



**AVRIO**



## **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report**

Active Travel Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme,  
Ballymahon, Co. Longford

Project Details

Project Reference:	AEMP-378 (A857-T8)
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Client:	CST Group
Site Address:	R392, Ballymahon, Co. Longford
Services Provided:	Preparation of an ‘Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report’

AVRIO Quality Information

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# Contents

Project Details.....	2
AVRIO Quality Information .....	2
Limitations .....	3
1. Introduction .....	5
1.1 Statement of Authority .....	5
2. Description of the Proposed Development.....	7
2.1 Site Location & Current Use .....	7
2.2 Development Description .....	7
3. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Exercise .....	8
3.1 Relevant Environmental Impact Assessment Legislation .....	8
3.2 EIA Screening Methodology .....	8
3.3 EIA Screening – Requirement for Mandatory EIA .....	9
3.4 Projects Considered for the Cumulative Assessment.....	11
3.5 Sub-threshold Development .....	15
3.6 Sub-threshold Assessment .....	16
3.6.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development .....	16
3.6.2 Location of the Proposed Development.....	19
3.6.3 Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts .....	21
4. Conclusions and Recommendations.....	26
Appendix A – Site Location .....	27
Appendix B – Proposed Development.....	29
Appendix C – Additional Proposed Development Scheme Plans .....	31



# 1. Introduction

AVRIO Environmental Management has been instructed by CST Group to complete an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening exercise for a proposed development as part of the R392 Active Travel Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme in Ballymahon, County Longford (Irish Grid Reference (IGR): N 15273 57491). The proposed development, detailed in section 2, includes works to upgrade a section of road and footpath along the R392 in Ballymahon located between the car park adjoining St Matthew's National School and continues along the R392 out of Ballymahon, past Ballymahon Vocational School to the junction with the L1128 in Ballymahon County Longford.

This EIA Screening exercise was undertaken to assist the relevant authorities (Longford County Council) in determining if EIA is required for the proposed development as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the Act) and in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended (the Regulations). Certain projects, listed in Schedule 5 of the regulations require mandatory EIA. Others, also listed in the Schedule 5 of the regulations, contain threshold levels and for projects that fall below these thresholds it is the decision of the competent authority to decide if an EIA and the associated Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required.

Whether a 'sub threshold' development should be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in significant environmental effects. Significant effects may arise due to the nature of the development, its scale or extent and its location in relation to the characteristics of the receiving area, particularly sensitive environments.

This report documents the methodology employed to complete the screening exercise, having regard to relevant legislation and guidance documents. It also sets out a clear rationale for each decision made in the process.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) was completed by AVRIO for this Proposed Scheme in January 2024. The AASR has informed the ecological considerations within this EIA Screening Report.

## 1.1 Statement of Authority

**Mark McQuaid BSc (Hons):** This report has been prepared by Mark McQuaid. Mark is a Senior Environmental Manager at AVRIO Environmental Management. He holds an Advanced Certificate in Agriculture and a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from the Institute of Technology, Sligo. Mark is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA), an organisation requiring peer review and a high standard of professional conduct. He has over 10 years of experience within the environmental industry. Mark has experience contributing to a number of Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA), for submission to the Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), United Kingdom Environment Agency (EA) and a number of Local Authorities throughout the UK and Ireland. Mark has prepared numerous environmental licence applications and surrender applications, for

and including Industrial Emissions Licences (IEL), Integrated Pollution Control Licences (IPC) and Waste Licences for submission to each of the above authorities. Mark has extensive experience in the sustainable development and management of a number of IED licenced facilities throughout Ireland and the UK as well as general consultancy within the waste management and environmental compliance sectors. Mark has extensive experience in the development of site-specific Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP), input to Habitat Regulation Assessments (HRA/AASR/NIS), undertaking Environmental & Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), Invasive Species Surveys & Management and production of site-specific mitigation proposals for a range of developments throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

**Fergal Maguire NDA, BSc (Hons), PIEMA:** This report has been reviewed and approved by Fergal Maguire. Fergal is the General Manager and Principal Environmental and Ecological Consultant at AVRIO Environmental Management. He holds an NDA and BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from the Institute of Technology, Sligo. Fergal is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA), an organisation requiring peer review and a high standard of professional conduct. He has over 12 years of experience within the environmental industry. He has experience contributing to a number of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA), environmental licence and surrender applications, including Industrial Emissions Licences (IEL), Integrated Pollution Control Licences (IPC) and Waste Licences for submission to the Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), United Kingdom Environment Agency (E.A.) and a number of Local Authorities throughout the U.K. and Ireland. Fergal has extensive experience in the sustainable development and management of a number of IED licenced facilities throughout Ireland, the U.K. and greater Europe, as well as general consultancy within the waste management, environmental compliance, and ecological sectors. Fergal has extensive experience in Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA), including priority species such as Bats, Badger, Otter, Red Squirrel, Pine martin and breeding birds, and habitats assessments, including Phase I and Fossitt Habitat Surveys. Fergal has extensive experience in Habitat Regulation Assessments (HRA/AASR/NIS), Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), Invasive Species Surveys and Management and production of site-specific mitigation proposals for a range of developments throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

## 2. Description of the Proposed Development

### 2.1 Site Location & Current Use

The proposed development site is located on the R392 in Ballymahon, Co. Longford (IGR: N 15273 57491). The proposed route will commence on the R392 road at the car park adjoining St. Matthews National School and continue along the R392 out of Ballymahon past Ballymahon Vocational School to the junction with the L1128.

