

St Nicholas Quarter Regeneration Scheme Phase Two

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Rev: 01

Date: May 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been prepared by Building Design Partnership (BDP) for Louth County Council ('the Applicant') to consider the need for Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') of proposed public realm, community and residential development associated with Phase Two of the St Nicholas Quarter Rejuvenation, Dundalk (the 'proposed development'). This report provides an overview of the relevant EIA process and screening considerations.
- 1.2. The screening report follows the framework set by the EU Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU), which is carried down into Irish legislation in the form of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Further guidance documents published by the European Commission, Government of Ireland and Environmental Protection Agency have informed the assessment and are referenced in section 4 of this report.
- 1.3. Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) stipulates the required information for inclusion in an EIA Screening Report. Table 1.1 identifies where the specified information can be found.

Table 1.1 Location of Information	
Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations	Location of information
1) a description of the development, including in particular—	
(i) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works;	Section 3 and Table 5.1
(ii) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;	Section 2 and Table 5.1
2) a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;	Table 5.1
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 -	Table 5.1

Table 1.1 Location of Information	
Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations	Location of information
(i) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and	Table 5.1
(ii) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and	Table 5.1
4) The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1-3 shall take into account where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.	Sections 2, 3 and Table 5.1

1.4. The remainder of this report has the following structure:

- **Section 2: Existing Site** – provides a description of the site and the surrounding area.
- **Section 3: Proposed Development** – provides a description of the proposed development.
- **Section 4: EIA thresholds and criteria** – provides an overview of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations that have been considered in this Screening Report.
- **Section 5: Screening Review** – assesses the impacts of the proposed development concerning the criteria set out in Section 4.
- **Section 6: Conclusion** – summarises the EIA Screening Assessment of the proposed development.

2. Existing Site

Site Description

- 2.1. The St Nicholas Quarter is located to the north of Dundalk town centre, to the south of the Castletown River Bridge. The application site (Figure 2.1) has a total area of 0.6ha, and comprises:
- Residential and commercial buildings situated between Bridge Street and Linenhall Street, and south of Northgate Street
 - A car park situated off Linenhall Street
 - St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens
 - Síocháin Peace Garden
- 2.2. The proposed development comprises the second phase of the St Nicholas Quarter Rejuvenation Project. The first phase comprised enhancements to the public realm along Bridge Street, Linenhall Street, Northgate Street and Síocháin Peace Garden. Phase 1 received Part 8 approval in April 2018 and has been completed.



Figure 2.1 Site Location Plan

- 2.3. Linenhall Street is largely residential, while Bridge Street is characterised by commercial activity, including retail units, cafés, restaurants, and public houses at ground-floor level, with residential accommodation typically located above. This reflects its designation as ‘Town Centre’ zone within the Dundalk Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (2025). The Siocháin Peace Garden is located to the northeast of the area and is zoned as ‘Open Space’, while St Nicholas Catholic Church and its associated gardens are zoned as ‘Community Facilities’.
- 2.4. The Dundalk Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (2025) identifies the St Nicholas Quarter as historically having functioned as the northern gateway to Dundalk Town Centre prior to the construction of the Eastern Bypass in the 1990s. Since that time, the area has experienced a steady decline in pedestrian footfall and overall vibrancy. This has resulted in increasing vacancy levels, underutilisation of buildings, and a gradual deterioration in the physical condition of the built environment.
- 2.5. In response to this decline, the St Nicholas Quarter has been designated as a ‘Key Development Area’ within the Local Area Plan. This designation presents a significant opportunity to regenerate the area from St Nicholas Catholic Church to the River Castletown. The objective is to create an inclusive and sustainable community, enhance Dundalk’s rich architectural and cultural heritage, and establish a high-quality townscape that better connects with surrounding areas of the town. Collectively, these measures aim to redefine and strengthen the northern approach to Dundalk Town Centre.
- 2.6. St Nicholas Catholic Church and its associated gardens are situated within the Clanbrassil Street Architectural Conservation Area. There are 12 protected structures located in close proximity to the site, which are detailed in the accompanying Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment. Within the site boundary, there are only two protected structures:
- St Nicholas Catholic Church (reg. no. 13701004), located at the junction of Bridge Street and Linenhall Street.
 - 25 Linenhall Street (reg. no. 13702028), a three-bay, two-storey dwelling located to the north of St Nicholas Catholic Church and its associated car park.
- 2.7. The site is located within a zone of archaeological potential, and there are eight recorded archaeological monuments in close proximity to the site, with two archaeological monuments located within the site boundary. This include the site of a meeting house (LH007-119004) and the line of the former town wall (LH007-119027), including the site of Blind Gate. The medieval town walls, believed to have enclosed Dundalk, are recorded as a National Monument.

