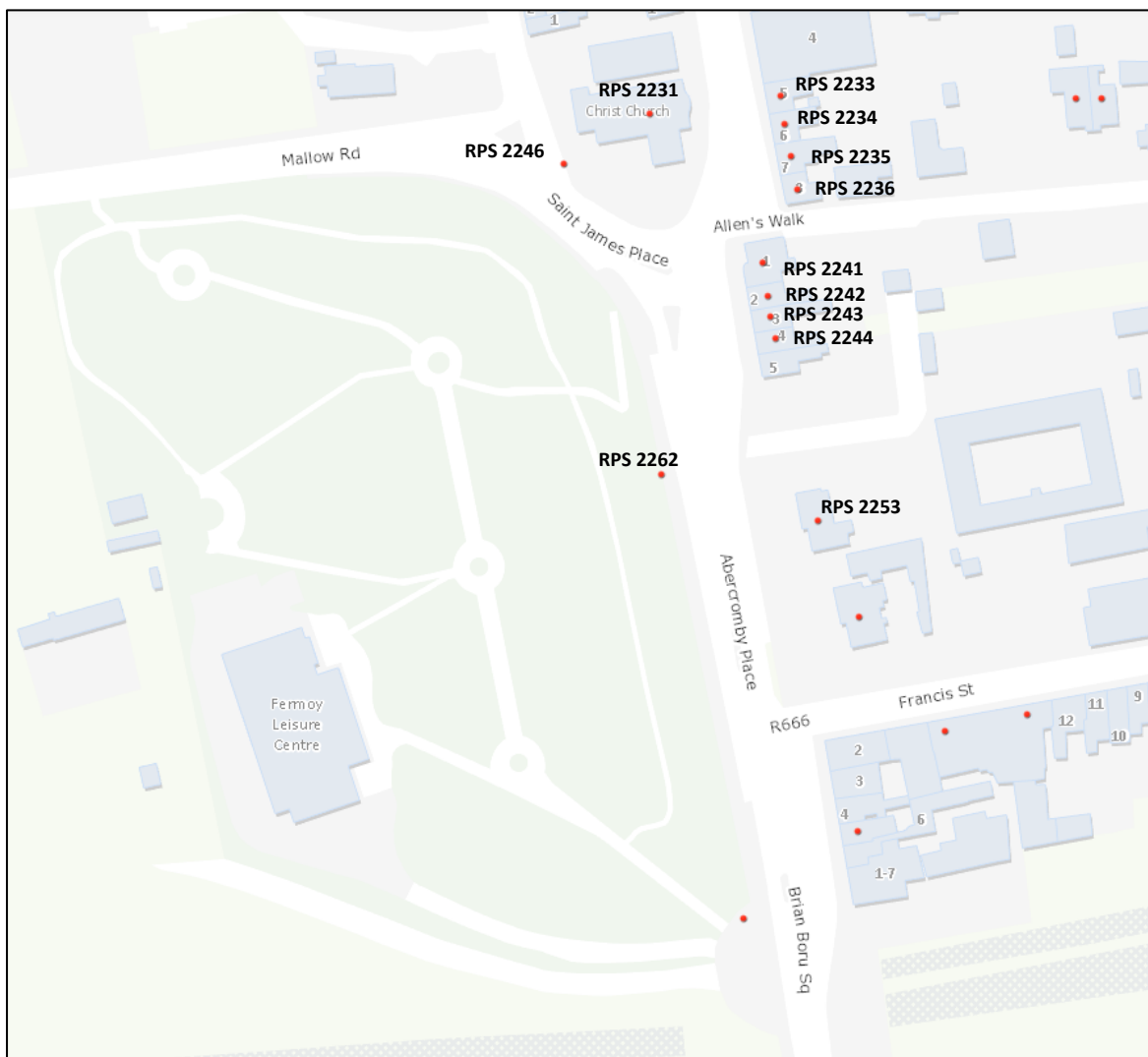


Figure 5—Annotated extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022 mapping of structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures in the vicinity of the proposed works





Plate 1— Christ Church (RPS ID: 2,231) on left of image with 1-4 St. James' Place (RPS IDs: 2241-4) on right. (Google Street View, image capture date August 2022)



Plate 2—Buildings of architectural interest on Church Place

(c) National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The footprint of the proposed works area will intersect with the streetscape of several buildings and other structures listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). Relevant extracts from the NIAH survey are as follows:

- Christ Church (Fermoy), Church Hill, Oliver Plunkett Hill, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821022):



*Plate 3—Christ Church (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821022)*

*Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821022

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social

Original Use: Church/chapel

In Use As: Church/chapel

Date: 1800 - 1830

Coordinates: 181127, 98906

Date Recorded: 24/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

*Description*

Freestanding cruciform Church of Ireland church, built 1802, with two-stage entrance tower to west with spire, three-bay nave elevations, bowed chancel to east, transept to south, and two-bay single-storey vestry to north-west. North transept demolished and spire to tower added 1820s to replace original. Pitched slate roofs with carved limestone eaves course to main block, and moulded bracket course and copings with carved kneelers to transept. Cast-iron rainwater goods. Rubble sandstone walls, partly rendered to apse, with moulded limestone string course at impost level and above bottom stage of tower, heavier to transept. Rubble sandstone buttresses to corners of transept, with dressed limestone quoins. Oval recessed panels to tower, east and south elevations, and square-headed panels to south and east elevations, all with moulded limestone surrounds. Round-headed niche to west elevation of nave, with cut sandstone voussoirs, and round-headed recessed panel to west elevation of tower with stepped cut sandstone surround and voussoirs. Cut limestone copings and kneelers, bracket courses, and dressed limestone quoins to vestry. Tower has rubble sandstone walls, with cut sandstone facing to bottom stage and to panelled pilasters to faces of upper part, recessed part of upper stage having corbel table, moulded limestone cornice, and cut limestone spire. Round-headed window openings throughout, grouped in

threes to side elevations of transept with chamfered block-and-start surrounds and stained-glass, triple-light to gable of transept and to former north transept arch, latter set into having rendered walling with round-headed chamfered brick surround. Nave windows are two-light and traceried with carved limestone surrounds and sills and having quarry glazing. Round-headed traceried triple-light window to chancel with surround comprising rendered engaged Ionic columns supported by carved limestone console brackets and having carved limestone archivolt, with stained-glass window. Round-headed recesses to tower, with stepped cut sandstone surrounds and having louvered double lights with oculi over, all lights having chamfered dressed limestone surrounds. Square-headed double-light and single-light round-headed windows to vestry, with chamfered cut limestone surrounds. Oval window to west side of tower, with chamfered sandstone surround and spoked window. Round-headed entrance opening in south side of tower, with chamfered dressed limestone block-and-start surround and voussoirs, set into round-headed recess with sandstone voussoir, with timber battened double-doors with ornate cast-iron hinges, and approached by limestone steps. Church retains internal features, such as braced timber kingpost ceiling timber gallery supported on timber Ionic columns, carved marble Corinthian engaged columns and pilasters to elliptical-headed east window, ornate marble sprocketed reredos, ornate marble pulpit, stained-glass windows, memorial tablets and brass plaques and font incorporating bowl dating from thirteenth century. Round-headed niches flanking altar area. Sited back from the street with lawn bounded by cast-iron railings set in dressed limestone plinth, with square-profile dressed limestone piers and cast-iron gates.

