AtkinsRéalis

Appropriate Assessment Screening

20/06/2025

N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

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Client signoff

Client	Galway County Council
Project	N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE
Job number	0088798
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1. Introduction

AtkinsRéalis have been commissioned by Galway County Council to prepare an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for the proposed Oughterard Footbridge, hereafter referred to as the proposed development.

This report comprises the AA Screening Report for the proposed development and is intended to assist Galway County Council, as the competent authority in this case, in making its determination as to whether Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of the proposed development.

The proposed development is in Oughterard, Co. Galway.

2. Existing situation & proposed development

2.1 Site location

The proposed development consists of the construction of a new low, steel bow-string truss pedestrian footbridge over the Owenriff River, located approximately 150m downstream (north-east) of the existing N59 road bridge, in the townlands of Cregg, Carrowmanagh, and Fough West, Oughterard, County Galway.

The proposed footbridge will be up to approximately 3.6m in height, and approximately 48.2m in length, with a 3m clear deck width. It will be a single-span footbridge with abutments to either side of the Owenriff River, and there will be no instream works. It will also contain a 3m clear width access ramp to tie into the Carrowmanagh Road to the north-west with stepped access to the riverside walkway. A new pedestrian crossing with speed table is proposed on Carrowmanagh Road with realigned kerb line. A path is proposed to tie into the N59 Clifden Road to the south-east with a new pedestrian crossing with speed table, and realigned carriageway kerb line. Works will include the demolition and rebuilding/realignment of the existing boundary wall to the existing dwelling to the north (adjacent to the riverside walkway) and to the existing dwelling to the south known as The Old Barracks. Ancillary works will include walls, fencing, pedestrian railings, bollards, signage, lighting, benches, hard and soft landscaping, including compensatory tree planting at Carrowmanagh Park, the diversion/replacement of an existing watermain and combined sewer, and a temporary construction compound on lands at Station Road, Oughterard.

2.2 Site location

The site is located approximately 150m east (downstream) of the existing N59 Oughterard Bridge (GC-N59-040.00). The ITM coordinates for the site location are as follows: -

X: 511801 Y: 742754

The proposed footbridge crosses over the Owenriff River. The proposed north abutment is on a riverside path near Carrowmanagh Rd, and the south abutment is in an area of woodland (currently private residential property). The footbridge approaches tie into proposed pedestrian crossings over Carrowmanagh Rd on the north side, and over N59 Clifden Road on the south side (adjacent to the Claddagh Credit Union).

The location map for the structure is shown in Figure 2-1.

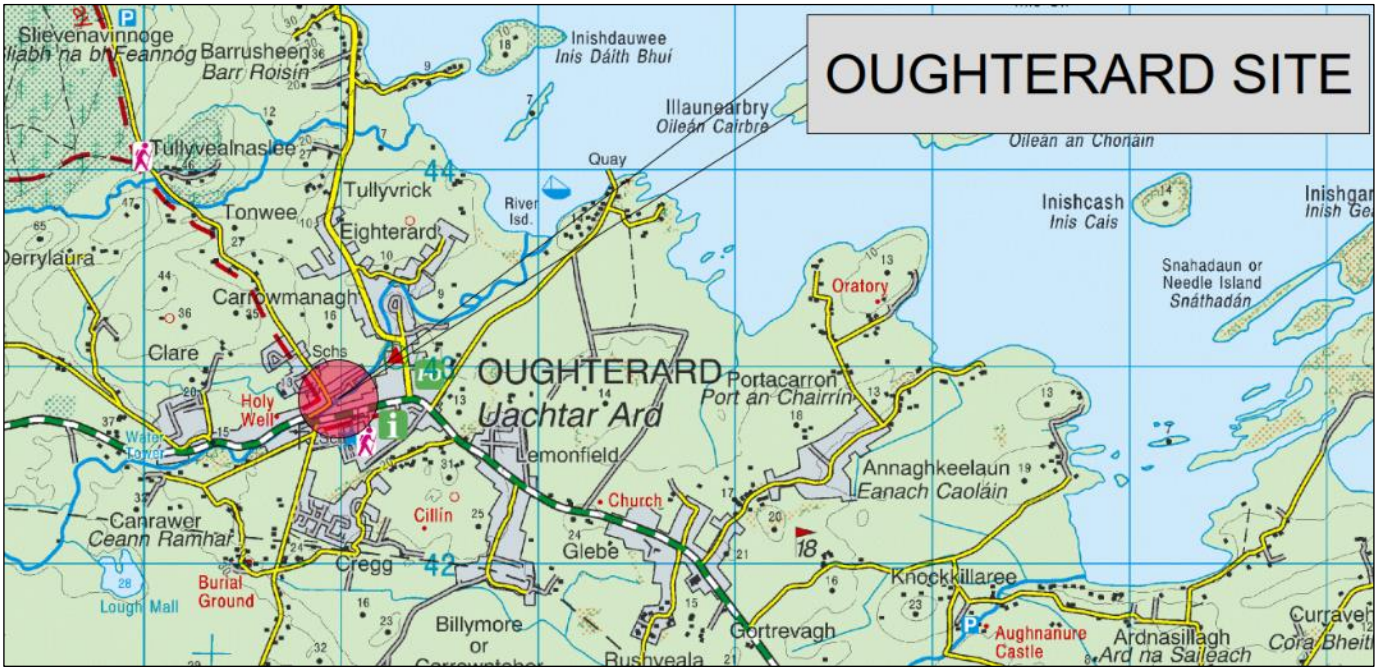

Figure 2-1- Location Plan

See existing general arrangement (GA) layout plan drawing (Figure 2-4), which shows topography and existing utilities at the site. The utility information is based on utility provider consultations, visual inspection of surface / manholes and ground penetration radar scan results.

The following existing utilities are present at the site: -

- North riverbank path adjacent to the proposed abutment and ramp: -
  - 225mm diameter buried concrete combined sewer pipe (1.56m depth below ground level (bgl))
  - 100 mm diameter buried watermain (1.00m depth bgl)
  - No overhead cables.
- Carrowmanagh Road adjacent to the proposed pedestrian crossing:
  - 225mm diameter buried concrete combined sewer pipe (1.56m depth bgl)
  - 100 mm diameter buried watermain (1.00m depth bgl)
  - Empty buried Aurora & Eir ducts / manholes
  - Overhead electric cables
- South riverbank and private land adjacent to the proposed abutment and approach path: -
  - Buried pipe – combined sewer (4.00m depth, UTT QL B4)
- N59 Clifden Road at the proposed pedestrian crossing:
  - Buried water main (1.1m deep bgl)

- Buried Eir telecoms (0.3 to 0.5m deep bgl)
- Road gully and buried 225mm dia. PVC pipe (0.5 to 0.9m depth bgl)
- Overhead electric cables

2.3 Scope and purpose of the project

The purpose of the N59 Oughterard Footbridge project is to provide a safe and convenient crossing for vulnerable road users (VRU's) over the Owenriff River in Oughterard, Co. Galway and to minimise the number of VRU's crossing over the existing N59 road bridge, which is narrow and has no footpaths.

The project objectives are presented in Technical Note, '*Rationale for Intervention and Project Objectives'*, AtkinsRéalis doc. ref. 0088798DG0012 Rev 1. These consider a range of impacts: transport users, economic, accessibility, social, land use, safety, climate change, and local environment.

The need for a new footbridge over the Owenriff River is emphasised in letters received from the Oughterard Footbridge Safety Committee, and the Safe Routes to School Outline Delivery plan for St. Paul's Secondary School. Provision of a new footbridge aligns with County Development Plan objectives such as promoting local development, providing an accessible environment, and encouraging/supporting pedestrian and cycle routes around town (Galway County Council, 2022).

The scope of the project is as follows: -

- Site investigation
- Enabling works
- Foundation and substructure work
- Installation of superstructure
- Finishes

2.4 Description of Works

AtkinsRéalis prepared the '*Location Option Appraisal*' Technical Note (AtkinsRéalis doc. ref. 0088798DG0014) which documents a multi criteria analysis (MCA) of several different location options for the proposed footbridge. A copy of the report will be submitted with the planning application. The report concluded that a single span crossing of the river approximately 150m downstream of the existing N59 road bridge is the preferred bridge location option. This location aligns with the main pedestrian desire line between Carrowmanagh and the town centre, allows substructures to be setback from the riverbank crest, and enables tie-into adjacent existing footways via zebra crossings over the roads.

AtkinsRéalis prepared the '*Structure Options Report'* (doc. ref. 0088798DG0031) which documents an MCA of several different structure options for the proposed footbridge. A copy of the report will be submitted with the planning application. The report concluded that a steel bow string truss on reinforced concrete (RC) abutments is the preferred structural option for the single span crossing. A bow string truss maximises headroom clearance and freeboard under the deck, provides an aesthetically pleasing crossing which is in keeping with the local setting, and is lightweight which reduces craneage and foundation requirements.

Proposed General Arrangement drawings are provided in Appendix A. A photomontage is provided in Appendix B. The proposed footbridge will be 48m span. Abutments will setback approximately 2.5m and 6.2m from the riverbank crest on the north and south side, respectively.

The lighting design has been developed with the following principal considerations: -

- Provide adequate illumination to contribute towards the safe use of the proposed footbridge and approach paths.
- To minimise the impact of lighting on bats in the local environment, and on fish in the Owenriff River.
- Minimise light pollution and visual glare to the surrounding neighbourhood - contain the lighting within the site.
- Provide a high-quality public realm space.

The following lighting is proposed:

- Luminaires integrated into the top rail of the east parapet of the proposed footbridge, the top rail of the north parapet on the proposed north ramp, and the north handrail on the proposed north steps
- 2 no. 6m high lighting columns along the east side of the proposed south approach path.
- Belisha beacons / 8m high lighting columns each side of the proposed zebra crossing on the N59 Clifden Rd.
- 6m high lighting columns each side of the proposed zebra crossing on Carrowmanagh Rd.

Directional downlighting will be used to avoid light trespass into the environment. Modelling of the proposed lighting plan was carried out by ASD lighting and found that the maximum light spill to the river surface will be less than 1 lux. Characteristics such as light spectrum, UV content, intensity, dimming etc. will be specified in accordance with current best practice and design guidance (e.g., Bat Conservation Trust & Institute of Lighting Professional Guidelines (2018); Emery (2008); Emma Stone (2014) University of Bristol / Bat Conservation Trust; Responsible Outdoor Lighting at Night (ROLAN) guidelines, etc.). Galway CC and the ecological specialist will have final review of the lighting design to ensure above listed guidance is followed during detailed design stage.

In summary, the works will include the following (further details are provided in Section 2.4):

- Site investigations
- Enabling works including replacement/diversion of buried utilities and set up of a crane platform
- Construction works including installation of a spread foundation on the north side, and a mini-bored RC pile foundation on the south side. Once the crane is set up, the footbridge will be delivered in sections to site, assembled, then lifted into position. Approach paths, boundary walls, zebra crossings etc. will then be completed.
- On completion, the temporary fencing, lighting, site compound etc. will be removed.

Temporary traffic management will be needed on the N59 Clifden Road and Carrowmanagh Road to enable the works – see Section 2.6 for details.

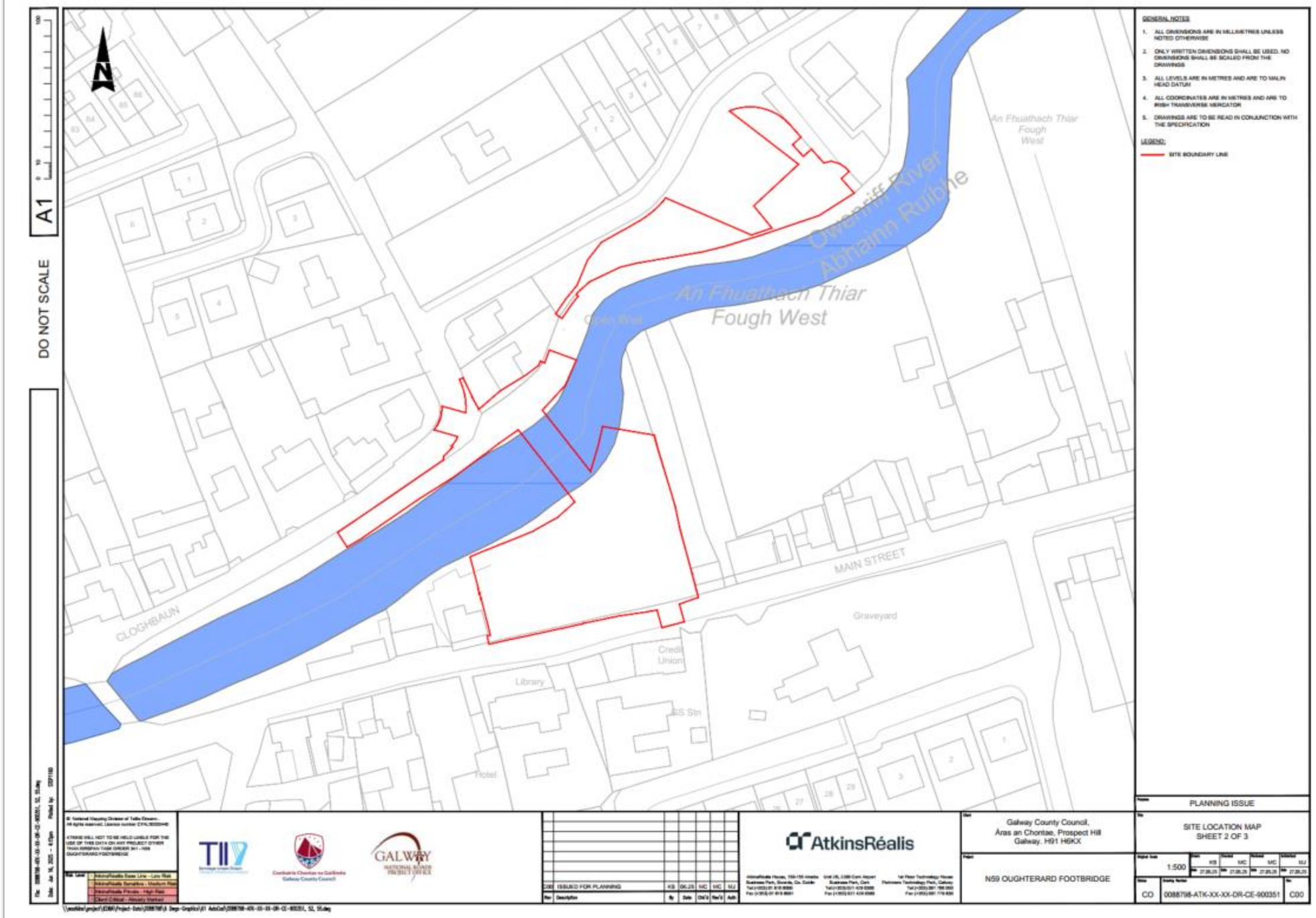

Figure 2-2 – Proposed development redline Boundary including Carrowmanagh Park proposed replacement tree planting.

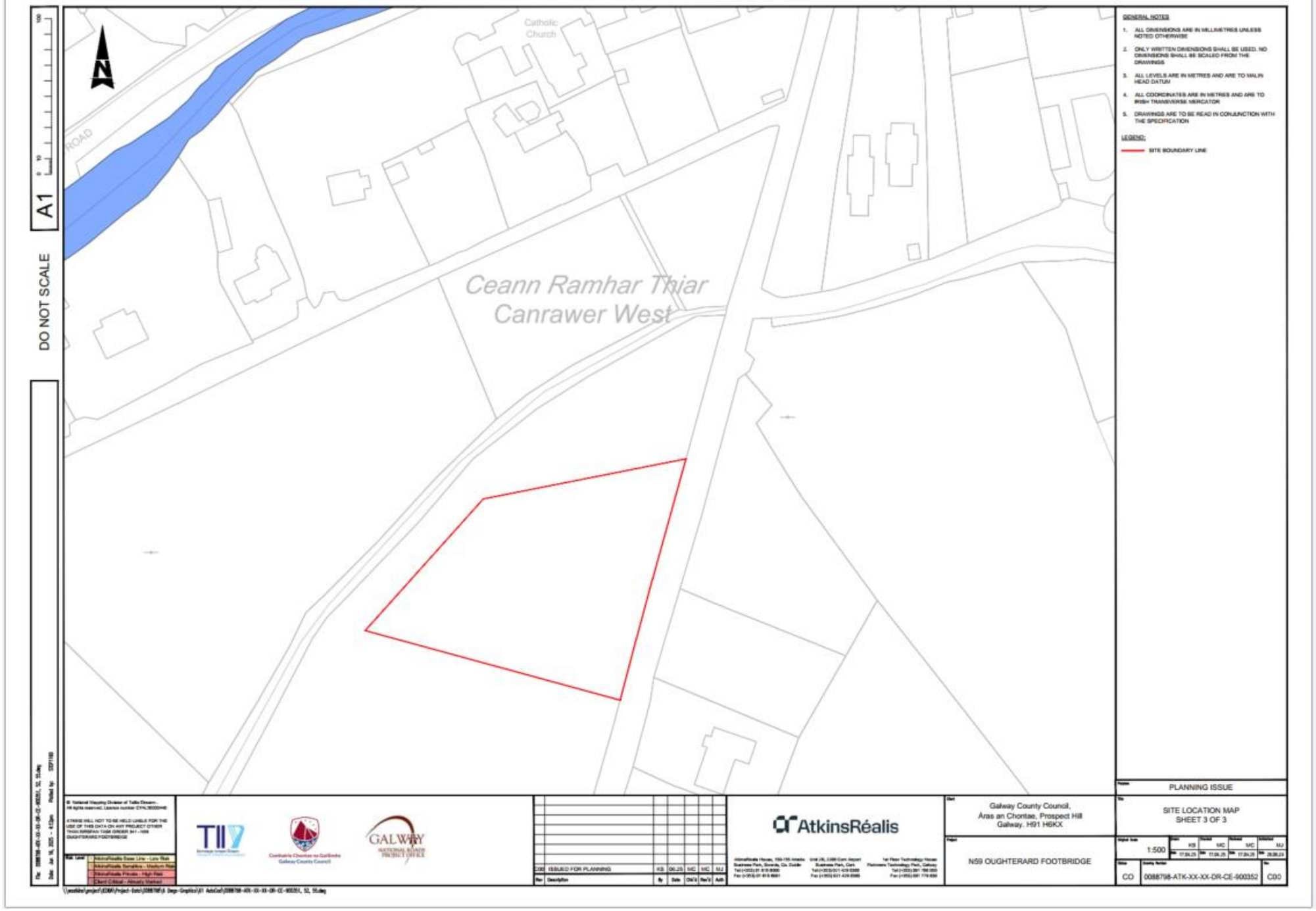

Figure 2-3 – Proposed Site compound location (Station Road).

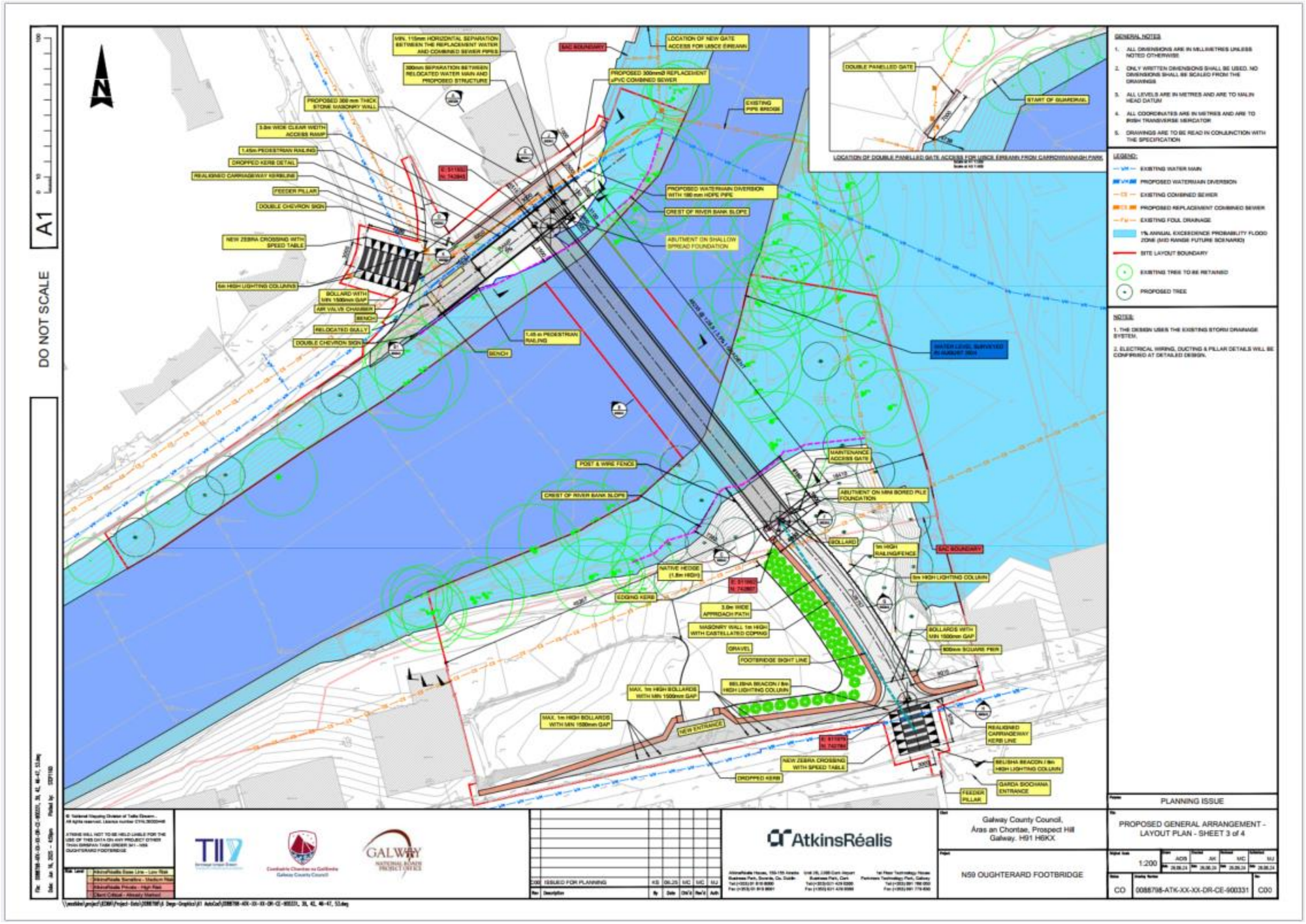

Figure 2-4 - Overview of proposed development (See planning pack for full scale detailed drawings)

2.5 Proposed sequence of works and methodology

The proposed sequence of works and methodology is outlined in the sections below..

2.5.1 Site investigations

The following site investigations will be carried out at detailed design stage: -

- North abutment/ramp: -
    - Slit trenches to confirm the arrangement of underground utilities and to determine the bedrock profile over the ramp/abutment extents.
- South side (abutment, crane pad and approach path): -
    - Trial/inspection pits
    - Rotary coring
    - Slit trenches to confirm the arrangement of underground utilities.

A temporary site compound will be set up for approximately 1-2 weeks. The compound will be setup at least 50m away from the Owenriff River.

2.5.2 Enabling Works

A site compound will be set up before commencement of the works (15 days). The site compound will be located at least 50m away from the Owenriff River. The location proposed for the site compound is shown on Drg. No. 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900014. The proposed location is a field on Station Rd owned by Galway CC c. 300m south-west of the site for the proposed footbridge An ecology site survey was carried out on 29/1/25 at the proposed site. A drainage ditch runs around the perimeter of the field. The proposed site compound will provide a 10m buffer zone to the ditch. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) has been undertaken for the proposed site compound location (see Updated Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment: N59 Oughterard Footbridge, Oughterard, Co. Galway. Doc. ref UPDATED J3497 OughetardFootbridgeAddendum_CHIA_v.08). All plant and equipment will be maintained, refuelled, and stored at the compound location. Oil will also be stored in an appropriately contained bunded facility at this location. Refuelling is not permitted on the riverbank.

The site compound is a contractor designed element. For preliminary design purposes, the proposals assume that the site compound needs to accommodate a temporary set-down area for the prefabricated footbridge sections and a turning circle for heavy goods vehicles. On this basis, the required area of the site compound would be approximately 4500m^2, and approximately 1300m^3 of hardcore/gravel would be used to build up temporary access roads, paths and working area. The Contractor will design the site compound and may determine that a smaller area is sufficient.

Vibration monitoring will be installed on buildings adjacent to the proposed works. Trigger levels will be set to ensure that potential vibration effects are limited to acceptable levels

Site clearance will be undertaken over the extents required for the proposed works (5 days). Trees will be removed (10 days) as specified in the tree impact/preservation plan. A total of 60 trees along the riverbank are to me removed: 31 ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), 12 sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), 14 alder (*Alnus* sp.), 2 willow (*Salix* sp.) and 1

hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.) (tree impact/preservation plan is included in the planning pack). Additionally, 1no. existing sycamore tree will be removed on Carrowmanagh Park. Tree branches within 3m of the proposed footbridge will also need to be removed. These works will be undertaken by a qualified arborist under the supervision of the contractor's ecologist.

A robust fence (Herras type fence complete with debris netting) will be erected to secure the works area (5 days). The required length of fence will change with each stage of construction as the works progress (the max. required length of fence is approx. 40m and 70m on the north and south side of the river, respectively). Any water which accumulates within excavations shall be pumped out of works areas, collected in storage tanks, and disposed off-site. A range of silt control measures (such as silt fences, mats, wattles etc.) will be installed on the riverbanks.

Protective fencing will be erected around trees to be retained (5 days) – as recommended in the tree impact/preservation plan. Where necessary, ground protection will also be installed to shield soil from damage during construction.

Temporary lighting at the site during construction will be installed (5 days) for security and health & safety purposes. All temporary lighting will be required to meet the lighting requirements set out in Section 2.3 with regards to preventing light spillage and any associated negative impacts on the local environment. Any overnight lighting will be kept to a minimum and away from the river.

The 60m length of existing masonry wall along the frontage of the dwelling on the south side (The Old Barracks) adjacent to the N59 Clifden Road will be temporarily dismantled (5 days) to enable access for plant, components, materials etc. to the site. The masonry will be set aside for when the wall is re-built/realigned after the works are complete.

On the north riverbank, the existing masonry boundary wall around the adjacent house (approximately 25m length) will be dismantled and masonry will be set aside to be re-used (5 days).

Watermain and combined sewer works

The water main and combined sewer replacement works on the north riverbank will be carried out during a dry weather forecast period (5 days), as this will minimise flows in the combined sewer and reduce the risk of potential siltation impacts associated with excavations. The expected duration of the works is up to 5 no. days.

On the north riverbank adjacent to the boundary wall, a trench will be excavated to 1.4m depth below ground level (BGL) to access the buried utility pipes. The excavated fill (approximately 60m^3) will be set aside at the site compound away from the river.

The existing 225mm dia. concrete sewer pipe will be replaced with a 300mm dia. uPVC pipe. An indicative methodology is shown below:

1. Lay plastic sheeting and absorbent materials on the ground to catch any sewerage spills.

3. Set up a jet-vac truck (expected 10 to 12 m^3 capacity) on Carrowmanagh Rd adjacent to the site. Provide a temp over-pumping bypass from the manhole on Carrowmanagh Rd along the riverbank to the sewer side spur manhole (buried) on the grass amenity area on Carrowmanagh Park. The capacity of the required over-pump bypass will be based on flow estimates. The temporary bypass will be continuous without joints along the riverbank to minimise the risk of leaks. Test the over-pumping system and ensure a back-up is available in case it fails.

4. Jet clean the existing sewer between the manholes.

5. Plug the sewer pipe to be replaced at the manholes. Collect sewerage in the jet-vac truck during the sewer replacement works. In the unlikely event that the capacity of the jet-vac truck is exceeded, the excess sewerage shall be taken by the temporary over-pump bypass.

6. Remove the existing concrete sewer pipe by loosening fittings (a concrete disc cutter may be needed). The existing sewer should be empty after jet cleaning, but any remaining sewerage in the pipe shall be drained into a container. Bung the existing sewer pipe and remove it. The holes in the manholes will be enlarged to accommodate the larger diameter of the proposed sewer pipe. Power tools will be used with vacuum dust extraction to avoid potential ecology impacts.

7. Install the new 300mm dia. uPVC sewer pipe between the manholes.

8. Test the system and backfill.

9. Remove the bungs in the manholes. Flush the over-pumping bypass with water, drain, then remove. Use containers and/or absorbent materials to catch any remaining liquid in the bypass system. Carefully dispose of containers and soiled materials at a licensed waste facility. Sewerage in the jet-vac truck shall be emptied into the sewer network at a manhole at least 50m from the river. It is envisaged that a sewer manhole at the proposed site compound on Station Rd will be used.

