

EIA Screening

Former Garda Station, Barrack Road, Ballitore, Co. Kildare

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MACCABE DURNEY BARNES



20 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2,
D02YV58, Ireland



Phone. +353 1 6762594



planning@mdb.ie



www.mdb.ie

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This report has been prepared by MacCabe Durney Barnes on behalf of Kildare County Council, to support it in undertaking a screening determination for Environmental Impact Assessment in respect of a Part 8 application at the former Garda Station, Barrack Road, Ballitore, Co. Kildare. This report has been prepared in respect of the provision of six dwellings the provision of six dwellings consisting of 2no. one bed bungalows, 3 no two bed dwellings over two floors and one number three bed dwelling also over two floors.

1.2 Legislation and Guidance

The EIA Screening Report has had regard to the following:

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

1.3 Methodology

The EIA screening assesses the proposed scheme with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the EIA Directive, and Planning and Development Regulations. The methodology has particular regard to the '3-Step' assessment process set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Practice Note PN02 (June 2021). Regard is also had to European and National guidance documents.

Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—

- I. there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,
- II. there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or
- III. there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall— (I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

1.4 Data Sources

The information is obtained from review of several online databases and public sources including:

- Flood Maps - <https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/>
- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) online dataset - <https://www.gsi.ie>
- Historic Environmental Viewer – <https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/>
- Kildare County Council Development Plan 2023-2029
- Kildare County Council Planning Application Portal
- An Bord Pleanála Planning Applications
- EPA - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>
- GeoHive – <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html>.
- Office of Public Works (OPW) - <http://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps>

In addition to the above an Appropriate Assessment Screening dated 14th August 2025, prepared by NM Ecology was used to inform this document.

2. THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Site Context

The site is located on the edge of Ballitore village, Co. Kildare. Ballitore (also spelled 'Ballytore') is a small settlement, with a population of 667 persons in 2022. The village was founded as a Quaker settlement with the first meeting house built in 1707. Ballitore is located 52km southwest of Dublin City Centre, in South Kildare, approximately 18km from Athy and 30km from Naas. The River Greese borders the village core to the east with the Glanbia industrial facility on the eastern side of the river. Crookstown Mill is located to the north of the village. The village is served by bus route 808 linking the village to Castledermot, Carlow and Nass.