Surrounding Context

- 2.8. The application site is located in Dundalk Town Centre, situated between Bridge Street to the east and Linenhall Street to the west. Dundalk lies on Ireland's east coast in County Louth, with a population of approximately 139,100. The town functions as a key transportation hub, strategically positioned near the M1 (National Primary Route) and the N52 (National Secondary Route), and approximately equidistant between Dublin and Belfast.
- 2.9. Dundalk is identified as a regional growth centre in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031 for the Eastern and Midland Region. The RSES highlights Dundalk's important role in supporting economic growth in the Dublin-Belfast Corridor, the largest economic agglomeration on the island of Ireland. It includes a Dundalk Urban Area Plan (UAP), which promotes the town's development as an attractive, vibrant, and accessible regional centre through compact and targeted growth. As part of this strategy, selected sites, including St Nicholas Quarter, are prioritised for development and regeneration.
- 2.10. The project site is located directly adjacent to the nearest Natura 2000 site – Dundalk Bay Special Protection Area (SPA) which borders the site to the north and 600m from the Dundalk Special Area of Conservation (SAC). These designated areas extend across the Castletown River and Dundalk Harbour, which flow directly into the Irish Sea.

3. Proposed Development

3.1. The proposal involves the following, which are detailed further below.

- Construction of six accessible dwellings on the Linenhall Car Park site.
- Demolition of No. 3 Bridge Street, and construction of a new commercial unit at ground floor level and a one-bedroom residential dwelling at first floor level facing Bridge Street, and a community facility facing Linenhall Street.
- Demolition of No. 2 Bridge Street and an existing modular building on the car park to facilitate the creation of an east-west pedestrian connection to the rear of St Nicholas Catholic Church.
- Landscape improvements to St Nicholas Church Gardens.
- Demolition of 27/28 Bridge Street to create an east-west pedestrian connection through Meeting House Lane and further landscape improvements.
- Landscaping improvements to the Síocháin Peace Gardens.

Construction of new accessible residential dwellings on the Linenhall Car Park

3.2. The proposal comprises the construction of six universally accessible residential units on the existing car park, set back from Linenhall Street and aligned with St Nicholas' Church. The rear of the dwellings will be fully paved and comprise a communal open space together with four parallel parking spaces and one accessible parking space.



Figure 3.1: Proposed Ground Floor (left) and First Floor (right) plan

Demolition of No.3 Bridge Street, and construction of a new mixed use development.

- 3.3. Demolition of No. 3 Bridge Street, and construction of commercial unit at ground floor level and a one-bedroom residential dwelling at first floor level facing Bridge Street, and a community facility to the rear.



Figure 3.1: Proposed Ground Floor (left) and First Floor (right) plan

Pedestrian route to the rear of St Nicholas Catholic Church

- 3.4. No. 2 Bridge Street and an existing modular building within the car park will be demolished to facilitate the creation of an east–west pedestrian connection to the rear of St Nicholas' Church.
- 3.5. The proposed pedestrian route will provide a direct link between Bridge Street and Linenhall Street and will incorporate stairs, a pedestrian ramp and new paving.