10. Clean the work area. Remove the plastic sheet and absorbent materials. Carefully dispose of containers, plastic sheet, and soiled materials at a licensed waste facility.

The existing 100mm PVC dia. water main will be replaced with a 180mm dia. HDPE pipe and realigned with a 300mm offset from the proposed north abutment/ramp. An indicative methodology is shown below:

1. Remove the existing PVC water main pipe (a disc cutter may be needed).

2. Install the new HDPE water main pipe and connect to the existing pipe with bushings/reducers.

3. Test the system and backfill.

After the sewer and water main works are complete, the excavation will be reinstated with the excavated material.

The adjacent masonry boundary wall will then be rebuilt (25m length, 800mm height and 300mm width) in a revised alignment to achieve 2.5m clearance to the proposed north abutment/ramp (5 days). The underside of the boundary wall foundation will vary in depth from 0.6m to 1.4m BGL.

The following enabling works will be needed to accommodate the proposed footbridge assembly and lifting operations in The Old Barracks private property: -

- The area under and around the proposed Liebherr LG 1750 crane shall be cleared of vegetation and topsoil (approximately 380m2). The ground will be regraded to the required level. Any soft spots shall be replaced with suitable fill. The temporary crane pad/platform is a contractor designed element which will be subject to various technical and environmental requirements/. It will be based on geotechnical design to be carried out after ground investigations are carried out after planning. The following is envisaged: -

    - Geotextile strengthening (approximately 640m2) and a sub-base of compacted washed gravel or crushed rock (approximately 600mm thick equating to 380m3 in total) shall be laid under the proposed crane pads as necessary. The use of an interlocking, modular mat system will be considered by the Contractor to reduce the depth of sub-base required, subject to Ground Investigations.

- A prefabricated crane platform consisting of a reinforced concrete (RC) slab (approximately 300mm thick), prefabricated columns, and precast strip footings on upfill will be installed where the ground falls away towards the boundary with the adjacent house on the east side (Ringabella). The estimated total volume of reinforced concrete is 70m3. Rotary core piles may be used. Ground investigations carried out on the north riverbank in 2024 found that the vibration effects of 100mm outside diameter rotary coring was 'easily noticeable' on the human perception scale at a distance of 5m. The proposed small diameter rotary piles for the temporary crane platform would be c. 30m from the edge of the river. The expected vibration effects on adjacent buildings are also expected to be within allowable limits to avoid structural damage or excessive disturbance to residents. Vibration monitoring will be implemented with trigger levels to ensure that vibration effects on sensitive receptors are within acceptable limits. A before and after condition survey of adjacent buildings will also be undertaken. The works will be restricted to typical periods

- There is an existing buried combined sewer (150mm diameter at approximately 4m depth) which runs west to east approximately 2m south of the proposed south abutment. This is within the influence zone of the Liebherr crane pad loads. This buried pipe will be assessed after ground investigations are carried out after planning. It is expected that the surcharge effects on the buried pipe will be within acceptable limits given it is 4m depth below ground level. The crane pads, hardstanding area and temporary crane platform will be designed to ensure that load constraints are satisfied

- A 5m wide area shall be cleared and graded to enable assembly of the crane main boom. Temporary trestles will be set up due to the uneven ground.

- An approximately 8m wide area shall be cleared for assembly of the footbridge sections. This would require removal of approximately 60m3 of existing fill, and a similar quantity of Class 6N2 upfill (crushed rock/gravel) would be needed to build up a temporary footbridge assembly area. The excavated fill would be set aside at the site compound to be used for reinstatement after completion of the works. Temporary trestles will need to be set up due to the uneven ground.

2.5.3 Construction Works

The expected methodology for the construction works is shown below with indicative material quantities and timescales: -

1) For the north abutment and ramp: -

   a) Excavate approximately 70m3 of existing fill down to bedrock level which is expected at 1.4m below ground level (BGL) (5 days).

   b) Pour approximately 3m3 of in-situ blinding concrete (approximately 75mm thick) and cure (10 days).

   c) Install PC foundations and substructures (total approximately 90m3 of concrete) (5 days).

   d) Backfill around the edge of the structure (2 days)

   e) Seal joints between precast elements (5 days)

   f) Install 2 no. bearings (5 days).

   g) Install parapets (24m length) (5 days).

2) For the south abutment:

   a) Excavate approximately 10m3 of existing fill (5 days)

b) Install bored mini-RC piles (1m3 of concrete) (5 days)

c) Lay approximately 1m3 of concrete blinding and cure (approximately 75mm thick) (10 days)

d) Construct in-situ RC pile cap and cure (7m3 of concrete) (15 days).

e) Backfill around the edge of the structure (2 days)

f) Install 2 no. bearings (5 days).

3) For the footbridge installation:

a) Mobilise and set up the Liebherr LG 1750 crane on the south side (2 days) in the curtilage of The Old Barracks.

b) Transport the 3 no. prefabricated footbridge sections to site. It will be transported either directly from the steel fabricator to The Old Barracks, or from a temporary set-down area nearby (e.g., the site compound).

c) Assemble the footbridge in the assembly area (1 day). The prefabricated steel superstructure consists of approximately 8m3 of structural steel, 7m3 of glass reinforced polymer (GRP) decking, and 96m length of parapets.

d) Lift the footbridge on to the abutments (1 day).

e) Demobilise the crane and trestles (2 days).

f) Remove hardcore/upfill used for the temporary footbridge assembly and crane pad area. Reinstate excavated fill and reinstate finishes/landscaping to the private property as appropriate (10 days).

4) For the finishes:

a) Construct the stone masonry wall (1m height by 0.7m width) flanking the proposed south approach path to the footbridge – consisting of 3m3 of in-situ concrete base and 18m3 of stone masonry (10 days).

b) Reinstate the stone masonry wall (1m height by 0.7m width) along the N59 frontage of The Old Barracks– consisting of 4m3 of in-situ concrete base and 30m3 of stone masonry (10-15 days). The realigned boundary will accommodate the relocated entrance to The Old Barracks.

c) Realign the kerbs at the edge of Carrowmanagh Rd and N59 Clifden Rd, install surfacing to the relocated The Old Barracks entrance and new footpath on the north side of the N59 Clifden Rd, and provide drop kerb details at the entrances (approximately 90m length of kerbs). Relocate the existing gully adjacent to the proposed zebra crossing on Carrowmanagh Rd to suit the amended kerb alignment. Drainage pipe to be modified to suit (20 days total).

d) Construct the approach paths, which consist of 50mm thick limestone paviours (approximately 12m3) and 30mm thick grout bed (approximately 7m3) (20 days).

e) Install the railing on the east side of the southern path (26m length) (10 days).

f) Construct the zebra crossings with raised tables (11m3 of modular pre-fabricated units or road surfacing) (10 days).

g) Install road signs, lighting, ducting, feeder pillars etc (5 days).

h) Install a double panelled gate (7m wide) in the masonry boundary wall at the south-west end of the grass amenity area on Carrowmanagh Park.

i) Undertake landscape planting as shown in in Figure 2-5 and Figure 2-6 (15 days). This includes planting of 39 no. standard sized trees on Carrowmanagh Park amenity area, 23 no. standard sized trees adjacent to the proposed footbridge, and hedging in The Old Barracks.

2.5.4 Completion of Works

Once works are completed, the following activities will be undertaken:

- Remove the site fencing and temporary lighting (10 days).
- Remove the site compound (15 days).
- General clean and tidy of the site (5 days).
- A snag survey will be undertaken and any remedial actions undertaken (5 days).

2.5.5 Materials to be Used

The following materials and components will be used: -

- Concrete
- Reinforcement steel
- Structural steel (coatings to be applied offsite)
- Stainless steel parapets.
- Bridge bearings (elastomeric)
- Light fittings and ancillary products required to install pedestrian/public lighting
- Footbridge deck planks (timber or glass reinforced polymer (GRP))
- Road signage
- HDPE replacement water main pipe
- uPVC replacement sewer pipe
- Structural backfill and upfill (crushed rock/gravel etc)

2.6 Programme and phasing of works

The following is an overview of the programme and phasing of the works (subject to receipt of Planning and statutory consents):

- Site investigations: The expected duration is two weeks, and the expected start date is Q3 2026.
- Enabling & construction works: Expected duration is nine months from mobilisation to completion, and the expected start date is Q4 2026.

The duration that excavations will be left exposed will be minimised as far as reasonably practicable. Excavations will be scheduled so that subsequent works such as blinding, in-situ RC, or PC installation can follow on quickly. This is to minimise the potential for silt to be generated which mitigates the risk of silt laden surface water run-off into the river. Excavation works will be carried out during relatively dry weather to mitigate the risk of siltation runoff into the

river. Weather forecast / rainfall will be monitored. Monitoring of the weather forecast and turbidity levels will be undertaken, and trigger levels will be established to stop work.

The expected duration of significant disruption to adjacent homeowners and residential amenity areas is shown below.

The expected duration of significant disruption to The Old Barracks is approximately six weeks. During this period, the following would be undertaken:

- Install temporary crane pad & footbridge assembly area.
- Mobilise the crane to site.
- Assemble the delivered footbridge sections.
- Lift the footbridge into position.
- Demobilise the crane.

The expected duration of significant disruption to the house (Riverside) adjacent to the proposed north abutment is approx. 13 days. During this period, the existing boundary wall adjacent to the proposed north abutment will be dismantled, the watermains and combined sewer will be relocated/replaced, and the wall will be rebuilt in a realigned position.

The expected duration of disruption to the grass amenity area on Carrowmanagh Park is expected to be approx. 15 days during planting of the compensation trees.

2.7 Management and organisation of Works

It is envisaged that the proposed site compound for the works will be set up in one of the fields along Station Road (south-west of the site) shown in Figure 2-3, which is owned by Galway CC. In the event that this site is not available at the time of construction another suitable site will be located in the surrounding area. The site compound must be a minimum 50 meters from the Owenriff River and a buffer of 10m from any drain or stream must be maintained. The site must also be surveyed for potential sensitive habitats or species.

Materials and plant required for the works are anticipated to be stored in this compound. All storage areas shall be appropriately bunded where required. Fuelling of plant is anticipated to be in a designated fuelling area within the compound. The compound will provide for the following:

- Welfare/office facilities for site staff
- Plant/machinery parking/storage area
- Fuel storage/refuelling area
- Segregated waste area
- Construction staff parking

Normal construction working hours for the development will be: -

- Monday to Friday: 08:00 to 18:00
- Saturday: 09:00 to 13:00

An ecological specialist will be employed by Galway County Council to ensure compliance with all environmental commitments. An Ecological Clerk of works (ECoW) will be employed by the contractor for the duration of the project. The ECoW will update the outline CEMP and be responsible for carrying out toolbox talks and the daily environmental monitoring and checks. The ecological specialist will be required to sign off on the CEMP prior to the commencement

of construction to ensure it complies will all environmental commitments. The ecological specialist will review all weekly environmental reports prepared by the ECoW and will carry out regular audits of the site. The ecological specialist will be present on site for all major work elements such as excavations, coring, concrete pours, installing of abutments and footbridge). Both the ECoW and ecological specialist must be suitably qualified having held protective species licences for relevant protected species and be full members of a professional body such as CIEEM or similar.

The following temporary traffic management is envisaged – details are subject to confirmation: -

- Traffic management will be needed on the N59 Clifden Road to narrow the carriageway and provide a working space for takedown and reconstruction of the existing masonry wall frontage to The Old barracks.
- Closure of the eastbound lane of the N59 Clifden Road will be needed along the frontage of The Old Barracks to enable HGV's to deliver/collect the crane, footbridge sections, components etc.
- Lane closures with stop/go lights and shuttle working will be needed on N59 Clifden Road to construct the proposed zebra crossing with raised table, realign the kerb, road markings and lighting.
- Traffic management will be needed on Carrowmanagh Rd to narrow the carriageway and provide a working space for realigning the kerb and modifying the footway.
- Lane closures with stop/go lights and shuttle working will be needed on Carrowmanagh Road to construct the proposed zebra crossing with raised table, lane markings and lighting.
- A traffic management plan will be developed by the contractor.

2.8 Landscape Design

The proposed development will require the removal of woodland on both sides of the river; however, the majority of tree removal will be on the southern riverbank. An arboricultural survey was completed, and a tree impact/preservation plan has been prepared (the plan is included within the Arboricultural Assessment which is included in the planning pack) (Noel Lane, 2024).

A total of 60 no. tree will need to be removed from the area adjacent to the proposed footbridge: 31 Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), 13 Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), 14 Alder (*Alnus sp.*). 2 Willow (*Salix sp.*) and 1 Hawthorn (*Crataegus sp.*), although 30 of these are Ash trees in different stages of decline due to Ash Die Back disease.

1 no. landscaping Sycamore tree at the south-west end of Carrowmanagh Park grass amenity area will need to be removed. The tree is approximately 5m height and is outside the SAC. The tree has negligible bat roosting suitability due to its size and absence of cracks or crevices which could be utilised for roosting.

The impact on woodland in the areas will be mitigated through design minimising the number of trees removed and planting trees to replace those being removed.

There is not sufficient space adjacent to the proposed footbridge to plant all the replacement trees. As such, additional land on Carrowmanagh Park (approx. 100m north east of the proposed footbridge) will be acquired by Galway County Council to plant the remainder of the trees. Planting in this area will replace trees within the river corridor and so be available to species currently using the woodland. Also, it will provide additional screening of the river from Carrowmanagh Park reducing illumination of the river environment from the street lighting on Carrowmanagh Park. A landscape plan has been developed based on the project design and tree impact/ preservation plan. See Figure 2-5 for the landscaped plan. A full scale version of the landscape plan can be found in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Report which is included in the planning pack. The potential impacts due to the removal of trees along the river bank have been considered in Section 6.2.5 below.

Figure 2-5 Proposed development Landscape plan

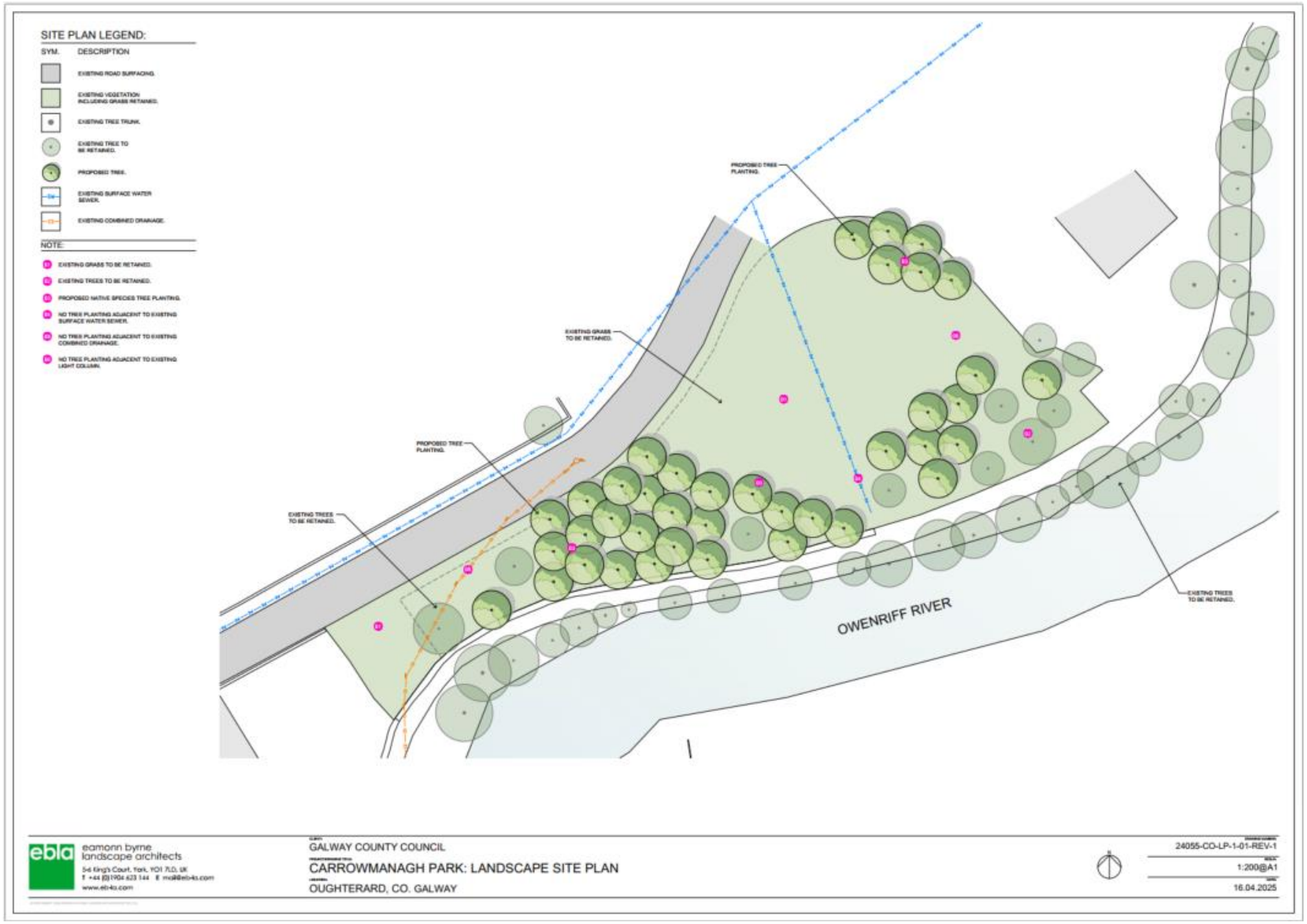

Figure 2-6 Carrowmanagh Park off site tree planting landscape plan

3. Scope of Study

This report comprises the Appropriate Assessment Screening in respect of the proposed works intended to provide supporting information to assist Galway County Council, in its capacity as the competent authority, in making its Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination in respect of the proposed works.

3.1 Legislative Context

3.1.1 Natura 2000

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ("the Habitats Directive") is a legislative instrument of the European Union (EU) which provides legal protection for habitats and species of Community interest. Article 2 of the Directive requires the maintenance or restoration of such habitats and species at a favourable conservation status, while Articles 3 to 9, inclusive, provide for the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of special areas of conservation (SACs), known as Natura 2000, which also includes special protection areas (SPAs) designated under Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds ("the Birds Directive"). Both SACs and SPAs are commonly referred to as "European sites" or "Natura 2000 sites".

SACs are selected for natural habitat types listed on Annex I to the Habitats Directive and the habitats of species listed on Annex II to the Habitats Directive. SPAs are selected for species listed on Annex I to the Birds Directive and other regularly occurring migratory species. The habitats and species for which a Natura 2000 site is selected are referred to as the "qualifying interests" of that site and each is assigned a "conservation objective" aimed at maintaining or restoring its "favourable conservation condition" at the site, which contributes to the maintenance or restoration of its "favourable conservation status" at national and European levels.

3.1.2 Appropriate Assessment

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive deals with the management and protection of Natura 2000 sites. Articles 6(3) and (4) set out the decision-making process, known as "Appropriate Assessment" (AA), for plans or projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites. Article 6(3) states: -

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

The first sentence of Article 6(3) provides a basis for determining which plans and projects require AA, i.e., those "*not directly connected with or necessary to the management of [one or more Natura 2000 sites] but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects*". In *Waddenzee* (C-127/02), the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruled that significant effects must be considered "likely" if "*it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information*", that they would occur. This clearly sets a low threshold, such that AA is required wherever there is a reasonable possibility of significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. In the same judgment, the CJEU established that the test of significance relates specifically to the conservation objectives of the site concerned, i.e., "significant effects" are those which, "*in the light, inter alia, of the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the site*", could undermine the site's conservation objectives. In addition to the effects of the plan or project on its own, the combined effects arising from the plan or project under consideration and other plans and projects must also be assessed (see Section 7 for more details).

The last part of the first sentence of Article 6(3) defines AA as an assessment of the "*implications [of the plan or project] for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives*". In the second sentence, Article 6(3) requires that, prior to agreeing to a plan or project, the competent authority must "ascertain" that "*it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned*". In *Sweetman v. An Bord Pleanála* (C-258/11), the CJEU ruled that a plan or project "*will adversely affect the integrity of that site if it is liable to prevent the lasting preservation of the constitutive characteristics of the site that are connected to the presence of a priority natural habitat whose conservation was the objective justifying the designation of the site in the list of sites*". On that basis, EC (2018) described the "integrity of the site" as "*the coherent sum of the site's ecological structure, function and ecological processes, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitats, complex of habitats and/or populations of species for which the site is designated*". As such, the "integrity" of a specific site is defined by its conservation objectives and is "adversely affected" when those objectives are undermined. In *Waddenzee*, the CJEU ruled that the absence of adverse effects can only be ascertained "*where no reasonable scientific doubt remains*".

The "precautionary principle" applies to all the legal tests in AA, i.e., in the absence of objective information to demonstrate otherwise, the worst-case scenario is assumed. Where the tests established by Article 6(3) cannot be satisfied, Article 6(4) applies (see explanation in Section 2.2, below).

3.1.3 Competent Authority

The requirements of Articles 6(3) and (4) are transposed into Irish law by, inter alia, Part 5 of the European Communities (Birds and Natura Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (as amended) ("the Habitats Regulations") and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) ("the Planning and Development Acts"). As per the second sentence of Article 6(3), it is the "competent national authorities" who are responsible for carrying out AA and, by extension, for determining which plans and projects require AA. The competent authority in each case is the authority responsible for consenting to or licensing a plan or project, e.g., local authorities, An Bord Pleanála, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) or a Government Minister. In all cases, it is the competent authority who is ultimately responsible for determining whether a plan or project requires AA and for carrying out the AA, where required.

3.2 Appropriate Assessment Process

The AA process can be described as being made up of three distinct stages, as described below, the need to progress to each stage being determined by the outcome of the preceding stage.

Stage 1: Screening – This stage involves a determination by the competent authority as to whether a given plan or project required AA. As explained in Section 2.1, AA is required in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site, but for which the possibility of likely significant effects on one or more Natura 2000 sites cannot be excluded. In People Over Wind (C-323/17), the CJEU ruled that measures intended to avoid or minimise harmful effects on a Natura 2000 site cannot be considered in making this determination. Consideration of the potential for in-combination effects is also required at this stage.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment – This stage involves a detailed assessment of the implications of the plan or project, individually and in combination with other plans and projects, for the integrity of the Natura 2000 site(s) concerned. This stage also involves the development of appropriate mitigation to address any adverse effects and an assessment of the significance of any residual impacts following the inclusion of mitigation. In Kelly v. An Bord Pleanála (IEHC 400), the High Court ruled that a lawful AA must contain complete, precise, and definitive findings based on examination and analysis, and conclusions and a final determination based on an evaluation of the findings. In the same judgment, the High Court stressed that, in order for the findings to be complete, precise, and definitive, the AA must be carried out in light of best scientific knowledge in the field and cannot have gaps or lacunae. In Holohan v. An Bord Pleanála (C-461/17), the CJEU clarified that AA must "catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected" (i.e. the qualifying interests of the site) and assess the implications of the plan or project for the qualifying interests, both within and outside the site boundaries, and other, non-qualifying interest habitats and species, whether inside or outside the site boundaries, "provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site". The proposer of a plan or project requiring AA is furnishes the competent

authority with the scientific evidence upon which to base its AA by way of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) or Natura Impact Report (NIR). If it is not possible to ascertain that the plan or project will not adversely affect one or more Natura 2000 sites, authorisation can only be granted subject to Article 6(4).

Stage 3: Article 6(4) – If a plan or project does not pass the legal test at Stage 2, alternative solutions to achieve its aims must be considered and themselves subject to Article 6(3). If no feasible alternatives exist, authorisation can only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) justifying its implementation. Where this is the case, all compensatory measures must be taken to protect the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

The three stages described above are illustrated in Figure 3-1.

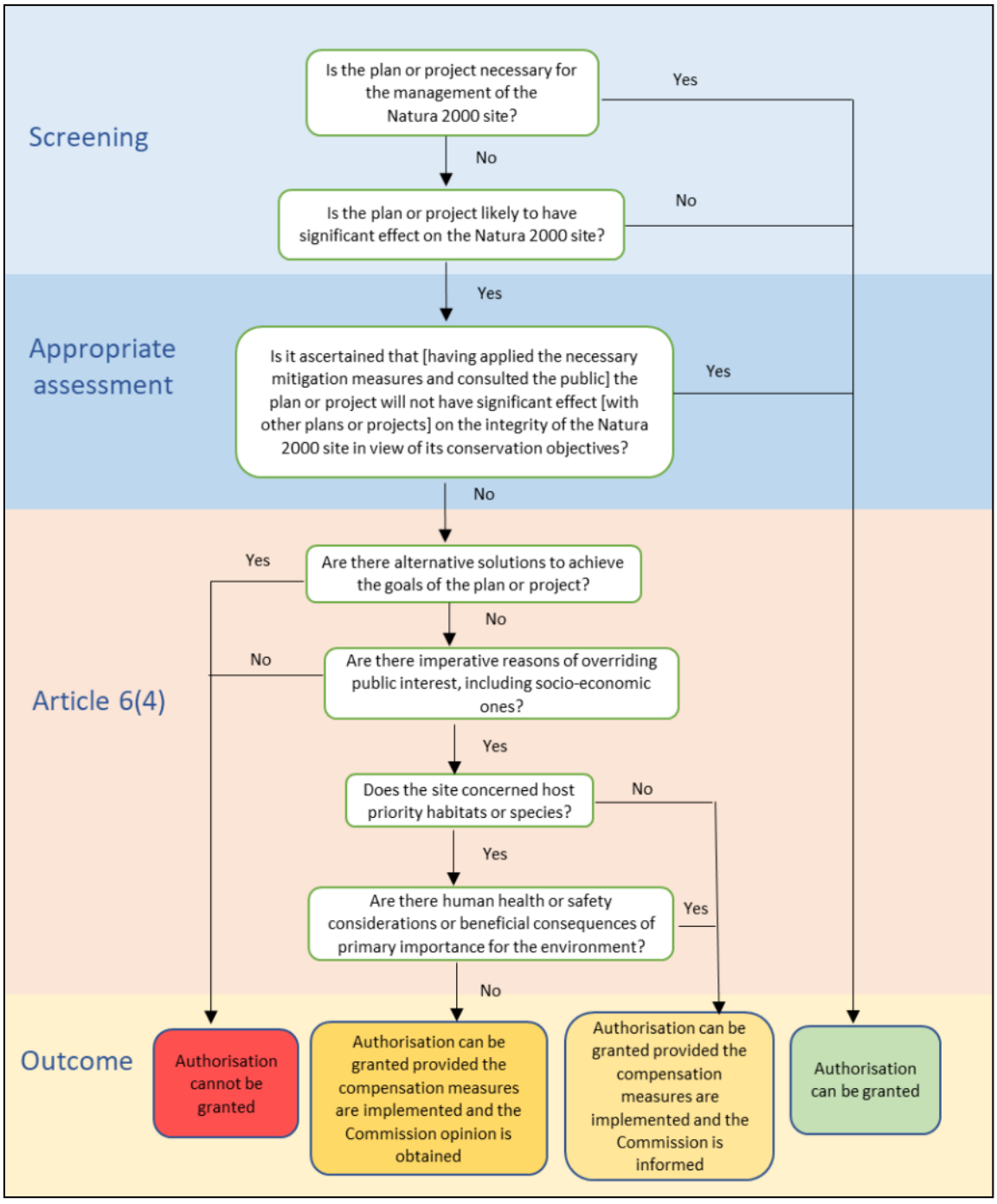

Figure 3-1 - Stages of the Appropriate Assessment process (EC, 2021a).

4. Methods

4.1 Legislative Guidance

This report was prepared with due regard to the relevant European and Irish legislation, case law and guidance, including but not limited to: -

- Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna. *Official Journal of the European Communities* L 206/7-50.
- Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. *Official Journal of the European Union* L 20/7-25.
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011. *S.I. No. 77/2011* (as amended) ("the Habitats Regulations").
- Planning and Development Act, 2000. *No. 30 of 2000* (as amended) ("the Planning and Development Acts").
- Planning and Development Regulations, 2001. S.I. No. 600/2001 (as amended) ("the Planning Regulations").
- EC (2018) *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.* European Commission, Brussels.
- EC (2021a) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. C (2021) 6913.* European Commission, Brussels.
- EC (2021b) *Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive. C(2021) 7301.* European Commission, Brussels.
- DEHLG (2010a) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Revised 11/02/2010.* Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.
- DEHLG (2010b) *Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10. Dated 11/03/2010.* Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.
- NPWS (2012a) *Marine Natura Impact Statements in Irish Special Areas of Conservation. A Working Document. April 2012.* National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin.
- NPWS (2021) Guidance on the Strict Protection of Certain Animal and Plant Species under the Habitats Directive in Ireland. *National Parks & Wildlife Service Guidance Series* 1, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Dublin.
- Mullen, E., Marnell, F. and Nelson, B. (2021) Strict Protection of Animal Species – Guidance for Public authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to development/works undertaken by or on behalf of a Public Authority. *National Parks & Wildlife Service Guidance Series* 2, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Dublin.
- OPR (2021) *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01.* Office of the Planning Regulator, Dublin.

