



**CLIENT:** Mayo County Council

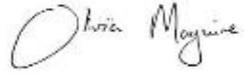
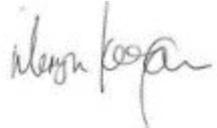
**PROJECT:** Provision of 4 No. Units at Lower Charles Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)  
Screening Report.

**Prepared by:** AONA Environmental Consulting Ltd.

**Date:** November 2022

## REPORT CONTROL

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

AONA Environmental Consulting Ltd. was commissioned by Mayo County Council to complete a EIA Screening Report, for a proposed development of 4 residential units located at Lower Charles Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo. The Report is prepared in the context of an application under Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The EIA Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with published guidance to assess the potential impacts on the environment due to the Proposed Development. The purpose of the EIA Screening Report is to determine if EIA is required for the proposed development as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended (the Act), and Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended (the Regulations). The requirement for a 'sub-threshold' development to be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in significant environmental effects which may arise due to the location of the development or the characteristics of the development. The EIA screening exercise outlined below has examined the project with reference to the relevant thresholds and criteria.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report which assesses the potential of the proposed development to adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites has been prepared and will also be submitted to the competent authority as part of the Part VIII application.

## 1.1 *Statement of Authority*

This report has been compiled by Olivia Maguire (B.Sc., M.Sc.) who is a Senior Environmental Consultant with AONA Environmental Consulting Ltd. and reviewed by Mervyn Keegan (B.Sc., M.Sc.) who is a Director with AONA Environmental Consulting Ltd.

Olivia is a Senior Environmental Consultant at AONA Environmental Consulting Ltd. and has over 16 years of experience in Environmental Consultancy. She has a Degree in Geography and a Master's Degree in Environmental Science from Queens University, Belfast and a Degree in Occupational Health and Safety from Atlantic University, Sligo. Olivia is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and the Occupational Hygiene Society of Ireland and operates in accordance with their respective codes of professional conduct. Olivia's role involves the delivery of a wide range of environmental and occupational health & safety consultancy services to public and private sector clients in the following areas;

- Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with relevant legislation & guidance
- Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Directive.
- Environmental Noise & Air Quality Surveys & Impact Assessment.
- Occupational Health Assessments including noise at work and indoor air quality surveys

## 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

### 2.1 *Description of Proposed Development*

Castlebar has a population of 12,068 (CSO 2016) and is the largest town in Mayo. Castlebar is the main administrative, public health, education and commercial centre in the county. The town provides over 9000 jobs, with a jobs/resident worker ratio of 1.920 (CSO 2016).

The proposed site, which consists of a net site area of c. 0.02745 hectares, currently consists of two semidetached two storey dwelling houses with associated rear gardens on Lower Charles Street, in Castlebar town centre, on lands zoned 'town centre' under the Castlebar Town and Environs Plan 2008-2014 (as extended). This area is identified for the purpose of renewal and regeneration.

The site is bordered to the east by an existing restaurant and to the west by a barber shop and the south by the public road (R373). The restaurant property to the immediate east is listed as a protected structure No1964:14:443 in the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020.

Proposed works include:

- the demolition of two semidetached two storey dwelling houses.
- the construction of 4 no. new dwellings comprising 4 No. 1 bed apartments in a semi-detached block.
- all associated site development works including site boundaries, drainage, utilities and services connections, diversions of existing services and all ancillary site works.
- all dwellings will be provided with private gardens or external terraces.

It is proposed to demolish the existing buildings with the exception of the gable wall to the east of the properties, as it's shared with the building which is a protected structure. At present the units have access to the rear via a laneway along the western site boundary, access to the rear in this case for all apartments is through a gated laneway between the ground floor properties off Lower Charles Street.

The proposed masonry-built houses are to be connected to the existing water mains and the public sewer system for treatment of wastewater and disposal of surface water. Mayo County Council are projected to be undertaking groundworks on Lower Charles Street, which consists of new paving and car parking provision. Once these works are being undertaken, new drainage infrastructure and connection to the proposed properties will be installed.