The site is located approx. 7.6km southwest of Abbeyshrule village centre, 18km south of Longford town centre and 20km northeast of Athlone town centre. The surrounding area encompasses a variety of features, including roadways, residential dwellings, St. Matthews National School, Ballymahon Vocational School, commercial complexes associated with Ballymahon, treelines, and hedgerows. The Inny River (IE\_SH\_26I011350) flows approx. 813m to the southeast of the development, which is a tributary of Lough Ree which flows into the Shannon River.

There are no SACs within 2km of the application site; the closest is Lough Ree SAC which is situated 4.64km southwest of the application site. There are no SPAs within 2km of the application site; the closest is Lough Ree SPA which is situated 5km southwest of the application site. There are no Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) or proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) within 2km of the application site; the closest is Forthill Bog NHA which is situated 8.36km northwest of the application site. The site and immediate environs consist of Buildings & Artificial Surfaces (BL3), Stone Walls and Other Stonework (BL1), Amenity Grassland (GA2) Scattered Trees and parkland (WD5) Ornamental/Non-Native Shrub (WS3), Hedgerows (WL1) and Treelines (WL2).

A site location map has been included in Appendix A of this report.

### 2.2 Development Description

The proposed development project titled 'Active Travel Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme' is part of a Pedestrian and Cycle Improvement scheme, which is part of Longford County Council's Active Travel strategy. The aim of the project is to improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure through the provision of improved walking and cycling facilities which will provide a safer alternative route of connectivity, while separation from routes of high vehicular concentration within Ballymahon Town. This project will include segregated pedestrian and cycle facilities for approximately 350m along the R392 between Saint Matthews National School and Moygh Road Junction (L1128). Widening of existing footpaths, junction tightening as well as the provision of a new ramped zebra crossing in front of the Ballymahon Vocational School will be provided. The works will also include the construction of a new boundary wall, additional signage and road markings.

A number of additional development schemes are being proposed to be undertaken within the town of Ballymahon. These additional proposed development schemes have been considered as part of this screening assessment. Further details have been provided on these proposed developments within Ballymahon in section 3.4 of this report.

Appendix B of this report includes the proposed scheme layout plan for the Active Travel Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme.

## 3. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Exercise

### 3.1 Relevant Environmental Impact Assessment Legislation

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements derive 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 and as amended in turn by Directive 2014/52/EU.

The consolidated European Union Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the 'EIA Directive'), was transposed into Irish planning legislation by the Planning and Development Acts 2000, as amended and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (the 'Regulations'). The EIA Directive was amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the 'amended Directive') which has been transposed into Irish law with the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018).

The legislation requires screening to be undertaken to determine whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made.

### 3.2 EIA Screening Methodology

EIA Screening is the first stage of the EIA process and determines whether the environmental impact of a proposed development or project will be such that an EIA is required. There are a number of steps in the screening process.

The mandatory requirement for an EIA is generally based on the nature or scale of a proposed development, as set out in Annex I and II of the amended Directive. This identifies certain types and scales of development, generally based on thresholds of scale, for which EIA is mandatory. In the case of a sub-threshold development proposed by a local authority, the authority is required to carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development. Where there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 for the purposes of a screening determination.

The European Commission (2017) have published a Guidance on Screening document<sup>1</sup> (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended 2014/52/EU) which summarises the need for an EIA based on specific measures and/or limits, according to predefined criteria such as the projects characteristics, location and/or certain project features such as a project's potential impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2017). Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Screening.

In addition, there is sometimes a requirement for EIA 'sub-threshold' developments, and, in this respect, it may be necessary to undertake a screening exercise to assess whether the proposed development requires the preparation of an EIAR.

A methodology was developed to formally screen the proposed development, which was based on '*Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*' (EPA 2022)<sup>2</sup>. The screening exercise is divided into a section on Mandatory EIA and another on Sub-threshold or Discretionary EIA. In each section below a screening matrix is presented which examines the requirement for EIA according to the criteria set out in the relevant legislation. The rationale behind the responses within the matrix is provided at the end of each section.

### 3.3 EIA Screening – Requirement for Mandatory EIA

The EIA Directive specifies the classes of project for which an EIA is required and the information which must be furnished within an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). In accordance with Article 4 (1) of the EIA Directive, all projects listed in Annex I to the EIA Directive are considered as having significant effects on the environment and shall be subject to Environmental Assessment. For projects listed in Annex II to the EIA Directive, the national authorities may determine whether an EIA is needed, either on the basis of thresholds / criteria or on a case-by-case examination.

The obligations as set out in the EIA Directive have been implemented into Irish law by the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

In order to determine whether an EIA is required for the Proposed Scheme, it is necessary to determine whether it is a project listed in one of the Annexes to the 2014 EIA Directive. These Annexes have been transposed into domestic law by the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The relevant classes of developments that require EIA are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Classes within Schedule 5, Parts 1 and 2, that are most relevant to the Proposed Scheme were considered and a determination against each one made, as follows.

#### **Part 1 of Schedule 5**

No classes of developments as outlined in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) were considered applicable or fitting of the proposed project description.

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<sup>2</sup> EPA (2022). Guidelines of the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports.

**Part 2 of Schedule 5**

The most relevant classes of development in Part 2 of Schedule 5 are Class 10(b) and 10(dd) which requires EIA for the following:

(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.

(dd) All private roads which would exceed 2000 metres in length.

On the basis of the above, the proposed scheme does not fall within the mandatory EIA requirements listed under Part 1 of Schedule 5. Additionally, the proposed scheme does not meet the threshold or correspond to the development descriptions as outlined in Part 2 of Schedule 5. The area covered by the proposed scheme is approx. 0.6 ha which is well below the 2 ha threshold which may apply if this project type under 10(b)(iv) were considered applicable. Furthermore, the proposed development relates to pedestrian and cycle facility improvements along a public road and not the construction or undertaking of works related to a new private road and, therefore, would not fall under the project type of 10(dd). Given the above, it is deemed the proposed scheme is not subject to EIA.