- *Applications for Approval for Local Authority Developments made to An Bord Pleanála under 177AE of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended (Appropriate Assessment) – Guidelines for Local Authorities* <https://www.pleanala.ie/getmedia/0f385f48-7e84-43e3-b405-1201e490740a/Applications-for-approval-for-LA-Developments-S177AE-EN.pdf>. An Bord Pleanála, Dublin.

- Case law, including *Waddenzee* (C-127/02), *Sweetman v. An Bord Pleanála* (C-258/11), *Kelly v. An Bord Pleanála* (IEHC 400), *Commission v. Germany* (C-142/16), *People Over Wind* (C-323/17), *Holohan v. An Bord Pleanála* (C-461/17), *Eoin Kelly v. An Bord Pleanála* (IEHC 84) and *Heather Hill* (IEHC 450).

- Sundseth, K. and Roth, P. (2014) *Article 6 of the Habitats Directive – Rulings of the European Court of Justice.* Ecosystems LTD (N2K Group), Brussels.

4.2 Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out to collate information available on European sites in the vicinity of the proposed project. These areas were viewed using Google Earth[1], Google maps[2] and Bing maps[3] (last accessed on the 2nd of April 2025).

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)[4] and National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) online databases were reviewed concerning European sites and their features of interest in the vicinity of the proposed project.

The locations and boundaries of Natura 2000 sites in relation to the proposed works were reviewed on the NPWS Designations Viewer[5] (NPWS, 2025a). Information on the qualifying interests and the structures and functions of the relevant Natura 2000 sites was found in the Site Synopsis, Natura 2000 Standard Data Form, Conservation Objectives and supporting documents for each site. Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive (NPWS, 2019a-c; ETC/DB, 2025a) and Article 12 of the Birds Directive (NPWS, 2025b; ETC/BD, 2025b) provided further information on the habitats and species concerned at the national level.

Spatial and other data regarding rivers and other waterbodies was obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) using its online facility EPA Maps: Water[6] (EPA, 2025). Other sources consulted included the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) Biodiversity Maps (NBDC, 2025) and Tailte Éireann GeoHive Map Viewer[7] (OSi, 2025).

Other plans and projects in the surrounding area were identified using the Galway County Council planning enquiry system. Search criteria were implemented to identify other plans and project with potential, in combination with the proposed works, to adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

Baseline data regarding the receiving environment, including Natura 2000 sites, was gathered through desk study and consultation with relevant bodies, most importantly the NPWS.

[1] https://earth.google.com/
[2] https://www.google.com/maps/
[3] https://www.bing.com/maps/
[4] https://www.npws.ie/
[5] https://experience.arcgis.com/
[6] https://gis.epa.ie/
[7] https://webapps.geohive.ie/

4.3 Consultation

There has been consultation with a number of state bodies to inform the project design. These have included meetings with NPWS, IFI, Galway County Biodiversity officer and local residents including an open information evening, Two meetings were held with NPWS one during option selection and the second during preliminary design. Comments or suggestion from NPWS, IFI, Biodiversity officer and local residents were taken into consideration during the preliminary design stage.

4.4 Site Visit

4.4.1 Walkover survey

A site visits were carried out on 27th February, 24th June, 4th November ,19th December 2024 and 30th January 2025 by AtkinsRéalis Senior ecologist Kevin Mc Caffrey.

Ecological survey methods were in general accordance with those outlined in the following documents: -

- *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000).
- *Good Practice Guidance for Habitats and Species (CIEEM, 2021)*
- *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping* (Smith *et al*., 2011).
- *Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes* (NRA, 2009).

Potential sensitive ecological receptors present within the survey area were recorded, including the presence of protected species and habitats or habitats that would support protected species, in addition to noting connectivity to European sites. Any presence of non-native invasive species was also recorded.

4.4.2 Aquatic surveys

Aquatic surveys were carried out by Pascal Sweeney of Sweeney Consultancy on the 3rd and 4th of July 2024. Locations surveyed and methods used are detailed below. See Planning Pack for full report.

Grid references of sites locations were recorded using a hand-held GPS device and photographs were taken with digital cameras.

4.4.2.1 Biological Water Quality

The biological water quality was assessed following the most recent EPA Standard Operational Procedure for the Q-scheme methodology, which is based primarily on analysis of the aquatic invertebrate fauna (EPA 2021). Pond-net samples were taken at two comparable locations, one upstream at ITM 511765 742755 and one downstream of possible impacts from the proposed works at ITM 511967 742880, in areas which were first checked with a bathyscope to avoid disturbance of freshwater pearl mussels (Figure 4-1). Invertebrates were identified on the bankside to the lowest taxonomic level possible with the naked eye.

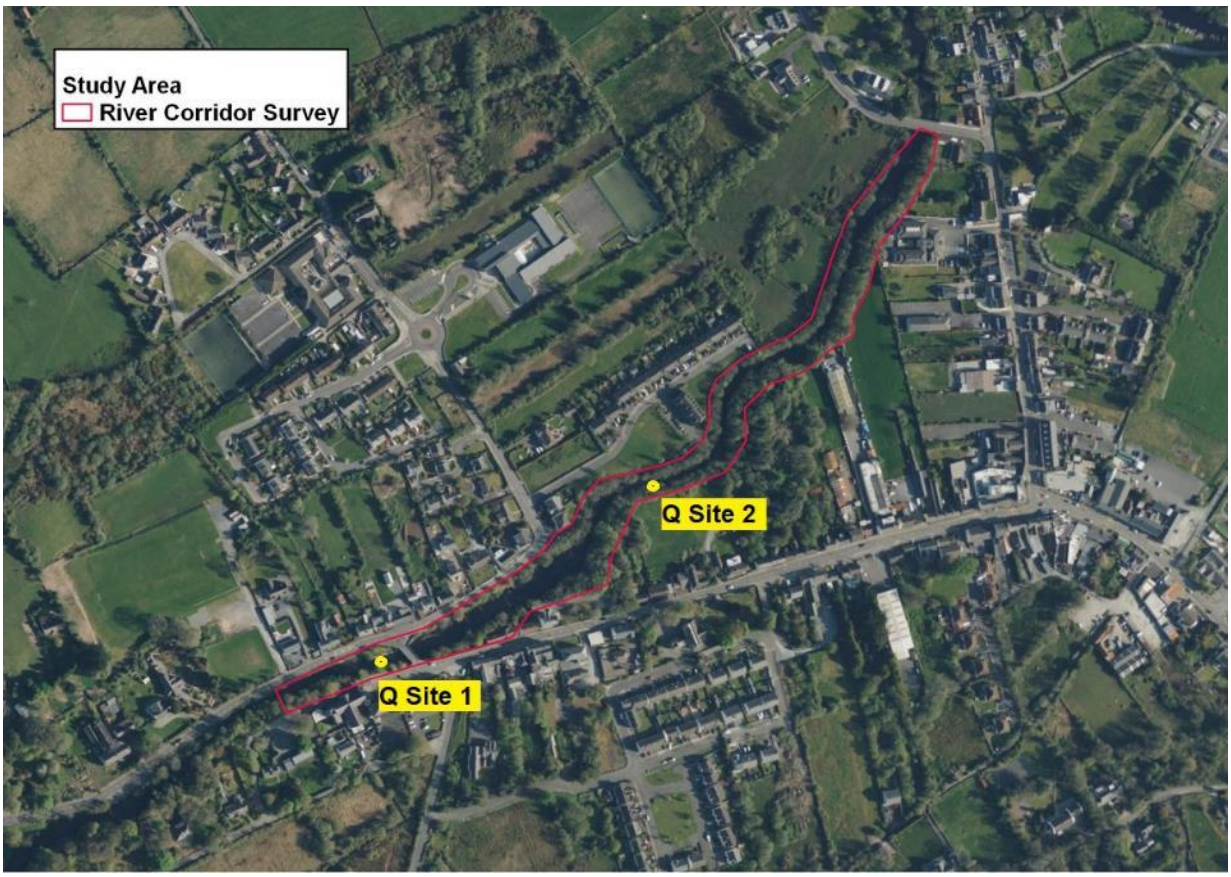

Figure 4-1 - Biological Water Quality (Q-value) Sites)

4.4.2.2 Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) (FPM)

Initial visual assessment of the habitat quality is based on the criteria outlined by Skinner *et al.* (2003). A licensed survey (NPWS Licence No C09/2024) was carried out in accordance with the standard methodology (Anon, 2004). With Aideen Kane M.Sc. acting as bankside assistant, Pascal Sweeney entered the river, checking for FPM at each step taken with a bathyscope. To count numbers of FPM and map their distribution within the preferred general location for the footbridge, the area was first marked out in a grid (Figure 4-2) with hi-vis strips. Grids 1A to 7A are from upstream to downstream along the relatively straight left bank. Grids A to D are 5m x 5m squares. Along the right bank, each grid is 5m long, but width varies. FPM numbers within each grid were counted, using a bathyscope. In the grids along the right bank, as FPM densities were such that it would not be possible to walk in without standing on mussels, it was necessary to count from a greater distance, which could have resulted in a slight underestimate of numbers.

Figure 4-2 - Grid surveyed which covers the proposed footbridge location (see Figure 2.2 for bridge location).

In addition to the count within the preferred general location for the footbridge, FPM numbers were surveyed in the following three 2m wide transects, as shown in Figure 4-3: -

1. Transect 1 upstream of the preferred general location for the footbridge at ITM 511853 742792, which is downstream of and immediately adjacent to a permanent transect which was surveyed on July 4th by Dr. Elizabeth Ryder, DKIT.

2. Transect 2 downstream of the preferred general location for the footbridge at ITM 512058 742912, across from the SW corner of the cul-de-sac running towards the left bank.

3. Transect 3 farther downstream at ITM 512190 743127, c. 50 m upstream of the next road bridge.

Coordinates given above were taken on the left bank.

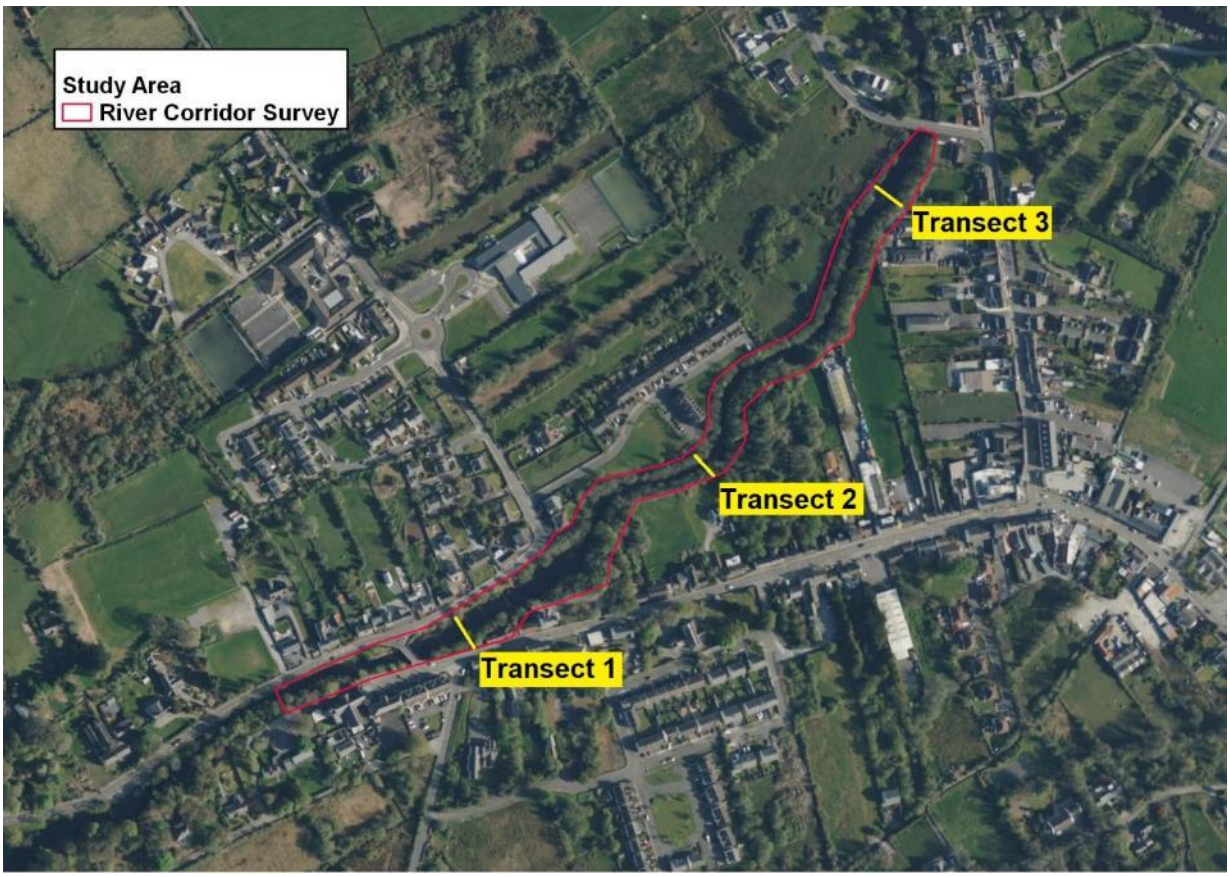

Figure 4-3 - FPM Transects.

Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*):-The habitat quality for salmon was assessed, based on the criteria outlined by Kennedy (1984), Crisp (1996), Bardonnet and Baglinière (2000) and by Hendry and Cragg-Hine (2003) for the physical instream requirements of this species for spawning, nursery and adult habitat. David Harrington (Senior Fisheries Environmental Officer, Inland Fisheries Ireland was contacted by email for information of salmon in the Owenriff. Observations were made while surveying with a bathyscope for FPM.

Lampreys (Lampetra planeri and Petromyzon marinus):- The habitat quality for the two lamprey species, the brook lamprey, and sea lamprey was assessed, based on the criteria outlined by Maitland (1980) and by Johns (2002) for the physical instream requirements of these species for spawning, nursery and adult habitat. Available records on the distribution of these species were checked.

Otter (Lutra lutra):- The presence of otter was checked for by a survey of the riverbank for holts or couching sites and an examination of hard bankside surfaces for the presence of spraints and bankside mud/sand for imprints. The habitat quality for this species was assessed, based on the criteria outlined by Chanin (2003).

Annex I Floating River Vegetation (FRV):- Direct observations of aquatic vegetation were made, and species were identified.

4.4.3 Bat Survey

Bat surveys of the project and surrounding areas were carried out by Dr. Caroline Shiel. Surveys took place from June to August 2024. Locations surveyed and methods used are detailed below. See planning pack For full report.

Derelict restaurant building – Bat surveys were conducted to investigate if bats were roosting in the building. Bat surveys included a thorough search of the interior and exterior of the building, dusk and dawn bat detector surveys

conducted by two surveyors. Surveys were also conducted by means of static bat detectors placed outside and inside the building.

Owenriff River – Bat activity along the Owenriff River was assessed by means of walking transects using bat detectors and thermal scopes to observe bats foraging over the river. Static detectors were also deployed at selected location along the river.

Woodland Areas A and B were surveyed during daylight hours for trees with potential bat roost features. GPS readings were taken of trees with potential as bat roosts. A tree survey was conducted by Noel Lane – Tree Care Services in July 2024. Metal tags were affixed to individual trees in a section of the study area between the existing N59 bridge as far as and including Woodland Area A. Walking transects with bat detectors and static surveys were also conducted in these woodland areas.

Area C – the field at the north-eastern end of the study area was surveyed by means of a static bat detector and walking transects.

Riverbank west of existing N59 Bridge trees were surveyed for potential roost features during daylight hours. A bat detector survey was conducted by means of hand-held bat detector.

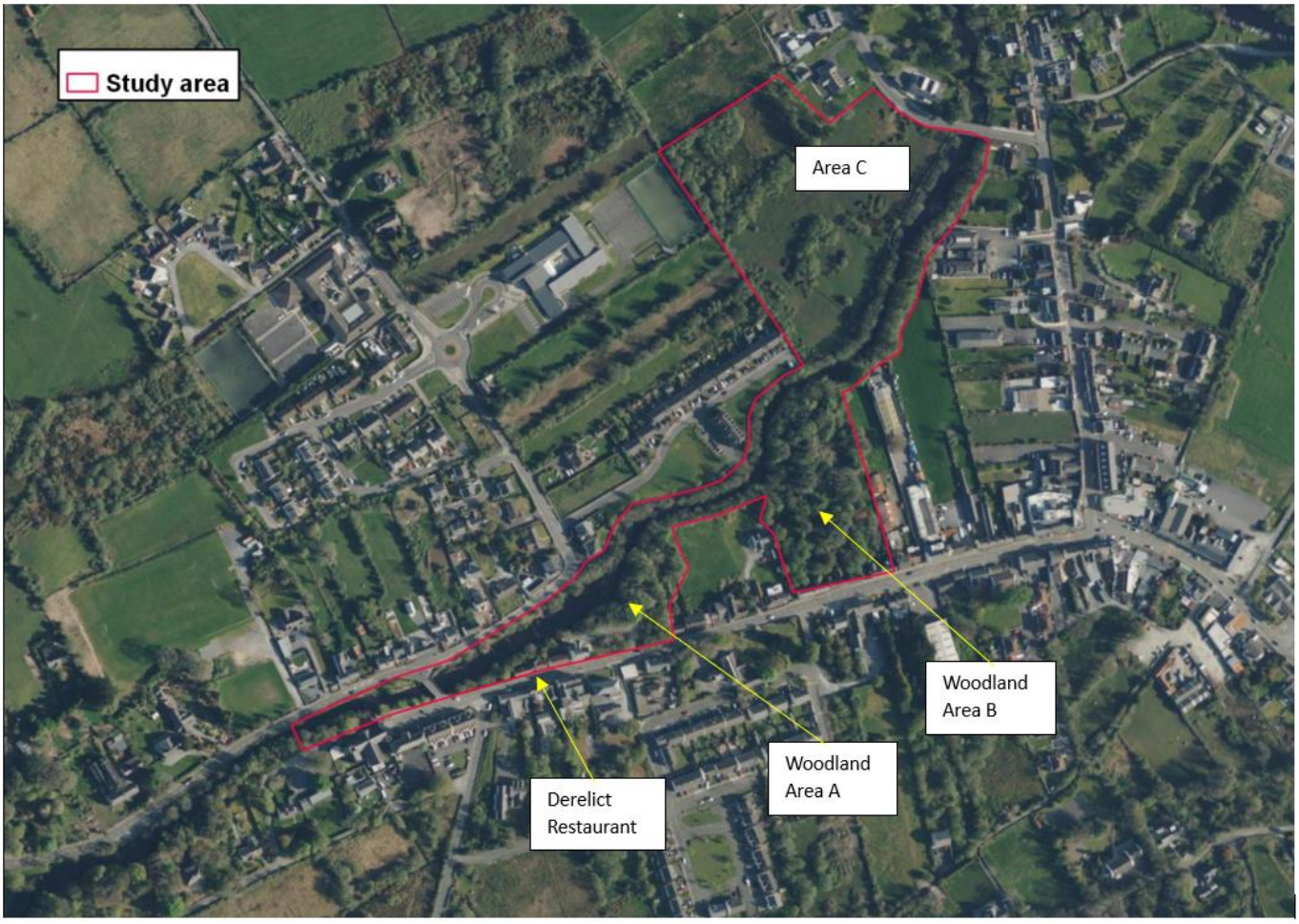

Figure 4-4 - Bat survey study areas.

4.5 Statement of Authority

This report was prepared by Sinéad Kinsella and Kevin McCaffrey. This report was peer reviewed by Paul O'Donoghue.

Sinéad Kinsella has a BSc in Applied Freshwater and Marine Biology. She has experience in preparing Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports, Natura Impact Statements and prepares Ecological Impact Assessment Reports and undertakes a range of ecological surveys (e.g. mammal and bat surveys) for a range of proposed developments.

Kevin McCaffrey has a BSc (Hons) in Applied Freshwater and Marine Biology and a MSc in Environmental Sustainability. He is a Senior Ecologist with over 12 years' experience in freshwater and marine ecology, environmental surveying, impact assessment and as an Ecological clerk of Works. He has prepared and reviewed a wide range of technical reports including Environmental Impact Assessment, AA screening, Natura Impact Assessment, and sanitary surveys.

Paul O'Donoghue is an Associate Director at Atkins. Paul holds a BSc (Zoology), MSc (Behavioural Ecology) and a PhD (Avian Ecology and Genetics). Paul is a Chartered member of the Society for the Environment (CEnv) and a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM). Paul has over 26 years' experience in ecology; including extensive experience in the preparation of Habitat Directive Assessments / Natura Impact Statements (i.e., Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive).

5. Existing Environment

5.1 Desktop Review

The proposed footbridge will be located over the Owenriff [Corrib] River, and therefore, works will be carried out adjacent to the Owenriff [Corrib] River, which is a 4th order watercourse. The Owenriff River discharges to Lough Corrib ca. 1.9km downstream of the proposed works area. It is in Hydrometric Area 30: Corrib and in Water Framework Directive (WFD) sub-catchment BallycuirkeLoughStream_SC_010. The interest of the Owenriff lies primarily in its importance as a Salmonid river and the presence of a significant population of Freshwater Pearl Mussel, a species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive and protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2021 (as amended).

Although there will be no in-stream works required as the proposed bridge is a clear span structure, there are potential for impacts within the Owenriff River, due to proximity of the works to the river and loss of riparian habitats. The area of the proposed works is located within Lough Corrib SAC (site code:IE000297) and ca. 1.8km upstream of Lough Corrib SPA (site code: IE000297). There are no other Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity of the works or with ecological connectivity to the works location.

Q-values, a biological water quality metric based on the composition of a river's macroinvertebrates community, show that the most recent water quality data is from an EPA sampling station 'Br upstream of Lough Corrib' in 2021, which Q4-5 High water quality ca. 500m downstream of the proposed works in 2021 and as Q4 Good water quality a further ca. 600m downstream at 'D/s Sew Trtmt Wks- Oughterard' also in 2021 (Source: EPA Maps). River Waterbody WFD Status (2016-2021) in the river where the proposed works will be carried out is classified as 'Poor.'

Invasive non-native species of particular concern include those restricted under the Habitats Regulations (SI No. 477/2011, as amended) or the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation, especially riparian and aquatic plants such as Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), waterweeds (*Elodea* spp.), Water Fern (*Azolla filiculoides*) and Parrot's-feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*). Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) has been recorded in the 2km grid square (M14B) on the NBDC. However, records are from 1970-1986. There is also a more recent record approximately 400m upstream (NBDC, 2009) Butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*), Canadian Waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*), Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), Common Broomrape (*Orobanche minor*), Curly Waterweed (*Lagarosiphon major*), Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*), New Zealand Pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*), Nuttall's Waterweed (*Elodea nuttallii*), *Rhododendron ponticum* and Sycamore *(Acer pseudoplatanus)* were all recorded within the 10km grid square M14, which the proposed works are located within. Routine biosecurity protocols will be followed to prevent the introduction or spread of invasive non-native species.

The proposed works are located within Lough Corrib SAC which is designated for White-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*). The habitat within the proposed project boundary may provide suitable refuges, particularly for juvenile crayfish. However, there are no records of Crayfish on the western side of Lough Corrib. Introduction of exotic crayfish species or the crayfish fungal plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*) could have a serious impact on the native crayfish population.

Species of conservation interest considered likely to be present in the Owenriff River, during at least part of their life cycle include Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), River Lamprey (*L. fluviatilis*), Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*), Brown Trout (*S. trutta*) and European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*). Species not of conservation interest potentially occurring in the works area include Three-spined Stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*) and Minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*). The Owenriff River is known as one of Ireland's premier salmon rivers.

There are numerous records for Otter along the Owenriff River and its tributaries, including a record of otter at Lough Corrib ca. 1.7km downstream of the proposed works. While no evidence of otters (holts, couches, slides, spraints or prints) was observed during the site visit, it is possible that otters may commute along the river channel. Therefore, the presence of this species cannot be ruled out.

As mentioned, Lough Corrib SPA is located ca. 1.8km downstream of the proposed works location. This is SPA is designated for a range of birds, waterbirds and wetland. A search of the 10km grid square (MI4) on the NBDC shows records for numerous birds and waterbirds, some of which are amber and red-listed on the BoCCI (Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland) (NBDC, 2025).

Oughterard Bridge was assessed for bat suitability as part of the EIRSPAN annual bridge routine maintenance program. The under surface of all arches are gunited and there is therefore, no potential for bats at this bridge (EIRSPAN Bat survey 2020). However, commuting and foraging bats are likely to occur in the vicinity of the proposed works along the Owenriff River, there is the potential impacts on bat species due to loss or fragmentation of linear habitat features and increased artificial lighting of the area.

5.2 Site Survey

The proposed bridge is located to the northwest edge of Oughterard Town. The river at this point is bordered by the N59 to the south and Carrowmanagh road to the north. Approximately 140m downstream of the existing road bridge the Carrowmanagh Road turns 90 degrees away from the river. At this point the Western Way continues along the river to the Glann Bridge. The 140m stretch of the northern riverbank is best characterised as amenity grassland with well-spaced medium sized trees. The strip of riverbank is 5-6 meters deep and abuts the road. The tree species present along this section include Ash, Weeping beach, Alder, Mountain Ash, Hawthorn and Cherry. The low impact invasive species *Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora* (Montbretia) is abundant on both riverbanks in any area that doesn't have a dense tree canopy and on a small island immediately upstream of the bridge location. Along the start of the Western way path where the proposed bridge is to be located there is a tree line composed of mostly Sycamore and Ash. Most of the Ash is affected by Ash die back to varying degrees. The sloped riverbank below the trees is dominated by brambles, Ivy and montbretia. A stand of Japanese Knotweed that is currently undergoing treatment by Galway County Council is located 50m upstream of the exiting bridge.

The southern riverbank at the existing bridge starts as a steep cliff with a narrow flat section of bank just above median flow level. This lower section of riverbank gradually widens as you move downstream. At the proposed bridge location this lower area is approximately 3-4 meters wide. There is then a steep gradient up towards the ground behind and to road level. The area appears to have been raised at some stage as the bank is comprised of large rock material. The vegetation along the riverbank for the first 100m approximately is mixed tree line with some scrub behind. A stand of Bamboo was recorded growing behind the old restaurant (First building downstream of the bridge). The proposed bridge landing is located within a small area of (Mixed) Broadleaved Woodland (WD1).

The dominant tree species within the wood are Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). Most of the Ash show signs of Ash Die back disease. Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Elm (*Ulmus* sp.) are present to a lesser extent. The understory of the woodland is dominated by Ivy (*Hedera helix*) on the low flat area adjacent to the river. A combination of Nettles (*Urtica dioica*), Brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*) and Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) are present further back from the river on the steep bank where the canopy is more open. Other species which occur in the area include Hedge Woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), Lords-and-Ladies (*Arum maculatum*), Ivy Broomrape (*Orobanche hederae*), Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Hart's-tongue (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*). The garden hedge escapes Box hedge (*Buxus* sp.) and Privet (*Ligustrum* sp.) are present throughout the wood.

There are no invasive plant species listed on the Third Schedule of the Natural Habitats Regulations (SI 477 of 2011) within the wooded area at the time of survey. Invasive plant species observed include *Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora* (Montbretia) and Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*); both are categorised by Invasive Species Ireland as High Impact invasive plant species

There is a small island present immediately upstream of the proposed bridge location; vegetation is dominated by Willow (*Salix* sp.) and *Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora* (Montbretia).