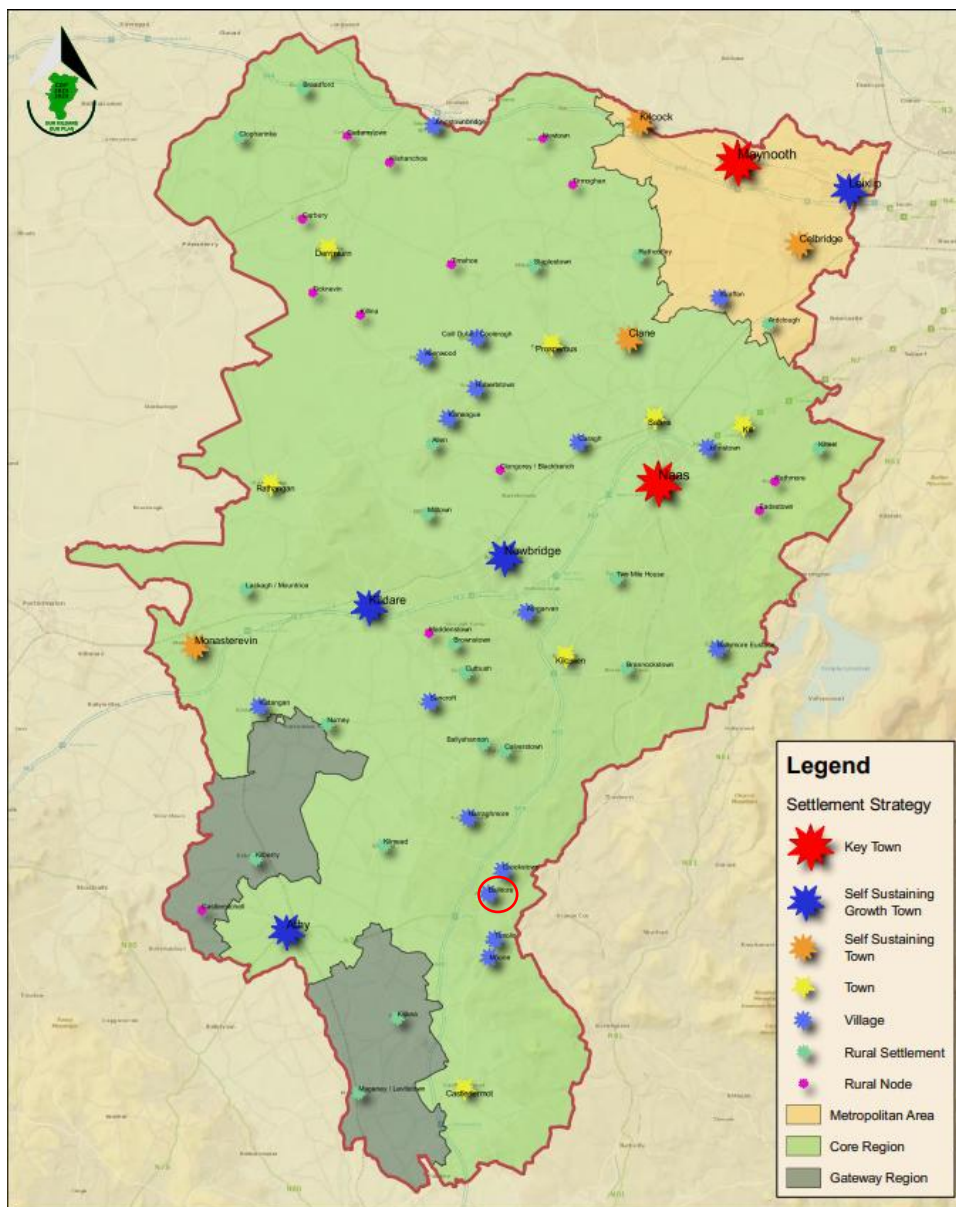


Figure 1: Settlement Hierarchy Map – Site Circle in Red (Source: Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029)