In addition, Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)<sup>3</sup> and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994<sup>4</sup> outline the legislative requirements that determine whether an EIA is mandatory for a proposed road development.

Section 50 (1) (a) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) states:

*“A road authority or the Authority shall prepare a statement of the likely effects on the environment (‘environmental impact statement’) of any proposed road development it proposes consisting of—*

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

Under point (iv) above, the prescribed types of proposed road developments are given in Regulation 8 of Roads Regulations, 1994. S.I. 119/1994 namely:

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<sup>3</sup> European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 279 of 2019)

<sup>4</sup> S.I. No. 119/1994 Roads Regulations, 1994



- (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”, or*
- (b) *“The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.”*

The proposed development scheme relates to pedestrian and cycle facility improvements along a public road and does not trigger the requirement for mandatory EIA under Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended) and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.

### 3.4 Projects Considered for the Cumulative Assessment

The proposed development scheme was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment. Additional proposed development schemes within Ballymahon highlighted to AVRIO by the Client for consideration include the following:

#### 1. Pobail Le Cheile Regeneration Project

a. The proposed development will consist of the following:

- i. The demolition of existing rear extension, construction of new rear extension, and refurbishment of the Dean Egan Library {LCC RPS No. 103 NIAH Reg. No. 13316028};
- ii. The construction of rear extension and refurbishment of Scoil Naisiunta Naomh Colmcille {LCC RPS No. 255 NIAH Reg. No. 13316003} and the segregation of a dedicated access adjacent to the Scoil accessing lands to the South;
- iii. The construction of a new community workshop facility, yard space and parking to the rear of Scoil Naisiunta Naomh Colmcille;
- iv. The refurbishment of the Convent of Mercy NIAH Reg. No. 13316005, demolition of existing side extension, construction of new extensions to the Southwest and Northeast of the Convent of Mercy;
- v. The construction of a new community hall, parking and set down area on the grounds of the Convent of Mercy;
- vi. The construction of public realm improvement works including shared surfaces, landscaping, widening of existing lane adjacent to the Dean Egan Library and associated realignment of existing boundary wall;
- vii. The provision of all groundworks, service connections, site drainage, internal paths, paving, parking, public lighting, public open space; and all associated site development works to complete the development; and
- viii. The proposed development is within the curtilage of protected structures LCC RPS No. 103 NIAH Reg. No. 13316028 and LCC RPS No. 255 NIAH Reg. No. 13316003 In the townlands of Ballymahon and Drinan, Co. Longford.

#### 2. R392 Main Street Ballymahon Upgrade



- a. The proposed development will consist of the following:
  - i. Breaking out of existing footpath and carriageway;
  - ii. Construction of new bituminous carriageway and concrete footpaths to a new alignment within the boundaries of the existing streetscape;
  - iii. Provision of tree pits, planting of trees and other landscaping measures to be dispersed throughout the length of the proposed works area;
  - iv. Provision of defined car parking within the proposed works area;
  - v. Replacement of existing street lighting with decorative columns and/or wall mounted lanterns;
  - vi. Minor alterations to existing surface water drainage features within the proposed works area; and
  - vii. Provision of ducts for undergrounding of existing cables.

### 3. N55 Nally's Corner Improvement Works

- a. The proposed development will consist of the following:
  - i. The upgrade and realignment of the existing T-junction of Main Street (R392) and the Edgeworthstown Road (N55) at Nally's corner to provide for a traffic signal junction.
  - ii. The upgrade and realignment of the existing T-junction of the Mullingar Road (R392) and the Athlone Road (N55) on the eastern side of the River Inny to provide for a roundabout junction.
  - iii. Street and public realm improvement works along the section of main Street between the two subject junctions proposed for upgrade works consisting of the provision of upgraded footpaths, cycle paths, carriageway, car parking, street furniture, road signage and markings, landscaping and planting and all ancillary site works.

### 4. Athlone Road Junction Improvement Works

- a. In 2018, the elected members of Longford County Council approved Part VIII No. 46 which comprised of improvement works to the N55 through Ballymahon. The previously approved scheme included:
  - i. A proposal to replace the existing priority junction at the Athlone Road with a roundabout.
  - ii. Proposals for dedicated cycle facilities on the N55 west of the Inny River.
- b. The previously approved scheme did not include proposals for:
  - i. Appropriate cycle facilities at either the Athlone Road Junction or the approaches thereto.
  - ii. Controlled crossing facilities at the Athlone Road Junction for either pedestrians or cyclists.
- c. Longford County Council proposes to amend the previously approved scheme as follows:

- i. Provide appropriate cycle facilities across the Athlone Road junction and on the approaches thereto.
- ii. Omit the previously approved roundabout and instead construct a signalised priority junction at the Athlone Road Junction.
- iii. Provide controlled crossing facilities at the Athlone Road junction for pedestrians and cyclists.

## 5. River Inny Walk

- a. The proposed development will consist of the following:
  - i. The construction of a c.232km long, 3m wide gravel/crushed limestone path to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists which would connect Ballymulvey, Ballymahon, Co. Longford to Newcastle Woods, Clonkeen, Co. Longford. The path would run in a general west-east direction alongside the northern bank of the River Inny through the Townslands of Ballymulvey and Clonkeen connecting to the network of forest trails (Coillte) to the northern section of Newcastle Woods. Fencing will be erected to various sections of the trail to separate from farmland with access to drinking water to be provided for farm animals at various junctures.