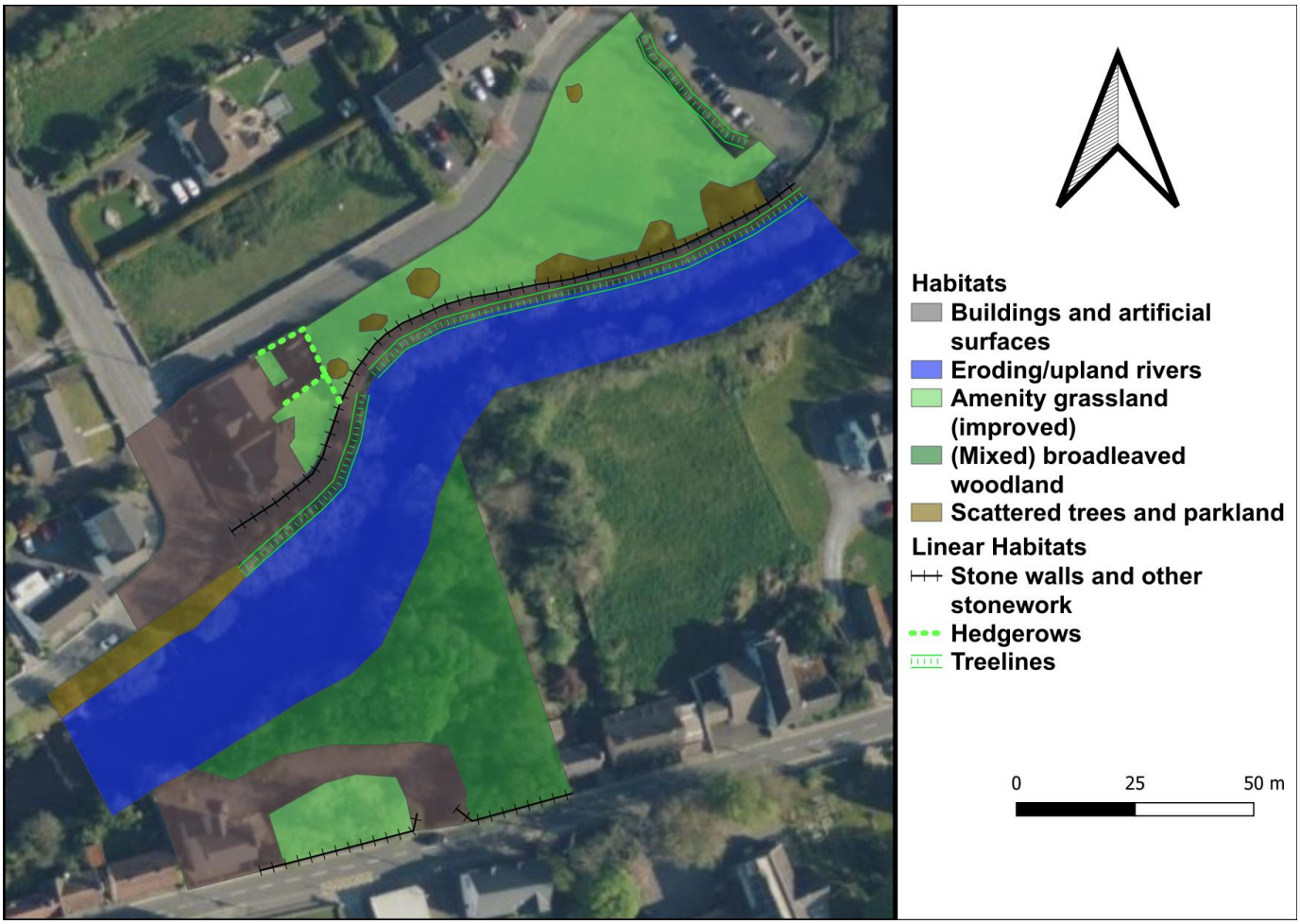

Figure 5-1 - Site habitat map.

Figure 5-2 – Northern bridge landing site , western way site seen in top right of image.

Figure 5-3 – View of southern landing site from immediately upstream of north landing.

Figure 5-4 – View of southern landing site from N59.

Figure 5-5 - View from southern riverbank towards northern landing site.

5.2.1 Aquatic Survey

An Aquatic Survey was carried out by Sweeney Consultancy on the Owenriff River at the proposed works site in summer 2024. Aquatic surveys were carried out in advance of the optioneering and design stages. The identification of a number of sensitive species and in particular Freshwater Pearl Mussel lead to the decision to avoid any instream works and locate any structures as far from the river edge as possible.

5.2.1.1 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*)

Live FPM were found throughout the Study Area from upstream of the N59 road bridge to under the next bridge downstream. [redacted]

5.2.1.2 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)

The Owenriff River is not a designated Salmonid Water designated under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations of 1988 (S.I. No. 293 of 1988). Some potentially good salmon spawning habitat was identified within the study area, where the water quality is suitable for salmon, which need EPA Class A water: Q4 to Q5 (Curtis *et al.,* 2009). However, during fieldwork, no salmon parr were observed while using the bathyscope. Information from a local salmon angler (Ultan Macken, B.Sc., *pers. comm.*) indicates that salmon in the Owenriff River spawn upstream of Oughterard. A report on a 2020 survey of fish stocks in the Corrib catchment is available on the IFI website (http://wfdfish.ie/index.php/corrib-catchment/). Reasonably good numbers of juvenile salmon were recorded in the only site surveyed in the Owenriff sub-catchment. This site is on the Rusheeny River, which flows from Lough Beg to Lough Ateeann, over 3km upstream of the Study Area. During a site visit on 4th of November 2024 Salmonid were recorded spawning immediately upstream of the bridge location. In a subsequent site visits on 19th of December 2024 a number of redds were easily visible from the riverbank.

5.2.1.3 Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)

Sea lampreys are present in the Corrib catchment but seem to be confined to below the Galway Regulating Weir (O'Connor, 2007). Although there are records of sea lampreys in some of the tributaries of Lough Corrib (Kurz & Costello, 1999), these records pre-date the construction of the existing weir. While there is potential lamprey spawning habitat preset along this stretch of river there is no suitable silty habitat for ammocoetes. There is likely to be suitable silty habitat present further downstream as the river deepens and slows as it joins Lough Corrib.

5.2.1.4 Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)

While O'Connor (2007) recorded no lampreys at either of the two sites electro fished in the Owenriff catchment, the possibility of this species being present cannot be excluded, as there is suitable habitat. While there is potential lamprey spawning habitat preset along this stretch of river there is no suitable silty habitat for ammocoetes. There is likely to be suitable silty habitat present further downstream as the river deepens and slows as it joins Lough Corrib.

5.2.1.5 Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

Baily and Rochford (2006) report signs of otters recorded at over 77% of sites surveyed in the Corrib catchment. The national Biodiversity Data Centre website shows records of otter in the Owenriff River at locations upstream of Oughterard and in Lough Corrib, near the mouth of the river (https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map). Otter imprints were found in bankside mud during fieldwork, but no holt or couching site within the study area.

5.2.1.6 Instream Vegetation

The aquatic macrophyte flora in the Owenriff River is dominated by *Myriophyllum alterniflorum* (alternate water-milfoil). Other aquatic macrophytes are rare. *Glyceria fluitans* and *Fontinalis antipyretica* cover less than 0.1% of the river. No species of *Ranunculus* (water crowfoot) or *Callitriche* (starwort) were recorded. This flora cannot be classified as the Annex I habitat type "Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation".

5.2.1.1 Invasive Species

The only species found within the study area that is listed in the third schedule of S.I. No. 477/2011 - European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, was Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*). This was a small plant on the left bank, just upstream of the N59 bridge and is evidently surviving herbicide treatment applied to a larger stand, formerly at this location. This is not within the area of proposed project area.

The main non-native species along the banks of the Owenriff River is *Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora* (montbretia). Other non-native plants present on the banksides in smaller amounts include *Fuchsia magellanica* (Fuchsia) and *Cotoneaster sp.* (Cotoneaster).

5.2.2 Bat Survey

A bat survey was carried out by Ecologist Dr. Caroline Shiel from June to August 2024.

5.2.2.1 Owenriff River

Bat activity along the Owenriff River was assessed by means of walking transects using bat detectors and thermal scopes to observe bats foraging over the river. Static detectors were also deployed at selected locations along the river. A Songmeter 4 bat detector was deployed overnight on 24/6/24 – 25/06/24 at a position on the northern river bank – Point C in Figure 5-6– GPS 53.428493, -9.3248527.A Songmeter 4 detector was deployed on the southern river bank on 07/08/24 to 08/08/24 – Point B in Figure 5-6 – GPS 53.427921, -9.3254372 (See Figure **5-6** below).

The results of the analysis from the Songmeters are similar for both survey points. The most frequently recorded species were Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Common pipistrelle (*P. pipistrellus*) and Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*). Two calls of Nathusius's pipistrelle (*P. nathusii*) were recorded on 08/08/24. Daubenton's bats (*Myotis daubentonii*) were detected in low numbers throughout both nights.

Figure 5-6 - Showing locations of static detectors deployed on banks of Owenriff River.

Walking transects conducted along the length of the Owenriff River in the study area revealed Soprano pipistrelles and Common pipistrelles feeding along the entire stretch of the river. Low numbers of Daubenton's bats were detected and were concentrated on slow-flowing pools in darker areas. No Daubenton's bats were detected foraging in the immediate vicinity of the existing N59 bridge. There is considerable light spillage onto the river in this location from streetlights.

The low occurrence of Daubenton's bats on site would indicate that there is no significant roost of this species close by. The under surfaces of the arches of the existing N59 bridge have been gunited leaving no roosting sites for bats.

Most of the trees lining the northern riverbank are immature and the predominantly alder and willow. In contrast, there are some very mature trees lining the southern bank of the river, many containing potential roost features for bats.

The bat surveys of the area recorded a singular Lesser Horseshoe call at an abandoned restaurant upstream of the bridge location. There are no proposed works at this site which is located 60m west of the proposed development. Lesser Horseshoe bats are a QI of the Lough Corrib SAC and listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive.

5.2.2.2 Tree Surveys – Woodland Area A

Woodland Area A consists of a block of mature deciduous trees to the east of the Old Barracks house. The trees are along the southern riverbank and extend to the rear of the houses on the N59 road. Species are mainly ash, sycamore, alder and beech. Many of the ash trees are showing signs of ash die-back disease.

Woodland Area A was surveyed during daylight hours on 07/08/24 and 08/08/24 for trees with potential bat roost features. GPS readings were taken of trees with potential as bat roosts. A tree survey was conducted by Noel Lane – Tree Care Services in July 2024. Metal tags were affixed to individual trees in a section of the study area between the existing N59 bridge as far as and including Woodland Area A.

A walking transect with a bat detector was conducted at dusk on 07/08/24. A static detector was deployed overnight on 07/08/24 – 08/08/24 on a stone wall within Area A.

A bat survey was conducted by walking transects within Woodland Area A at dusk on 07/08/24. Equipment used included a Pettersson D240X bat detector and Echometer Touch Pro plugged into a mini iPad.

Woodland Area A contains many mature trees that have developed suitable bat roosting features such as cavities and cracks over time. There is an old stone wall running parallel to the Owenriff River, approximately 3m from the riverbank. There are several places along the base of the wall that would provide ideal conditions for otter holts.

Soprano pipistrelles were the first species recorded and were detected foraging mainly over the river but also intermittently within the woodland. Common pipistrelle and Leisler's were also recorded foraging over the river. Many Whiskered bats were recorded throughout survey, indicating that there is a roost close-by. A small number of Brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*) were recorded in the woodland. No Lesser horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) were detected.

Results of the recording from the Static bat detector revealed similar results. Whiskered bats were the most frequently encountered species and were active in the woodland throughout the night. A small number of Brown long-eared bats were recorded. Surprisingly, no Natterer's bats were detected, even though the habitat was ideal.

No Lesser horseshoe bats were detected.

5.2.2.3 Tree Surveys - Woodland Area B

Woodland Area B was surveyed during daylight hours on 14/08/24 for trees with potential bat roost features. GPS readings were taken of trees with potential as bat roosts. The tree survey conducted by Noel Lane – Tree Care Services – did not include this area.

A walking transect with a bat detector was conducted at dusk on 14/08/24.

Woodland Area B is located to the rear of Kennys Derelict pub on main street and extends north to the Owenriff River. Woodland Area B was accessed from the property immediately to the west of the pub. There is a lot of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan knotweed growing in this open area between Woodland Area A and Woodland Area B.

The trees in Woodland Area B consist of ash (again with ash die-back, sycamore and beech). The trees are not as mature as those in Woodland Area A and consequently do not have as many potential roost features.

Badger activity was noted in the open area between Woodland Area A and Woodland Area B. Badger trails were recorded heading into Woodland Area B.

A bat detector survey was conducted on 14/08/24 within Woodland Area B. Several Soprano pipistrelles were detected foraging within the woodland. Large numbers of whiskered bats were detected throughout the survey. It is most likely that these bats are roosting either in the haybarn or else in the various stone outbuildings to the rear of Kenny's pub. Further surveys would be required to locate the roost. However, this section of woodland is outside of the proposed development and so there will be no impact on this are due to the proposed development.

5.3 Threats, Pressures and Activities

As noted in Section 6.3, the main threats to the quality of this site are from water polluting activities resulting from intensification of agricultural activities, uncontrolled discharge of sewage which is causing localised eutrophication of the lake, and housing and boating development, which is causing the loss of native lakeshore vegetation. Introduction of exotic crayfish species or the crayfish fungal plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*) could also have an impact on the native crayfish population. The bat roost is susceptible to disturbance or development.

6. Connectivity to Natura 2000 sites

6.1 Zone of Influence

The "*Zone of Influence*" of a plan or project is the area which may experience ecological effects as a result of its implementation, including any ancillary activities. The various impacts of a plan or project will each have their own characteristics, e.g., nature, extent, magnitude, duration etc. Accordingly, the area subject to each impact ("zone of impact") will vary depending on characteristics of the impact and the presence of pathways for its propagation. Ecological features within or connected to one or more zones of impact could, depending on their sensitivities, be affected by the plan or project under consideration. The area containing such features may be regarded as the Zone of Influence. As such, in establishing the Zone of Influence for a plan or project, regard must be had to the characteristics of its potential impacts, potential pathways for impacts and the sensitivities of ecological features in the receiving environment.

In its guidance on selecting Natura 2000 sites to include in AA, *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities* (DEHLG, 2010a) recommends inclusion of sites in the following three categories: -

- Any Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the plan or project area,
- Any Natura 2000 sites within the Zone of Influence of the plan or project (generally within 15km for plans, to be established on a case-by-case basis for projects, having regard to the nature, scale and location of the project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors and the potential for in-combination effects), and
- Following the precautionary principle, any other Natura 2000 sites for which the possibility of significant effects cannot be excluded, e.g., for a project with hydrological impacts, it may be necessary to check the full extent of the catchment for Natura 2000 sites with water-dependent qualifying interests.

In addition, *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (EC, 2021a) recommends consideration of Natura 2000 sites hosting fauna which could move to the plan or project area or its zone(s) of impact, and the potential for the plan or project to sever ecological connectivity within or between Natura 2000 sites. *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management* (OPR, 2021) emphasises the importance of employing the source-pathway-receptor model (rather than arbitrary distances such as 15km) when selecting Natura 2000 sites for inclusion in AA.

Based on the above considerations, the Zone of Influence for the proposed works was defined as the combination of the following zones of impact: -

- For direct impacts, all areas within and immediately adjoining the works area.
- For temporary disturbance to birds and other fauna, as well as effects associated with the spread of invasive alien species, all areas within a precautionary buffer of 500m from the works area.
- For hydrological impacts, waterbodies, and riparian zones/floodplains within 500m of all works locations and downstream waterbodies as far as any accidental pollution could conceivably be carried – the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib.
- For indirect effects, all other areas with potential ecological connectivity to the above zones of impact, i.e. The Corrib catchment.

Using QGIS3, spatial data for waterbodies and catchments from *EPA Geoportal* were viewed in conjunction with aerial imagery from *Bing Maps* to identify pathways and zones of impact from the proposed works, and other potential ecological connections to the wider landscape. These were then mapped in relation to Natura 2000 sites using spatial data from *NPWS: Maps and Data*.

6.2 Identification of Sites

6.2.1 Direct Impacts

The proposed works are located within Lough Corrib SAC (site code: 000297). There is potential for direct impacts on this SAC as a result of the proposed works. The SAC is designated for a number of riparian or aquatic habitats. Lough Corrib SAC is located within the zone of impact of this project,

6.2.2 Water quality

Given that the proposed works site is located within Lough Corrib SAC, the aquatic qualifying interests of this SAC which include; Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110], Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea* [3130], Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140], Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation [3260] are considered likely to occur within the zone of impact for water quality impacts from the proposed works. There is also potential for impact on aquatic QI species in the vicinity of the proposed works, including *Margaritifera margaritifera* (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029], *Austropotamobius pallipes* (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092], *Petromyzon marinus* (Sea Lamprey) [1095], *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey) [1096], *Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106], *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]. Further, the proposed works site is hydrologically connected to Lough Corrib SPA, which is ca. 1.8km downstream. This SPA is designated for a range of waterbirds and wetland, which rely on water quality. This SPA is also considered to be within the zone of influence of the proposed works.

Potential water quality impacts during the construction stage relate to release of silt during excavations, pouring of concrete or hydrocarbon spills/leaks from machinery. During the operational phase runoff from the hard stand areas paving, ramps and abutment will be directed to the exiting road drainage. The bridge deck will have gaps between the decking and so rain water will pass through the structure to the river. As this is a pedestrian bridge there is no risk of hydrocarbons or other pollutants associated with road bridges.

The combined sewer main along the proposed north abutment is to be replaced. During the removal of the existing pipe there is the potential for spillage of sewage. There is potential for impact on the Owenriff River given its proximity to the works. A detailed sequence of the works are provided in Section 2.5.2 above. In summary, the works will be carried out in summer when schools are off and rainfall levels are low. The section of pipe to be removed will be bunged and then cleaned using a jet-vac truck to remove any sewage from the pipe. During replacement of the pipe the jet-vat truck will be used to store any sewage within the system, with an additional temporary over-pumping bypass being put in place in the unlikely event that the jet-vat tank reaches its capacity. Given this there is not considered to be a likely significant impact on the Owenriff River due to the combined sewer main replacement.

Further, Connemara Bog Complex SAC is hydrologically connected to the proposed works area. However, the SAC is located ca. 6.8km upstream of the proposed works area. There will be no water quality impacts on this SAC as a result of the proposed works.

6.2.3 Vibration/Noise

During construction of the proposed development there will be several works with the potential to produce noise and vibrations. The main source of noise/vibrations will be due to excavations and coring associated with ground investigations, construction of bridge abutments and a temporary crane pad. The north abutment is 5m from the

normal wet width of the river, while the south abutment and crane pad are 14m and 23m respectively from the normal wet width. Fauna which are sensitive to excessive noise and vibrations include Bats, Fish and Freshwater Pearl Mussel. Lampreys are less sensitive to vibrations due to lack of a swim bladder, ammocoetes are more sensitive however there is no suitable silt habitat in the proposed bridge location and so they are unlikely to occur. As the works will take place during normal day time hours it is not expected that there will be any impact on bats due to noise/vibrations. Preliminary ground investigation works have been carried out to confirm depth and quality of bedrock to inform the design of the north abutment. The works involved one 100mm rotary core and a slit trench. To gain site specific data vibration monitoring was carried out during the works at a number of locations. The highest vibrations were recorded during loading/offloading of the machinery, followed by the excavation and then rotary coring. There were two monitoring stations located near the works one 4m and the other 10m. The results showed that over this short distance the vibrations levels halved, showing that any vibrations will dissipate relativity quickly. To minimise the potential for impacts it was decided to construct a spread foundation rather than piling. Although vibration monitoring was lower for GI rotary cores the size of core was 100mm as opposed to 200-300mm cores which would be required for the abutment foundations. Additionally installing cores would take longer to complete and would produce a significant quantity of fine limestone dust from the drilling (water is also required for lubrication). The excavation of the north abutment foundation is expected to take 2-3 days to excavate, with an additional 1 day for the diversion of utilities. The proposed construction method for the south abutment is mini bore piles. Potential impacts on Qualifying Interests (QI) of the SAC will be discussed further below.

6.2.4 Lighting

Operational lighting will be provided at the proposed crossing to provide adequate illumination for bridge users and provide a high-quality public realm space. Increased artificial light can impact on bats, salmonids and Freshwater Pearl mussel through blockage of commuting routes and changes to behaviour. There is existing street lighting running along the Carrowmanagh Road adjacent to the Owenriff River. Additionally, there is existing light pollution from Oughterard Town to the south although this is partially screened by the existing woodland. The proposed bridge lighting will be down lighting located within the handrails and directed inwards. The relevant bat guidance will be followed with regards to lighting design, including maximum light spill onto the river of maximum 1 lux due to the bridge. Modelling of the proposed lighting plan was carried out by ASD lighting and found that the maximum light spill to the river surface will be less than 1 lux (Planning pack report ref:ASD-SL-IR-2024-2025-011 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE - CALC - R03).

Temporary lighting at the site during construction will be required for security and health & safety purposes. All temporary lighting will be required to meet the same requirements as set out in Section 2.3 with regards to preventing light spillage and any associated negative impacts on the local environment, with any overnight lighting kept to a minimum and away from the river.

Potential impacts on QIs due to lighting will be discussed further below.

6.2.5 Disturbance to habitats

There are no Annex I habitats present within the proposed project redline boundary and so there can be no direct impacts. There are a number of Annex I habitats located downstream of the project; this will be discussed further in Section 6.2.8.

A section of woodland will need to be felled to construct the bridge. This is not Annexed habitat but does provide ecological functions for Annex species such as Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Salmon. As such the potential impacts of the removal/alteration of this habitat on QI species will be discussed further bellow.

6.2.6 Hydromorphology

The proposed bridge is to be clear span with the abutments located back from the riverbank crest (North 2.5m and South 6.2m). Flood modelling of the proposed Bridge arrangement has shown that the Bridge structures will not interfere with the flow of the river during flood events. A such there can be no impact on the hydromorphology of the river.

6.2.7 Disturbance to fauna

Otter (*Lutra lutra*) prints were recorded during the aquatic survey, which is a qualifying interest of Lough Corrib SAC, within the area of the proposed works. There is potential for indirect disturbances to otter that may forage or commute along the channels due to the presence of personnel along the river stretch. The potential for negative impacts on Otter must therefore be considered.

With respect to otters, the TII Guidance states the following: -

- No works should be undertaken within 150m of any holts at which breeding females or cubs are present. Following consultation with NPWS, works closer to such breeding holts may take place - provided appropriate mitigation measures are in place, e.g., screening and/or restricted working hours on site.

- No wheeled or tracked vehicles (of any kind) should be used within 20m of active, but non-breeding, otter holts. Light work, such as digging by hand or scrub clearance should also not take place within 15m of such holts, except under licence.

- There is also potential for disturbance during the proposed ground investigation works on aquatic species which are qualifying interests of the Lough Corrib SAC, such as Freshwater Pearl Mussel, White-clawed crayfish, Salmon and Lamprey species. Vibrations will occur during the coring of and trial pit works. The potential for negative impacts on these species must be considered.

The construction phase will increase activity in the area and so has the potential to cause disturbance to bird species in the area. However, given the habitats present in the surrounding area and the existing disturbance levels from the Carrowmanagh Road significant impacts are not considered likely on ex-situ QI bird species due to the proposed works.

6.2.8 Indirect effects

In the wider Zone of Influence, the Corrib Catchment, there are 15 no. SACs, Lough Corrib SAC (site code: 000297), Connemara Bog Complex SAC (site code: 002034), Maumturk Mountains SAC (site code: 002008), Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC (site code: 001774), Towerhill House SAC (site code: 002179), Carrowkeel Turlough SAC (site code: 000475), Ross Lake and Woods SAC (site code: 001312), Cloughmoyne SAC (site code: 000479), Shrule Turlough SAC (site code: 0005250), Mocorha Lough SAC (site code: 001536), Clyard Kettle-holes SAC (site code: 000480), Skealoghan Turlough SAC (site code: 000541), Ardkill Turlough SAC (site code: 000461), Kilglassan/ Caheravoostia Turlough Complex SAC (site code: 000504) and Carrowkeel Turlough SAC (site code: 000475).

The only SAC which is within the Zone of Influence of the proposed works is Lough Corrib SAC (site code: 000297). The remaining SACs are not hydrologically connected to the proposed project and are not connected via landscape features to the proposed project.

There are 2 no. SPAs located within the wider Corrib catchment, Lough Corrib SPA (site code: Lough Mask SPA (site code: 004062) and Lough Carra SPA (site code: 004051).

The only SPA which is within the Zone of Influence of the proposed works is Lough Corrib SPA (site code: 004042). The remaining SPAs are not hydrologically connected to the proposed works area.

Oughterard District Bog NHA (site code: 002431) is located ca. 6.2km upstream of the proposed works. Lough Corrib pNHA (site code: 000297) is located ca. 1.8km downstream of the proposed works. Rose Lake And Woods (site code: 001312), Moycullen Bogs NHA (site code: 002364), Ballycuirke Lough pNHA (site code: 000228), Drimcong Wood pNHA (site code: 001260), Gortnandarragh Limestone Pavement pNHA (site code: 001271), Killtullagh Turlough pNHA (site code: 000287), Connemara Bog Complex pNHA (site code: 002034) and Maumturk Mountains pNHA (site code: 002008) are all located within 15km of the proposed works. However, there is no hydrological or ecological connection between the proposed works and these sites.

6.2.9 Invasive alien species

The introduction or spread of any aquatic or riparian invasive alien species could negatively affect the river itself, i.e., 'Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation' (3260) and the communities of fish and other native aquatic species. In addition, the introduction or spread of diseases such as crayfish plague pose a risk to species such as White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*). No third schedule invasive species were recorded during the site survey in the proposed redline boundary. However, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Knotweed were record in the open fields immediately eat of the woodland (Approximately 30m from the proposed bridge). Given the recent outbreaks of crayfish plague in Ireland, the implementation of biosecurity protocols will ensure that crayfish plague and non-native invasive species are not introduced into the proposed working area.

6.2.10 Summary

Based on the above examination of the Zone of Influence, the following Natura 2000 sites have been selected for inclusion in the screening assessment: -

- Lough Corrib SAC (site code: IE000297)
- Lough Corrib SPA (site code: IE004042)

The Qualifying Interests for which the above Natura 2000 sites are designated, can be found listed in Section 6.3 below.

6.3 Brief Description of European Sites

6.3.1 Lough Corrib SAC

Lough Corrib SAC is described as follows[8]: -

> "*Lough Corrib is situated to the north of Galway city and is the second largest lake in Ireland, with an area of approximately 18,240 ha (the entire site is 20,556 ha). The lake can be divided into two parts: a relatively shallow basin, underlain by Carboniferous limestone, in the south, and a larger, deeper basin, underlain by more acidic granite, schists, shales and sandstones to the north. The surrounding lands to the south and east are mostly pastoral farmland, while bog and heath predominate to the west and north. A number of rivers are included within the cSAC as they are important for Atlantic Salmon. These rivers include the Clare, Grange, Abbert, Sinking, Dalgan and Black to the east, as well as the Cong, Bealanabrack, Failmore, Cornamona, Drimneen and Owenriff to the west. In addition to the rivers and lake basin, adjoining areas of conservation interest, including raised bog, woodland, grassland, and limestone pavement, have been incorporated into the site.*

[8] https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY000297.pdf

The shallow, lime-rich waters of the southern basin of Lough Corrib support one of the most extensive beds of stoneworts (Charophytes) in Ireland, with species such as Chara aspera*,* C. hispida*,* C. delicatula*,* C. contraria *and* C. desmacantha *mixed with submerged pondweeds (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*,* P. gramineus *and* P. lucens*), Shoreweed (*Littorella uniflora*) and Water Lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*). These Chara beds are an important source of food for waterfowl. In contrast, the northern basin contains more oligotrophic and acidic waters, without Chara species, but with Shoreweed, Water Lobelia, Pipewort (*Eriocaulon aquaticum*), Quillwort (*Isoetes lacustris*), Alternate Water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum alternifolium*) and Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*). The last-named is listed under the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015, and is an Annex II species under the E.U. Habitats Directive.*

*Large areas of reedswamp vegetation, dominated by varying mixtures of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Common Club-rush (*Scirpus lacustris*), occur around the margins of the lake. Reedswamp usually grades into species-rich marsh vegetation characterised by Slender Sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*), Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) and Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). Of particular note are the extensive beds of Great Fen-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) that have developed over the marly peat deposits in sheltered bays, particularly in the southeast corner of the lake…*

*…This large site contains four discrete raised bog areas and is selected for active raised bog, degraded raised bog, Rhynchosporion and bog woodland. Active raised bog comprises areas of high bog that are wet and actively peat-forming, where the percentage cover of bog mosses (*Sphagnum *spp.) is high, and where some or all of the following features occur: hummocks, pools, wet flats, Sphagnum lawns, flushes, and soaks. Degraded raised bog corresponds to those areas of high bog whose hydrology has been adversely affected by peat cutting, drainage and other land use activities, but which are capable of regeneration…*

*…Limestone pavement occurs along much of the shoreline in the lower Corrib basin, and supports a rich and diverse flora, including Herb-Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Bloody Crane's-bill (*G. sanguineum*), Carline Thistle (*Carlina vulgaris*), Spring Gentian (*Gentiana verna*), Wild Thyme (*Thymus praecox*), Rustyback (*Ceterach officinarum*), Wood Sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*), Slender St. John's-wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*), Quaking-grass (*Briza media*) and Blue Moor-grass (*Sesleria albicans*). Areas of Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) scrub occur in association with exposed limestone pavement, and these include species such as Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), with occasional Juniper (*Juniperus communis*). Three Red Data Book species are also found in association with limestone scrub - Alder Buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*) and Wood Bitter-vetch (*Vicia orobus*), the latter is also protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015.*

Open areas of orchid-rich calcareous grassland are also found in association with the limestone exposures…

*…A number of the rivers in the site support submerged and floating vegetation of the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion, including mosses. For example, in the River Corrib species such as Shining Pondweed (*Potamogeton lucens*), Perfoliate Pondweed (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*), Small Pondweed (*P. berchtoldii*), Yellow Water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*), White Water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*) and stoneworts (*Chara *spp.) occur.*

*The rare and Annex II-listed Slender Green Feather-moss (*Hamatocaulis vernicosus*, formerly known as* Drepanocladus vernicosus*) is found at the fen at Gortachalla, northeast of Moycullen. Here it is widespread around the margins, and this constitutes a large and significant population in the national context. A very large population of another rare moss,* Pseudocalliergon trifarium*, is also found in this area…*

*…Otter and Irish Hare have been recorded regularly within this site. Both of these species are listed in the Red Data Book and are legally protected by the Wildlife Act, 1976. Otter is also listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Lough Corrib is considered one of the best sites in the country for Otter, due to the sheer size of the lake and associated rivers and streams, and also the generally high quality of the habitats. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) use the lake and rivers as spawning grounds. Although this species is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Lough Corrib is also a well-known fishing lake with a very good Trout (*Salmo trutta*) fishery. The lake has a population of Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), a scarce, though probably under-recorded species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), also listed on Annex II, are also known from a number of areas within the site.*

*A population of Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), a species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, occurs within the site. White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), also listed on Annex II, is well distributed throughout Lough Corrib and its in-flowing rivers over limestone. A summer roost of Lesser Horseshoe Bat, another Annex II species, occurs within the site - approximately 100 animals were recorded here in 1999.*"

6.3.1.1 Qualifying Interests

Lough Corrib SAC is designated for the following habitats and species. An asterisk (*) denotes a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive: -

- Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110]
- Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130]
- Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140]
- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260]
- Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210]
- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty, or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410]
- Active raised bogs [7110] *
- Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]
- Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]
- Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] *
- Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] *
- Alkaline fens [7230]
- Limestone pavements [8240] *
- Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]

- Bog woodland [91D0] *
- *Margaritifera margaritifera* (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]
- *Austropotamobius pallipes* (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]
- *Petromyzon marinus* (Sea Lamprey) [1095]
- *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey) [1096]
- *Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106]
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303]
- *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]
- *Najas flexilis* (Slender Naiad) [1833]
- *Hamatocaulis vernicosus* (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216]

Due to the size and geographic range of the SAC, not all qualifying interests lie within the ZoI of the proposed works on the Owenriff River. Table 7-1 details the identification of qualifying interests of the SAC that are within the ZoI of the proposed works.