#### *Appraisal*

The design of this large-scale church, by one of Cork's distinguished architects, Abraham Hargrave the Elder, was to accommodate not only the parishioners but also the large number of military at the nearby barracks. A distinct feature is the very tall entrance, made to admit, without dipping, the colours carried on military church parades. Another unusual feature is the placing of the entrance on the south side of the tower as opposed to the west. The remaining transept to the south was one of two added to accommodate the growing congregation, that to the north and the original spire having been removed at a later date. The cost of the church's construction was borne by Sir John Anderson, founder of Fermoy, and John Hyde, who built the nearby Castle Hyde estate and its site was given by the Baylor Family. Prominently sited on a hill to the north of Fermoy Bridge, this church is a very notable feature in the townscape. Its façade is given decorative emphasis by the numerous carved stone dressings as well as the variety of window openings. The use of cut sandstone and carved limestone adds textural and chromatic variety to the site. Many interior features are also retained, the finely carved altar piece and pulpit being the most interesting, but also the timber gallery and the stained-glass windows, all giving considerable artistic interest to the building. The bowl of the font to the interior is a survival from the now destroyed thirteenth-century abbey of Fermoy and it, together with the memorial tablets, adds context to the site.

- Virginia House, 7 Church Place, Oliver Plunkett Hill, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821026)





Plate 4— Virginia House, 7 Church Place (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821026)

#### *Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821026

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Social

Original Use: House

In Use As: Guest house/b&b

Date: 1800 - 1840

Coordinates: 181174, 98895 (Irish Grid)

Date Recorded: 21/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

#### *Description*

Terraced four-bay three-storey house, built c. 1820, now also in use as guesthouse. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks, and cut limestone ridge tiles. Rendered walls. Square-headed window openings with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows, and cut limestone sills. Round-headed doorway with timber panelled door, dressed limestone surround incorporating plinth blocks and cornice. Fanlight above and cast-iron boot scrape to limestone threshold. Site bounded by cut limestone plinth wall.

#### *Appraisal*

This substantial house occupies a prominent site, on a hill and opposite the Church of Ireland church. It is a notable and pleasing feature on the streetscape. The diminishing windows and shallow reveals are a characteristic feature of townhouses of its type and era. It retains its fine door surround and timber sash windows, which are probably replacements of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

- Adair National School, Oliver Plunkett Hill, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821023):



Plate 5— Adair National School (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821023):

#### *Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821023

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Social

Previous Name: Fermoy Infant School

Original Use: School

Date: 1835 - 1840

Coordinates: 181184, 98952 (Irish Grid)

Date Recorded: 24/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

#### *Description*

Detached four-bay single-storey former national school, dated 1836, with projecting gabled porch to front elevation and uncompleted extension to rear. Now disused. Pitched slate roofs with dressed limestone chimneystacks, clay ridge tiles and cast-iron rainwater goods. Timber bargeboards to gable of porch. Rendered walls, with carved limestone date plaque to front elevation. Square-headed openings with cut limestone sills and fixed timber windows with overlights. Recent openings to south gable. Square-headed opening to porch with timber battened double-doors. Sited back from street with rubble stone boundary walls having two pedestrian entrances with cast-iron gates. Former teacher's house to site.

#### *Appraisal*

The size and single-storey form of this structure are typical of the national schools of its era in Ireland. The entrance porch and rectangular form are also characteristic of these buildings. The date plaque and double pedestrian entrances, the latter probably used as separate entrances for the boys and girls, all add context to the building which retains much of its original fabric, including the slate roof, dressed limestone chimneystacks and date plaque.

- 1 Saint James's Place, Allen's Walk, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821032):



Plate 6—1 Saint James's Place (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821032)

*Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821032

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Artistic

Original Use: House

In Use As: Office

Date: 1820 - 1860

Coordinates: 181164, 98864

Date Recorded: 16/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

*Description*

Corner-sited end-of-terrace three-bay three-storey over half-basement house, built c. 1840, as a terrace with the adjoining houses. Now also in use as offices. North end bay recessed although projecting to rear elevation, and middle bay has rounded corner. Two-bay two-storey return to rear. Hipped slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks. Red brick parapet having dressed limestone coping. Flemish bond red brick walls with dressed limestone quoins. Rendered walls to basement and to other elevations. Square-headed window openings with render reveals, cut limestone sills, and six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows, having brick voussoirs to front elevation. Segmental-arched door opening with brick voussoirs and limestone step. Timber panelled door set into timber doorcase comprising carved fluted engaged columns and architrave, with stained-glass sidelights having panelled risers, and fanlight. Set back from street with cast-iron railings having rendered plinth with cut limestone coping and cast-iron gate.

*Appraisal*

This house forms part of a very fine and intact terrace, which occupies a prominent site on a hill and opposite the Church of Ireland church. The



building is an important element of the terrace, terminating its north end. Its form is in keeping with the regularity and proportions of the other structures, but is differentiated by the recessed bay and the rounded corner, which add extra interest to the façade and point to the style of a country house. The largely intact structure shows evidence of fine crafting and materials. It maintains notable elements such as the timber sash windows, deep chimneystacks, limestone quoins and cast-iron railings.

- 2 Saint James's Place, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: Reg No: 20821033):



Plate 7—2 Saint James's Place (NIAH Reg. No.: Reg No: 20821033)

#### *Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821033  
Rating: Regional  
Categories of Special Interest: Architectural  
Original Use: House  
Date: 1820 - 1860  
Coordinates: 181166, 98854 (Irish Grid)  
Date Recorded: 16/08/2006  
Date Updated: --/--/--

#### *Description*

Terraced two-bay three-storey over half-basement house, built c. 1840, as terrace with adjoining houses. Now disused. Hipped slate roof with rendered chimneystack and red brick parapet having dressed limestone coping. Flemish bond red brick walls with rendered walls to basement and rear elevation.

Square-headed window openings with cut limestone sills, front elevation having one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows, and rear having six-over-six panes. Round-headed door opening with red brick voussoirs, carved stone roll moulded surround, timber architrave, timber fill to fanlight, and timber panelled door. Cut limestone steps to threshold. Site bounded by cast-iron railings on rendered plinth.