Figure 3.2: Proposed Bridge Street elevation with new east-west pedestrian route.

Landscape improvements to St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens

- 3.6. Landscape improvements to St Nicholas' Church Gardens will comprise the removal of three existing trees and the planting of two new replacement trees. A total of 152 m² of new landscaping and planting is proposed, along with the installation of three new benches.
- 3.7. Works also include granite re-paving throughout the garden area and the provision of a new brushed concrete pedestrian ramp to improve accessibility.
- 3.8. In addition, the existing Jesus statute is proposed to be relocated from the centre to an infill area in the northern part of the gardens.



Figure 3.3: Proposed landscape improvements to St Nicholas Church gardens

Meeting House Lane landscape improvements and New East–West Pedestrian Link

- 3.9. The demolition of 27/28 Bridge Street will facilitate an east–west connection between Bridge Street and Linenhall Street. The proposals also include landscape improvements to Meeting House Lane, incorporating planting, the addition of six new trees, and the repaving of the lane. Six Sheffield bicycle stands are proposed.



Figure 3.4: Proposed landscape improvements to Meeting House Lane

Landscape enhancements to Síocháin Peace Gardens

- 3.10. Landscaping improvements are proposed for the Síocháin Peace Gardens, including new walkways, a sensory play area, sensory planting, the removal of seven trees, and the planting of 23 replacement trees. The proposals also include seven benches and the relocation of an existing monument.
- 3.11. New play areas are proposed, including a sensory play area featuring a water prism, sound roller, stone xylophone, and wind pipes. In addition, active play elements are proposed, including a climbing structure and stepping logs.
- 3.12. The proposed enhancements to the park also include five Sheffield cycle stands, along with one e-scooter stand to promote active travel.



Figure 3.5: Proposed landscaping enhancements to Síocháin Peace Gardens

4. EIA Thresholds and Criteria

Legislation and Guidance

- 4.1. The thresholds and criteria for developments that may require EIA Screening are set out in EU and Irish Legislation. The EU legislation is comprised of the original EIA Directive and two further amendment Directives which complete the EIA Directive:
- Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985
 - Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011
 - Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014
- 4.2. The EIA Directive is subsequently carried through to Irish legislation in the form of:
- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)
 - Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)
 - The Roads Act 1993 (as amended)
- 4.3. Part 10 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) ('the 2001 Regulations') identifies the requirements for EIA, with Schedule 5 Parts 1 & 2, respectively aligned with Annexes I & II of the EIA Directive, providing the relevant criteria and thresholds for potential EIA development in Ireland.
- 4.4. Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) sets out the types of road projects that may require the road authority to prepare an EIS. These are large-scale projects such as new or realigned roads of four lanes or more, new bridges or tunnels that are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
- 4.5. The EIA Screening report also references the following documents from relevant bodies:

European Commission

- Interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2024.
- EU and Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening, 2017.

Government of Ireland

- EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding sub-threshold development, 2020.
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, 2019.
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN02: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, 2021.

Environmental Protection Agency

- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, 2022.