Previous planning application (Ref: P18/191) for the construction of three two storey terraced dwelling houses on this site was granted planning permission in August 2018 subject to

conditions outlined in Schedule 2 of the Planners Report. It was considered that having regard to the policies and objectives of the Castlebar and Environs Development Plan 2008-2014, that the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 2.2 *Water Features and Quality*

The application site is located within the Moy and Killala Bay Hydrometric Area and Catchment and the Castlebar Sub-Catchment and Sub-Basin. A review of Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) Geographical Information System (GIS) data, OSI mapping on GeoHive.ie, and recent aerial photography indicates that there are no watercourses or field drains within the immediate area of the proposed project site. The nearest watercourse is the Castlebar River, which is ~100m east of the application site. This river flows north, before its confluence with the Manulla river before the combined flow enters Lough Cullen. There is no hydrological connection to this stream

Directive 2000/60/EC (the Water Framework Directive) was adopted by the European Parliament and Council in 2000. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) establishes a legal framework for the protection, improvement and sustainable management of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater. The aim of the WFD is to prevent the deterioration in the existing status of waters (including the maintenance of "High Status" where it exists) and to ensure that all waters, with some limited exceptions, achieve at least "Good Status", The EPA have classed the ecological status of the Castlebar River at a location c.260m from the application site as '3' meaning it is of 'poor' ecological status. Under the requirements of the Water Framework Directive this is unsatisfactory as it is required that at least 'good' status (Q4) is achieved in this waterbody.

The Swinford Waterbody (IE\_WE\_G\_0033) which underlies the Proposed Housing Development currently has a water quality classification of 'Good' and a status of 'Not at Risk' (September 2022). There are no springs or wells within the vicinity of the site.

An Annual Environmental Report (2020) prepared for Castlebar Wastewater Treatment Plant (D0047-01) in accordance with the requirements of the wastewater discharge licence for the agglomeration shows that the WWTP is compliant with the ELV's set in the Wastewater Discharge Licence.

Following examination of the relevant GIS information in relation to flood risk assessment, the site of the proposed development is not within a flood risk area. Geographical Survey Ireland (GSI) mapping indicates the application site lies in an area of high vulnerability and in an area of

Rk– Regionally Important Aquifer - Regionally important aquifers are capable of supplying regionally important abstractions (e.g. large public water supplies).

### 2.3 Construction Methodology

A Construction Stage Method Statement will be requested from the Works Contractor's as part of their Works Proposals, which will be in compliance to the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of resource and waste management plans for construction & demolition projects. Construction will concur with Mayo County Council appropriate Health and Safety standards and Safety Management Systems.

The design of the project provided by Mayo County Council demonstrates that the design of the project has considered that all necessary measures and best practice will be put in place to avoid any impacts to the Natura 2000 sites occurring.

Adherence to best practice Construction and Environmental Management during the construction phase will ensure that development would not result in pollution of groundwater or any surface water. It is noted that all water and wastewater infrastructure will be designed and constructed in accordance with the relevant Irish Water code of practice for connections and developer services, design and construction requirements for self-lay developments July 2020 (revision 2), IW-CDS5030-03 and IW-CDS-5020- 03 and Water and Wastewater infrastructure standard details, connections and developer services, construction requirements for self-lay developments; July 2020 (revision 4), IW-CDS-5030-01 and IW-CDA-5020-01.

## 3 RELEVANT EIA LEGISLATION

The EIA Directive, Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27<sup>th</sup> June 1985 *on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment* is designed to ensure that projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are subject to a comprehensive assessment of environmental effects prior to development consent being given. This Directive was amended by the following Directives: - Directive 97/11/EC of 3 March 1997, Directive 2003/35/EC of 26 May 2003, Directive 2009/31/EC of 23 April 2009, (codified in Directive 2011/92/EU of 13 December 2011) and most recently by Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014.