6.3.1.2 Conservation Objectives

The site-specific conservation objectives for Lough Corrib SAC and the specific attributes and targets defining the objectives are detailed in NPWS (2017). The overall aim is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species of community interest, i.e., the habitats and species for which the SAC is designated. The NPWS Conservation Objectives for this SAC can be found at the link below: -

https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000297.pdf

6.3.1.3 Threats and Pressures

The potential threats and pressures, as identified by EUNIS[9], for Lough Corrib SAC are given in

[9] https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/SDF.aspx?site=IE0000297

Table 6-1 below. The Site Synopsis (NPWS, 2022) describes the land use, management and threats within the site as follows: -

> "*The main threats to the quality of this site are from water polluting activities resulting from intensification of agricultural activities on the eastern side of the lake, uncontrolled discharge of sewage which is causing localised eutrophication of the lake, and housing and boating development, which is causing the loss of native lakeshore vegetation. The raised bog habitats are susceptible to further degradation and drying out due to drainage and peat cutting and, on occasions, burning. Peat cutting threatens Addergoole Bog and already a substantial area of it has been cut away. Fishing and shooting occur in and around the lake. Introduction of exotic crayfish species or the crayfish fungal plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*) could have a serious impact on the native crayfish population. The bat roost is susceptible to disturbance or development*. "

Table 6-1 - Threats, pressures, and activities with negative impacts on Lough Corrib SAC (NPWS, 2022; Eionet 2024).

Rank [High (H) / Medium (M) / Low (L)]	Threats and pressures [code]	Threats and pressures [type]	Location [inside (i) / outside (o) / both (b)]
H	H01.08	diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters	o
M	B01	forest planting on open ground	b
M	D01	roads, paths, and railroads	i
H	A02.01	agricultural intensification	b
L	E03.01	disposal of household / recreational facility waste	i
M	E01.03	dispersed habitation	i
H	G05	other human intrusions and disturbances	i
M	A10.01	removal of hedges and copses or scrub	i
H	C01.03.02	mechanical removal of peat	i
M	A08	fertilisation	b
M	J02.15	other human induced hydraulic conditions	b
H	I01	invasive non-native species	i
M	D03.01.02	piers / tourist harbours or recreational piers	i
M	A04.03	abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing	i
M	J02.01.03	infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes, or pits	i
L	C01.01	sand and gravel extraction	o
M	E01.01	continuous urbanisation	o

6.3.2 Lough Corrib SPA

Lough Corrib SPA is described as follows[10]: -

> "*Lough Corrib is the largest lake in the country and is located, for the most part, in County Galway, with a small section in the north extending into County Mayo. The lake can be divided into two parts: a relatively shallow basin in the south, which is underlain by Carboniferous limestone, and a larger, deeper basin to the north, which is underlain by more acidic granite, schists, shales, and sandstones. The main inflowing rivers are the Black, Clare, Dooghta, Cregg, Owenriff and the channel from Lough Mask. The main outflowing river is the Corrib, which reaches the sea at Galway City…*
>
> *…The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Greenland White-fronted Goose, Gadwall, Shoveler, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Common Scoter, Hen Harrier, Coot, Golden Plover, Black-Headed Gull, Common Gull, Common Tern, and Arctic Tern. The site is also of special conservation interest for holding an assemblage of over 20,000 wintering waterbirds. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetlands & Waterbirds.*
>
> *Lough Corrib is an internationally important site that regularly supports in excess of 20,000 wintering waterbirds including an internationally important population of wintering Pochard (10,107) – except where indicated all figures are five year mean peaks for the period 1995/96 to 1999/2000. The site also supports nationally important populations of wintering Greenland White-fronted Goose (160 - five year mean peak for the period 1994/95 to 1998/99), Gadwall (48), Shoveler (90), Tufted Duck (5,486), Coot (14,426) and Golden Plover (1,727). Other species which occur include Mute Swan (182), Whooper Swan (35), Wigeon (528), Teal (74), Mallard (155), Goldeneye (74), Lapwing (2,424) and Curlew (114).*
>
> *In winter nationally important numbers of Hen Harrier (8 - four year mean peak count between 2006 and 2009) also utilise the site as a communal roost.*
>
> *Lough Corrib is also a traditional breeding site for gulls and terns, with various islands being used for nesting each year. There are important colonies of Common Tern (37 pairs in 1995) and Arctic Tern (60 pairs in 1995).*
>
> *The site supports substantial colonies of Black-headed Gull (431 pairs in 2000) and Common Gull (186 pairs in 2000), these representing 3% and 11% of the respective all-Ireland totals. Small numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull and Herring Gull have also been recorded breeding within the site. The site supports approximately half of the national population of nesting Common Scoter (30 pairs in 1995); Lough Corrib was colonised by this rare, Red Data Book species only as recently as the late1970s/early1980s.*
>
> *Lough Corrib SPA is an internationally important site which supports in excess of 20,000 wintering waterbirds, including a population of Pochard that is, itself, of international importance. A further six species of wintering waterfowl have populations of national importance. The site also contains a nationally important communal roost site for Hen Harrier. Lough Corrib is the most important site in the country for breeding Common Scoter. Its populations of breeding gulls and terns are also notable, with nationally important numbers of Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Common Tern, and Arctic Tern occurring. It is of note that several species which regularly occur are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds*

[10] https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004042.pdf

Directive, i.e., Whooper Swan, Greenland White-fronted Goose, Hen Harrier, Golden Plover, Common Tern, and Arctic Tern. Lough Corrib is a Ramsar Convention site."

6.3.2.1 Qualifying Interests

Lough Corrib SPA is designated for the following habitats and species. An asterisk (*) denotes a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive: -

- Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) [A051]
- Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056]
- Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) [A059]
- Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) [A061]
- Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) [A065]
- Hen Harrier *(Circus cyaneus*) [A082]
- Coot (*Fulica atra*) [A125]
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]
- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]
- Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182]
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193]
- Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]
- Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) [A395]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

6.3.2.2 Conservation Objectives

The site-specific conservation objectives for Lough Corrib SPA and the specific attributes and targets defining the objectives are detailed in NPWS (2023). The overall aim is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species of community interest, i.e., the habitats and species for which the SPA is designated. The NPWS Conservation Objectives for this SAC can be found at the link below: -

https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004042.pdf

6.3.2.3 Threats and Pressures

The potential threats and pressures, as identified by EUNIS[11], for Lough Corrib SAC are given in Table 6-2 below.

Table 6-2 - Threats, pressures, and activities with negative impacts on Lough Corrib SPA (Eionet 2024).

Rank [High (H) / Medium (M) / Low (L)]	Threats and pressures [code]	Threats and pressures [type]	Location [inside (i) / outside (o) / both (b)]
H	E01	urbanised areas, human habitation	o
L	G01.01	nautical sports	i
M	B	sylviculture, forestry	o
L	A04	grazing	o
H	F02.03	leisure fishing	i
L	A08	fertilisation	o
H	F03.01	hunting	i

[11] https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/SDF.aspx?site=IE0004042

7. Likely Significant Effects

7.1 Identification of Potential Impacts

The identification of potential impacts in this section uses the "*source-pathway-receptor*" model. According to this model, for an impact to exist, all three of the following criteria must be met: -

Some aspect of the plan or project must act as a source of an impact,

There must be a pathway capable of conveying the impact to a receptor, and

The receptor must be sensitive to the impact.

The types of impacts likely to arise from the proposed works and their specific sources are described in Section 6.2 and the receptors are the qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 sites concerned, as listed in Section 6.3. Given that the sources and the receptors are already known, the following subsections focus on the identification of potential pathways between those sources and receptors.

7.1.1 Lough Corrib SAC

Potential Impacts to the Qualifying Interests of Lough Corrib SAC are identified in Table 7-1 below.

Table 7-1 - Identification of pathways for impacts to Lough Corrib SAC.

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110]	Habitat 3110 has a widespread distribution in Ireland, occurring in a large number of lakes. It is a soft-water, nutrient poor lake habitat. This habitat is present in the vicinity of the proposed works (10km grid square M14). However, based on NPWS site specific conservation objectives mapping (2022) this habitat is only present upstream of the proposed project (>4km).	Given fact that this habitat is only present a significant distance upstream (As per NPWS Site specific Conservation Objective species mapping) there is no potential for impact.	**No**
Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea* [3130]	Habitat 3130, 'Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea'* has been interpreted as a mixed *Najas flexilis* lake habitat in Ireland. The habitat occurs in lakes with circum-neutral, low-nutrient waters in catchments of mixed geology. Base-rich influences come from basalt, limestone, marble, sedimentary deposits or calcareous coastal sand, and peatland is often widespread in the catchments. According to the NPWS site conservation objectives mapping (2022) this habitat is present 1.8km downstream of the proposed project in Lough Corrib.	Given that the proposed works will take place upstream of examples of this habitat type and potentially give rise to impacts to which this habitat is sensitive, the potential for impacts are considered further below.	**Yes**

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140]	The hard-water lake habitat (Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp.) is strongly associated with lowland lakes over limestone bedrock. It is also found on calcareous sand at the landward side of machair plains and in canals. The habitat is dominated by algae, particularly stoneworts (*Chara* spp.). Stonewort diversity is high and includes a number of rare and threatened species. According to the NPWS site conservation objectives mapping (2022) this habitat is present 3.3km downstream of the proposed project in Lough Corrib.	Given that the proposed works will take place upstream of examples of this habitat type and potentially give rise to impacts to which this habitat is sensitive, the potential for impacts are considered further below.	**Yes**
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation [3260]	Broad definition, covering upland, flashy, oligotrophic, bryophyte- and algal-dominated rivers, to tidal reaches dominated by submerged or floating vegetation of the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* (low water level during summer) or aquatic mosses. No species of *Ranunculus* (water crowfoot) or Callitriche (starwort) were found between the existing N59 bridge and the Glann Road bridge and therefore could not be classified as this Annex I habitat. However, there is potential that this habitat could occur further downstream.	Given that there is potential for this habitat to occur downstream, and the project could potentially give rise to impacts to which this habitat is sensitive, the potential for impacts is considered further below.	**Yes**
Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) (* important orchid sites) [6210]	The Annex I habitat 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) comprises species-rich plant communities found on shallow, well-drained calcareous substrates. It is considered a priority habitat only if it is an important orchid site. This habitat's current range and distribution was recorded within M14. This habitat was not recorded during surveys of the proposed project area.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) [6410]	The Annex I habitat 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) is represented in Ireland by both fen and grassland communities on nutrient-poor soils. This habitat is not recorded within the 10km grid square (Article 17).	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No
Active raised bogs [7110]	Raised bogs are accumulations of deep acid peat (3-12m) that originated in shallow lake basins or topographic depressions. They have a typical elevated surface or dome, which develops as raised bogs grow upwards from the surface (Fossitt, 2000). The bog dome is primarily rainwater fed (ombrotrophic) and isolated from the local groundwater table. The current range and distribution of this habitat are not recorded within the 10km grid square M14.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No
Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]	Raised bogs are accumulations of deep acid peat (3-12m) that originated in shallow lake basins or topographic depressions. They have a typical elevated surface or dome, which develops as raised bogs grow upwards from the surface (Fossitt, 2000). The bog dome is primarily rainwater fed (ombrotrophic) and isolated from the local groundwater table. The current range and distribution of this habitat are not recorded within the 10km grid square M14.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No
Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion* [7150]	Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion* (7150), which is characterised by the presence (inter alia) of *Rhynchospora alba* and *R. fusca*, is considered to be an integral part, and a micro-habitat, of Active raised bog (7110) and Blanket bog (7130). The current range and	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
	distribution of this habitat is recorded within the 10km grid square. However, site surveys of the proposed project area did not record this habitat type.		
Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* [7210]	The Annex I habitat Cladium fens refers to *Cladium mariscus* beds which are in contact with species-rich vegetation of small-sedge fens (i.e. *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*). This can occur where there are species-rich open swards of *Cladium mariscus* with elements of small-sedge fen, fen meadow and tall herb fen. These may be naturally species-rich or managed to prevent dominance of *Cladium mariscus*. The current range and distribution of this habitat is recorded within the 10km grid square M14. However, site surveys of the proposed project area did not record this habitat type.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	**No**
Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220]	Hardwater springs where tufa is actively deposited and where characteristic species of bryophytes are dominant or abundant. This habitat is not recorded within the 10km grid square M14 and was not recorded during site surveys.	As no examples of this habitat is located in the vicinity of the proposed works or hydrologically connected to them, there are no pathways for impacts to this qualifying interest. As such, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	**No**
Alkaline fens [7230]	Alkaline fens are groundwater-fed, generally peat-forming systems with extensive areas of species-rich small sedge and brown moss communities. They occur in areas where there is a high-water table and a base-rich, often calcareous water supply. This habitat's current distribution and range is recorded within the 10km grid square M14.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	**No**

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
	However, site surveys of the proposed project area did not record this habitat type.		
Limestone pavements [8240]	Limestone pavements is a priority EU Annex I habitat. The structure of the 8240 Limestone pavement habitat typically consists of blocks of rock, known as clints, separated by fissures or grikes. Sometimes due to weathering this structure is less defined, especially in the 'shattered' variant of pavement. Limestone pavement can occur as areas of exposed rock with very little vegetation or in association with grassland, heath, scrub, or woodland communities. This habitat's current distribution and range is recorded within the 10km grid square M14. However, site surveys of the proposed project area did not record this habitat type.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	**No**
Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]	Old woodland of Oak (*Quercus* sp.) with Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Hard-fern (*Blechnum spicant*), generally on podsolised soils in upland, southern and western regions, but also on localised, non-waterlogged acid soils elsewhere. Although this habitat's current range and distribution is recorded within the 10km grid square M14, this woodland is not located in close proximity to the proposed works as noted during the site survey.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
Bog woodland [91D0]	Bog woodland is a priority Annex I habitat. It occurs in three distinct habitats in Ireland: on intact raised bogs, where it is associated with low flow flushes on the high bog; on cutover bog, where it occurs in association with a weak ground-water influence; and within sessile oak woodlands in association with nutrient-poor flushes. This habitat is not recorded within the 10km grid square.	Given that this is a terrestrial habitat, and that this habitat is not present in the vicinity of the proposed works, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No
Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]	Large, long-lived (100+ years), bivalve mollusc found in clean, fast-flowing rivers. Glochidial larvae use a temporary salmonid host, juveniles occupy interstitial habitats in the riverbed for 5 years or more. Mussels mature at 7-15 years and have a prolonged fertile period lasting into old age. This qualifying interest includes the population in the Owenriff River and its tributaries [redacted] 	Given the nature, extent and scale of the proposed works, in close proximity to high densities of this Annex II species there is potential for impact. The potential for impact is considered further below.	**Yes**
Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]	Ireland's largest freshwater arthropod. Prefers relatively cool temperatures and adequate dissolved oxygen and lime but tolerating significant fluctuations in these. Juveniles live among submerged tree roots, gravel or macrophytes, while larger crayfish must have stones to	Although there are no records of this species in the Owenriff or on the western side of Lough Corrib near Oughterard there is still the potential for them to occur. As there is potential for water quality impacts associated with the project the	**Yes**

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
	hide under, or an earthen bank in which to burrow. White-clawed crayfish have been recorded within Lough Corrib; however, existing records have only been recorded on the eastern site of the Lough.	precautionary principle will be used, and this species will be considered further below.	
Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	Adults live as external parasites on host fish or marine mammals at sea, migrating in spring into freshwater to excavate redds or spawning nests in gravelled areas of large rivers. Egg laying follows nest excavation and the resulting ammocoetes hatch within days. These move downstream to areas of fine sediment into which they can burrow. Transformation into young adults occurs in late summer, with migration to estuaries and open sea in late autumn-winter.	The lake has a population of Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), a scarce, though probably under-recorded species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Brook Lamprey *(Lampetra planeri*), also listed on Annex II, are also known from a number of areas within the site. Given the presence of potentially suitable spawning and ammocoetes habitats in the vicinity of the proposed works, the potential for impacts is considered further below.	**Yes**
Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	Smallest of the lampreys recorded in Ireland. Unlike other lampreys, it is non-parasitic and non-migratory as an adult, living its entire life in freshwater. Adults spawn in spring, excavating shallow nests in relatively fine gravels in areas of reduced flow. Ammonoids move downstream to areas or margins with fine silt. Young adults overwinter before migrating short distances upstream to spawn. The adult fish die after spawning.		
Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]	Irish population comprises mostly fish that spend two years as sub-adults in freshwater before going to sea as smolts. Most fish spend one winter at sea before returning to their natal rivers, mainly during the summer, as grilse. Smaller numbers spend two winters at sea, returning mainly in spring, hence “spring” salmon. A small proportion of the adult population returns to the sea post-	Salmon are considered present throughout the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib. Given that the proposed works will be carried adjacent to the Owenriff River and within Lough Corrib SAC, the potential for impacts are considered further below.	**Yes**

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
	spawning and can return to spawn again. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) use the lake and rivers as spawning grounds.		
Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303]	A summer roost of Lesser Horseshoe Bat, another Annex II species, occurs within this SAC - approximately 100 animals were recorded here in 1999. Bat surveys carried out over summer 2024, recorded a single Lesser Horseshoe bat call in the old, abandoned restaurant west of the proposed bridge location. Extensive surveys were carried out in the proposed bridge location and in the wider area no other calls were recorded.	Although only a single Lesser horseshoe call was recorded during surveying there still remains the potential for impact on this species due to the proposed bridge. A number of trees are to be removed and additional lighting in the area which could act as a barrier to the species. Therefore, the potential for impacts is considered further below.	**Yes**
Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (1355)	Large mustelid found along rivers, lakes, and coasts throughout Ireland, where there is abundant prey and habitat providing cover. Feeds on a wide variety of aquatic prey, including fish, crustaceans, molluscs, and amphibians. Channels within the proposed works area provide a suitable habitat for foraging and commuting for otter. Lough Corrib is considered one of the best sites in the country for Otter, due to the sheer size of the lake and associated rivers and streams, and also the generally high quality of the habitats. No holts or couches were recorded during the aquatic survey, but prints were observed in the bank side mud.	The channels provide suitable habitat for foraging and commuting for this species. Therefore, the potential for impacts is considered further below.	**Yes**
Najas flexilis (*Slender Naiad*) [1833]	The Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*) is a rare submerged, rooted aquatic plant, typically found in clear-water,	Given that this species has been recorded upstream of the proposed works, ca. 10km, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
	lowland lakes. This species has been recorded upstream of the proposed works at Lough Boffin.		
Hamatocaulis vernicosus (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216]	Slender green feather-moss is a medium-sized straggling moss. It is found in base-rich flushes and springs in the uplands and, more rarely, lowland sedge fens. This species has been recorded upstream of the proposed works at Lough Shindilla.	Given that this species has been recorded upstream of the proposed works, via remote connection, ca. 20km, impacts can be ruled out at this stage.	No

7.1.2 Lough Corrib SPA

Potential Impacts to the Qualifying Interests of Lough Corrib SAC are identified in Table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2 - Identification of pathways for impacts to Lough Corrib SPA.

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	These bird species are qualifying interests of Lough Corrib SPA, which is located ca. 1.9km downstream of the proposed works. These species are widespread throughout waterways in Ireland, using riparian corridors such as streams, rivers and canals for commuting, breeding and foraging purposes.	The river where the proposed development will be constructed may provide connectivity to the SPA for these species. While works are not within the SPA, they are hydrologically connected. Therefore, the potential for impacts is considered further below.	**Yes**
Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) [A051]			
Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056]			
Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) [A059]			
Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) [A061]			
Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) [A065]			
Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [A082]			
Coot (*Fulica atra*) [A125]			
Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]			
Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]			
Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182]			

Qualifying interest	Description and location	Pathways for impacts	Potential impact
Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193]			
Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]			
Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) [A395]			

7.2 Evaluation of Effects

7.2.1 Lough Corrib SAC

The significance of effects on the Lough Corrib SAC are evaluated in view of the relevant conservation objectives in Table 7-3 (excluding the conservation objectives for qualifying interests for which potential impacts were ruled out in Table 7-1).

Table 7-3 - Evaluation of effects on the Lough Corrib SAC (LSE = likely significant effect).

Conservation objective	Description of Effects	LSE
To restore the favourable conservation condition of ***Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the*** **Littorelletea uniflorae** ***and/or*** **Isoëto-Nanojuncetea** *in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes for these conservation objectives are the same. The attributes of this conservation objective relate to habitat area, habitat distribution, typical species, vegetation composition: [characteristic zonation], vegetation distribution: [maximum depth], hydrological regime: [water level fluctuations], lake substratum quality, water quality: [transparency, nutrients, phytoplankton biomass, phytoplankton composition, attached algal biomass, macrophyte status], acidification status, water colour, dissolved organic carbon, turbidity and fringing habitat : [area and condition hectares]. The only conservations objectives that could be impacted by the proposed project are the stated water quality objectives. Given that there will be no instream works, the scale of the ground works is relatively small, use of predominately precast concrete and the significant distance to these QIs (1.8km and 3.3km) the proposed works will not have an impact on conservation objectives of these QIs. Thus, negative impacts can be ruled out for this qualifying interest.	No
To restore the favourable conservation condition of ***Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of*** **Chara** ***spp****. in Lough Corrib SAC*		
To maintain the favourable conservation condition of ***Water courses of plain to montane levels with the*** **Ranunculion fluitantis** ***and*** **Callitricho-Batrachion** ***vegetation*** *in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to habitat area, habitat distribution, hydrological regime: [river flow, groundwater discharge], substratum composition: [particle size range], water quality, vegetation composition: [typical species], floodplain connectivity: [area] and riparian habitat: [area]. Although this habitat was not recorded during the site surveys (Survey covered 480m downstream of the proposed bridge location) there remains the potential for it to occur further downstream. The proposed project has the potential to impact on water quality and the riparian habitats due to the required removal of vegetation. Following the precautionary principal mitigation measure will be required to prevent negative impacts on this QI, as such this species cannot be screened out at this point and will be brought forward to NIS.	Yes
To restore the favourable conservation condition of ***Freshwater Pearl Mussel*** *in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to distribution, population size, population structure: [recruitment, adult mortality], suitable habitat: [extent, condition], water quality: [macroinvertebrate and phytobenthos (diatoms)], substratum quality: [filamentous algae (macroalgae); macrophytes (rooted higher plants), sediment, oxygen	Yes

Conservation objective	Description of Effects	LSE
	availability], hydrological regime: [flow variability], host fish and fringing habitat: [area and condition]. The aquatic surveys recorded high densities of FPM at the crossing point. Given the sensitivity of this species, proximity of the works and nature of the required works mitigation measure will be required to prevent negative impacts on this QI, as such this species cannot be screened out at this point and will be brought forward to NIS	
*To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **White-clawed Crayfish** in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to distribution: [rivers, Lough Corrib], population structure: [recruitment], negative indicator species, disease, water quality and habitat quality: [heterogeneity]. Although there are no records of this species in the Owenriff or on the western side of Lough Corrib near Oughterard there is still the potential for them to occur. As there is potential for water quality impacts associated with the project the precautionary principle will be used, and this species will be considered further below.	Yes
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **Sea Lamprey** in Lough Corrib SAC* *To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **Brook Lamprey** in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to distribution: [extent of anadromy], population structure of juveniles, juvenile density in fine sediment, extent and distribution of spawning habitat and availability of juvenile habitat. The main impacts listed in the conservation objectives for both Sea and Brook Lamprey refer to barrier and silt removal. The proposed works do not include any instream works and so will no create any barriers or remove any silt from the river. The conservation objectives for Brook Lamprey state that available spawning habitat is not a limiting factor for this species. All elements of the proposed bridge to be constructed are outside of the floodplain and so will not cause any hydromorphological changes in the river. Thus, negative impacts can be ruled out for these qualifying interests.	No
*To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **Atlantic Salmon** in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to distribution: [extent of anadromy], adult spawning fish, salmon fry abundance, out-migrating smolt abundance, number and distribution of redds and water quality. Given the sensitivity of this species to water quality, proximity of the works and nature of the required works mitigation measure will be required to prevent negative impacts on this QI, as such this species cannot be screened out at this point and will be brought forward to NIS.	Yes
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **Lesser Horseshoe Bat** in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to population per roost, summer roosts, number of auxiliary roosts, extent of potential foraging habitat, linear features and light pollution. There are no known roosts present in the immediate area. This specie is designated as a QI of the SAC predominantly due to the large roost present Close to Cornamona approximately 12km from the proposed bridge. The bat surveys of the area recorded a singular Lesser Horseshoe call at an abandoned restaurant upstream of the bridge location. There are no proposed works at this site. There were no recorded at the bridge location itself. The proposed bridge design will	No

Conservation objective	Description of Effects	LSE
	follow the standard bat guidance on lighting (GN08/23). In addition, there is an existing level of light pollution in the area given its location within the town and street lighting along the northern side of the river. Given this and the low level of Lesser horseshoe activity in the area there will be no significant impact on lesser horseshoe bat population of the SAC due to the proposed project.	
*To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **Otter** in Lough Corrib SAC*	The attributes of this conservation objective relate to distribution, extent of terrestrial habitat, extent of freshwater (river) habitat, extent of freshwater (lake) habitat, couching sites and holts, fish biomass available and barriers to connectivity. There will be no loss of terrestrial or freshwater habitat for Otters and no barriers to connectivity due to the proposed bridge. No instream works are required and the setting back of the abutments particularly on the southern bank will maintain free access along the riverbank. There were no records of holts or couches upstream or downstream of the proposed bridge location. There were prints recorded in the area and so Otters are present. Although the likelihood of potential impact due to either disturbance or fish biomass are unlikely given the design and scale of the proposed work following the precautionary principal mitigation will be required to ensure there is no significant impact. As such this QI cannot be screened out at this stage and will go forward to NIS.	Yes

7.2.2 Lough Corrib SPA

The significance of effects on the Lough Corrib SPA are evaluated in view of the relevant conservation objectives in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4 - Evaluation of effects on Lough Corrib SPA (LSE = likely significant effect).