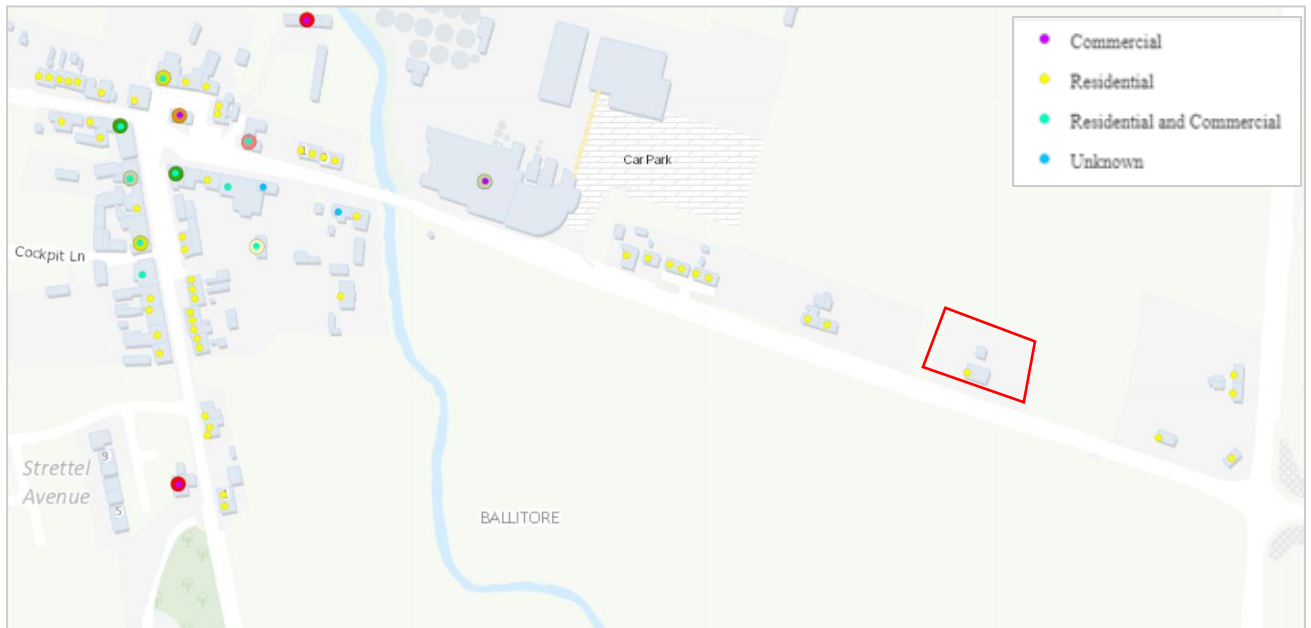


Figure 2: Land Use Surrounding the Site – approx. parameters of subject site outlined in red (Source: myplan.ie)

The village core primarily consists of residential use with local amenities and services populated within the village.

2.2 Site Description

The proposed development site is located approx. 450m from the centre of Ballitore on the Barrack Road. The subject site is directly adjacent to farmland to its east, south and north. The site is in the proximity of other residential dwellings to its east and west. Access is direct via the Barrack Road. The road itself is straight along the frontage and there is a footpath adjacent to the site, which connects with Ballitore Village and continues in an easterly direction.

The site, which is 0.23 ha in area is vacant and is overgrown with grass, mature and semi-mature trees, hedging and some other vegetation consisting of dry meadow habitat. It is currently occupied by the former Garda Station, which consists of a two-storey building with a hipped roof and a single storey structure to the rear.



Figure 3: Site Location (Source: myplan.ie)



Figure 4: Recent condition of subject site – view from Barrack Road (Source: Google Street View)



Figure 5: Recent condition of subject site – view from Barrack Road (Source: Google Street View)

2.3 Environmental Sensitivities of the Site

The information set out below was derived from the data available within the EPA Mapping Tool, the Kildare County Council Planning Application Portal, and the relevant local statutory planning documentation, including the adopted Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029.

2.3.1 Bedrock

According to an examination of the information available on GeoHive, the site is part of the Carrighill Formation with Calcareous greywacke siltstone & shale.

2.3.2 Soils and Hydrogeology

The subsoils are sand and gravels category. According to the EPA, the subsoils present are limestone sands and gravels (carboniferous) and gravelly in texture.



Figure 6: Subsoils in the context of the Subject site (Source: EPA Mapping)

2.3.3 Hydrology

The River Grease flows through the village of Ballitore and is located to the west and south of the subject site, approx. 250m at its nearest point. It flows south and south-west, and merges with the River Barrow approx. 19 km downstream. The River Barrow then flows south and meets the coast at Waterford Harbour, a further 80 km downstream. Under the Water Framework Directive status assessments 2016 – 2021, the River Grease (Code IE_SE_14G040200) is at risk and is of Poor status and of moderate status downstream. For the majority of its course, the River Barrow is of Moderate status with parts in Good and Poor status. The site forms part of the Barrow Water Framework Directive Catchment.