### 3.1 National EIA Guidance

EIA provisions in relation to planning permissions are contained in the Part X of the *Planning and Development Act, 2000*, as amended (hereafter referred to as "the Planning Act"), and in Part 10 of the *Planning and Development Regulations, 2001*, as amended.

The 2014 EIA Directive has been transposed into national planning law by the *European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018* (S.I. No. 296 of 2018), with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018<sup>1</sup>, and the *European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (No.2) Regulations 2018*, with effect from 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

### 3.2 EIA Guidance

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) revised the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, in August 2018. These updated Guidelines deal with the new legislative provisions resulting from the 2014 EIA Directive and the *European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018* (S.I. No. 296 of 2018)<sup>2</sup> and how they are to be addressed in practice.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published guidance to respond to the 2014 EIA Directive, including *Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (2022). Since the adoption of the 2014 EIA Directive, The European Commission has also prepared a suite of Guidance documents including *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)* (2017).

## 4 EIA SCREENING

### 4.1 Methodology

To determine if an EIA is required, the first step is to determine whether the Project is a class set out in Annex I or II of the Directive. These classes have been broadly transposed into Schedule 5 (Part 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, with national thresholds included for many of the Annex II classes.

If the project is not subject to a mandatory EIA, EIA may still be required to determine the likelihood of a sub-threshold project having significant effects on the environment. Criteria are included in Annex III of the EIA Directive (transposed into Irish Law in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended) to determine whether a subthreshold development should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment

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<sup>1</sup> A separate commencement date of 1 January 2019 is provided for the enhanced provisions for EIA screening in advance of making a planning application (Sections 176A to 176C)

<sup>2</sup> Hereafter referred to as the 2018 EIA Regulations.

## 4.2 Mandatory EIA Thresholds

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the legislative basis for mandatory EIA. It states:

*"An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by a planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for proposed development where either:*

*(a) the proposed development would be of a class specified in –*

*(i) Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either – I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or*

*(ii) Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either – I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or*

*(b) (i) the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and (ii) the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment."*

Further to the above, Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out a number of classes and scales of development that require EIA. There is no class set out under Part 1 of Schedule 5 in relation to the provision of a housing development. Under Part 2 of Schedule 5, in relation to Infrastructure projects, Class 10(b)(i) of Part 2 refers to housing developments as follows:

### *10. Infrastructure projects*

*(a) .....*

*(b) (i) Construction of more than **500 dwelling units**.*

*(ii) Construction of car-parks providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.*

*(iii) Construction of shopping centres with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres*

*(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a Business District, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area, and 20 hectares elsewhere. (In this paragraph "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)*

The number of dwelling units proposed as part of the proposed housing development is 4 on an area < than 2 hectares and will therefore be significantly below the threshold specified in Class 10(b)(i) and (iv) respectively of Part 2. Having regard to the above, **EIA is not mandatory for the proposed development.**

#### 4.2 Sub-Threshold Screening

To determine whether the project described in Section 2 above should be subject to an EIA, the following assessment is completed on the basis of the Criteria in Schedule 7 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended* and utilising the Screening Checklist provided in the *'Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)'* (EC, 2017).

The criteria are grouped under the following three headings in Table 1 below:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development
2. Location of Proposed Development
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The assessment of the likelihood of significant environmental effects requires professional judgment. The DoEHLG Guidance Document *'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development'* states that it is not intended that special studies or technical evaluations will be necessary for the purpose of making a decision. In this context, this screening exercise has relied on available information.

In addition to the above reference criteria, a further screening exercise was completed to assess the most significant potential impacts and Table 2 presents the sections that would be covered in any EIA as specified in the Directive and includes the aspects of the environment with the potential to be significantly affected by the project.