*Appraisal*

This substantial house comprises part of a notable and largely intact early nineteenth-century and prominently-sited terrace. The elegant proportions and tall openings are typical of town houses of this period. It retains timber sash windows, probably replacements from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The round-headed doorcase is also characteristic of the house's period and style and, along with the cast-iron railing surround, providing a focal point for the façade.

- 3 Saint James's Place, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821034):



Plate 8—3 Saint James's Place (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821034)

*Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821034

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural

Original Use: House

In Use As: House

Date: 1820 - 1860

Coordinates: 181169, 98849

Date Recorded: 16/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

### *Description*

Terraced two-bay three-storey over half-basement house, built c. 1840, as part of terrace. Hipped roof with rendered chimneystack and red brick parapet having limestone coping. Flemish bond red brick walls, with rendered walls to basement. Square-headed openings with cut limestone sills, brick voussoirs, and replacement uPVC windows, those to first floor having cast-iron balconies. Round-headed opening with brick voussoirs, timber panelled door having carved timber roll moulded architrave, spoked fanlight, and carved limestone plinth blocks. Flagstones to threshold. Site bounded by cast-iron railings with rendered plinth having cut limestone coping and cast-iron gate.

### *Appraisal*

This substantial house comprises part of a notable and largely intact early nineteenth-century and prominently-sited terrace. The elegant proportions and tall openings are typical of town houses of this period. The round-headed doorcase is also characteristic of provincial houses of this period and style and, along with the cast-iron railing surround, provides a focal point for the façade. The cast-iron balconies add interest to the façade and differentiate it from the surrounding buildings.

- 4 Saint James's Place, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821035):



Plate 9—4 Saint James's Place (NIAH Reg. No.: 20821035)

### *Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821035

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Artistic

Original Use: House

In Use As: Surgery/clinic

Date: 1820 - 1860  
Coordinates: 181168, 98842 (Irish Grid)  
Date Recorded: 16/08/2006  
Date Updated: --/--/--

*Description*

Terraced two-bay three-storey over half-basement house, built c. 1840, as part of terrace. Now also in use as doctor's surgery. Hipped roof with rendered chimneystack and red brick parapet wall having dressed limestone coping. Flemish bond red brick walls, with rendered walls to basement. Square-headed openings with render reveals, cut limestone sills, red brick voussoirs, and six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows, basement windows being four-over-eight pane. Round-headed door opening, with red brick voussoirs, and carved limestone roll moulded surround, timber doorcase incorporating architrave and cornice supported by decorative consoles, and timber panelled door with spoked fanlight. Approached by flight of cut limestone steps with cast-iron bootscrape. Site bounded by cast-iron railings with rendered plinth having dressed limestone coping.

*Appraisal*

This substantial house comprises part of a notable and largely intact early nineteenth-century prominently-sited terrace. The elegant proportions and tall openings are typical of town houses of this period. It retains its six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows and their limestone sills add variety of materials and texture to the façade. The finely made round-headed doorcase is characteristic of the house's period and style and, along with the cast-iron railing surround, provides a focal point for the façade.

- Fermoy House, Brian Boru Square, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK:



Plate 10— Fermoy House railings (NIAH Reg No: 20821053). No image in NIAH online files. Image above from Google Maps Street View (Image date July 2022) .

*Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821053  
Rating: Regional  
Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Artistic, Historical  
Original Use: Gates/railings/walls  
In Use As: Gates/railings/walls  
Date: 1810 - 1830



Coordinates:181142, 98744 (Irish Grid)

Date Recorded: 24/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

#### *Description*

Boundary walls and entrance gates, built c. 1820, and marking perimeter of now demolished Fermoy House and forming boundary to public park. Rubble limestone plinth walls with dressed limestone coping and cast-iron spearhead railings. Cast-iron lamp standards mounted at intervals on square-profile dressed limestone piers with plinths and caps. Quadrant entrance to avenue having ten square-profile piers to three vehicular gateways, one gateway being flanked by pedestrian entrances. Piers are of rusticated ashlar limestone, with moulded caps and plinths, and having cast-iron gates, with decorative cast-iron railings between gateways.

#### *Appraisal*

These walls once formed the boundary to the demesne of Fermoy House. John Anderson, the founder of Fermoy town, built and lived in this house in the early nineteenth century. The walls and piers are a reminder of Fermoy's foundations and history and enhance their prominent site, near the river and surrounding the large park. The piers are well executed and show evidence of fine stone crafting. Their simple design offsets the decoration provided by the cast-iron railings and gates.

- Oliver Plunkett Hill, CARRIGNAGROGHERA, Fermoy, CORK



Plate 11—Oliver Plunkett Hill (NIAH Reg No: 20821015)

#### *Survey Data*

Reg No: 20821015

Rating: Regional

Categories of Special Interest: Architectural, Social, Technical

Original Use: Cobbles/flags/paving/kerbing

In Use As: Cobbles/flags/paving/kerbing

Date: 1845 - 1855

Coordinates: 181125, 99033 (Irish Grid)

Date Recorded: 24/08/2006

Date Updated: --/--/--

#### *Description*

Rubble limestone wall, built c. 1850, to each side of Oliver Plunkett Hill and side streets, and retaining higher footpath level. Surmounted by cast-iron railings and having dressed and tooled limestone coping to some sections. Rendered to some sections and having cut limestone steps.

#### *Appraisal*

Constructed during the Great Famine, these walls were built as a relief scheme to provide employment. Their regular and flush elevations enhance and add continuity to the terraced streetscape, and their survival and intact condition are a testament to the fine stone craft involved in its construction. This also shows in the tooled coping and cut limestone steps. Similar schemes were undertaken at Richmond Hill and Ardán Chnuic Mhic Dhonnchadha. They are notable features in the Fermoy townscape.

#### **4.4 Non-designated sites**

In the area of what is now Abercromby Place, the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey six-inch mapping appears to indicate the former presence of an on-street well. For the purpose of this report, this location has been designated as Site of Potential No. 1 (Figure 14). With respect to the proposed works area, the cartographic evidence suggests the site is located in the immediate environs of the southern tie-in to the existing road (compare to Figure 6).

#### **4.5 Historic landscape characterisation**

The proposed work areas are confined to the existing urban streetscape, between the N72 national secondary road (Mallow Road/St James Place/Abercromby Place) and the R639 regional road (Oliver Plunkett Hill/Allen's Walk), south of Christchurch in Fermoy. This part of Fermoy town is of comparatively modern construction, mostly constructed after the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century, however the routeway leading north from the strategic Fermoy Bridge was likely in use since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. North from Fermoy Bridge, the branching road—at what is now Christ Church junction—is implied on Smith's map of 1750 (Figure 11).