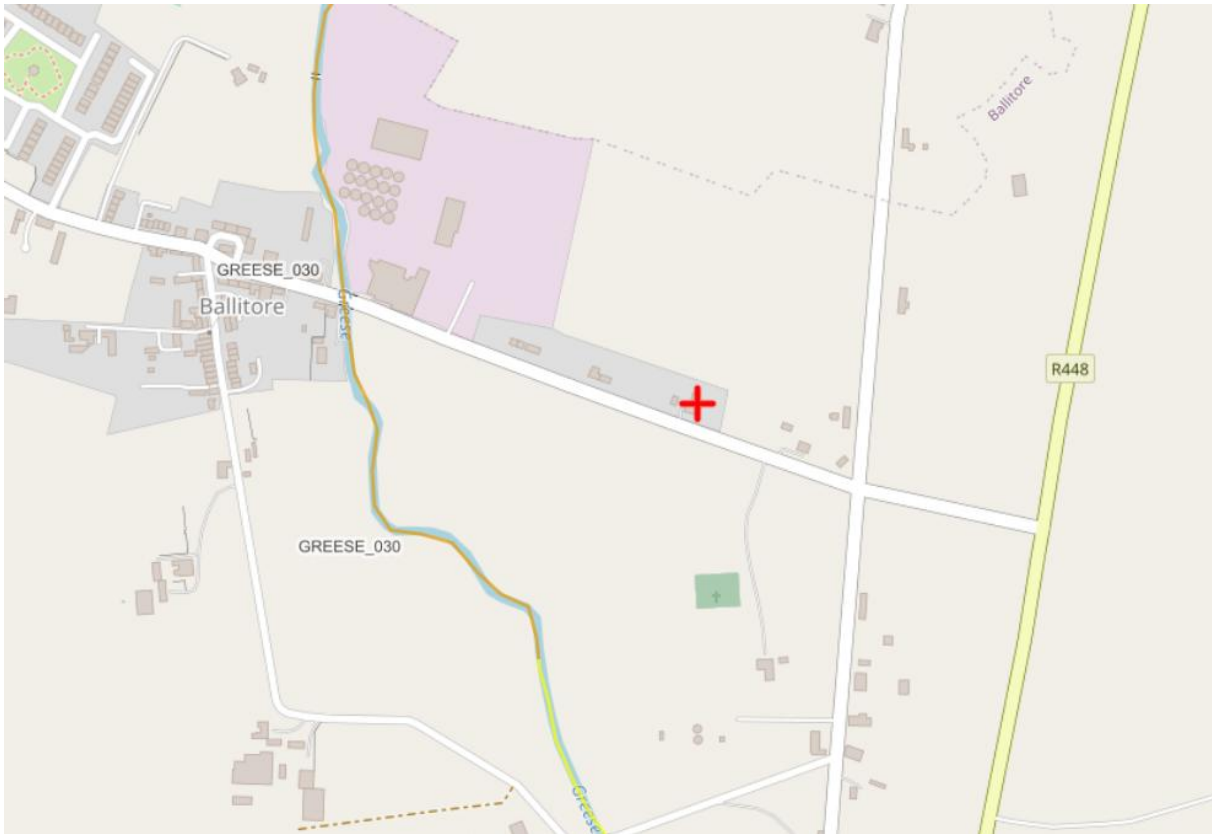


Figure 7: Water Framework Directive WFD Status 2016-2021 with subject site (Source: EPA Maps)

2.3.4 Aquifer and Groundwater

The subject site is underlain by an aquifer, which is identified as a “Poor Aquifer”. The bedrock is categorised as generally unproductive.