**Table 1: Screening Criteria**

Screening Questions	Commentary of potential significance
<b>1 Characteristics of the proposed development</b>	
(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,	<p>The proposed development is for 4 No. 1 bed apartments in a semi-detached block. The proposed site which consists of a net site area of c. 0.02745 hectares currently consists of two semidetached two storey dwelling houses with associated rear gardens on Lower Charles Street, in Castlebar town centre and directly accesses the regional route R373. The proposed residential units are to be connected to the existing public system for the treatment of wastewater, disposal of surface water and connection to public watermains for domestic water supply. All dwellings will be provided with private amenity space.</p> <p>Having regard to the modest size and design of the proposal, and linkages with existing infrastructure it is not considered that it would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.</p>
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,	<p>Information on the site and the area of the proposed development was studied prior to the completion of this statement.</p> <p>Previous planning application (Ref: P18/191) for the construction of three two storey terraced dwelling houses on this site was granted planning permission in August 2018 subject to conditions outlined in Schedule 2 of the Planners Report. It was considered that having regard to the policies and objectives of the Castlebar and Environs Development Plan 2008-2014 (as extended), that the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.</p> <p>Planning application for an adjoining site was refused permission on 13 January 2022 (Planning Ref: 21/850). The proposed development on Richard Street adjoins the northern boundary of the proposed development site. Planning permission was sought for the Retention and extension of an existing storage unit and all ancillary site works and services at Richard Street, Castlebar, to be used as a Commercial Warehouse. Planning permission was refused on the grounds that under the zoning matrix set out under the Castlebar Town and Environs Plan 2008-2014 (as extended)., a warehouse type use is not permitted on lands zoned town centre. The development would therefore contravene materially a development objective indicated in the development plan for the zoning of land for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes (whether residential, commercial, industrial agricultural, recreational, or otherwise or a mixture of uses). These lands are zoned 'town centre' under the Castlebar Town and Environs Plan 2008-2014 (as extended). This area is identified for the purpose of renewal and regeneration.</p>

	<p>A further search of the Mayo County Council planning database identified details of various planning applications for development within the immediate catchment of the subject site (&lt;100m).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning ref: 16293: change the use of first and second floor of existing commercial building from previous use as office to 3 no. Self-contained apartments at Thomas Street, Castlebar. Granted permission 21/11/2016. Approximately 65m from the proposed site.</li> <li>• Planning ref: 20489: change of use from commercial to residential at 12 Lucan Street, Castlebar. Granted permission 07/10/2020 approximately 75m from the proposed site.</li> <li>• Planning ref: 22529: retain and complete extension to rear of existing dwelling house together with associated site services at Rush Street, Castlebar. Granted permission 09/09/2022. Approximately 90m from the proposed site.</li> <li>• Planning ref: 19701: change of use of existing restaurant to multi-unit residential accommodation and internal changes to create residential units and all associated site works, at Thomas Street, Castlebar. Granted permission 18/12/2019. Approximately 100m from the proposed site.</li> </ul> <p>These planning applications in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site could have in-combination effects that would be capable of resulting in likely significant impacts to the environment. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that all development consents would incorporate conditions requiring protection of the environment during the construction and operational phase.</p> <p>Having regard to the scale of the permitted developments in the vicinity, the accompanying Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Assessment noted that there will be no likely significant effects to any European Site during the construction or operations phases of the Proposed Development. Therefore, there will be no in-combination effects with local planning application</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that the proposed development will have a significant permanent positive impact when considered in the context of existing and approved plans which will provide residential facilities.</p>
<p>(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,</p>	<p>The site currently consists of two semidetached two storey dwelling houses that will be demolished. It is proposed to retain the eastern gable wall attached to the restaurant as the Tulsí Restaurant is a protected structure (Code No: 1964:14:443; Terraced façade of former Presbyterian church, c.1863, with two-storey c.1990 building with restaurant and living accommodation to rear). The works are to be contained within the site boundary and are not considered to have any likely significant effects to the environment.</p>
<p>(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and</p>	<p>The proposed use of natural resource of land is not considered to be different to the existing situation with extensive 'Urban' habitat which is of low ecological significance. While exact quantities of</p>