## 6. Future Aspirational Two-way Cycle Link to Royal Canal

- a. There is currently no detailed development description for this proposed scheme given its aspirational nature. However, it would be proposed that a two-way cycle track be constructed along the R392 linking the Active Travel Pedestrian and cycle scheme under consideration in this report to the Royal Canal to the northwest of Ballymahon town. The proposed development scheme would extend along the R392 for a distance of approximately 950 meters.

An overall site plan highlighting the locations of the above proposed schemes has been included in Appendix C of this report.

Further to the above proposed development projects, the online planning system for Longford County Council<sup>5</sup>, was consulted on the 27/09/2024 and further approved/proposed projects identified in the area included:

### 1. Planning Ref: 19312

- a. proposed demolition of existing fire damaged building formerly known as "St. Matthews Girls School" and all ancillary works

### 2. Planning Ref: 2460100

- a. development for a Discount Foodstore Supermarket with ancillary off-licence sales. The proposed development comprises: 1) The demolition of existing single storey former school building and site clearance; 2) Construction of new footpath to (West side) of existing Church View access road and associated and ancillary

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<sup>5</sup> Longford County Council (2024) Planning Application Finder (ePlan Online). Available from: <https://eplanning.ie/eplan/searchtypes?localAuthorityId=18>

road realignment; 3) Construction of new access road from Church View access road, providing vehicular and pedestrian access to the proposed development (and facilitating the future development of adjoining lands); 4) The construction of a single storey Discount Foodstore (with ancillary off-licence use) with mono-pitch roof measuring 2,291 sqm gross floor space with a net retail sales area of 1,489 sqm; and, 5) Provision of car and cycle parking, boundary treatments, free standing and building mounted signage, covered trolley bay, refrigeration and air conditioning plant and equipment, hard and soft landscaping, public lighting, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, roof mounted solar panels, ESB substation, drainage, utility and services infrastructure and connections, and all other associated and ancillary development and works above and below ground level

**3. Planning Ref: 16177**

- a. install a temporary ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) classroom with link corridor connecting to the existing school building, resulting minor modifications to the existing building, connection to existing services and associated site works

**4. Planning Ref: 19243**

- a. demolition of the existing trolley bay (19 Sq.m), demolition of the existing entrance door and front windows, to allow for a new single storey extension of 26 Sq.m (additional floor space of 7 Sq.m) which will incorporate the relocation of the entrance door, a new internal access ramp and new trolley bay complete with new windows, new external limestone wall cladding, internal reconfiguration of the retail area to include a new Post Office area of 19 Sq. m., external signage and all associated site works

**5. Planning Ref: 19117**

- a. (a) demolition of existing single storey extension to the rear of existing Dental Surgery previously granted planning permission under 07/1096 and proposed two storey extension to rear of existing surgery, (b) change of use of adjoining single storey residential building to use as dental surgery with provision of new single storey extension to the rear, link corridor between buildings, new front access door, (c) to include changes to existing floor layouts to both buildings and changes to relevant elevations, (d) provision of parking area to rear upgrade to access and gate, connection to relevant drainage, provision of boundary wall/fences and retaining walls, signage and all associated site development works where it is now proposed to reduce in size the proposed extension to the rear of building away from lateral boundaries, retain ground excavation works and amendments boundary treatment including rear access and boundary location

**6. Planning Ref: 19229**

- a. proposed construction of 1 No. prefabricated building to be used as a mainstream classroom together with relocation of existing playground shelter & all ancillary site works

**7. Planning Ref: 19209**

- a. change of use of our existing convenience shop to include part off-licence use (gross floor area for off-licence use 20 sq.m) and associated works

#### **8. Planning Ref: 21256**

- a. the construction of a new single storey extension to existing school building to accommodate new w/c facilities and all associated site development works

#### **9. Planning Ref: 19202**

- a. the construction of 98 no. residential units & crèche to be completed in two phases and all associated ancillary site development works. The 1st phase will consist of (a) 46 no. 2 storey semi-detached 3 bed townhouses, (b) 12 no. 2 storey terraced 3 bed townhouses, (c) 4 no. semi-detached single storey 2 bed townhouses & 1 no. detached single storey 2 bed townhouse, (d) 20 no. 2 bed apartments in 5 no. 2 storey building units, and (d) a mixed use 2 storey building unit consisting of 3 no. 1 bed apartments & crèche with ancillary accommodation. The second phase will consist of 12 no. 2 storey semi-detached 3 bed townhouses on removal of a temporary sewage treatment system. Works will include 2 new vehicular entrances, associated internal access roads & junctions; carparking; footpaths; all boundary treatments and associated landscaping and open spaces; street lighting; associated bin & bicycle stores, a pumping station and temporary sewage treatment system within the site which will be removed on the upgrading of the public foul system; connection to the existing public services; and all associated ancillary site development works

#### **10. Planning Ref: 2360195**

- a. the proposed construction of an industrial/commercial/warehousing unit which was previously granted full planning permission under planning reference number PL04/1253 to the rear of existing car showroom & garage, connection to existing services and all ancillary site works

#### **11. Planning Ref: 21144**

- a. proposed construction of light industrial unit with relevant signage, provision of car parking, entrances, boundary wall/fence, connection to public services and all associated ancillary site works.

## **3.5 Sub-threshold Development**

The EIA Directive states at Paragraph 27 that, ‘the Screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment.’

The EIA Directive is set out under Annexes I-III of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive). Annex I list developments for which EIA is mandatory and Annex II lists projects which require a determination of their likely significant effects. Criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA is set out in Annex III.