Conservation objective	Description of effects	LSE
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **gadwall** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to winter population trend, winter spatial distribution, disturbance at wintering site, barriers to connectivity and site use, forage spatial distribution event and abundance, roost spatial distribution and extent. The only conservation objective which has the potential to be impacted by the proposed project is barriers to connectivity. The proposed project if successful would introduce an additional structure on the Owenriff. However, there are exiting bridges both upstream and downstream of the proposed bridge which are significantly larger. Given that the bridge is clear span and elevated over the river it is considered that there is sufficient space for birds to navigate either below or over the proposed structure. Given the profile of the bridge, any bird species which navigate the two exiting bridges will be able to navigate the proposed structure also and as such there will be no significant change to the connectivity to the SPA via the Owenriff River	No
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **shoveler** in Lough Corrib SPA*		
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **pochard** in Lough Corrib SPA*		
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **tufted duck** in Lough Corrib SPA*		

Conservation objective	Description of effects	LSE
*To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **common scoter** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to breeding population trend, productivity rate, distribution of nesting habitat, extent and condition of nesting habitat, disturbance at breeding site, barriers to connectivity and site use, forage spatial distribution, extent and abundance. The only conservation objective which has the potential to be impacted by the proposed project is barriers to connectivity. The proposed project if successful would introduce an additional structure on the Owenriff. However, there are exiting bridges both upstream and downstream of the proposed bridge which are significantly larger. Given that the bridge is clear span and elevated over the river it is considered that there is sufficient space for birds to navigate either below or over the proposed structure. Given the profile of the bridge, any bird species which navigate the two exiting bridges will be able to navigate the proposed structure also and as such there will be no significant change to the connectivity to the SPA via the Owenriff River	No
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **hen harrier** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to roost attendance: individual hen harriers, forage area spatial distribution, extent and abundance, roost spatial distribution and extent, disturbance at the level of impact roost site. The proposed bridge is outside of the SPA and so the only conservation objective with the potential for impact is Foraging area. There are no suitable hen harrier foraging areas located within the proposed project boundary or immediate surroundings and so there is no potential for impact.	No
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **coot** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to winter population trend, winter spatial distribution, disturbance at wintering site, barriers to connectivity and site use, forage spatial distribution, extent and abundance, roost spatial distribution and extent. The only conservation objective which has the potential to be impacted by the proposed project is barriers to connectivity. The proposed project if successful would introduce an additional structure on the Owenriff. However, there are exiting bridges both upstream and downstream of the proposed bridge which are significantly larger. Given that the bridge is clear span and elevated over the river it is considered that there is sufficient space for birds to navigate either below or over the proposed structure. Given the profile of the bridge, any bird species which navigate the two exiting bridges will be able to navigate the proposed structure also and as such there will be no significant change to the connectivity to the SPA via the Owenriff River	No
*To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **golden plover** in Lough Corrib SPA* *To restore the favourable conservation condition of **Greenland white-fronted goose** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to winter population trend, winter spatial distribution, disturbance at wintering site, barriers to connectivity and site use, forage spatial distribution, extent and abundance, roost spatial distribution and extent and supporting habitat: area and quality. The only conservation objective which has the potential to be impacted by the proposed project is barriers to connectivity. The proposed project if successful would introduce an additional structure on the Owenriff. However, there are exiting bridges both upstream and downstream of the proposed bridge which are significantly larger. Given that the bridge is clear span and elevated over the river it is considered that there is sufficient space for birds to navigate either below or over the proposed structure. Given the profile of the bridge, any bird species which navigate the two exiting bridges will be able to navigate the	No

Conservation objective	Description of effects	LSE
	proposed structure also and as such there will be no significant change to the connectivity to the SPA via the Owenriff River	
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **black-headed gull** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to breeding population size, productivity rate, distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA, prey biomass available, disturbance at the breeding site, disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony and barriers to connectivity. The only conservation objective which has the potential to be impacted by the proposed project is barriers to connectivity. The proposed project if successful would introduce an additional structure on the Owenriff. However, there are exiting bridges both upstream and downstream of the proposed bridge which are significantly larger. Given that the bridge is clear span and elevated over the river it is considered that there is sufficient space for birds to navigate either below or over the proposed structure. Given the profile of the bridge, any bird species which navigate the two exiting bridges will be able to navigate the proposed structure also and as such there will be no significant change to the connectivity to the SPA via the Owenriff River	No
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **common gull** in Lough Corrib SPA*		
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **Common tern** in Lough Corrib SPA*		
*To restore the favourable conservation condition of **Arctic tern** in Lough Corrib SPA*		
*To maintain the favourable conservation condition of **wetlands** in Lough Corrib SPA*	The relevant attributes of this conservation objective relate to wetland habitat area and wetland habitat quality and functioning within the SPA. As the proposed project is located outside of the SPA there can be no potential impact on this QI.	No

7.2.3 Summary

The potential for impacts associated with the project is considered small given the scale, duration and construction methodology. With minimal ground excavations required and precast concrete being employed for all but the blinding layer for the abutments. However, given the sensitive nature of several QI species of Lough Corrib SAC located immediately adjacent the proposed works it cannot be found that likely significant impacts will not occur and so mitigation measures will be required. As such this project will proceed to Stage 2 AA and an NIS will be prepared. It was found that no likely significant impact is expected for Lough Corrib SPA and so this site is screened out at this stage and will not be discussed further.

8. Conclusion

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has examined the details of the proposed footbridge in Oughterard, County Galway, and the Natura 2000 sites in their Zone of Influence. It has analysed the potential impacts of the proposed works on the receiving natural environment and evaluated their effects, both individually and in combination with other plans and projects, in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 sites. This report has been prepared in line with the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish law by the Habitats Regulations, relevant case law and guidance from the European Commission, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of the Planning Regulator, based on objective information and adhering to the precautionary principle.

Following the assessment detailed in this report, it cannot be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to any impacts which would constitute significant effects on Lough Corrib SAC (site code: 000297), in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the authors of this report that Galway County Council, as the competent authority in this case, may determine that Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of the proposed footbridge in Oughterard, County Galway.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Proposed General Arrangement drawings

N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

DRAWING INDEX		
DRAWING NUMBER	DRAWING NAME	REVISION
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900001	DRAWING INDEX	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900100	LOCATION MAP	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900355	SITE LOCATION MAP - SHEET 1 OF 3	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900351	SITE LOCATION MAP - SHEET 2 OF 3	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900352	SITE LOCATION MAP - SHEET 3 OF 3	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900372	EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 1 OF 4	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900368	EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 2 OF 4	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900369	EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 3 OF 4	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900370	EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 4 OF 4	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900371	EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - SECTION A	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900375	PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 1 OF 4	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900014	PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 2 OF 4	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900331	PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 3 OF 4	C00
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0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900342	PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - SECTIONS - SHEET 2	C00
0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900344	PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - SECTIONS F, G AND H	C00

Planning Application Drawings
June 2025

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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

GALWAY
NATIONAL ROADS
PROJECT OFFICE

AtkinsRéalis

A1

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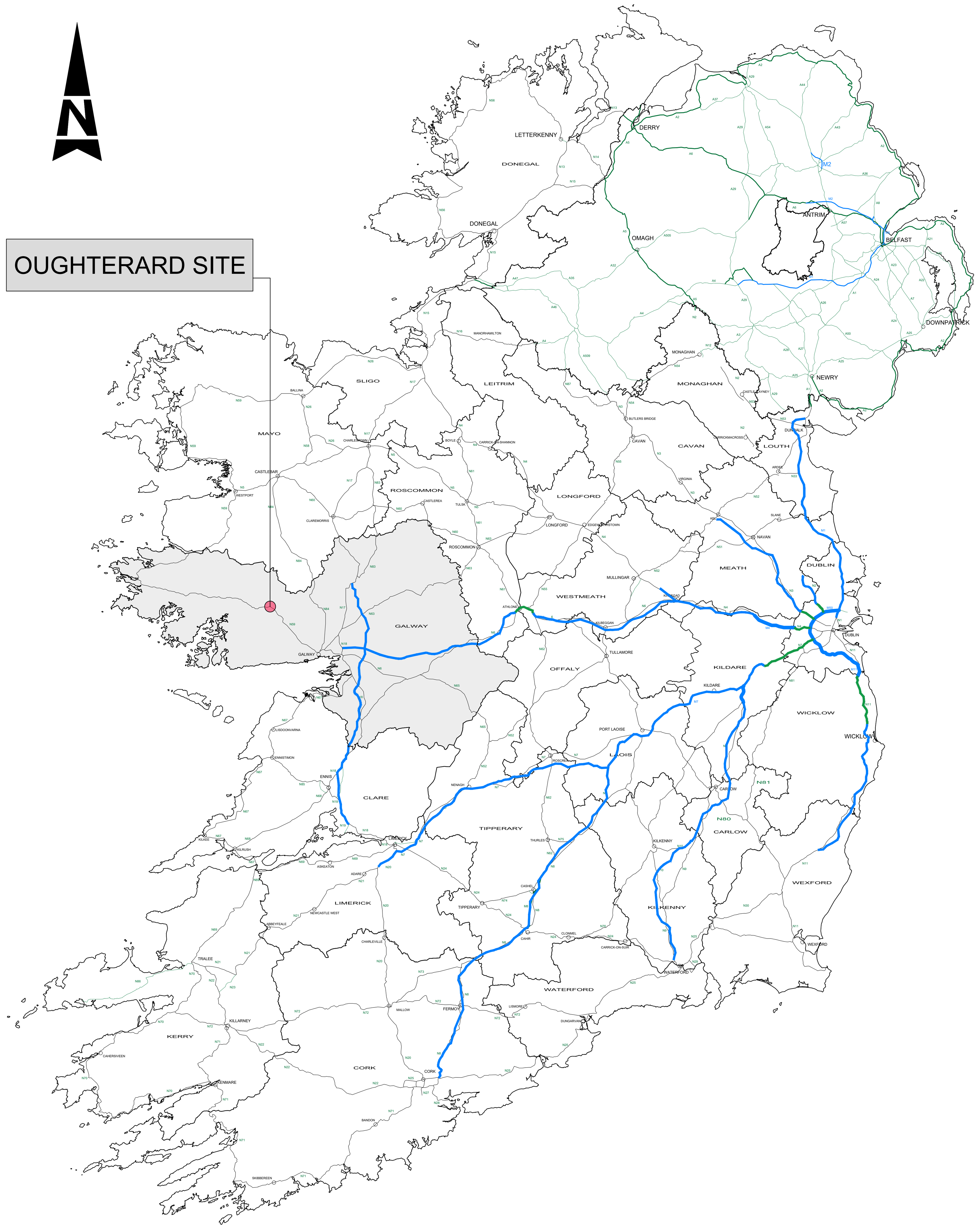

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
2. ONLY WRITTEN DIMENSIONS SHALL BE USED. NO DIMENSIONS SHALL BE SCALED FROM THE DRAWINGS
3. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO MALIN HEAD DATUM
4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

ATKINS WILL NOT TO BE HELD LIABLE FOR THE USE OF THIS DATA ON ANY PROJECT OTHER THAN EIRSPAN TASK ORDER 341 - N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Risk Level		
	X	AtkinsRéailis Base Line - Low Risk
		AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
		AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
		Client Critical - Already Marked

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Fax (+353) 021 429 0360

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Parkmore Technology Park, Galway
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Fax (+353) 091 779 830

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Title: LOCATION MAP

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
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	Date 07.03.24	Date 07.03.24	Date 07.03.24	Date 07.03.24

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
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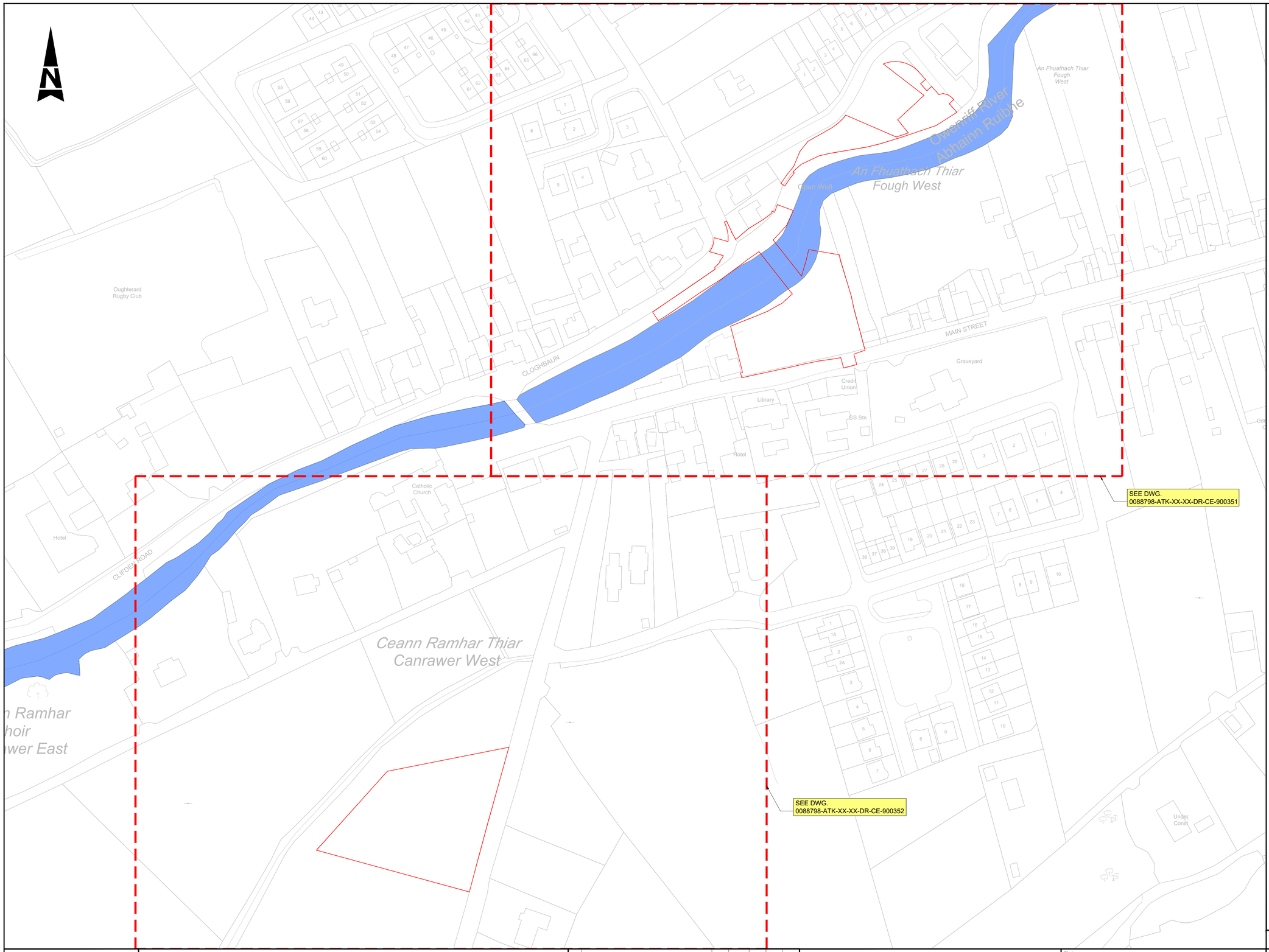

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DO NOT SCALE

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LEGEND:

SITE BOUNDARY LINE

Risk Level	
	X AtkinsRéallis Base Line - Low Risk
	X AtkinsRéallis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	X AtkinsRéallis Private - High Risk
	X Client Critical - Already Marked

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: SITE LOCATION MAP SHEET 1 OF 3

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
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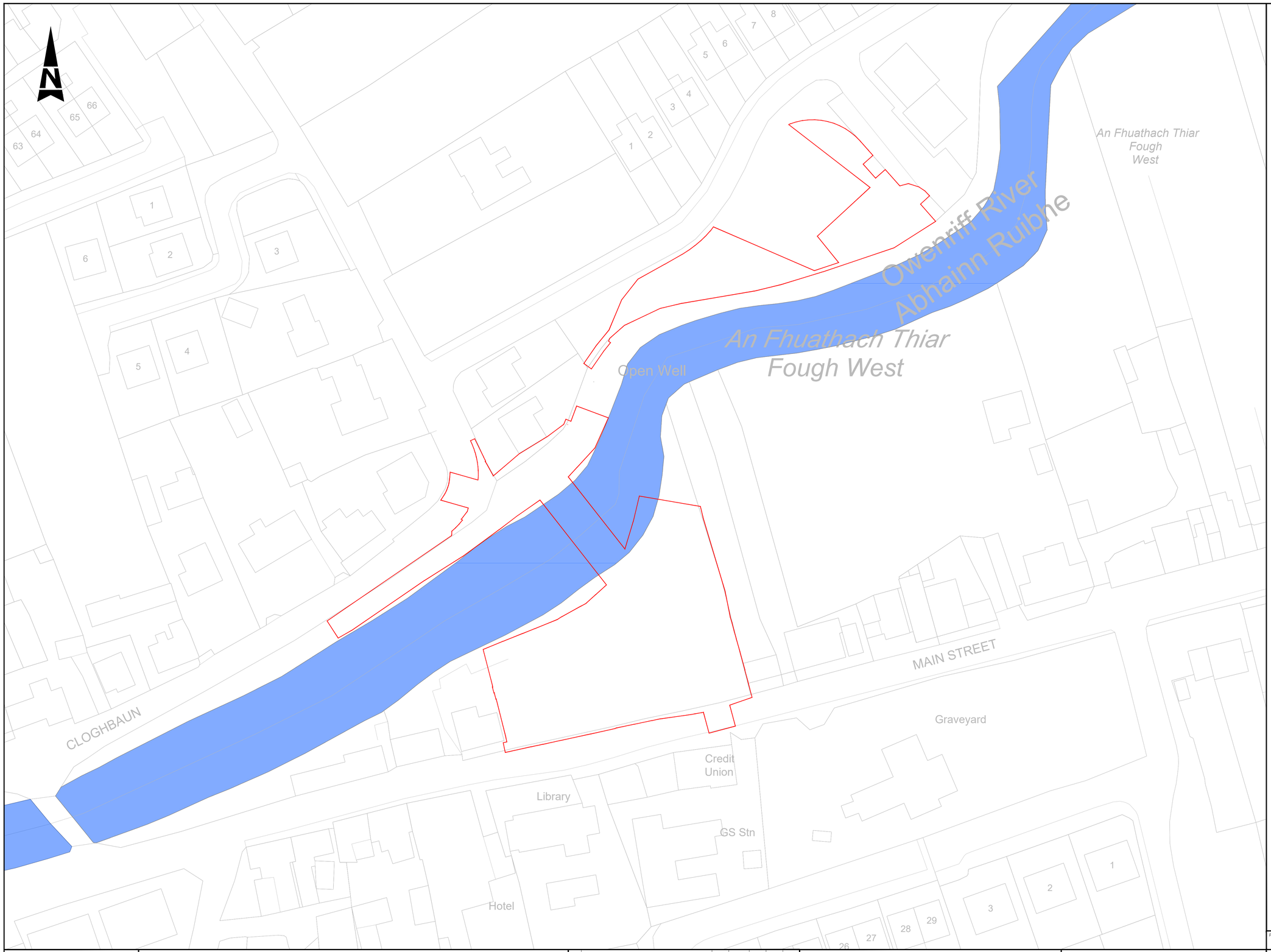

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LEGEND:

SITE BOUNDARY LINE

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DO NOT SCALE

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Risk Level	
X	AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
X	AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
X	AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
X	Client Critical - Already Marked

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: SITE LOCATION MAP SHEET 2 OF 3

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
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Status	Drawing Number	Rev
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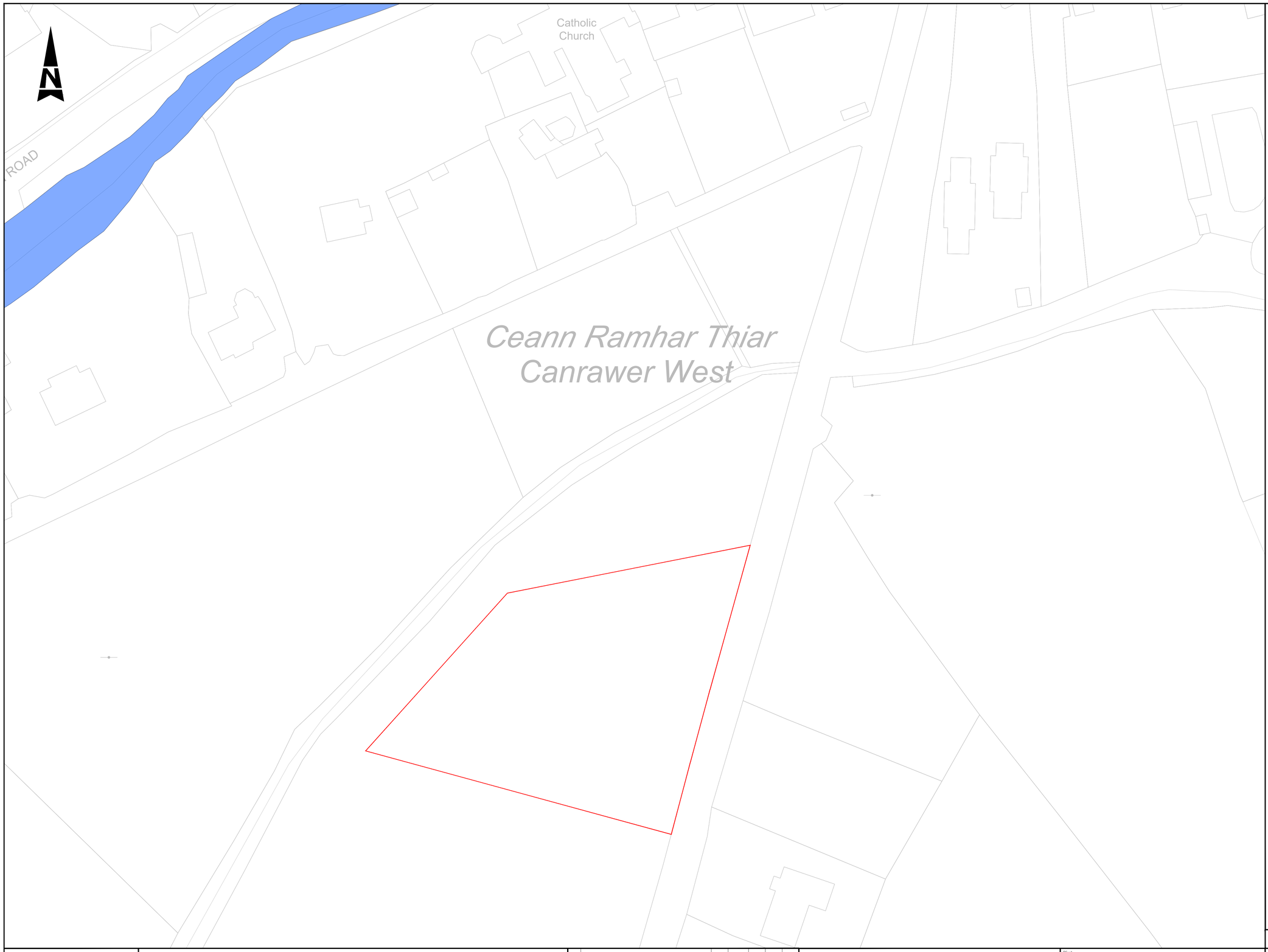

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LEGEND:

SITE BOUNDARY LINE

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Risk Level	
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	X AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	X AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
	X Client Critical - Already Marked

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: SITE LOCATION MAP SHEET 3 OF 3

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SEE DWG. 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900369

SEE DWG. 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900368

Oughterard Rugby Club
Catholic Church
Hotel
Graveyard
Ceann Ramhar Thiar
Canrawer West

GENERAL NOTES

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EXISTING SERVICES LEGEND

- EXISTING ESB OVERHEAD
- EXISTING ESB UNDERGROUND
- EXISTING TELECOM DUCTING
- EXISTING GAS MAINS
- EXISTING FOUL SEWER
- EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER
- EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
- EXISTING WATER MAIN
- EXISTING UNKNOWN SEWER
- EXISTING WATER HYDRANT
- EXISTING WATER METER
- EXISTING NTL / UPC / VIRGIN
- EXISTING BT DUCT
- EXISTING EIR DUCT
- EXISTING EIR OVERHEAD
- PROPOSED EIR DUCT
- EXISTING ENET
- EXISTING FOUL DRAINAGE

LEGEND:

- SITE BOUNDARY LINE
- EXISTING TREE

Risk Level	
	X AtkinsRéallis Base Line - Low Risk
	AtkinsRéallis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	AtkinsRéallis Private - High Risk
	Client Critical - Already Marked

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GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT LAYOUT PLAN. SHEET 1 OF 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
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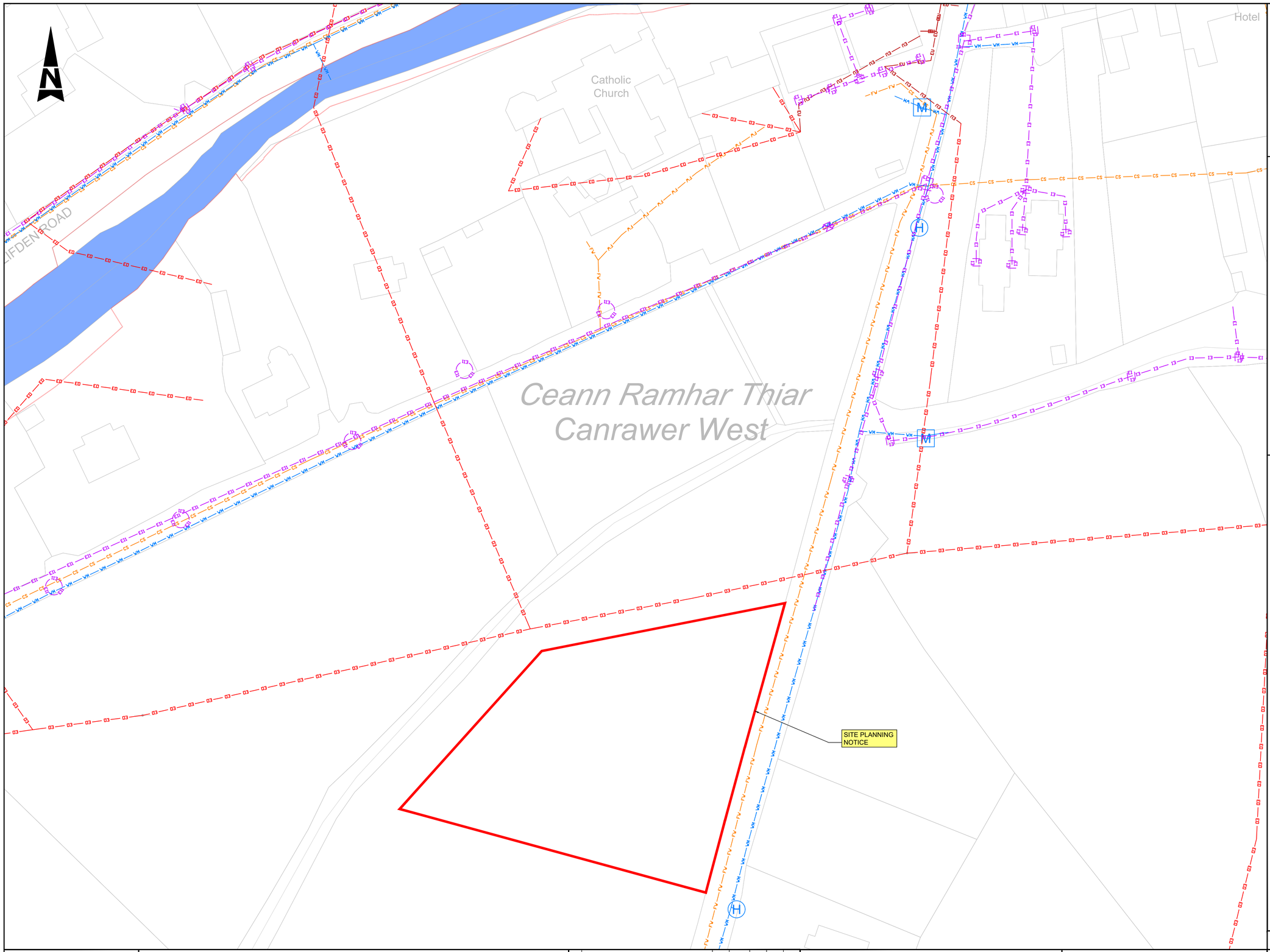

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GENERAL NOTES

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4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
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EXISTING SERVICES LEGEND