biodiversity	<p>materials required during the construction phase have not been determined at this stage, the amount of aggregates and materials that will be imported to the site during construction will be moderate.</p> <p>The proposed development is to be connected to the existing water mains and the public sewer system for treatment of wastewater and disposal of surface water. Adherence to best practice Construction and Environmental Management during the construction phase will ensure that development will not result in pollution of groundwater or surface water. There are no surface water connections from the site to any watercourse or any hydrological link to any European Site.</p> <p>No resources will be taken from any Natura 2000 site and there are no resource requirements that will impact upon any designated sites. A site survey of the proposed site was undertaken on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to inform the Appropriate Assessment, in which habitats on site were assessed and the suitability of the site to support plants, animals or habitats of note was also considered. It was concluded that the habitat comprised mainly of Buildings and artificial surfaces which is a highly modified habitat type, comprised of manmade materials with no particular biodiversity potential and as such is of no particular biodiversity value. In summary the AA concluded that that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site.</p> <p>In conclusion, it is anticipated that throughout construction/demolition and operation the development would not result in the use of large amounts of natural resources greater than that associated with comparable developments or to the extent that would have a significant impact on the environment.</p>
(e) the production of waste,	<p>During the construction phase measures including good site management will be taken to limit the quantity of waste generated. Waste such as Demolition waste will be recycled where possible. All waste will be segregated on site and stored separately prior to removal to an accredited facility. This will have a positive environmental effect as waste to landfill will be minimised.</p> <p>It is highly probable that demolition waste will contain hazardous substances such as Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs). The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006 as amended (S.I. No. 386 of 2006) and The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 291 of 2013) provides the legislative backdrop to all aspects of asbestos control in construction/demolition. Any actions related to ACMs must be in accordance with these regulations.</p> <p>Asbestos works are a matter principally for Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and will be dealt with through appropriate survey, reporting, removal and disposal as required. The handling and disposal of this waste will be compliant with all regulations regarding disposal of this waste and will therefore be</p>

	<p>dealt with in a way so not to cause environmental pollution or hazard to human health.</p> <p>During the operational phase no new additional waste types will be generated by the development. Emissions will be linked to heating systems and will fall within the regulated standards for modern residential developments. Appropriate waste receptacles are to be put in place for the management of domestic waste streams generated by the development which will be disposed of by a licensed waste contractor.</p> <p>On this basis the waste generation will not be of a level of significance that would require EIA. There is no likelihood of significant environmental effects arises.</p>
(f) pollution and nuisances,	<p>As with any construction site, noise, vibration, lighting and dust arising from construction activities and construction traffic have the potential for pollution or nuisance. The contractors 'Construction Stage Method Statement' compiled in accordance with the EPA's <i>Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of resource and waste management plans for construction &amp; demolition projects</i> (2021) will incorporate standard proven mitigation measures that effectively minimise the effect.</p> <p>Demolition works have the potential for noise disturbance. However, any such disturbance will be temporary (limited to the demolition/works period), localised and controlled and mitigated by standard construction best practice and normal day-time working hours. Other minor impacts identified will occur predominately during the construction phase in terms of construction related noise and traffic. Again, these will be temporary and will not lead to long term residual impacts.</p> <p>Currently, there is street lighting along the southern roadside boundary of the site. Proposed lighting will adhere to the best practice lighting standards provided in the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guidance document <i>Guidance Note 08/18 – Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK</i> (2018). Mayo County Council will consider the minimisation of artificial light pollution as much as possible in the lighting design of this new development.</p> <p>In terms of dust nuisance during the construction phase, the site is surrounded by existing residential and commercial development. Standard construction dust mitigation measures will be integrated into the construction phase, and it is considered that any impact would be short-term and not significant i.e. an effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.</p> <p>Other sources of pollutants include fuels, oils, concrete and chemicals. Adherence to best practice Construction and Environmental Management during the construction phase will ensure that development will not result in pollution of groundwater or surface water.</p>