#### **4.6 Placenames**

The proposed works will pass through just a single townland, that of Carrignagroghera, associated with Fermoy town. The name 'Fermoy' applies to a town, a civil parish, a townland and a barony. Place names can often provide evidence for historical associations. The principal place names traversed by the proposed works are as follows in Table 1:

Table 1- Placename evidence for places traversed by the proposed works

<b>Placename</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Origins</b>
Carrignagroghera	Possibly 'Rock of the hangmen'	Earliest recorded use of placename: 1591 ('Carriginchroughere', ref. <a href="https://www.logainm.ie/10130.aspx">https://www.logainm.ie/10130.aspx</a> )



Fermoy	<i>Fhear Mai</i> 'Men of the plain'	Earliest recorded use of placename: 640 ('Fernmuighe', ref. <a href="https://www.logainm.ie/10133.aspx">https://www.logainm.ie/10133.aspx</a> )
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#### 4.7 Previous archaeological investigations

The Archaeological Excavations Database ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) was reviewed to identify the results of archaeological testing and excavations in the vicinity of the proposed pavement strengthening works, as follows:

##### *Fermoy:*

In 2007, archaeological monitoring was undertaken in areas of archaeological potential within the town of Fermoy during the excavation of service trenches for broadband cable. These trenches were excavated through the modern roadway and in areas previously disturbed by modern service trenches. No archaeological finds or features were encountered. (Lalonde 2007)).

In 2009, archaeological monitoring of topsoil-stripping of large trench-like areas was undertaken to accommodate the construction of flood protection walls and embankments close to the north bank of the River Blackwater. Trenching was undertaken along some streets/roadway to facilitate the laying of storm pipes. One such trench (Trench 10) was located between the south end of St James' Place and the north corner of Francis' Street. Extended along the roadway approaching the north side of Fermoy Bridge was a section of a rough cobbled surface, 0.12m thick, exposed 1.3m below the present road surface and directly overlaid the natural deposition. This feature was sealed by a thick layer of colluvium and may be the remains of the earliest road surface c. 1718. (Henry 2009).

#### 4.8 Cartographic evidence

Pre-18th century mapping for the Fermoy area provide little specific detail on Fermoy. Fermoy town does not appear on any of the mid-17th century Down Survey mapping (Figures 8 and 9), and no crossing of the River Blackwater is indicated in the area of what is now Fermoy town—this coincides with the original wooded bridge of 1626 having been washed away in 1628 and not replaced until replaced (with a stone bridge) in 1687 (Power et al. 2000, 634-5).

By the time of Smith's map of 1750 (Figure 11), the southern side of the River Blackwater had been developed, with no development depicted on the north bank of the river. A similar situation is depicted on the Taylor and Skinner map of 1783 (Figure 12). Despite Smith's map of 1750 suffering from deficiencies in survey precision, a road junction depicted on the north side of the River Blackwater may well correspond to the area of the present day N72 Christ Church Junction. Indeed, archaeological investigations (Henry 2009) along the road leading north from the bridge towards Christ Church junction did reveal an earlier road surface (potentially dating to 1718) located c.1.3m below the present road surface.

It is not until the Grand Jury map of 1811 (Figure 13), that urban development is cartographically depicted on the north bank of the river. At this point Christ Church and the two military barracks, constructed by Anderson, are depicted.

By the time the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 6-inch mapping (c. 1840, Figure 14), the northern part of Fermoy town is well developed. The Christ Church junction, between what is now the N72 national secondary road and the R639 regional road, is in place and, based on subsequent Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping (Figures 15 and 16), remained so up to the present time.

*Features of note from the historical mapping:* The proposed works are confined to the existing N72 and R639 thoroughfares. The cartographic evidence indicates little by way of archaeological significance within the footprint of the proposed. The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey mapping does, however, depict a potential on-street well. For the purpose of this assessment, this feature has been designated as Site of Potential No. 1 (Figure 14). The location of the former well would appear to be in the area of the tie-in with the existing road surface.

## 4. Cultural Heritage Protection

### 5.1 Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 Objectives

This Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment report takes cognisance of the objectives listed Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 and, as relevant, makes recommendations aimed to ensure adherence to same. The development plan sets out some key objectives for the protection of cultural heritage within the county. These include, *inter alia*:

#### HE 16-2: Protection of Archaeological Sites and Monuments

Secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional cases preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments and their setting included in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) (see [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) and the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and of sites, features and objects of archaeological and historical interest generally.

In securing such preservation, the planning authority will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as outlined in the Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage policy document or any changes to the policy within the lifetime of the Plan.

#### HE 16-4: Zones of Archaeological Potential in Historic Towns and Settlements

Proposed development works in Historic Towns and settlements, Zones of Archaeological Potential, Zones of Notification and the general historic environs in proximity to the zones, should take cognisance of the impact potential of the works, and all appropriate archaeological assessments employed to identify and mitigate the potential impacts.

#### HE 16-5: Zones of Archaeological Potential

Protect the Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAPs) located within historic towns, urban areas and around archaeological monuments generally. Any development within the ZAPs will need to take cognisance of the upstanding and potential for subsurface archaeology, through appropriate archaeological assessment.

#### HE 16-6: Industrial and Post Medieval Archaeology

Protect and preserve industrial and post-medieval archaeology and long-term management of heritage features such as mills, limekilns, forges, bridges, piers and harbours, water-related engineering works and buildings, penal chapels, dwellings, walls and boundaries, farm buildings, estate features, military and coastal installations. There is a general presumption for retention of these structures and features. Proposals for appropriate redevelopment including conversion should be subject to an appropriate assessment and record by a suitably qualified specialist/s.

#### HE 16-7: Battlefield, Ambush and Siege Sites and Defensive Archaeology

Protect and preserve the defensive archaeological record of County Cork including strategic battlefield, ambush and siege sites, and coastal fortifications and their associated landscape due to their historical and cultural value. Any development within or adjoining these areas shall undertake a historic assessment by a suitably qualified specialist to ensure development does not negatively impact on this historic landscape.

#### HE 16-8: Burial Places

Protect all historical burial places and their setting in County Cork and encourage their maintenance and care in accordance with appropriate conservation principles.

#### HE 16-9: Archaeology and Infrastructure Schemes

All large scale planning applications (i.e. development of lands on 0.5 ha or more in area or 1km or more in length) and Infrastructure schemes and proposed roadworks are subjected to an archaeological assessment as part of the planning application process which should comply with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's codes of practice. It is recommended that the assessment is carried out following pre planning consultation with the County Archaeologist, by an appropriately experienced archaeologist to guide the design and layout of the proposed scheme/development, safeguarding the archaeological heritage in line with Development Management Guidelines.

#### HE 16-10: Management of Monuments within Development Sites

Where archaeological sites are accommodated within a development it shall be appropriately conservation/protection with provision for a suitable buffer zone and long-term management plan put in place all to be agreed in advance with the County Archaeologist

#### HE 16-11: Archaeological Landscapes

To protect archaeological landscapes and their setting where the number and extent of archaeological monuments are significant and as a collective are considered an important archaeological landscape of heritage value.