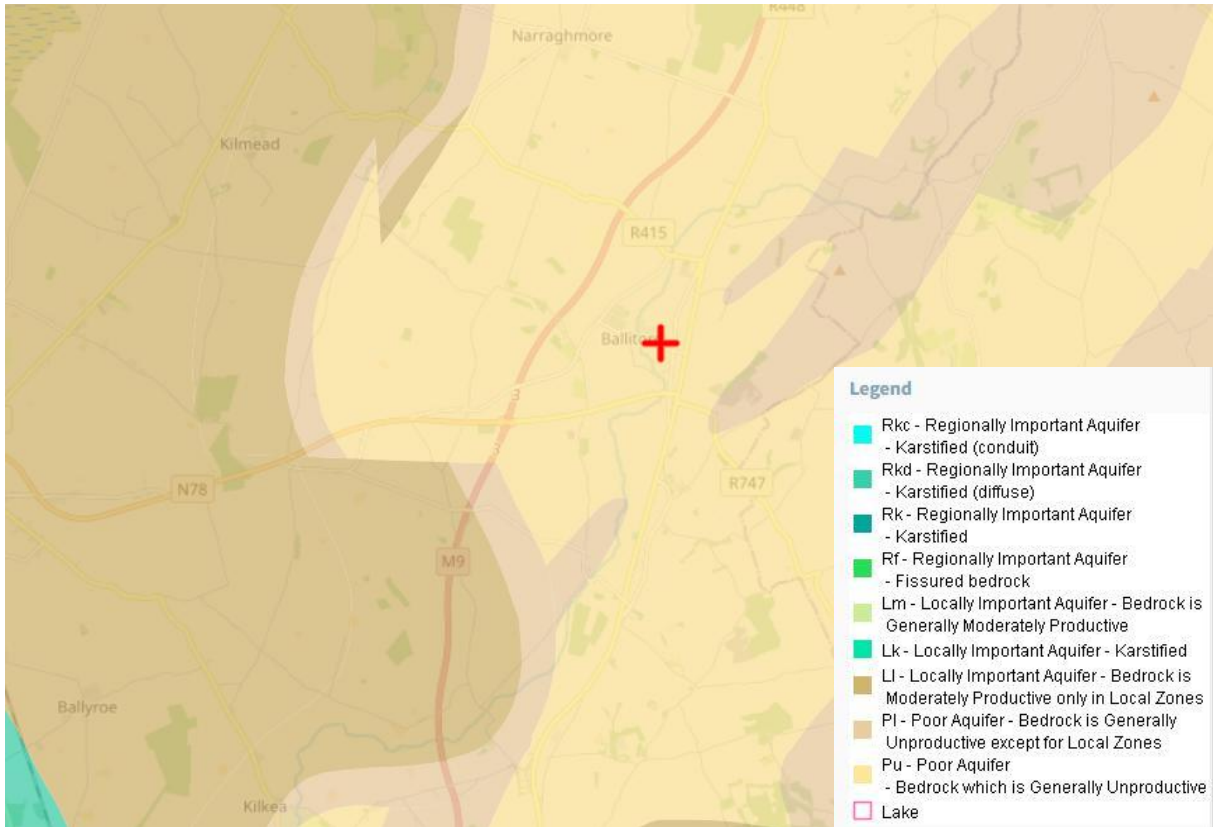


Figure 8: Aquifers in the vicinity of the Site (Source: EPA Mapping Tool)

2.3.5 Ground Water Vulnerability

The EPA Mapping Tool shows that the groundwater vulnerability at the subject site is of between High and Extreme vulnerability.

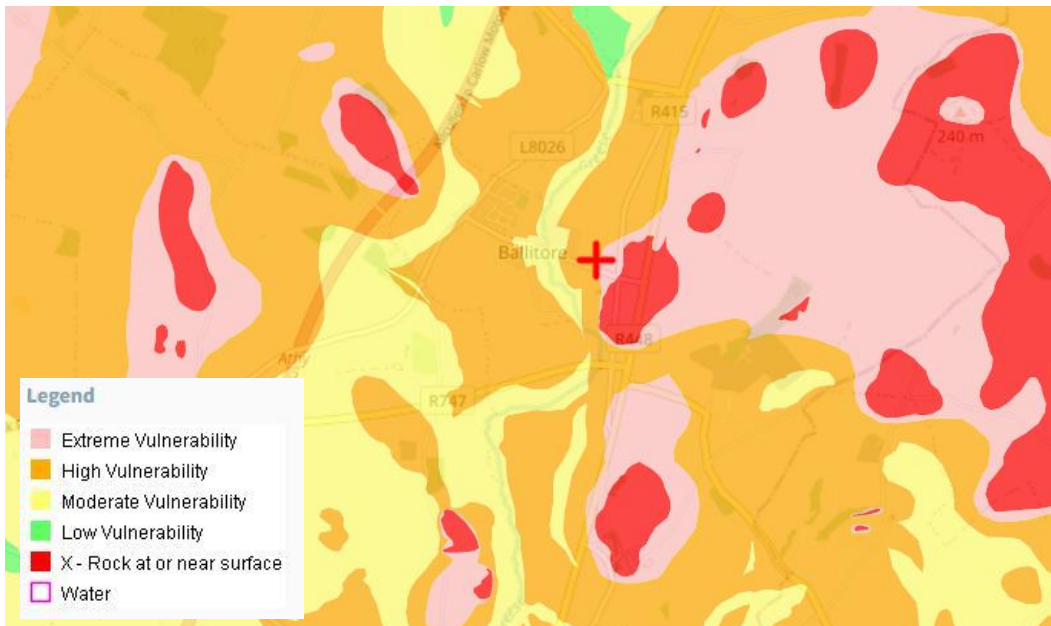


Figure 9: Ground Water Vulnerability (Source: EPA Maps)

2.3.6 Radon

The subject site is positioned in an area where between one in ten homes is likely to have high radon levels.