The Roads Act 1993, as amended requires information detailed in Annex III of the EIA Directive to be considered in determining whether a road scheme is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The EIA Directive includes an updated Annex III 'Selection Criteria Referred to in Article 4 (3)' (Criteria to determine whether the projects listed in Annex II should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment). This Annex is mirrored in the 7th Schedule of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The criteria are grouped under three headings:

- Characteristics of projects;
- Location of projects; and
- Type and characteristics of the potential impacts.

The sub criteria associated with each of the above have been taken into account and are considered in the context of the Proposed Scheme in the sections below. To assist with the consideration of the above criteria, the Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening (European Commission 2017) has been used to support these considerations and subsequently inform the EIA screening recommendation.

As noted above, the proposed scheme does not constitute the nature or scale of any of the classes of development within Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning Regulations, and therefore, a sub-threshold assessment of the potential for significant environmental effects on the environment has been undertaken.

## 3.6 Sub-threshold Assessment

The EIA Regulations draw from the EIA Directive to set out screening criteria for EIA to assist in determining likely significant impacts and the requirement for EIA for projects which do not meet the thresholds in Schedule 5 Part 1 and Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Table 3.1 – 3.3 presents a summary of the findings of the sub-threshold assessment. It sets out the EIA screening criteria, a commentary on each of these (where these are addressed within the sub-threshold assessment), and a conclusion is drawn as to whether a significant impact against each criterion is identified.

### 3.6.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

**Table 3.1** Characteristics of the Proposed Development

EIA Screening Criteria	Commentary	Significant Impact
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The size and design of the whole of the proposed scheme	The proposed scheme is in total approx. 350 meters in length extending along the R392 road within the town of Ballymahon. The geographic extent of the proposed works is largely confined to the immediate area. Accordingly, there is no impact associated with the operational phase. The active works area comprises the existing road and pedestrian footpaths which will be excavated, upgraded and re finished in the new design. The scale of works is not considered significant.	No
Cumulation with other existing development and / or development the subject of a consent for the Proposed Scheme 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 proposed works have been assessed cumulatively. Section 3.4 of this report details a range of proposed projects in proximity of the proposed development and within the Town of Ballymahon. The majority of the proposed developments in the vicinity of the proposed scheme involve the construction of residential properties, extension of existing residential properties and the construction and upgrade to commercial properties. Additional proposed development schemes as highlighted by the Client were also considered. These proposed schemes include a range of upgrade works along the R392 and surrounding areas of the town of Ballymahon, primarily to improve pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. The proposed works as part of the scheme under consideration in this assessment would primarily consist of the development and upgrade of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and associated works as detailed in Section 2 of this report. Taking this into account and given the small scale and nature of the Proposed Scheme, no significant cumulative impacts have been identified, arising from the Proposed Scheme in combination with other existing and/or proposed development projects.	No
The nature of any associated demolition works	No major demolition works are proposed or anticipated as part of the Proposed Scheme. Demolition and rebuilding of minor structures such as boundary walls may be required to facilitate the development works, however, these works would be of a small scale and will not give rise to any significant impacts.	No
The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	Significant excavation works are not anticipated to be required as part of the Proposed Scheme, as such no significant impacts are expected. The proposed works will be required to reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of development areas where possible. Imported materials such as stone will be used as part of the development, the quantities of which are not considered significant when considering the scale of the proposal. The Proposed Scheme will not be located in any designated geological heritage or ecological site. No protected habitat or species were identified in the confines of the site location of the Proposed Scheme. The AASR completed by AVRIO concluded that the Proposed Scheme, individually or in combination, is not predicted to result in likely significant effects on any European protected sites.	No
The production of waste	The Proposed Scheme is not likely to have a significant environmental effect with regard to the production of waste. Waste materials will be produced during construction as a result of construction activities / processes. All waste generated will be	No

	required to be handled, reused where possible, or transferred and disposed of to an appropriately licensed / permitted waste disposal / recovery facility.	
Pollution and nuisances	<p>During construction there is potential that the Proposed Scheme may generate some noise nuisance and air pollution as a result of the construction works. The construction works will be subject to applicable standards including BS 5228:2009 and A1:2014 “Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites”.</p> <p>Construction will require the use of machinery such as excavators, lorries etc. and the presence of such machines may result in temporary increases in noise levels. Construction works will be required to be managed so as noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance ‘Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes’ (NRA, 2014).</p> <p>Standard construction measures will be required to be adopted to minimise the impact of any dust generated during construction.</p> <p>Any construction-related impacts arising from noise, lighting and dust are expected to be short term in duration given the scale and nature of works.</p> <p>No significant impacts from pollution or nuisances during the Construction or Operational Phase are anticipated from the Proposed Scheme. The Proposal to provide improved active travel infrastructure and pedestrian upgrades may reduce vehicular dependency which would be a positive impact for local air quality and noise levels into the future.</p>	No
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	The Proposed Scheme will be largely contained within the existing road network and will involve works small scale in nature that are not likely to have a significant impact on the surrounding environment. The likelihood of any accidents or incidents during construction and operation will be required to be managed in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation and by the implementation of best practice construction and operational procedure management.	No
The risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	The design and operation of the Proposed Scheme is not expected to result in water contamination or air pollution. All construction activities will be required to be carried out according to best practice guidelines and with the implementation of mitigation measures there will be no significant impacts on water or air.	No



	Significant impacts on human health are not anticipated.	
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### 3.6.2 Location of the Proposed Development