Project Type

- 4.6. Schedule 5 Part 1 of the 2001 Regulations is aligned with Annex I of the EIA Directive, and identifies those developments for which EIA and the submission of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is mandatory. This includes major infrastructure projects such as airports, motorways or power stations. The proposed development does not meet these criteria.
- 4.7. Schedule 5 Part 2 is aligned with Annex II of the EIA Directive, and lists the type of development that may require an EIA depending on whether the site area and quantum of development exceeds certain thresholds and criteria and subsequently if there is potential for likely significant environmental effects. The two relevant categories for the proposed development are 'urban development', listed at paragraph 10 (b) (iv) and 'more than 500 dwelling units' listed at paragraph 10 (b) (i) of Schedule 5 Part 2.
- 4.8. The thresholds for EIA for this project category are listed as development in a business district with a site area over 2 hectares, in a built-up area with a site area of over 10 hectares and elsewhere with a site area over 20 hectares. For the purposes of EIA, the 2001 Regulations define 'business district' as a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use. The site is located within the city centre, in an area predominantly characterised by retail and commercial land uses and predominantly zones as Town Centre. It is therefore considered part of a designated 'business district'. According to the relevant EIA regulations, the applicable threshold for projects in this category is a site area exceeding 2 hectares. The proposed development, with a total site area of approximately 0.6 hectares, is significantly below this threshold. As such, the proposed development does not meet the criteria for EIA under this project category.
- 4.9. Therefore, given the scale and nature of the Proposed Development, the proposed development does not meet the thresholds and criteria for the most appropriate potential project type of 'urban development' or '500 dwelling units' as set out in the relevant legislation and guidance.
- 4.10. As such, as defined in Article 92 of the 2001 Regulations, the proposals are considered 'sub-threshold' development. Accordingly, Section 5 (Assessment) provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against the Schedule 7 criteria against which sub-threshold development is required to be assessed.
- 4.11. The proposal does not exceed any of the criteria for EIA development set out in Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended).

5. Screening Review

Schedule 7 Criteria: Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)

- 5.1. Schedule 7 of the 2001 Regulations sets out the considerations for determining whether development that is within the criteria listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 should be subject to an EIA. Considerations relate to the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the types and characteristics of the potential impacts.
- 5.2. Schedule 7A of the Regulations sets out the information to be provided by the applicant for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA. The following table assesses the Proposed Development against the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

Table 5.1 Review of Proposed Development against Schedule 7 Criteria

Schedule 7 Criteria	Review
1. Characteristics of Proposed Development	
The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	
(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development	The proposed development comprises landscape improvements to Siocháin Peace Gardens, St. Nicholas Church Gardens, and Meeting House Lane; construction of a commercial unit, seven new dwellings and the provision of a new community facility within the Linenhall car park, across a total site area of approximately 0.6 hectares.
(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	The proposals align with the Dundalk Local Area Plan 2025–2031 (2025), which identifies St Nicholas Quarter as a key opportunity for regeneration, following a decline in footfall and high levels of vacancy in the area. The Plan seeks to redefine the quarter as a northern access point to the town centre. Dundalk has also been identified as a regional growth centre, as a gateway into Northern Ireland in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031 for the Eastern and Midland Region. The proposals are located approximately 110 metres east of a pending planning application (ref. 2560624) relating to the demolition of an existing warehouse and the construction of a multi-storey apartment building comprising 20 dwellings. Given the distance from the proposed

	development, there is not considered to be any potential for cumulative effects to arise. The proposals are located approximately 150 metres north of an approved planning application (ref. 2560114) for accessibility works to Saint Nicholas Church of Ireland Parish Church. Given the distance from the proposed development, and the limited scale of this proposal, no potential for cumulative effects is considered to arise. The proposals are located approximately 230 metres to the east of an approved planning application (ref: 2460312) for the construction of a three storey apartment building for 18 dwellings. Given the distance from the proposed development, there is not considered to be any potential for significant cumulative effects to arise.
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works	Three buildings (Nos. 2, 3 and 27/28 Bridge Street), are proposed to be demolished. The adoption of appropriate measures for control of dust and noise during demolition works will ensure that significant adverse effects are avoided.
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	The proposed development will require the excavation and removal of soils and materials for the purposes of excavation for the foundations for the new build elements of the proposal (7 residential units, 1 commercial unit and the community facility. All soil excavated is proposed to be re-used on site, but should soil be exported this will be classified as inert and non-hazardous in accordance with the EPA's Waste Classification Guidance dated 1st June 2015, ensuring that waste and other materials removed from the site will have no significant effect on the environment. Waste material transferred would be undertaken by an appropriately permitted waste collection permit holder and bought to an appropriately permitted or licenced facility. The use of water during demolition and construction of the proposals will not be at a level which would cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment. The proposed landscape enhancements including those to the Siocháin Peace Garden, St Nicholas Catholic Church gardens and Meeting House