	<p>During the operational stage it is envisaged that the proposed residential development, considering the small scale and connection to existing infrastructure would not have any negative impact in terms of pollution or nuisance.</p>
<p>(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge,</p>	<p>The Site will be secured, and demolition works managed, controlled and mitigated by standard construction best practice, as per building and environmental regulations and day-time working hours. The contractor's 'Construction Stage Method Statement' will be informed by best practice methodologies and be subject to the contractor's safety statements and risk assessments which will negate the risk of major accidents or disasters arising during the construction phase.</p> <p>The potential natural disasters that may occur are limited to flooding and fire. The sites are not located within a Flood Zone and no mapped indicative fluvial, pluvial, coastal or groundwater flood zones have been recorded within or adjacent to the boundary of the proposed development site.</p> <p>In terms of fire risk, the proposed development will comply with all relevant health &amp; safety legislation. It is considered that the risk of significant fire occurring, affecting the proposed development and causing it to have significant environmental effects, is limited.</p>
<p>(h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).</p>	<p>There is limited potential for negative effects on human health during the construction phase as a result of potential emissions to air of dust, or potential emissions to land and water of hydrocarbons. Measures inherent in the design and best construction site practices will prevent any risk of pollution running off the site.</p> <p>As described above, Asbestos Containing Materials(ACM's) will be dealt with through appropriate survey, reporting, removal and disposal as required, in compliance with all regulations regarding disposal of this waste and will therefore be dealt with in a way so not to cause risk to human health.</p> <p>To reduce the potential for health and safety risks, the project developer would require that all contractors prepare a site-specific health and safety plan before initiating construction activities. The plan would inform those on site of the measures to take in the event of an emergency and would be maintained for the duration of the construction phase.</p> <p>The site will be secured, and demolition works managed, controlled and mitigated by standard construction best practice as per building and environmental regulations and normal day-time working hours.</p>

<b>2 Location of the proposed development</b>	
(a) the existing and approved land use,	<p>The existing and approved land use is two derelict semi-detached buildings considered of low ecological value. These lands are zoned 'town centre' under the Castlebar Town and Environs Plan 2008-2014 (as extended). This area is identified for the purpose of renewal and regeneration under the Urban Housing and Regeneration Act 2015. The proposed development is in line with this objective.</p> <p>From a land use planning perspective, the proposed housing development can be integrated into the receiving environment without any significant effects.</p>
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,	<p>The proposal is not of such a scale that it would impact significantly upon the natural resources in this geographical area. The site is of low ecological significance.</p> <p>No ecological designations directly affect the site. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in respect to areas classified or protected under birds and habitat legislation. This assessment has determined that the proposed development will not adversely impact on these natural resources.</p>
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	<p>The development proposals are in keeping with other developments in this location and the area has been zoned for the type of use proposed. Consequently, it is considered that the site has a high absorption capacity for the scale and type of development proposed and no likelihood of significant environmental effects arises.</p>
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	<p>The proposal is not of such a location or scale that it would impact upon the absorption capacity of this feature.</p>
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;	<p>The proposal is not of such a location or scale that it would impact upon the absorption capacity of this feature.</p>
(iii) mountain and forest areas;	<p>The proposal is not of such a location or scale that it would impact upon the absorption capacity of this feature.</p>
(iv) nature reserves and parks;	<p>The proposal is not of such a location or scale that it would impact upon the absorption capacity of this feature.</p>