**Table 3.2** Location of the Proposed Development

EIA Screening Criteria	Commentary	Significant Impact
The existing and approved land use	The proposed scheme will be undertaken within the urban setting of Ballymahon town along the existing R392 Road which is maintained by Longford County Council. The location of the proposed scheme has been detailed previously in Section 2.1 of this report along with a description of the current site use. The Proposed Scheme will require no significant land take to allow for completion of the proposed works.	No
The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	<p>The extent of land take for this project is very limited as the proposed development scheme will be primarily within the extents of the existing R392 road and associated footpath areas. Given this to be the case, landcover primarily consists of artificial surfaces.</p> <p>No significant impact on soils is predicted.</p> <p>Baseline ecological surveys undertaken for the site as part of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report undertaken by AVRIO in January 2024 for the Proposed Scheme did not identify any significant natural resources that may be impacted within the proposed development area.</p>	No
<p>The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</p> <p>(i) Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</p>	There will be no impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment. The site location of the Proposed Scheme is located primarily within the existing R392 road network, the site of which is not located in any environment type as listed in (i) to (viii).	No

<div><div>(ii)</div><div>(ii) Coastal zones and the marine environment;</div></div> <div><div>(iii)</div><div>Mountain and forest areas;</div></div> <div><div>(iv)</div><div>Nature reserves and parks;</div></div> <div><div>(v)</div><div>Areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive;</div></div> <div><div>(vi)</div><div>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;</div></div> <div><div>(vii)</div><div>Densely populated areas; and</div></div>		
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(viii) Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.		
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### 3.6.3 Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

**Table 3.3** Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

EIA Screening Criteria	Commentary	Significant Impact
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	<p>The spatial extent of potential impacts is limited to the localised footprint of the proposed scheme as described in Section 2 of this report. The population of Ballymahon may experience some temporary effects during construction (such as noise, dust and traffic), however, these are not expected to be significant.</p> <p>Based on the location, current site setting and the nature of the proposed scheme, any potential impacts (during the construction and operational phases) are not likely to be significant in magnitude.</p>	No
The nature of the impact	<p>There will be no significant impact on the receiving environment arising from the proposed scheme (during the construction and operational phases). All construction phase works will be managed in line with industry best practice construction guidelines and relevant legislation. Any impacts that may arise as part of the construction phase will not be significant and will be of a temporary nature.</p> <p>During operation, the proposed scheme will result in positive long-term effects through the provision of improved urban realm space, improved active travel infrastructure and potential improved health benefits to the local communities with the facilitation of a high quality sustainable new mode of transportation.</p>	No
The transboundary nature of the impact	The proposed scheme will not result in transboundary impacts.	No
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Any potential construction impact will be temporary in nature and of low intensity and complexity. Impacts arising during the construction phase will be temporary and short-term in nature. Construction works will be managed through best practice	No

	construction guidelines with respect to excavation, material removal, dust, traffic and lighting. Waste generated during the construction phase will be controlled through best practice measures.	
The probability of the impact	The probability of impacts has been considered throughout this sub-threshold assessment and are as reported herein. Whilst temporary impacts relating to construction activities are likely to occur, best practice measures will result in any impacts being insignificant.	No
The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	Regarding the onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impacts, it should be noted that no significant impacts are anticipated with respect to construction or operation of the proposed scheme. Potential impacts associated with construction are expected to be short in duration, during standard and regularised construction hours of operation. There are no operational impacts anticipated.	No
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 previously detailed in Table 3.1, given the scale nature of the Proposed Scheme, no significant cumulative impacts have been identified, arising from the Proposed Scheme in combination with other existing and/or approved projects.	No
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	With respect to the possibility of effectively reducing the impact, the design of the Proposed Scheme has been optimised to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised as far as reasonably practicable. Standard mitigation measures should/will be implemented, where appropriate, to ensure any potential impacts are minimised as far as possible in accordance with best practice construction management. The potential impacts are not considered significant and do not result in a requirement for EIA.	No

A further screening exercise was completed to assess the most significant potential impacts, as outlined in Table 3.4 below. These are the sections that would be covered in any EIA as specified in the EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC).

**Table 3.4** Significance of Impact According to Theme

EIA Section Heading	Brief Assessment of Impact
Population and Human Health	The potential impacts are not considered to be significant. During construction there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience, dust and noise. The active works area will be limited and managed under best practice measures so potential impacts will be restricted in their geographic extent as well as their duration.
Biodiversity	No flora and fauna of ecological significance or sensitivity were recorded on the site during baseline surveys undertaken as part of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) prepared by AVRIO for the Proposed Scheme in January 2024. Relevant designated sites were considered in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, and it was determined that no designated sites will be impacted by the Proposed Scheme.
Land & Soils	<p>Due to the scale of the Proposed Scheme, it is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impacts on soils and geology, either as a result of site works or site maintenance processes which will be managed using best construction and Health and Safety practices to ensure the protection of the environment.</p> <p>Waste produced will be of limited quantities, likely consisting of soil/stone excavated and general site construction waste. Excavated soil and stone will be reused where possible. Where practicable waste will be recycled, otherwise disposed of at a licensed waste facility. Construction works will be managed through best practice construction guidelines with respect of excavation and soil/stone removal and through the implementation of standard mitigation measures to reduce impacts on soils, geology and hydrogeology as far as practically possible.</p> <p>There are no significant operational phase impacts on land soils, geology and hydrogeology anticipated.</p>
Water	<p>No natural water courses will be traversed by the development and no instream work will take place. The construction phase will be carried out in accordance with construction best practices, methodologies and mitigation proposals to ensure that potential impacts on water are either eliminated or reduced to low levels. Potential impacts on water quality are considered to be imperceptible.</p> <p>The Proposed Scheme will be designed in accordance with construction and NTA best practice and as such road drainage will be integrated, so surface water will not collect or move flood water into the wider area, as a result, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated during operation.</p>