- EXISTING ESB OVERHEAD
- EXISTING ESB UNDERGROUND
- EXISTING TELECOM DUCTING
- EXISTING GAS MAINS
- EXISTING FOUL SEWER
- EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER
- EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
- EXISTING WATER MAIN
- EXISTING UNKNOWN SEWER
- EXISTING WATER HYDRANT
- EXISTING WATER METER
- EXISTING NTL / UPC / VIRGIN
- EXISTING BT DUCT
- EXISTING EIR DUCT
- EXISTING EIR OVERHEAD
- PROPOSED EIR DUCT
- EXISTING ENET

LEGEND:

- SITE BOUNDARY LINE

Risk Level	
	X AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
	Client Critical - Already Marked

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Galway County Council

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Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Tel (+353) 091 786 050
Fax (+353) 091 779 830

Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT LAYOUT PLAN. SHEET 2 OF 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
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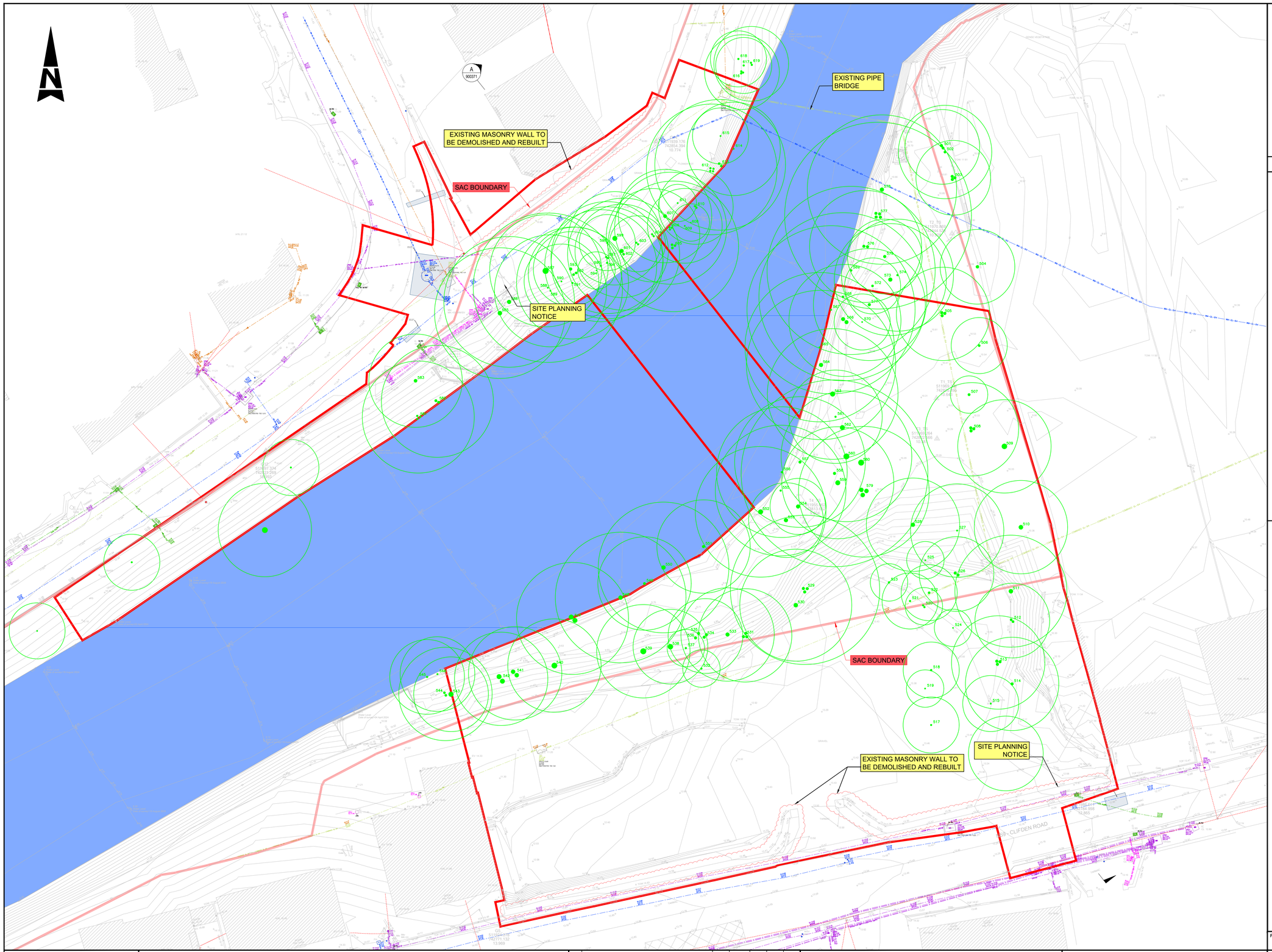

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GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
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SERVICES LEGEND

UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY LINE	FOUL DRAINAGE
ELECTRICAL MANHOLE	FOUL MANHOLE
OVERHEAD LINE WITH POLE	STORM DRAINAGE
OVERHEAD ELECTRIC	STORM DRAINAGE MANHOLE
ESB HV UNDERGROUND HV ELECTRICITY LINE	COMBINED DRAINAGE
PUBLIC LIGHTING ELECTRICITY LINE	COMBINED DRAINAGE MANHOLE
6m HIGH STREET LIGHT	PRODUCT DRAINAGE
MINI PILLAR	PRODUCT DRAINAGE MANHOLE
U/G ELECTRIC TRAFFIC CONTROL	CHEMICAL LINE
TRAFFIC CONTROL MANHOLE	CHEMICAL MANHOLE
EIR	ROAD GULLY
EIR CHAMBER	GULLY TRAP
OVERHEAD LINE WITH POLE	WATER MAIN
ENET	SLUICE VALVE
ENET CHAMBER	FIRE HYDRANT
COMMS	WATER METER
COMMS CHAMBER	SCOUR VALVE
VIRGIN	PRESSURE RELEASE VALVE
VIRGIN CHAMBER	AIR VALVE
FIBRE	NON-RETURN VALVE
FIBRE CHAMBER	FUEL LINE/TANK
AURORA TELECOM	GAS SV
AURORA TELECOM CHAMBER	GAS LINE
CATV	GAS HIGH PRESSURE LINE
CATV CHAMBER	GL 00.00 GROUND LEVEL (METRES - OS DATUM)
BT/EIRCOM	CL 10.00 COVER LEVEL (METRES - OS DATUM)
BT/EIRCOM CHAMBER	IL 10.00 INVERT LEVEL (METRES - OS DATUM)
SIRO FIBRE	DP1.50 DEPTH TO TOP OF SERVICE DUCT OR CABLE
SIRO CHAMBER	DF ON MANHOLES = INVERT LEVEL OF CHAMBER
UNIDENTIFIED SERVICE	DF ON DRAINAGE = INVERT LEVEL OF PIPE
UNIDENTIFIED CHAMBER	UTO UNABLE TO OPEN
EARTH LINE AND RODS	OSA OUTSIDE SURVEY AREA
TRAFFIC SENSORS	UTT UNABLE TO TRACE
CCTV POLE	(E) EMPTY DUCT
UTILITIES CABINET	(CD) CLOSED DUCT
	SURVEYED AREA

LEGEND:

SITE BOUNDARY LINE

Risk Level		
	X	AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
		AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
		AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
		Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

AtkinsRéalis

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Fax (+353) 091 779 830

Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT LAYOUT PLAN. SHEET 3 OF 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:200	KS Date 28.05.25	MC Date 28.05.25	MC Date 28.05.25	MJ Date 28.05.25

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900369	C00

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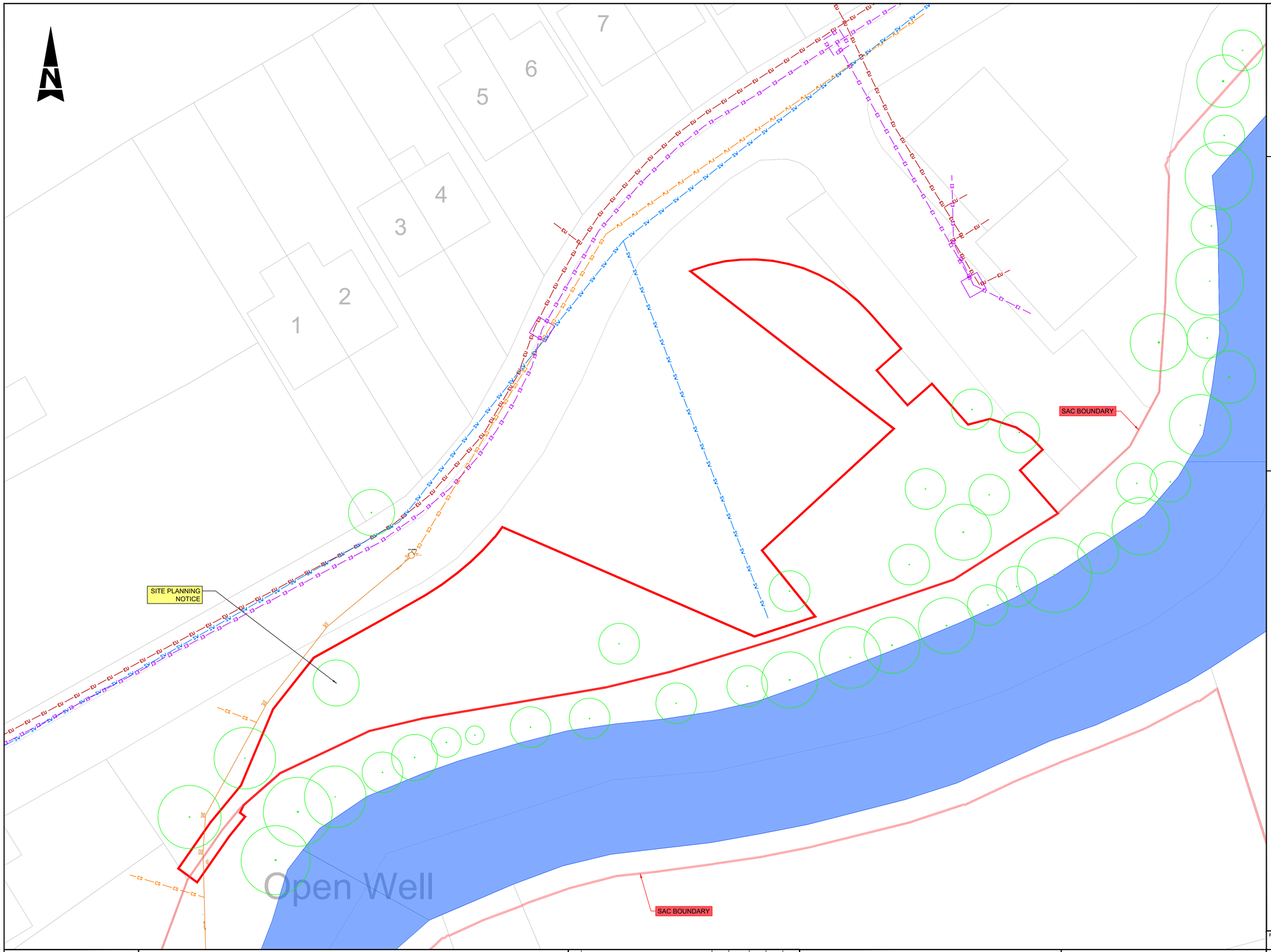

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
2. ONLY WRITTEN DIMENSIONS SHALL BE USED. NO DIMENSIONS SHALL BE SCALED FROM THE DRAWINGS
3. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO MALIN HEAD DATUM
4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

EXISTING SERVICES LEGEND

- ED — ED — EXISTING ESB OVERHEAD
- EU — EU — EXISTING ESB UNDERGROUND
- TU — TU — EXISTING TELECOM DUCTING
- GA — GA — EXISTING GAS MAINS
- FW — FW — EXISTING FOUL SEWER
- SW — SW — EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER
- CS — CS — EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
- WM — WM — EXISTING WATER MAIN
- UNK — UNK — EXISTING UNKNOWN SEWER
- (H) EXISTING WATER HYDRANT
- (M) EXISTING WATER METER
- CTV — CTV — EXISTING NTL / UPC / VIRGIN
- BT — BT — EXISTING BT DUCT
- EI — EI — EXISTING EIR DUCT
- EI1 — EI1 — EXISTING EIR OVERHEAD
- EI — EI — PROPOSED EIR DUCT
- E-NET — EXISTING ENET
- EXISTING FOUL DRAINAGE

LEGEND:

- SITE BOUNDARY LINE
- EXISTING TREE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: EXISTING GENERAL ARRANGEMENT LAYOUT PLAN. SHEET 4 OF 4

Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:200	KS	MC	MC	MJ
	Date 28.05.25	Date 28.05.25	Date 28.05.25	Date 28.05.25

Status: CO

Drawing Number: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900370

Rev: C00

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

AtkinsRéalis

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Fax (+353) 091 779 830

Risk Level	
X	AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
	Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

100 0 10 A1

DO NOT SCALE

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900368, 70.dwg Plotted by: STEP1160

Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 4:41pm

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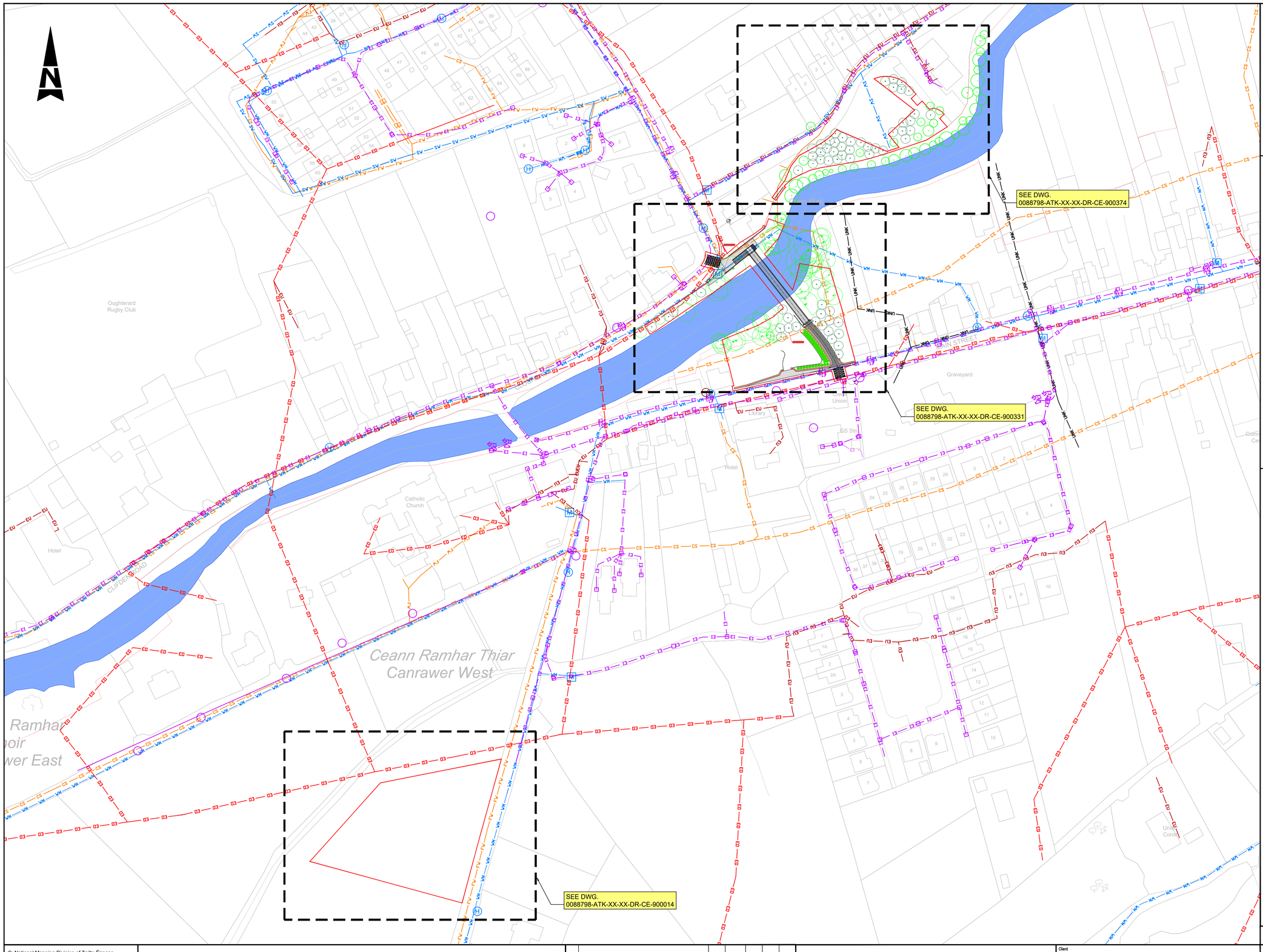

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0 10 100

DO NOT SCALE

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900375.dwg
Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 4:49pm Plotted by: STEP1160

GENERAL NOTES

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3. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO MALIN HEAD DATUM
4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

EXISTING SERVICES LEGEND

- EXISTING ESB OVERHEAD (ED / ED)
- EXISTING ESB UNDERGROUND (EU / EU)
- EXISTING TELECOM DUCTING (TU / TU)
- EXISTING GAS MAINS (GA / GA)
- EXISTING FOUL SEWER (FV / FV)
- EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER (SV / SV)
- EXISTING COMBINED SEWER (CS / CS)
- EXISTING WATER MAIN (VM / VM)
- EXISTING UNKNOWN SEWER (UNK / UNK)
- EXISTING WATER HYDRANT (H)
- EXISTING WATER METER (M)
- EXISTING NTL / UPC / VIRGIN (CTV / CTV)
- EXISTING BT DUCT (BT / BT)
- EXISTING EIR DUCT (EI / EI)
- EXISTING EIR OVERHEAD (EI1 / EI1)
- PROPOSED EIR DUCT (EI / EI)
- EXISTING ENET (E-NET)
- EXISTING FOUL DRAINAGE

LEGEND:

- SITE BOUNDARY LINE
- EXISTING TREE TO BE RETAINED
- PROPOSED TREE

Risk Level	
	AtkinsRéailis Base Line - Low Risk
X	AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
	Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT LAYOUT PLAN. SHEET 1 OF 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:1000	KS Date 28.05.25	MC Date 28.05.25	MC Date 28.05.25	MJ Date 28.05.25

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900375	C00

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A1
DO NOT SCALE

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900014.dwg
Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 4:53pm Plotted by: STEP1160

N

6m WIDE HAZARD ZONE EACH SIDE OF THE OVERHEAD ELECTRIC

DRAINAGE DITCH

10m WIDE BUFFER ZONE TO DRAINAGE DITCH

OFFICE, WELFARE FACILITIES, STORAGE ETC.

ENTRANCE

TURNING AREA FOR HGV'S (30m WIDE)

FOOTBRIDGE SETDOWN

SITE LAYOUT BOUNDARY FOR SITE COMPOUND

GENERAL NOTES

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4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
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EXISTING SERVICES LEGEND

EO	EXISTING ESB OVERHEAD
EU	EXISTING ESB UNDERGROUND
TU	EXISTING TELECOM DUCTING
GA	EXISTING GAS MAINS
FW	EXISTING FOUL SEWER
SW	EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER
CS	EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
WM	EXISTING WATER MAIN
UNK	EXISTING UNKNOWN SEWER
H	EXISTING WATER HYDRANT
M	EXISTING WATER METER
CTV	EXISTING NTL / UPC / VIRGIN
BT	EXISTING BT DUCT
EI	EXISTING EIR DUCT
EI1	EXISTING EIR OVERHEAD
EI	PROPOSED EIR DUCT
E-NET	EXISTING ENET

Risk Level	
	X AtkinsRéailis Base Line - Low Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
	Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Fax (+353) 091 779 830

Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 2 of 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:200	KS Date 15.05.24	AK Date 15.05.24	MC Date 15.05.24	MJ Date 15.05.24

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900014	C00

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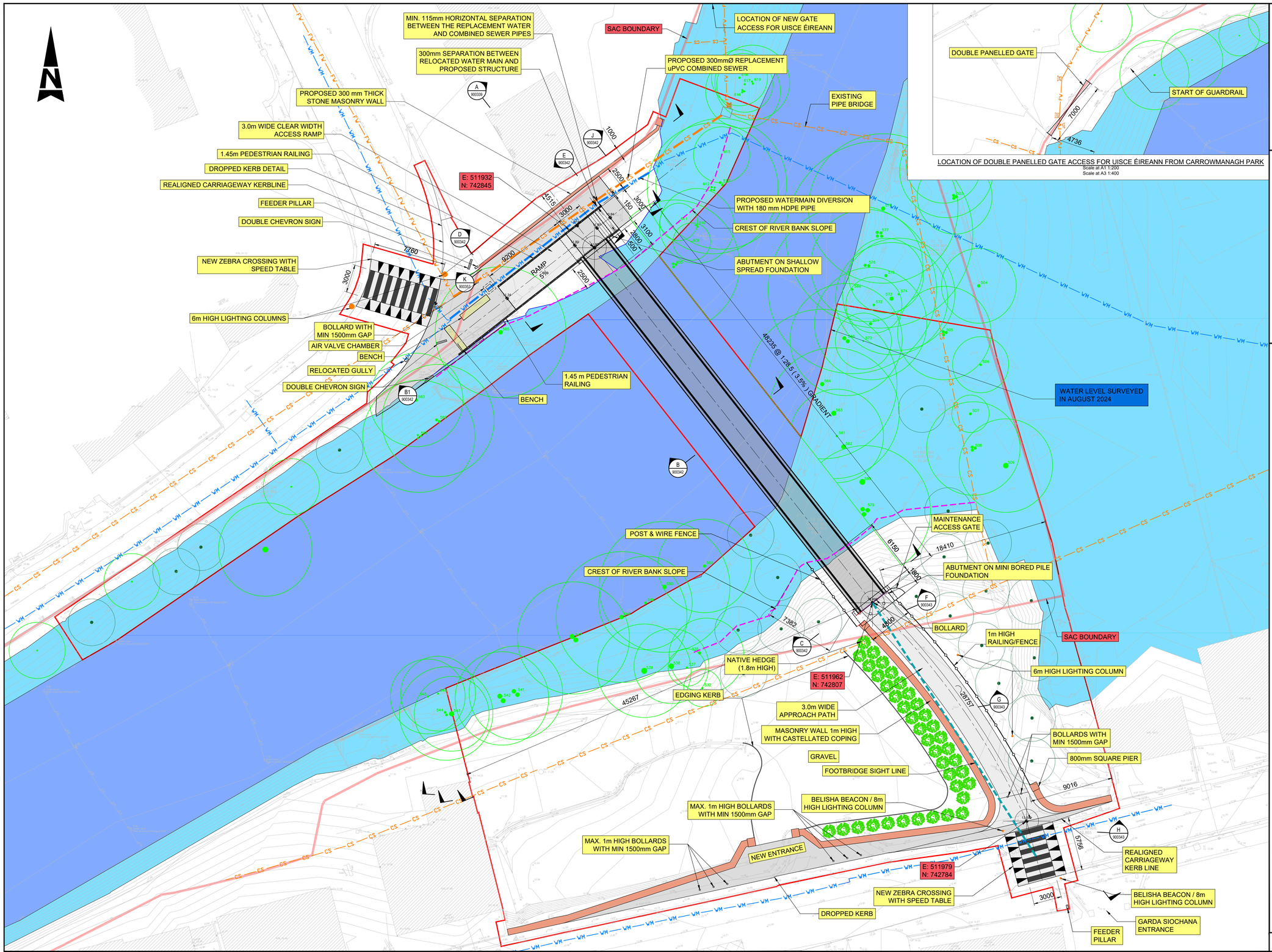

GENERAL NOTES

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5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

LEGEND:

- WM — EXISTING WATER MAIN
- WM — PROPOSED WATERMAIN DIVERSION
- CS — EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
- CS — PROPOSED REPLACEMENT COMBINED SEWER
- FW — EXISTING FOUL DRAINAGE
- 1% ANNUAL EXCEEDENCE PROBABILITY FLOOD ZONE (MID RANGE FUTURE SCENARIO)
- SITE LAYOUT BOUNDARY
- EXISTING TREE TO BE RETAINED
- PROPOSED TREE

NOTES:

1. THE DESIGN USES THE EXISTING STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM.
2. ELECTRICAL WIRING, DUCTING & PILLAR DETAILS WILL BE CONFIRMED AT DETAILED DESIGN.

A1

DO NOT SCALE

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900331, 39, 42, 46-47, 53.dwg
Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 4:59pm Plotted by: STEP1160

Risk Level
- X AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
- X AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
- X AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
- X Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Fax (+353) 091 779 830

Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 3 of 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:200	AOS	AK	MC	MJ
	Date 26.06.24	Date 26.06.24	Date 26.06.24	Date 26.06.24

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900331	C00

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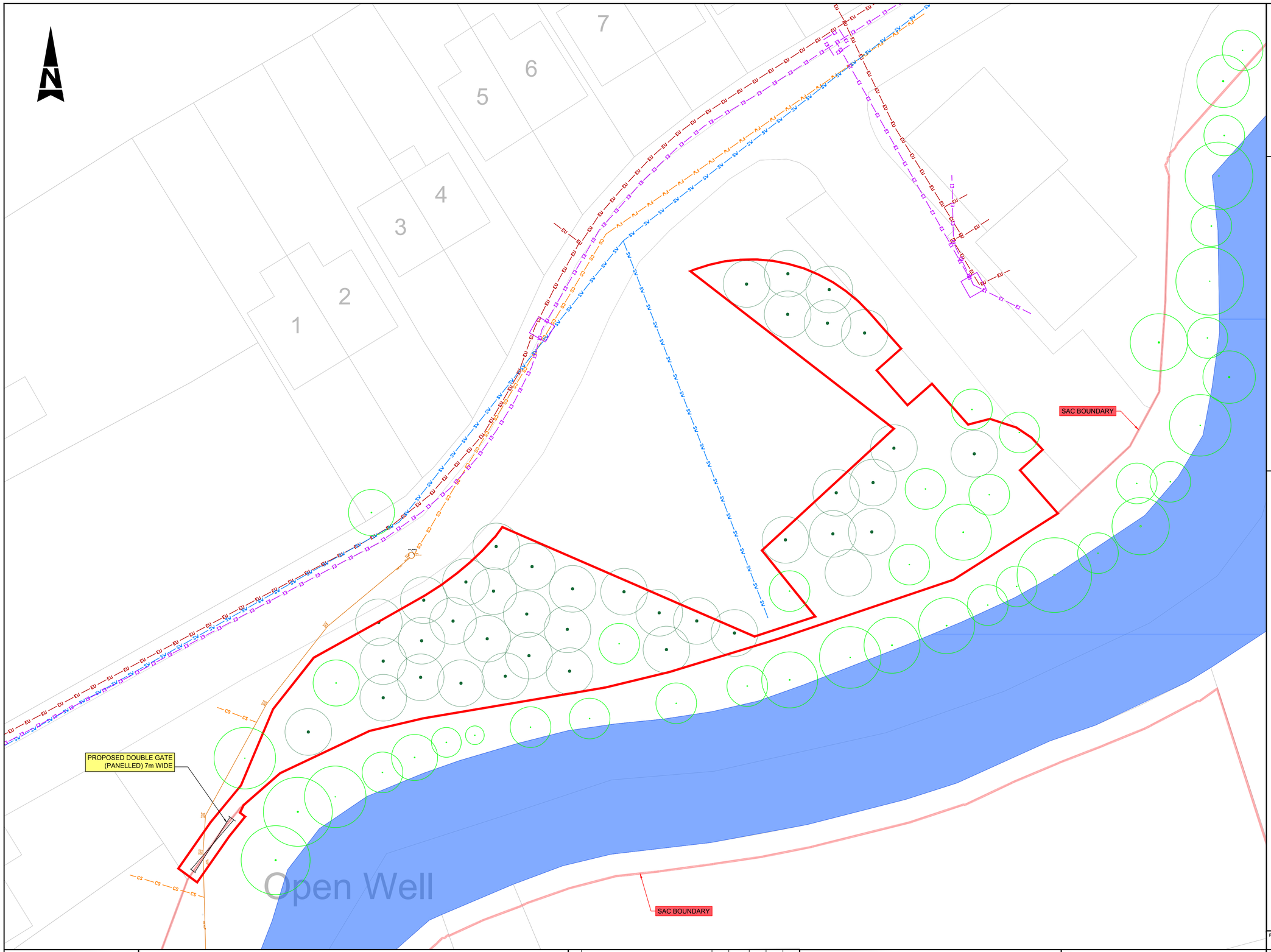

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
2. ONLY WRITTEN DIMENSIONS SHALL BE USED. NO DIMENSIONS SHALL BE SCALED FROM THE DRAWINGS
3. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO MALIN HEAD DATUM
4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