#### HE 16-13: Undiscovered Archaeological Sites

To protect and preserve previously unrecorded archaeological sites within County Cork as part of any development proposals. The Council will require preservation in situ to protect archaeological monuments discovered. Preservation by record will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

#### HE 16-14: Record of Protected Structures

- d) Ensure the protection of all structures (or parts of structures) contained in the Record of Protected Structures.
- e) Protect the curtilage and attendant grounds of all structures included in the Record of Protected Structures
- f) Ensure that development proposals are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale and form to the existing protected structure and not detrimental to the special character and integrity of the protected structure and its setting.
- g) Ensure high quality architectural design of all new developments relating to or which may impact on structures (and their settings) included in the Record of Protected Structures.
- h) Promote and ensure best conservation practice through the use of specialist conservation professionals and craft persons.

#### HE 16-15: Protection of Structures on the NIAH

Protect where possible all structures which are included in the NIAH for County Cork, that are not currently included in the Record of Protected Structures, from adverse impacts as part of the development management functions of the County

#### HE 16-16: Protection of Non- Structural Elements of Built Heritage

Protect non-structural elements of the built heritage. These can include designed gardens/garden features, masonry walls, railings, follies, gates, bridges, shopfronts and street furniture. The Council will promote awareness and best practice in relation to these elements.

#### HE 16-18: Architectural Conservation Areas

Conserve and enhance the special character of the Architectural Conservation Areas included in this Plan. The special character of an area includes its traditional building stock, material finishes, spaces, streetscape, shopfronts, landscape and setting.

#### HE 16-23: Cultural Heritage

Protect and promote the cultural heritage of County Cork as an important economic asset and for its intrinsic value to identity of place and the well being of people within the County

## 5. Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

In terms of potential impact on Cultural Heritage, the preliminary design indicates that the vertical profiles of the existing N72 and R639 are generally being retained. No new carriageway drainage systems are proposed. Carriageway widths are to be reduced, requiring a corresponding revision of kerb lines.

### *5.1 Items/Areas of interest with nil meaningful impact anticipated:*

- RMPS/SMR sites: The proposed works will intersect with the Zone of Notification for two recorded monuments—Christ Church SMR CO035-021 (built 1802) and Fermoy ‘Infant School’ SMR CO035-102 (built c. 1836)—but nil meaningful impact on either monument, or any associated features, is anticipated.

- Architectural Conservation Areas: The proposed works will not directly intersect with any Architectural Conservation Areas. Indeed, the improvements to the junction are expected to enhance the safety, aesthetics and public realm at the junction and add to the aesthetics of adjacent the Architectural Conservation Areas associated with Fermoy town.
- Record of Protected Structures: The proposed works will intersect with the streetscape of the following structures listed on the record of protected structures, however nil associated features are deemed likely to be directly impacted:
  - RPS ID 2,231: Structure—Christ Church - Church of Ireland. Church Place.
  - RPS ID 2,233: Structure—Terraced House. 1 Church Place.
  - RPS ID 2,234: Structure—Terraced House. 2 Church Place.
  - RPS ID 2,235: Structure—Virginia House. 7 Church Place.
  - RPS ID 2,236: Structure—Terraced House. 4 Church Place.
  - RPS ID 2,241: Structure—1 St James's Place.
  - RPS ID 2,242: Structure—2 St James's Place.
  - RPS ID 2,243: Structure—3 St James's Place.
  - RPS ID 2,244: Structure—4 St James's Place.
  - RPS ID 2,262: Structure—Boundary Walls & Gates. Fermoy House. Brian Boru Square.
  - RPS ID 2,253: Structure—Tudor Revival-Style House. Ambercromby Place.

The improvements to the junction are expected to enhance the safety, aesthetics and public realm at the junction.

- Potential early 18<sup>th</sup> century road surface: the rough cobbled surface identified by previous archaeological investigations (Henry 2009) c. 1.3 m below the present road surface, and directly overlying natural subsoils, which is considered of potential 1718 date, appears unlikely to be impacted by the propose works given the vertical profiles of the existing N72 and R639 are generally being retained.

### *5.2 Items/Areas of interest with potential impact anticipated:*

- Record of Protected Structures: The proposed works will impact directly a structure (RPS ID 2246: Limestone Kerbing. Church Hill/St. James Place) listed on the Record of Protected Structures. A proposed new footpath/public realm will intersect with the line of the protected limestone kerbing.
- Site of Potential No. 1 (former on-street well): The exact location of the former well could not be ascertained, however, based on its depiction on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, it was located in the area of the proposed works (southern) tie-in with the streetscape.

## **6. Mitigation measures for consideration**

As the proposed work area is, based on the preliminary design, confined to existing N72 national road and R639 regional road, and as the vertical profiles of the existing N72 and R639 are generally being retained, with no new carriageway drainage systems proposed, the works are considered to pose relatively limited risk to Cultural Heritage in the area.

In consideration of on-going design, measures are to be put in place to:

- Safeguard the Limestone Kerbing at Church Hill/St. James Place, which is listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS ID 2246). The current design proposes new footpath/public realm that will intersect with the line of the protected limestone kerbing.
- Safeguard Site of Potential No. 1 (former on-street well, Figure 14) .
- Safeguard other identified structures in Record of Protected Structures, including their curtilages and attendant grounds.
- Safeguard Christ Church (SMR CO035-021) and any associated features.
- Safeguard all structures which are included in the NIAH for County Cork, that are not currently included in the Record of Protected Structures.

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Ordnance Survey of Ireland GeoHive web service: <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html>

Teagasc 1969 *Ireland-General Soil Map*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. National Soil Survey. <https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/environment/soil/General-Map.pdf> (Accessed 21/2/2023)

Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/>

## 8. Other figures and plates



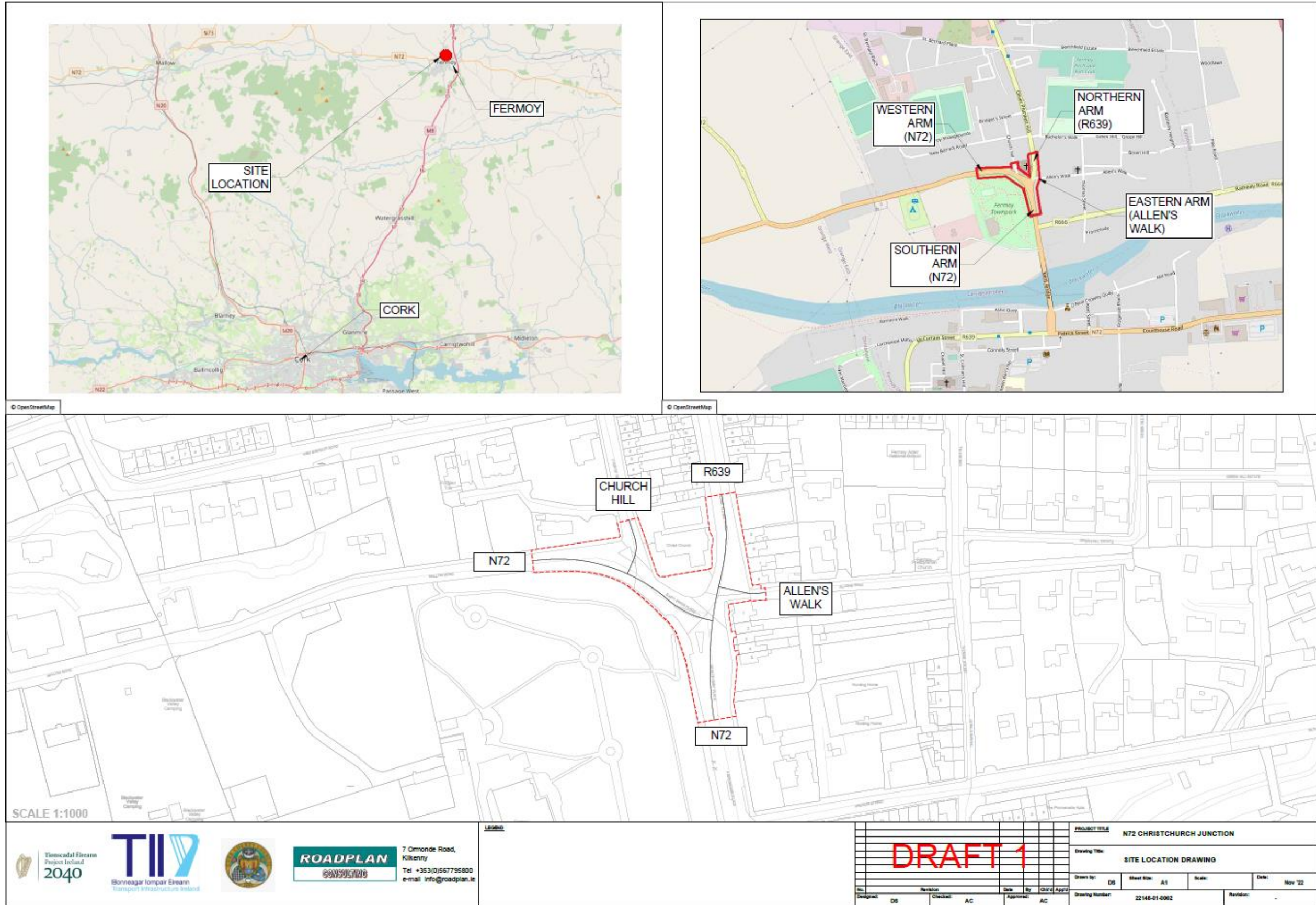


Figure 6—Composite plan showing location of proposed N72 Christ Church Junction works.



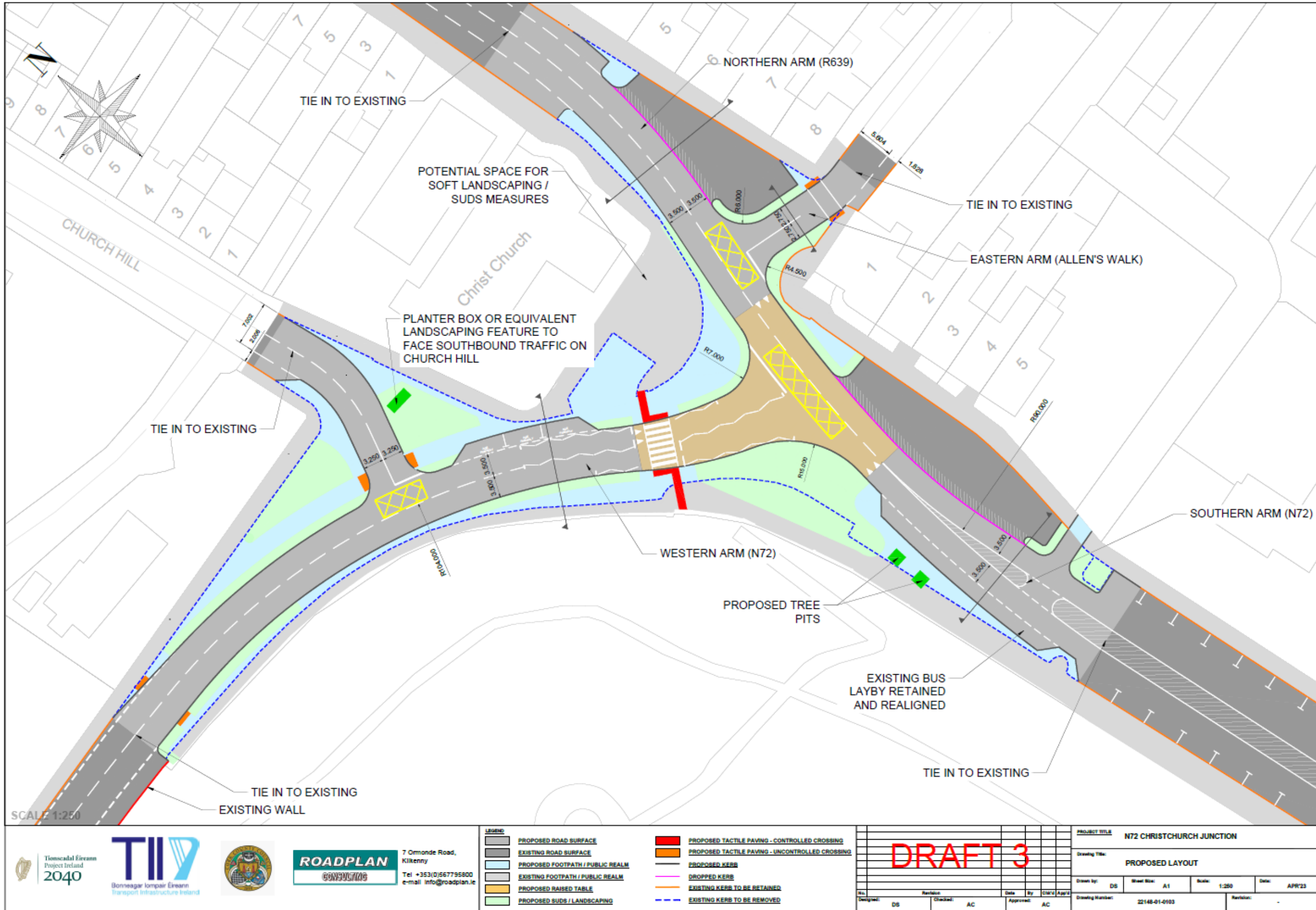


Figure 7—N72 Christ Church Junction preliminary design drawing (Draft 3).