	Lane which offer an opportunity to enhance local biodiversity and improve the ecological value of the site compared to its current condition.
(e) the production of waste,	Construction of the proposed development will employ best practice measures to ensure safe and effective site waste management. During operation, a facilities management company will undertake on-site management of waste in accordance with all legal requirements and employ suitably permitted/licenced contractors to undertake off-site management of their waste in accordance with all legal requirements. All foul water sewage arising from the new residential dwellings will be processed at the Dundalk Waste Water Treatment Plant. Significant adverse effects from the production of waste will therefore be avoided.
(f) pollution and nuisances	The nature of the proposed uses means that the proposed development will not result in significant pollution or nuisances. During the construction phase, appropriate management techniques will be applied to reduce the risk of 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	There is no potential for the Proposed Development to give rise to significant adverse effects on the environment due to accidents and/or disasters.
2. Location of proposed development The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:	
(a) the existing and approved land use	The site area, excluding St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens, and the Siocháin Peace Garden, are zoned as 'Town Centre'. The Siocháin Peace Garden is zoned as 'Open Space' and St Nicholas Catholic Church as 'Community facilities'. The proposed development therefore aligns fully with the existing land use zoning of the site.

	The proposed works are aligned with the Dundalk Local Area Plan (2025) which identifies St Nicholas Quarter as an area of opportunity for regeneration, following a decline in footfall and high levels of vacancy.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	The existing site is largely hardstanding, with areas of soft landscaping at St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens and Síocháin Peace Garden. These existing areas of soft landscaping are to be subject to improvements comprising introduction further planting and trees. The proposals include the removal of 10 trees - three located within St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens and seven within Síocháin Peace Gardens. A total of 31 replacement trees are proposed, including two within St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens, six along Meeting House Lane, and 23 within Síocháin Peace Gardens. As such, the works are not considered to result in a loss of or reduction to habitat area. The proposed landscape improvements to the Síocháin Peace Garden are located adjacent to the Dundalk Bay SPA, on the opposite site of Fairgreen Road, which provides a buffer between the two. The wider site is located 0.6km from Dundalk Bay SAC, and 2.2km from Dundalk Bay RAMSAR. There are no known direct hydrological pathways linking the project area to these sites and therefore there is not considered to be any potential for significant adverse effects to arise from either construction or operation of the proposed development in this regard.
c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths	There are no watercourses or wetlands on or directly adjacent to the site. As noted above, there are not considered to be any hydrological pathways to the Dundalk Bay.
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment	The proposed landscape improvements to the Síocháin Peace Garden are located adjacent to the Dundalk Bay SPA on the opposite site of Fairgreen Road, which provides a buffer between the two. The wider site is located 0.6km from Dundalk Bay SAC, and 2.2km from Dundalk Bay

	RAMSAR. There is no functional link or pathways between the site and the identified Natura 2000 sites and therefore there is not considered to be any potential for significant adverse effects to arise from either construction or operation of the proposed development in this regard.
(iii) mountain and forest areas	N/A
(iv) nature reserves and parks	N/A
(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive	Síocháin Peace Garden is located directly adjacent to the Dundalk Bay SPA. A buffer created by Fairgreen Road, ensures there is no functional link or pathway with the proposed development site. Similarly there are no functional hydrological or ecological pathways linking the site to Dundalk Bay SAC (0.6km from the site) Dundalk Bay Ramsar site (2.2km from the site).
(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	None relevant to the characteristics of the scheme.
(vii) densely populated areas	The total population of the wider Dundalk area is approximately 139,100. Linenhall Street is predominantly residential in character, whereas Bridge Street is mixed-use, featuring active ground-floor uses with residential units above. The proposed development includes landscape enhancements to St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens, the Síocháin Peace Garden, and Meeting House Lane. The proposals also include the construction of seven accessible residential dwellings, a commercial unit and a community facility on Linenhall Street.