Air and Climate	<p>Potential short-term low probability impact on air quality, in particular dust emissions during construction activities, however, this will be managed through construction best practice measures.</p> <p>In the context of the construction phase, the construction site, workers, materials and construction equipment may be vulnerable to extreme climate events such as heavy rainfall or storms.</p> <p>GHG emissions will be anticipated to be generated during the construction phase of the Proposed Scheme due to construction works, the construction materials (embodied manufacturing emissions) and the transport of these materials. Due to the nature and scale of the Proposed Scheme it is not anticipated that these impacts will be significant.</p> <p>The introduction of a segregated cycle infrastructure has the potential to have a positive impact by potentially reducing greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the expected reduction in the number of vehicle road users by the introduction of a high-quality active mode of travel. As a result, it is not expected the operation of the Proposed Scheme will impact climate.</p>
Noise and Vibration	<p>There may be a short-term increase in noise and vibration in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Scheme during the construction phase. Noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes' (NRA 2014). It is anticipated that the works will be scheduled during day-time hours and in agreement with the local authority. The Construction contractor(s) will be required to comply with the requirements of the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations, 1988 (S.I. No. 320 of 1988), as amended, and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 371 of 2006).</p> <p>All construction activities will be carried out according to best practice and guidelines for the management of noise and vibration, such as the British Standard 5228: Code of Practice for Noise Control on Construction and Demolition Sites, and Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007.</p> <p>As the Proposed Scheme will not result in noise and vibration producing activities being increased or moved closer to sensitive receptors during the operational phase, there will be no significant adverse impacts anticipated as a result of the operation of the Proposed Scheme.</p>
Landscape and Visual	<p>During the construction phase the presence of construction related plant and machinery may detract from certain views. Such impacts are short term and temporary in nature and as such are unlikely to result in a significant adverse impact. Due to the nature and scale of the Proposed Scheme it is not anticipated to have a significant impact on landscape.</p> <p>There is no landscape or visual impact expected as a result of the operation phase of the proposed scheme.</p>

Cultural Heritage	<p>The Proposed Scheme will be contained within the footprint of the R392 road corridor which is a predominantly urban area and has been subject to excavation and development works in the past. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's Historic Environment Viewer application was referred to and shows no National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) site or Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) within the footprint of the proposed development scheme.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is not considered to have a significant impact on features of cultural heritage.</p>
Material Assets	<p>During the construction period, there will be a short-term and temporary increase in construction related traffic which will result in potential for delays to public transport as a result of the Proposed Scheme. Any potential impacts are expected to be temporary and short-term in duration. Traffic management requirements will be agreed with Longford County Council and all other relevant authorities in advance of construction. Increases in construction traffic are expected to be small, however, safety requirements for carriageway works may require single lane closures and where these are required, they will be agreed in advance with Longford County Council and publicised to reduce disruption to the wider population.</p> <p>Any road closures and / or restrictions will be widely publicised within the local and wider area to minimise disturbance to local residents and are to be agreed with the relevant local authorities. Any bus stop closures will be advertised prior to commencement of works, to minimise disruption to local users. Alternative pedestrian / cyclist routes should be established in the event of the temporary closure of footway / cycleway. These will be clearly visible and fit for all abilities.</p> <p>As a result, the construction of the Proposed Scheme will not result in significant adverse impacts to traffic and transport.</p> <p>There is no significant adverse operational phase impacts expected for traffic or transport as cyclists and pedestrians will be segregated from other road users and road crossings will be managed by signalised junctions.</p>
Interaction between environmental Topics	<p>There will likely be interactions between several of the different environmental aspects outlined individually above. For example, increases in traffic during construction could likely result in increases in road noise and vehicle emissions and dust in respect to air quality. However, these effects will be temporary and short term in duration. Construction activities will be required to be undertaken in line with standard construction best practices for processes which will generate dust and excessive noise. As a result, it is considered these interactions will not result in significant adverse impacts to surrounding communities.</p> <p>No significant in-combination impacts are predicted for the Proposed Scheme.</p>



## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Proposed Scheme does not constitute the nature or scale of any class of development within Schedule 5, Part 1 or Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The Proposed Scheme is not a prescribed road type identified in Section 50. (1) (a) of the Roads Act 1993, as amended. The Proposed Scheme does not satisfy the criteria outlined in part (a) of Regulation 8 of the 1994 Regulations and does not exceed the length thresholds of part (b) of Regulation 8 of the 1994 Regulations.

The Proposed Scheme was therefore considered as sub-threshold and assessed against the criteria outlined in Annex III of the EIA Directive. This sub-threshold assessment has determined that significant environmental effects are unlikely as a result of the construction or operation of the Proposed Scheme. It is therefore considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required for the Proposed Scheme.

## Appendix A – Site Location



# Legend

 Site Boundary

Project Title:  
AEMP-2000378  
Active Travel Pedestrian & Cycle Scheme,  
Ballymahon, Co. Longford

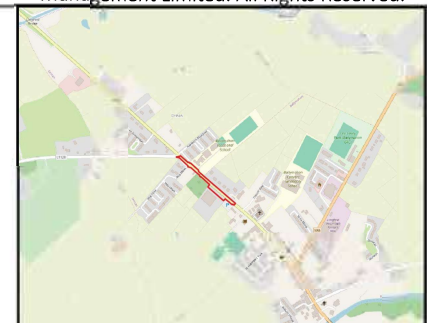
Drawing Title:  
Site Boundary Map

Drawn By: SMC	Checked By: FM
Project No: 2000378	Drawing No: Figure 1
Scale: 1/1500	Date: 14th October 2024



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## Appendix B – Proposed Development