Figure 8— Fermoy area, extracted from William Petty's General Map of Ireland (from Down Survey, 1656-8)



Figure 9—Down Survey mapping (county scale, 1656-8) showing Fermoy area



Figure 10—Down Survey mapping (parish scale, 1656-8) showing Fermoy area

No mapping available



Figure 11—Extract from Smith's 1750 map of County Cork, depicting Fermoy town



Figure 12—Taylor and Skinner map of Fermoy area (1783, p122) (map orientation: north is to the bottom right)



Figure 13—Grand Jury map of Fermoy area (1811) (<https://doi.org/10.48495/hq37vq12p>)



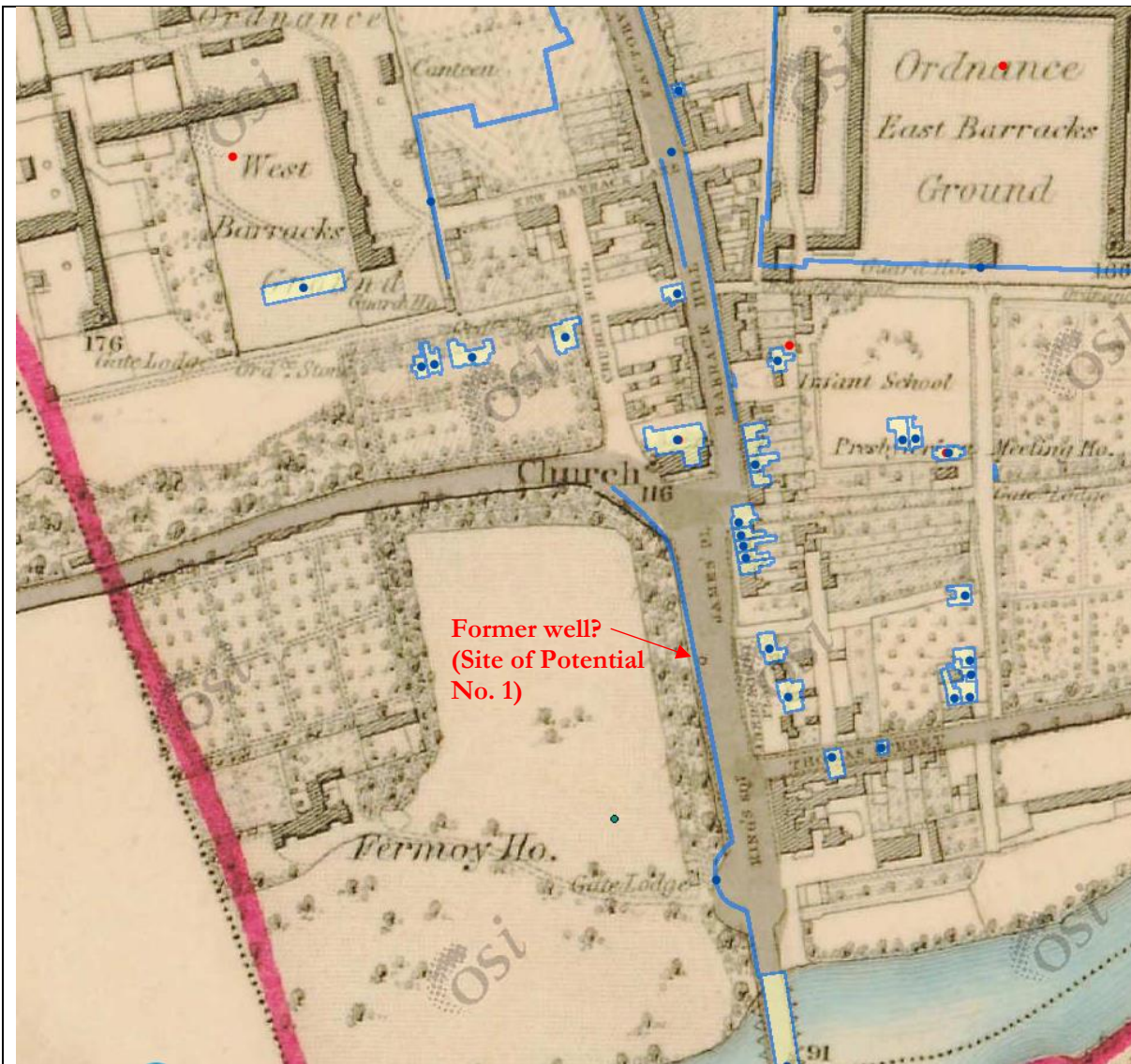


Figure 14—Extract from Historic Environment Viewer ([www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) showing 1<sup>st</sup> edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey mapping.