	The proposed development will support the regeneration of this area in alignment with the objectives within the Dundalk Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (2025).
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The proposed development is located within an Architectural Conservation Area ('Clanbrassil Street'), within a Zone of Archaeological potential, with two protected structures on site, and three archaeological monuments within the site boundary. The accompanying Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment states that the public benefit of the public realm enhancements is capable of outweighing the loss of the demolishing of the undesignated No. 2 Bridge Street. The residual impact is judged to be moderate adverse in respect of fabric loss and townscape rhythm, and moderate beneficial in respect to urban-grain repair, accessibility and vista, with a net assessment of slight beneficial. Through alignment with the recommendations of the Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment the proposed development is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse effects in this regard that would warrant a full EIA. The accompanying Archaeological Assessment states that the proposed development is located within the walled town of Dundalk and may have once contained part of the walls or banks associated with the medieval defences along Linenhall Street. These defences were demolished in the 18th century, and it is unknown whether any structural remains survive below ground level. The assessment confirms that there is no evidence of the town defences surviving above ground; however, previous ground investigations indicate that there is potential for archaeological deposits to exist beneath the current ground level. To address this, the assessment recommends that the buildings proposed for removal be subject to a written and photographic record prior to demolition. In addition, all ground disturbance works should be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Should any features of archaeological potential be discovered during the course of the works, further mitigation measures may be required, such as preservation in situ or by record.

	Through alignment with the recommendations of the Archaeological Assessment the proposed development is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse effects in this regard.
3. Types and characteristics of 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)	The proposed development will affect approximately 0.6 hectares of land, comprising both brownfield redevelopment and landscape enhancement proposals. The proposed development will have beneficial effects in contributing to the rejuvenation and regeneration of the wider area. Further effects as discussed in this report are considered to be relatively geographically confined to the site.
(b) the nature of the impact	The proposed development includes landscape improvements, alongside the delivery of a new community facility and residential dwellings. Whilst the works are small in scale, they are expected to give rise to moderate long-term effects during the operational phase. These effects relate to the features set out below and are examined in greater detail in Section 3 of this report: • Cultural Heritage & Townscape: The accompanying Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that the overall impact of the proposed development, taking into account the benefits of the scheme and the proposed demolition of No. 3 Bridge Street, is assessed as 'slight beneficial'. A range of mitigation measures has been incorporated into the design to address any residual impacts to avoid significant adverse effects. • Archaeology: The accompanying Archaeological Assessment confirms that there is no evidence of medieval archaeology above ground; however, there remains potential for archaeological deposits below ground level. This can be addressed through a programme of archaeological mitigation to avoid significant adverse effects.