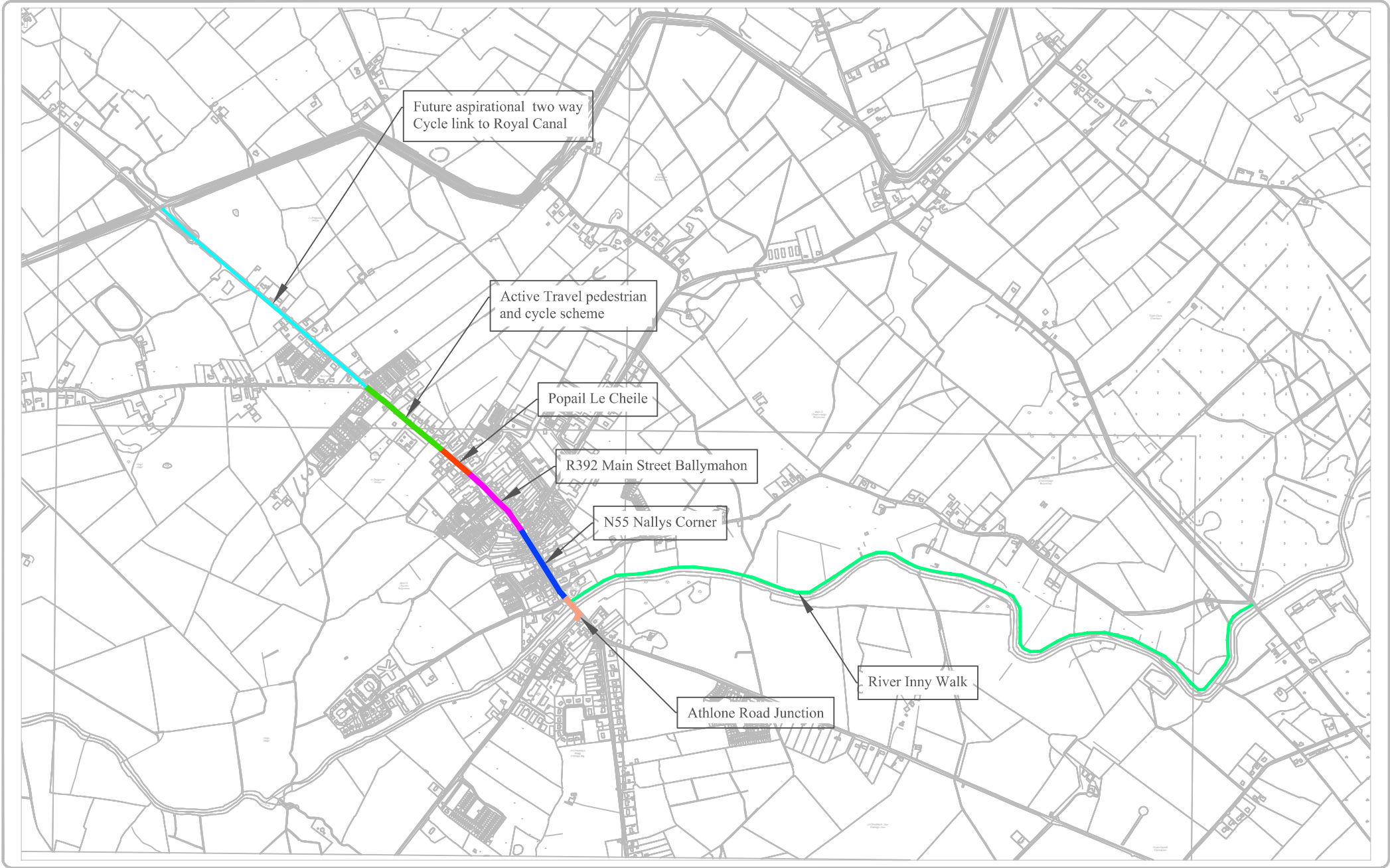


**KEY:**

	PROPOSED FOOTPATH
	PROPOSED SHARED SURFACE
	PROPOSED CYCLE TRACK
	PROPOSED GRASS STRIP
	PROPOSED RAISED TABLE
	PROPOSED SHARED SURFACE
	PROPOSED TRAMLINE PAVING
	PROPOSED LADDER PAVING
	PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING BUFF
	PROPOSED TACTILE CORDUROY BUFF
	PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING RED
	PROPOSED BELISHA BEACONS
	PROPOSED COLOURED PENCIL BOLLARDS
	RED LINE BOUNDARY
	SITE NOTICE LOCATIONS

PL1 Site notice	KL	17.01.25
REV.	AMENDMENT	BY DATE
DRAWN: KL	TECH. CHECK: KF	
SCALE @ A1: 1:500	ENG. CHECK: FF	
DATE: 15.01.2025	APPROVED: SS	
STAGE: PLANNING		
JOB TITLE: Pedestrian & Cycle Facility Ballymahon, Co. Longford		
DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Site Layout		
CLIENT: Longford County Council		
DRAWING NO: 122262-4001	REV: PL1	

## Appendix C – Additional Proposed Schemes



THIS DRAWING TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING DRAWINGS AND ALL OTHER RELEVANT DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS.

DO NOT SCALE THIS DRAWING USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY.

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Rev. No.	Date	Revision Notes	Des. by	Chkd. by



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Client :	Longford County Council		
Project :	Ballymahon Active Travel Pedestrian and cycle Scheme		
Title :	Ballymahon projects to be considered in EIA screening		
Drawing No:	2401	Revision:	
Scale:	NTS	Date:	22/04/2024
Drawn by:	BK	Checked:	BK
		Approved:	