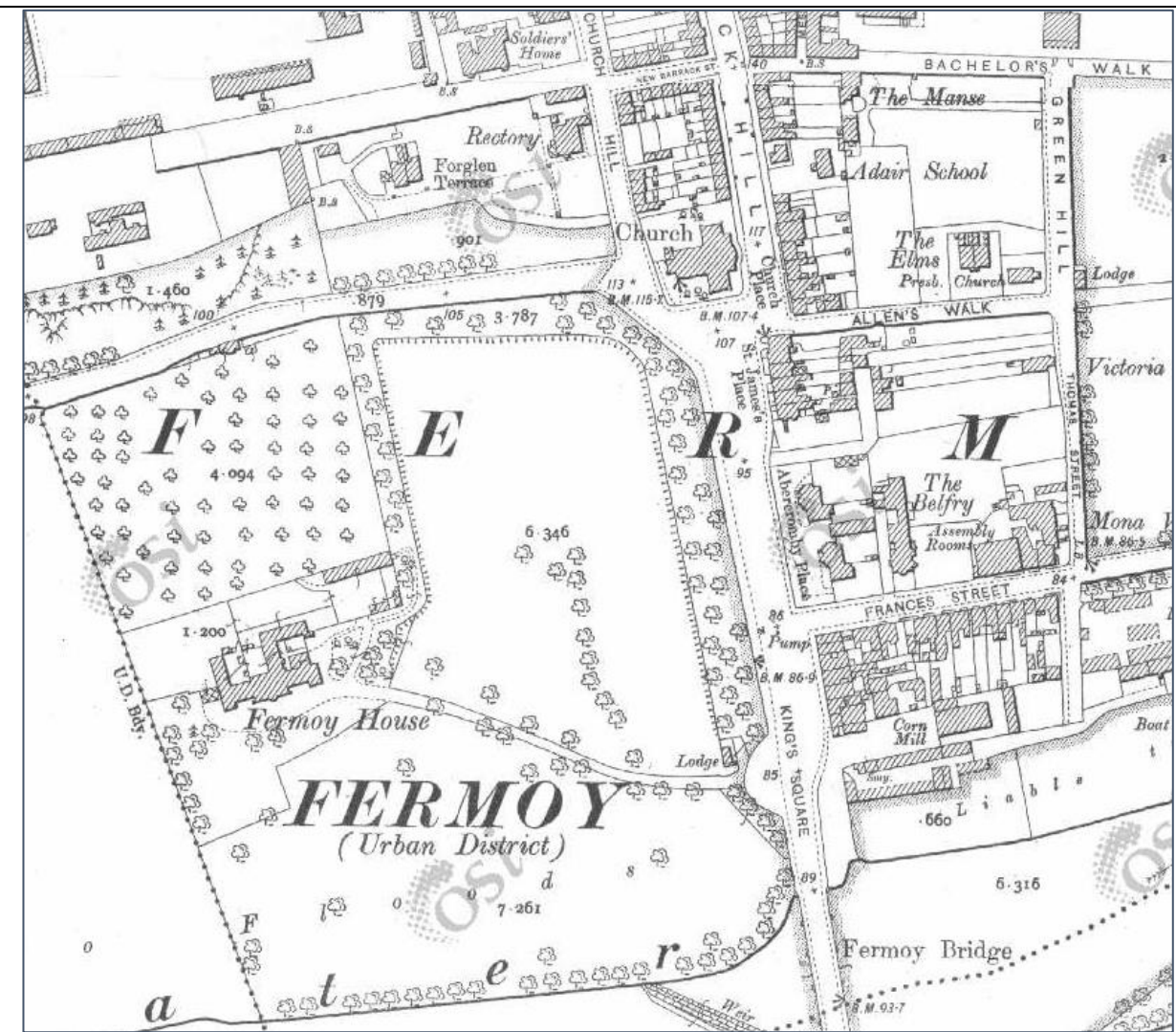


Figure 15—Extract from Historic Environment Viewer ([www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) showing historic (c. 1900) 25-inch Ordnance Survey mapping.



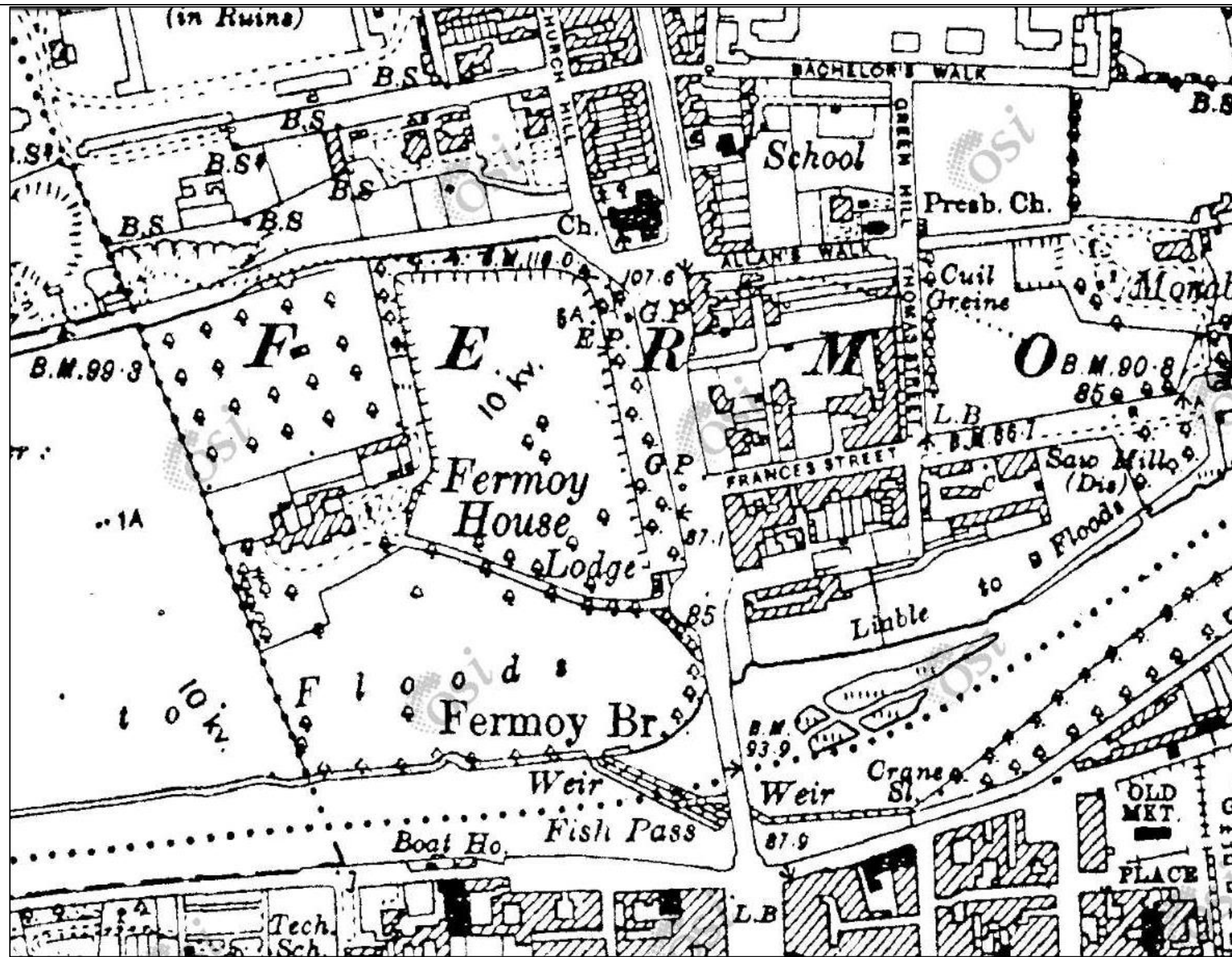


Figure 16—Extract from Historic Environment Viewer ([www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) showing Cassini 6-inch Ordnance Survey mapping for Fermoy





Plate 12— View looking south along southern end of Oliver Plunkett Hill (formerly Barrack Hill). (Google Maps Street View, image date July 2022)



Plate 13— View looking south at approach to Christ Church Junction at southern end of Oliver Plunkett Hill (Google Maps Street View, image date July 2022)





Plate 14— Looking south across Christ Church Junction from southern end of Oliver Plunkett Hill (Google Maps Street View, image date July 2022)



Plate 15— View looking east along N72 road towards Christ Church Junction (Google Maps Street View, image date August 2022)



Plate 16— View looking east along N72 road towards Christ Church Junction (Google Maps Street View, image date August 2022)





*Plate 17— Eastwards approach to Christ Church Junction (Google Maps Street View, image date August 2022)*



*Plate 18— View looking south at southern end of Church Hill towards Christ Church Junction (Google Maps Street View, image date September 2019)*





Plate 19— View looking east from N72 across Christ Church Junction (Google Maps Street View, image date September 2019)



Plate 20— View north towards Christ Church Junction (Google Maps Street View, image date July 2022)



Plate 21— View of N72 Christ Church Junction looking north (Google Maps Street View, image date August 2022)





Oifig na mBóithre Náisiúnta **Chorcaí**  
Cork National Roads Office



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council