EXISTING SERVICES LEGEND

- EXISTING ESB OVERHEAD
- EXISTING ESB UNDERGROUND
- EXISTING TELECOM DUCTING
- EXISTING GAS MAINS
- EXISTING FOUL SEWER
- EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER
- EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
- EXISTING WATER MAIN
- EXISTING UNKNOWN SEWER
- EXISTING WATER HYDRANT
- EXISTING WATER METER
- EXISTING NTL / UPC / VIRGIN
- EXISTING BT DUCT
- EXISTING EIR DUCT
- EXISTING EIR OVERHEAD
- PROPOSED EIR DUCT
- EXISTING ENET
- EXISTING FOUL DRAINAGE

LEGEND:

- SITE BOUNDARY LINE
- EXISTING TREE TO BE RETAINED
- PROPOSED TREE

A1

DO NOT SCALE

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900374.dwg Plotted by: STEP1160

Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 5:02pm

Risk Level		
	X	AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
		AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
		AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
		Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT LAYOUT PLAN. SHEET 4 OF 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:200	KS Date 28.05.25	MC Date 28.05.25	MC Date 28.05.25	MJ Date 28.05.25

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900374	C00

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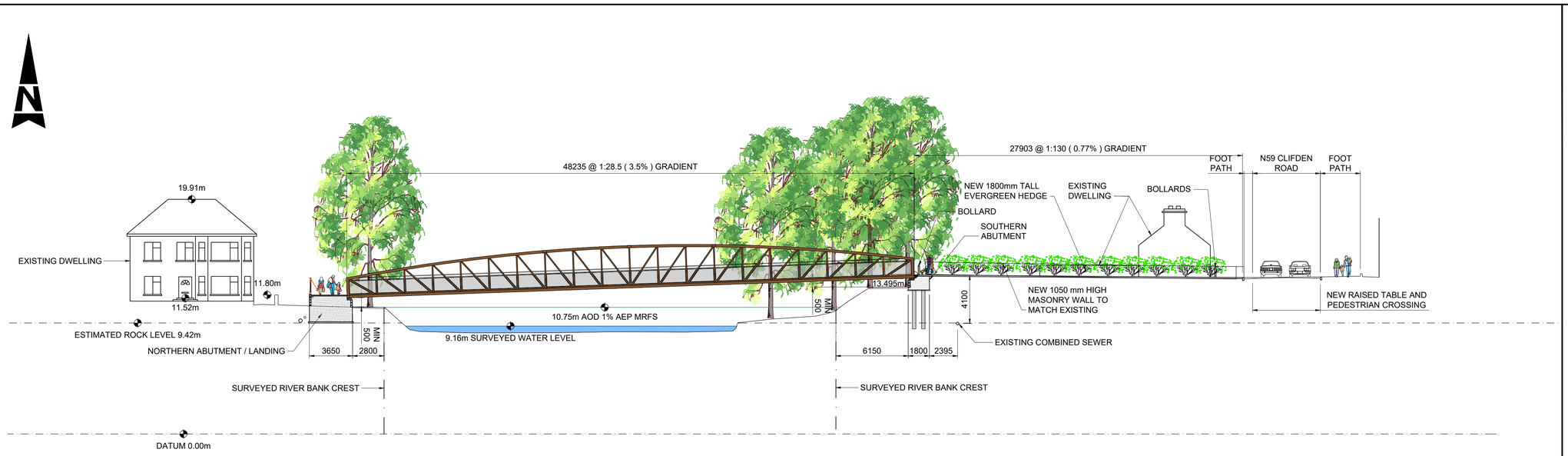

SECTION A: PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE LONGITUDINAL SECTION

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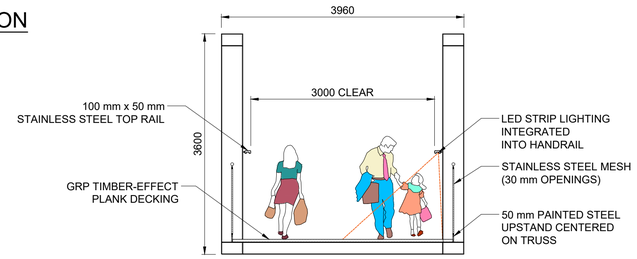
Scale at A3 1:400



SECTION B: MIDSPAN BRIDGE CROSS SECTION

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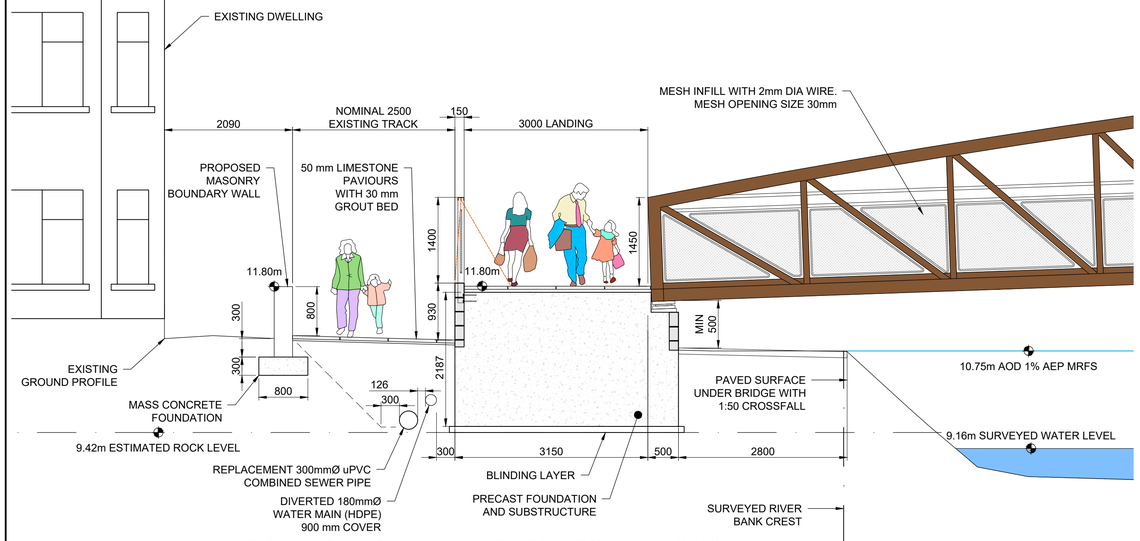
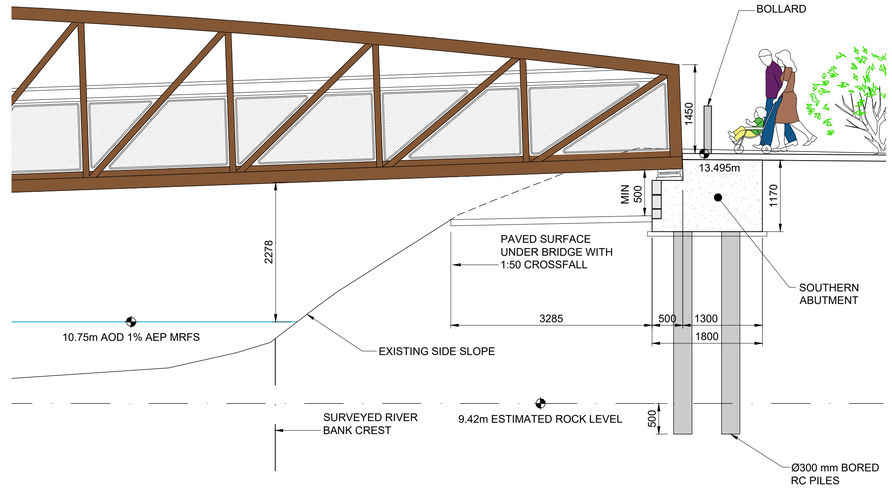
Scale at A3 1:100



NORTHERN ABUTMENT LONGITUDINAL SECTION

Scale at A1 1:50
Scale at A3 1:100



SOUTHERN ABUTMENT LONGITUDINAL SECTION

Scale at A1 1:50
Scale at A3 1:100

GENERAL NOTES

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4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION
6. THE ABBREVIATION "AEP MRFS" MEANS ANNUAL EXCEEDANCE PROBABILITY MID-RANGE FUTURE SCENARIO

Risk Level	
	X AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
	X AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
	X AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
	X Client Critical - Already Marked

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - SECTIONS - SHEET 1

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:50, 200	KS Date 01.08.24	AK Date 01.08.24	MC Date 01.08.24	MJ Date 01.08.24

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900339	C00

A1 DO NOT SCALE

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Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 5:06pm

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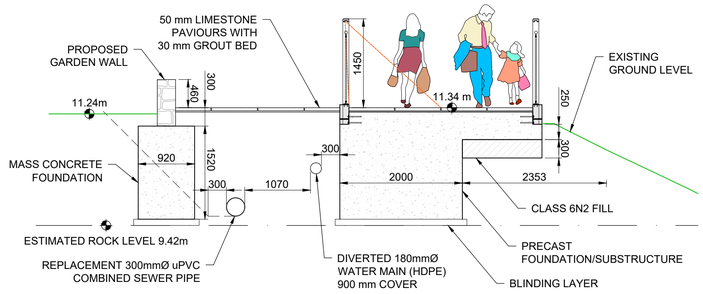
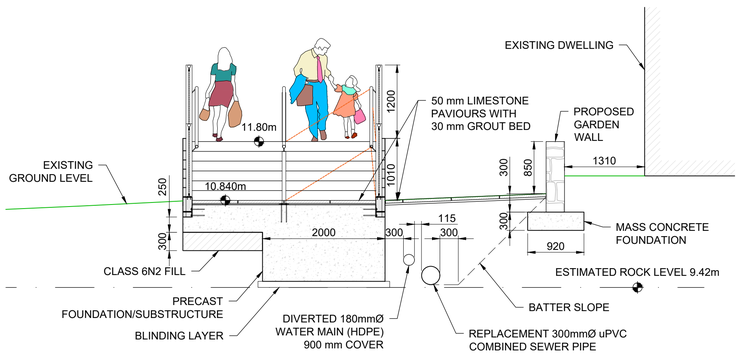
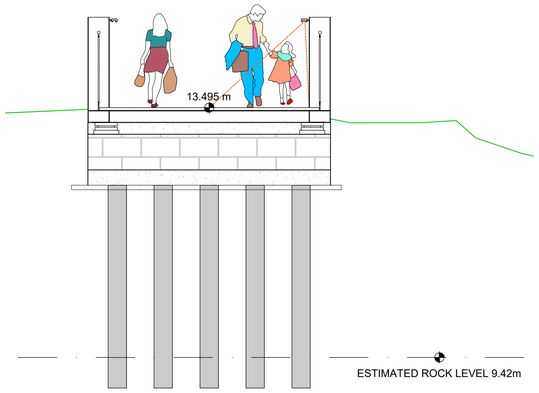


SECTION D
Scale at A1 1:50
Scale at A3 1:100



SECTION E
Scale at A1 1:50
Scale at A3 1:100



SECTION C
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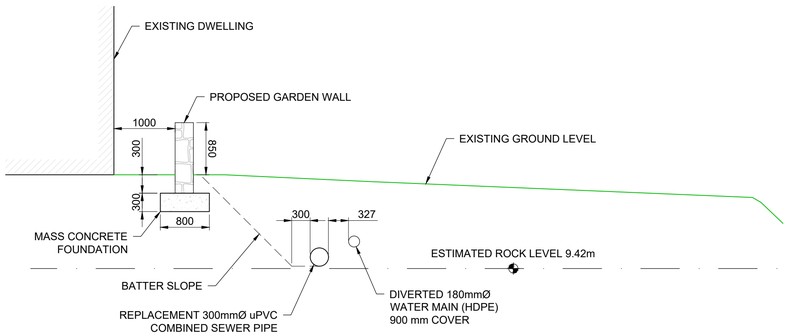
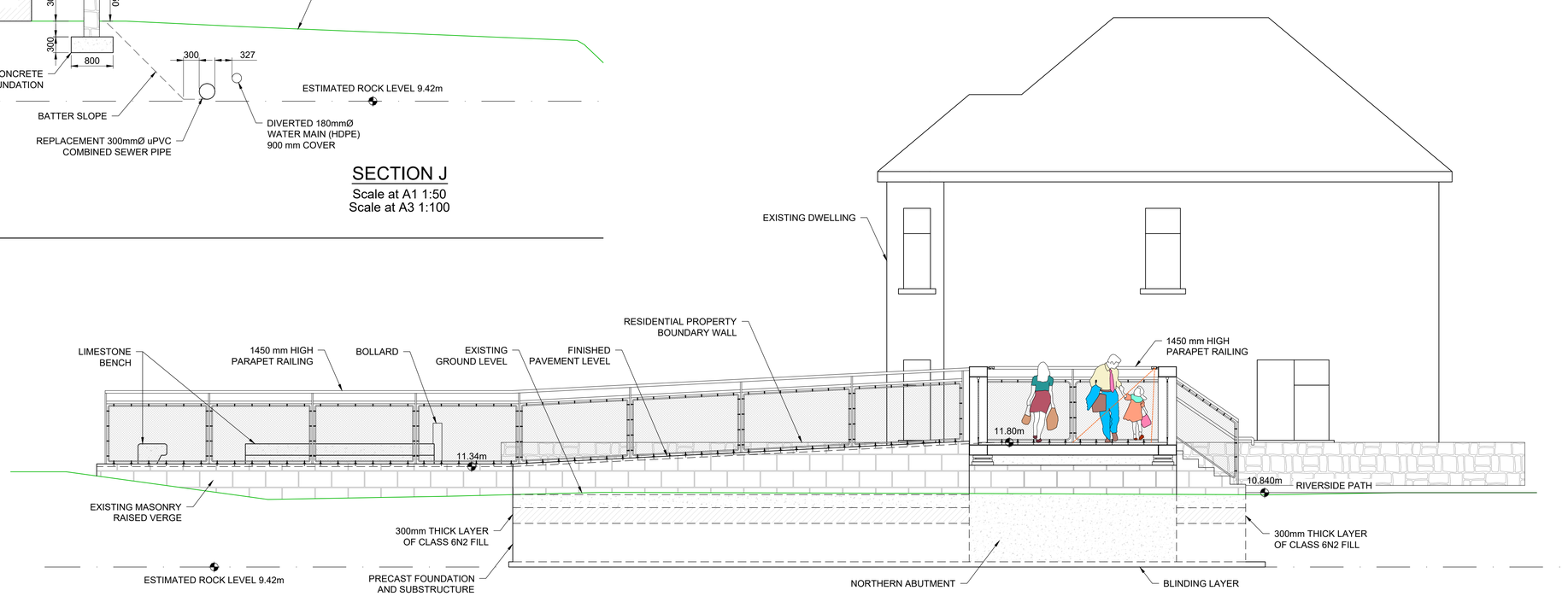
Scale at A3 1:100



SECTION J
Scale at A1 1:50
Scale at A3 1:100



SECTION B1
Scale at A1 1:50
Scale at A3 1:100

GENERAL NOTES

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Risk Level	
X	AtkinsRéailis Base Line - Low Risk
X	AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
X	AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
X	Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council
GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - SECTIONS - SHEET 2

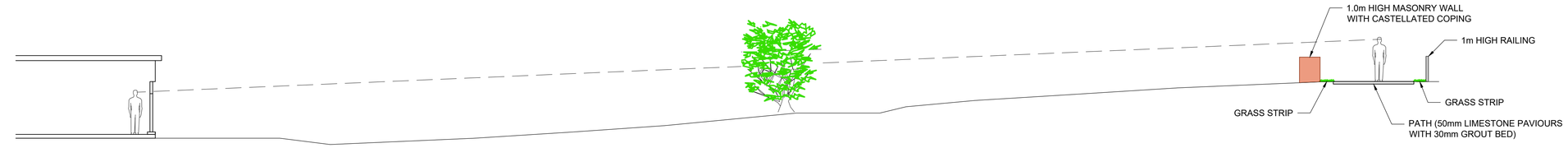
Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:50	AGL Date 17.10.24	AK Date 17.10.24	MC Date 17.10.24	MJ Date 17.10.24

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900342	C00

0 10 100

A1

DO NOT SCALE



SECTION F
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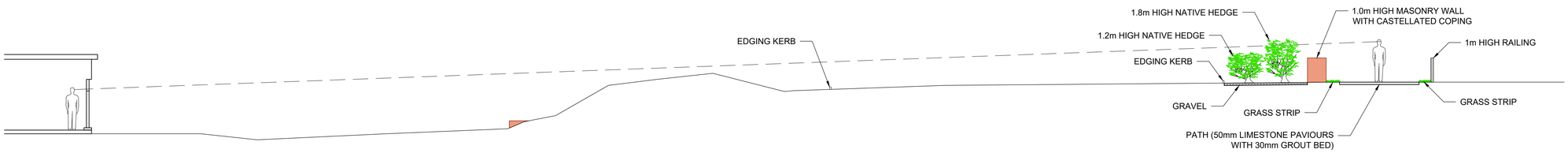
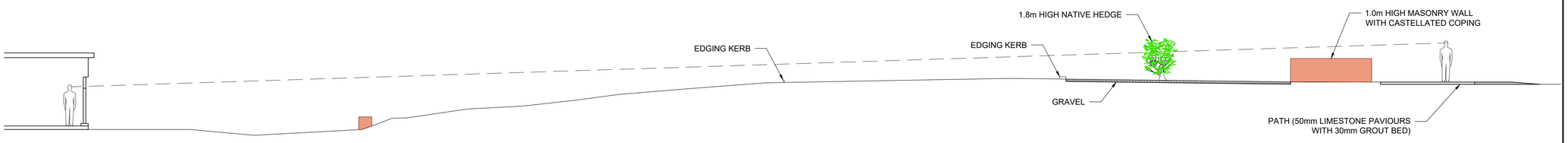
Scale at A3 1:200



SECTION G
Scale at A1 1:100
Scale at A3 1:200



SECTION H
Scale at A1 1:100
Scale at A3 1:200

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
2. ONLY WRITTEN DIMENSIONS SHALL BE USED. NO DIMENSIONS SHALL BE SCALED FROM THE DRAWINGS
3. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO MALIN HEAD DATUM
4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

Risk Level
- X AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
- AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
- AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
- Client Critical - Already Marked

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - SECTIONS F, G AND H

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:100	KS Date 19.02.25	MC Date 19.02.25	MC Date 19.02.25	MJ Date 19.02.25

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900344	C00

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900343-44.dwg
Date: Jun 10, 2025 - 10:40am Plotted by: STEP1160

\\wsatkins\project\IEDBA\Project-Data\0088798\6 Dwgs-Graphics\61 AutoCad\0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900343-44.dwg

Appendix B. Photomontage

AtkinsRéalis

Photomontages

Galway County Council

19 May 2025

0088798DG0097

N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Notice

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Document history

Document title: Photomontages

Document reference: 0088798DG0097

Revision	Purpose description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
0	For review	MC			MJ	14/5/25
1	For review	MC			MJ	19/5/25

Client signoff

Client	Galway County Council
Project	N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE
Job number	100088798
Client signature/date	

Contents

Introduction

AtkinsRéalis was commissioned by Galway County Council to prepare photomontages for the N59 Oughterard Footbridge project. This report presents the photomontages and provides the following details:

- Viewpoints used for the photomontages.
- Details of the photo taken.
- Landscape elements which have been omitted/modified for clarity.

Photomontages

2 no. photomontages are provided. The viewpoints used for the photomontages are shown in the 'Viewpoint Locations Map' drawing in Appendix A (Drg. No. 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900401). A viewpoint of the proposed footbridge is provided on the north and south side of the river. The viewpoint locations are accessible by the public and show the proposed footbridge in elevation.

The photomontage from the north viewpoint is shown in Appendix B. The photo details are as follows:

- Date taken: 12/08/2024, 12:45
- Camera model: Nikon D3000
- Focal length: 18mm
- 35mm focal length: 27

The photomontage from the south viewpoint is shown in Appendix B. The photo details are as follows:

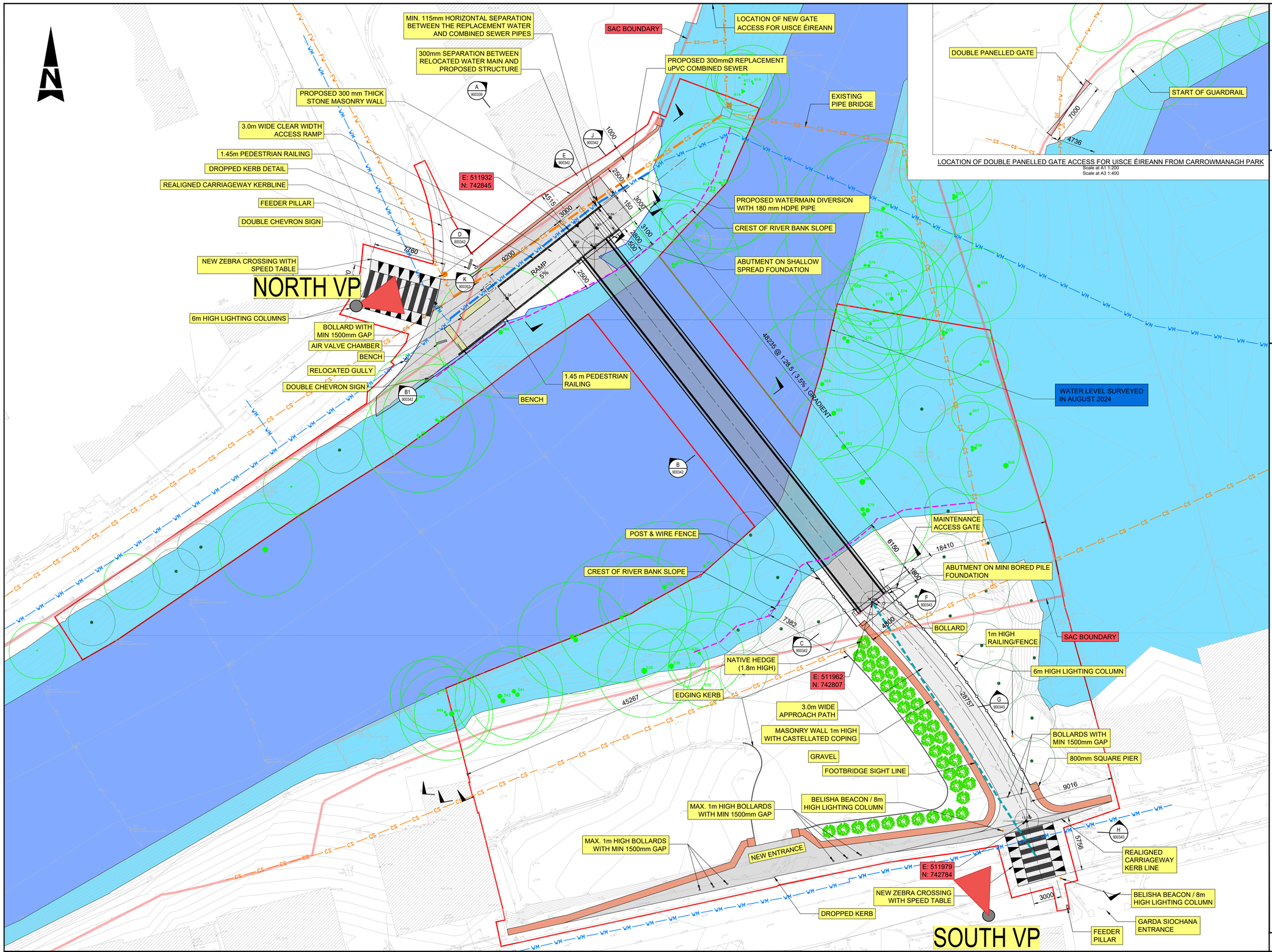
- Date taken: 19/11/2024, 12:50
- Camera model: Canon EOS 5D Mark IV
- Focal length: 50mm

The photomontages contain notes indicating which landscape elements have been omitted/modified for clarity. A landscape site plan is provided in Appendix C with annotations indicating which landscape elements have been omitted/modified in each photomontage for clarity.

For the north viewpoint photomontage, the trees were rendered because the original photo did not provide a clear view of the trees to be retained.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Viewpoint Locations Map



LOCATION OF DOUBLE PANELLED GATE ACCESS FOR UISCE ÉIREANN FROM CARROWMANAGH PARK
Scale at A1 1:200
Scale at A3 1:400

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
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3. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO MALIN HEAD DATUM
4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

LEGEND:

- WM — EXISTING WATER MAIN
- WM — PROPOSED WATERMAIN DIVERSION
- CS — EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
- CS — PROPOSED REPLACEMENT COMBINED SEWER
- FW — EXISTING FOUL DRAINAGE
- 1% ANNUAL EXCEEDENCE PROBABILITY FLOOD ZONE (MID RANGE FUTURE SCENARIO)
- SITE LAYOUT BOUNDARY
- EXISTING TREE TO BE RETAINED
- PROPOSED TREE

NOTES:

1. THE DESIGN USES THE EXISTING STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM.
2. ELECTRICAL WIRING, DUCTING & PILLAR DETAILS WILL BE CONFIRMED AT DETAILED DESIGN.

A1

DO NOT SCALE

File: 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900331, 39, 42, 46-47, 53.dwg
Date: Jun 16, 2025 - 4:59pm Plotted by: STEP1160

Risk Level
- X AtkinsRéalis Base Line - Low Risk
- X AtkinsRéalis Sensitive - Medium Risk
- X AtkinsRéalis Private - High Risk
- X Client Critical - Already Marked

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GALWAY NATIONAL ROADS PROJECT OFFICE

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Rev'd	Auth
C00	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	KS	06.25	MC	MC	MJ

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Client: Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill Galway. H91 H6KX

Project: N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Purpose: PLANNING ISSUE

Title: PROPOSED GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - LAYOUT PLAN - SHEET 3 of 4

Original Scale	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
1:200	AOS	AK	MC	MJ
	Date 26.06.24	Date 26.06.24	Date 26.06.24	Date 26.06.24

Status	Drawing Number	Rev
CO	0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900331	C00

\\wsatkins\project\IEDBA\Project-Data\0088798\6 Dwgs-Graphics\61 AutoCad\0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900331, 39, 42, 46-47, 53.dwg

Appendix B. Photomontages

NOTES:
1. PHOTO TAKEN 12/8/24 (SUMMER).

NOTES
1. 2 NO. TREES ON THE NORTH RIVERBANK ARE OMITTED TO PROVIDE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE.

NOTES:
1. PHOTO TAKEN 19/11/24 (AUTUMN).

NOTES

1. THE HEDGE ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE MASONRY WALL IS SHOWN WITH 1m HEIGHT TO PROVIDE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE.
2. 5 NO. TREES ON THE SOUTH RIVERBANK ADJACENT TO THE PROPOSED SOUTH ABUTMENT ARE OMITTED TO PROVIDE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE.
3. 1 NO. TREE ON THE NORTH RIVERBANK IS OMITTED TO PROVIDE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE PROPOSED NORTH RAMP.
4. THE PROPOSED FENCE ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE APPROACH PATH IS OMITTED FOR CLARITY.

Appendix C. Landscape Site Plan

SITE PLAN LEGEND:

SYM.	DESCRIPTION
	PROPOSED NATURAL STONE PAVING TO FOOTPATH/ RAMP.
	PROPOSED NATURAL STONE KERB.
	PROPOSED SURFACING TO THE BRIDGE.
	PROPOSED BUFF COLOURED ASPHALT TO PATH.
	SURFACING TO MATCH EXISTING RIVERSIDE FOOTPATH.
	RIPARIAN/ WILDFLOWER VEGETATION.
	AMENITY GRASS.
	PROPOSED WALL.
	PROPOSED RAILING.
	EXISTING TREE TRUNK.
	EXISTING TREE TO BE RETAINED.
	PROPOSED TREE.
	PROPOSED SCRUB PLANTING.
	PROPOSED HEDGE PLANTING.
	PROPOSED BENCH.
	PROPOSED BOLLARD.
	LANDS MADE AVAILABLE BOUNDARY

NOTE:

01 EXISTING TREES AND UNDERSTORY PLANTING TO BE RETAINED.

02 PROPOSED RIPARIAN PLANTING.

03 EXISTING AMENITY GRASS TO BE RETAINED.

04 PROPOSED TREE PLANTING.

05 PROPOSED TREE PLANTING WITH WOODLAND SHADE WILDFLOWERS.

06 EXISTING FOOTPATH TO BE WIDENED.

07 PROPOSED HEDGE PLANTING.

08 PROPOSED SCRUB AND TREE PLANTING.

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CLIENT:
GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

PROJECT/DRAWING TITLE:
OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE: LANDSCAPE SITE PLAN

LOCATION:
OUGHTERARD, CO. GALWAY

N

DRAWING NUMBER:
24055-CO-LP-0-01-REV-3

SCALE:
1:200@A1

DATE:
13.06.2025

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