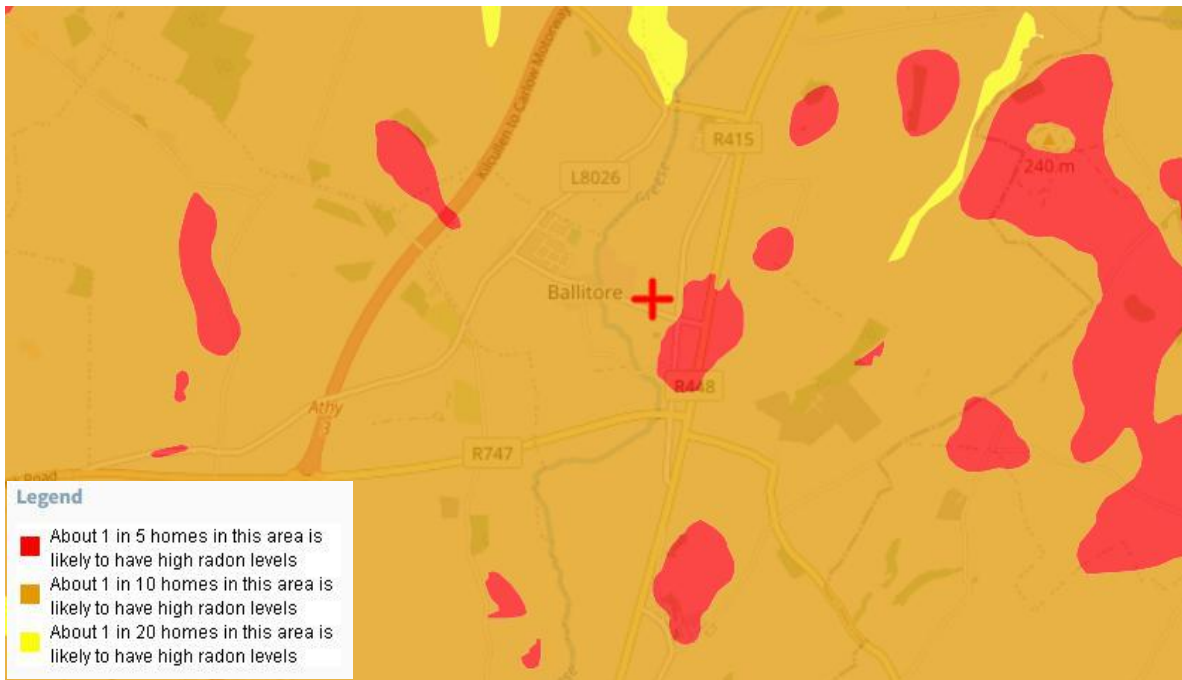


Figure 10: Radon Levels in the Context of the Subject Site (Source: EPA Maps)

2.3.7 Air quality

The site falls within Air Quality Index Region where the Index indicate air quality as 'Good'. According to EPA Maps, the site is situated in Zone D Rural Ireland.

2.3.8 Designated sites

There are no designated sites within the subject site or directly adjoining the subject site. The AA Screening report prepared to accompany this application reviewed potential impacts using the source-pathway-receptor model, and a distant surface water pathway to the River Barrow and River Nore SAC was identified.

Table 1: European Sites in the Context of the Subject Site

European Site	Distance	Reason for Designation
Special Area of Conservation		
River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162)	11.5km west of site (19km downstream via River Grease)	<p><u>Annex I habitats:</u> Coastal habitats, Estuaries, mudflats / sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows, water courses of plain to montane levels, european dry heaths, hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains, petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion), old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum, alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior</p> <p><u>Annex II species:</u> Desmoulin's whorl snail Vertigo moulinsiana, freshwater pearl mussel Margaritifera margaritifera, Nore freshwater pearl mussel Margaritifera durrovensis, white-clawed crayfish Austropotamobius pallipes, sea lamprey Petromyzon marinus, brook lamprey Lampetra planeri, river lamprey Lampetra fluviatilis, twaite shad Alosa fallax, Atlantic salmon Salmo salar, Killarney fern Trichomanes speciosum, otter Lutra lutra</p>