(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;	A separate Screening Report for the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been prepared and excludes any potential for impact on Natura 2000 Sites.
(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	There are no known areas in which the environmental quality standards shall be exceeded.
(vii) densely populated areas;	This small site (0.02745ha) is located in an existing developed/urban context, which is the subject of on-going and future regeneration / redevelopment.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The Proposed Development is adjacent to a protected structure on Lower Charles Street, Code no. 1964: 14: 443. It is proposed to demolish the existing buildings except for the gable wall to the east of the properties, as it's shared with the restaurant which is the protected structure. All works will be carried out in accordance with the Principals of Conservation and best conservation practice and the "Architectural; Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities", issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2004.
<b>3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts</b>	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The magnitude of the proposal (0.02745 hectares) transforms two derelict buildings into 4 residential units. Any potential impact will be temporary, short-term and limited to the site and its immediate adjoining properties. Therefore, the geographical extent and population likely to be affected are very small and no likelihood of significant environmental effects arises.
(b) the nature of the impact,	The impact will be an increase in housing in accordance with the Mayo County Development Plan core strategy. There are no unusual aspects to the Proposed Development and any potential impacts are consistent with and typical of normal small-scale redevelopment/regeneration works. No likelihood of significant environmental effects arises.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact	There are no transboundary impacts associated with the proposed development.

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact	Having regard to the characteristics and the location of the proposed development site, no impact of an unusual intensity or complexity is expected. The nature of the building does not fall into the project types mentioned in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2020, that it warrants an EIAR.
(e) the probability of the impact	Should approval be given, the development will proceed. During the construction stage, noise nuisances and air pollution may occur. No significant environmental impacts are predicted for the proposed development if all applicable environmental health and safety regulations are complied with throughout the Construction/demolition Phase thereby ensuring that this phase will not result in significant effects on human health or the environment.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	The potential impacts during the development will be associated with the construction stage. These impacts would be short term or temporary in nature. As such an EIA is not required to evaluate the reversibility of the impact.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development, the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	The proposed project will not give rise to significant effects on the environment, and no permitted or proposed projects were identified with which the proposal would give rise to significant cumulative impacts.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	<p>It is considered that the proposal will enhance the existing landscape. The design put forward is a high standard architectural design, consistent with neighbouring structures.</p> <p>Any potential impacts will be temporary or short term associated with the normal construction of Proposed Development on an urban site. Any such potential impacts may be appropriately mitigated through standard construction best practice and control of working hours. No likelihood of significant environmental effects arises</p>

**Table 2 Potential Impacts by EIA Topic**

EIA Topic	Potential Impact
Population and Human Health	<p>The relatively small site (0.02745 hectares) is located in an existing developed/urban context, which is the subject of on-going and future regeneration / redevelopment.</p> <p>The potential impacts of the construction phase on human beings are not considered to be significant. During construction, there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience, dust and noise to occur. However, the works will be short-term in duration. Standard best practice construction methodologies will limit disturbance to people in the area.</p> <p>Once completed, the new development will provide for more usable space than its current land use of lying vacant. In addition, the new development will provide additional housing stock in an area of high demand which is considered a significant positive impact.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report that accompanies the planning application demonstrates that the proposed development will not impact on identified European Designated Sites within the zone of influence of the proposed development either alone, or in combination with, other plans or projects. The lack of any sensitive habitats and/or species means that the proposed development will not have any significant effect on flora and fauna.</p>
Land & Soil	<p>The site is currently a developed urban site, which is zoned for residential use/regeneration. The loss of both land-use and soils is considered suitable. The development will be constructed in accordance with the contractors 'Construction Stage Method Statement' compiled in accordance with the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of resource and waste management plans for construction &amp; demolition projects. This will incorporate standard proven mitigation measures that effectively minimise any significant effects.</p>
Water	<p>Good construction site practices will be in place to prevent any risk of pollution, e.g. from silt laden waters, hydrocarbons and cement based products, running off the site. With best practice incorporated into the design and the construction works methodology, the potential for significant run-off of pollutants is either eliminated or greatly reduced, and no significant residual impacts on water are anticipated.</p> <p>CFRAM mapping shows that the site of the proposed development is not at risk of flooding.</p> <p>The proposed development will connect to the existing sewer, which eliminates the requirement for an onsite wastewater treatment facility.</p>