	• Landscape and Views: The proposal will enhance the local townscape through the landscape improvements. • Ecology & Biodiversity: The landscape proposals will include measures to enhance ecology and biodiversity through the proposed landscape improvements to Síocháin Peace Gardens, St Nicholas Catholic Church Gardens and Meeting House Lane. • Transport & Access: The proposals promote sustainable and active travel modes through the removal of 21 car parking spaces at Linenhall Car Park, coupled with the delivery of six cycle parking spaces at Meeting House Lane and a further five cycle parking spaces, together with one e-scooter stands, at Síocháin Peace Gardens. • Population & Socio-Economic: The proposal includes the delivery of seven accessible residential units, a commercial unit, and a new community facility. In addition, landscape enhancements to Síocháin Peace Garden, Meeting House Lane and St Nicholas Catholic Church Garden. It is expected that the proposals will have a positive impact on the local population and contribute to socio-economic benefits. • Water: There are no watercourses or wetlands on the site and no new ones will be provided. There is the potential for temporary adverse effects on human health and population, water, ecology and biodiversity during the construction phase as a result of the emission of dust, noise and air pollution. The construction works will be carried out with best practice measures including effective site waste management, dust mitigation and limited construction hours, in order to safeguard the amenity of the surrounding population. Due to the scale and temporary nature of the works, the construction effects are not significant and would not warrant EIA. Therefore, the nature of the potential impacts is not considered to be significant within the meaning of the EIA Directive.
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(c) the transboundary nature of the impact	N/A
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact	Impacts will be of low intensity and complexity.
(e) the probability of the impact	All above effects can reasonably be expected to occur with all mitigation measures to be properly implemented. The impacts are not considered to be significant within the meaning of the EIA Directive.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	There would be temporary and long-term effects as described in 3(b) above.
(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	As described in Section 2 of this report and 1 (b) of this table, the site forms part of a regional growth centre, as a gateway into Northern Ireland in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031 for the Eastern and Midland Region. As noted above, two planning applications have been approved in the past year at distances of 150-230 metres from the site. In addition, there is one application which is currently under consideration around 110 metres. Given the nature and distance of these neighbouring developments, it is considered unlikely that any significant cumulative impacts would arise should the outstanding application be approved. As such, there is not considered to be potential for significant cumulative effects within the meaning of the EIA Directive.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	The construction-related impacts are anticipated to be consistent with the normal range of effects associated with developments of this scale and nature. As no significant effects are identified, no mitigation measures beyond those already specified are proposed.

- 5.3. Following the review of the Proposed Development against the Schedule 7 criteria, construction works are anticipated to be temporary adverse, whilst operational effects are anticipated to be long term moderate positive. None of the anticipated effects are likely to be significant within the meaning of the EIA Directive.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. As established in Section 4 of this report (EIA Thresholds and Criteria), the proposed development is considered sub-threshold 'urban development' as set out in the EIA Directive and Schedule 5 of the 2001 Regulations.
- 6.2. This EIA Screening Report has provided an overview assessment of the proposed development against the Schedule 7 criteria of the 2001 Regulations. Section 5 examined the nature of the development including the size and location of the development, and the types and characteristics of likely potential effects. Construction works are anticipated to result in temporary adverse effects, whilst the operational phase is anticipated to result in long term moderate positive effects.
- 6.3. The proposed development does not have the potential to cause significant environmental effects and an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required to support a planning application.

Appendix 1: EIA Reports Guidelines: Description of Effects (EPA, 2022)

Quality of Effects It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral	Positive Effects A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).
	Neutral Effects No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
	Negative/adverse Effects A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).
Describing the Significance of Effects "Significance" is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful (also see Determining Significance below.).	Imperceptible An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
	Not significant An effect which causes noticeable ² changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
	Slight Effects An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.

	Moderate Effects An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
	Significant Effects An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Very Significant An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Profound Effects An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics
Describing the Extent and Context of Effects Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.	Extent Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.
	Context Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)
6.1 6.2	
Describing the Probability of Effects Descriptions of effects should establish how likely it is that the	Likely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.

predicted effects will occur – so that the CA can take a view of the balance of risk over advantage when making a decision.	Unlikely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects ‘Duration’ is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful.	Momentary Effects Effects lasting from seconds to minutes
	Brief Effects Effects lasting less than a day
	Temporary Effects Effects lasting less than a year
	Short-term Effects Effects lasting one to seven years.
	Medium-term Effects Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
	Long-term Effects Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
	Permanent Effects Effects lasting over sixty years
	Reversible Effects Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration
	Frequency of Effects

	Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)
6.3	
Describing the Types of Effects	Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary Effects) Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway.
	Cumulative Effects The addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.
	'Do-Nothing Effects' The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.
	'Worst case' Effects The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.
	Indeterminable Effects When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.
	Irreversible Effects When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.
	Residual Effects

	The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.
	Synergistic Effects Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents, (e.g. combination of SOx and NOx to produce smog).