Air Quality and Climate	It is considered that the scale of construction traffic required for a project of this size will have a minimal impact on the local air quality and climate. During construction, there is the potential for short-term minor negative impacts related to dust emissions associated with demolition works, construction works, wind blow from stockpiles, or machinery movement, however this will be short term in duration and limited to the works area. Best practice measures identified in the contractors 'Construction Stage Method Statement' will minimise emissions.
Noise and Vibration	Potential short-term noise impact may arise during construction activities however this will be temporary in nature and managed through best practice measures, ensuring a controlled level of noise during the construction phase. Due to the relatively small scale of the project, it is considered that the construction and operation of the project will not result in any significant levels of noise or vibration.
Material Assets: Built Environment	The proposed development is to be connected to the existing public system for the treatment of wastewater, disposal of surface water and connection to public watermains for domestic water supply. There are no issues with capacity in the existing services. No significant impacts are envisaged.
Material Assets: Land	<p>A construction project may affect material assets if it involves any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition of land;</li> <li>• Loss of land used by the community;</li> <li>• Demolition of private property;</li> <li>• Revaluation of or change in the development potential of adjoining lands / properties.</li> </ul> <p>The Proposed Development provides for a small-scale demolition works adjacent to a protected structure. All works will be carried out in accordance with the Principles of Conservation and best conservation practice and the "Architectural; Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities", issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2004. No significant impact is envisaged.</p>
Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage	As above
Landscape or visual impacts	There is no impact on Special Amenity Areas, Protected Views, or other landscape features of note. No significant impact is envisaged.

Resource and Waste Management	Possible effects include the re-use / recycle / disposal of excavated material as well as other waste generated on site i.e. construction waste and domestic waste once occupied. Any effects will be mitigated by the implementation of best practice in construction and operational waste management procedures. No significant impact is envisaged.
Interactions	<p>Although there will be interaction between the environmental topics, particularly between human beings and landscape, noise and vibration and air quality and climate, the small scale and nature of these interactions will not result in significant environmental impacts.</p> <p>The supporting AA Screening assessment for this development has shown there will be no likely significant effects to any European Site during the construction or operations phases of the Proposed Development. Therefore, there are no in-combination impacts envisaged.</p>

## 5 CONCLUSION

The development is of a project type prescribed in Annex II of the European Union 'EIA Directive' but does not meet the relevant threshold criteria set for its equivalent prescribed class under Schedule 5 Part 2 (12)(b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. The development is thus a 'sub-threshold' development. Accordingly, the proposed development has been assessed on that basis and in accordance with the screening criteria set out in Annex III of the European Union 'EIA Directive' and its equivalent in Schedule 7 to the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (SI No 600 of 2001).

This Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has determined that the characteristics of the proposed development are considered not significant due to the scale and nature of the proposed development, the characteristics and sensitivities of the receiving environment and design and standard proven construction measures that will be implemented as part of the construction and operational phase of the proposed development.

The development works will be short-term, and the temporary impacts associated with the construction phase can be managed and appropriate control measures can be incorporated into the construction plan to ensure that the works do not have significant adverse effects on the environment. Development of the sites for residential use is appropriate in the context of the applicable zoning objective and national policy. The proposed development is making both vital and viable an existing derelict town centre property, which is considered reasonable and to be in accordance with the sustainable development of the area.

With proposed mitigation measures in place, it is not anticipated that the construction or operational phases of the proposed development, whether considered on its own, or in combination with surrounding projects or plans, will give rise to likely significant environmental effects.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report that accompanies the planning application demonstrates that the proposed development will not impact on identified European Designated Sites within the zone of influence of the proposed development either alone, or in combination with, other plans or projects.

Having considered the proposed development in the context of the criteria set out in Annex III of the European Union Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, AONA Environmental Consulting Ltd. is of the professional opinion that the proposed provision of 4 No. Units at Lower Charles Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo is unlikely to result in significant adverse impact on the

environment and it is determined that **EIAR is not required in respect of this proposed development.**