2.3.9 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)

The Ballycore Rath located c. 2.6 km from the site is a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

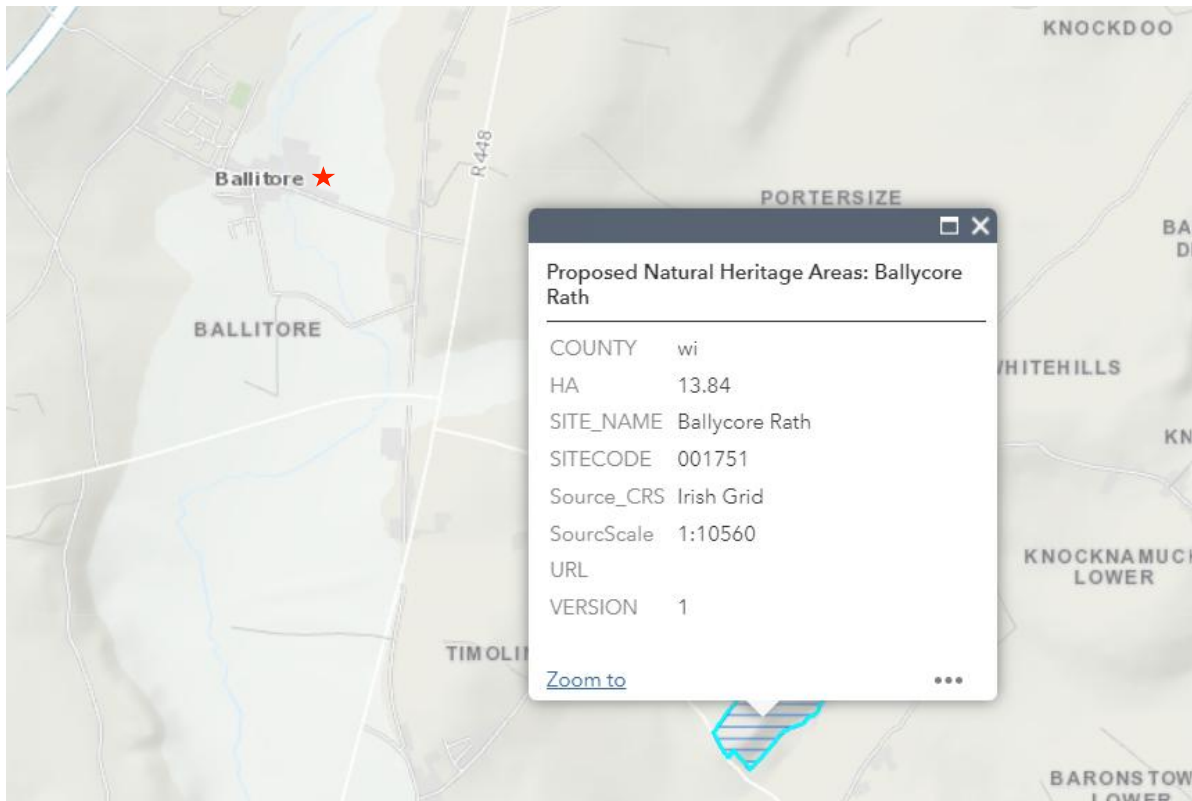


Figure 11: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (Source: Myplan.ie)

2.3.10 Archaeology

According to the Historic Environmental Viewer no protected structures nor national monuments are identified on or adjoining the site. However, it might be noted that the structure to be refurbished, as part of the planned proposal, is listed a National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) 'Regional' site (Code: 11822021 – "Ballitore Garda Station/Constabulary Barracks") for its architectural, historical, and social merits. A list of national monuments identified in the surrounding area are tabulated below.

Table 2: Record of National Monuments

RMP No.	Townland	Classification	Distance from Site (KM)
KD036-048	Ballitore	Moated site	0.3
KD036-020	Ballitore	Burial ground	0.3
KD036-049001	Ballitore	House - medieval	0.4
KD036-049002	Ballitore	House - medieval	0.4
KD036-052	Ballitore	Enclosure	0.7
KD036-021	Ballitore	Enclosure	1.3

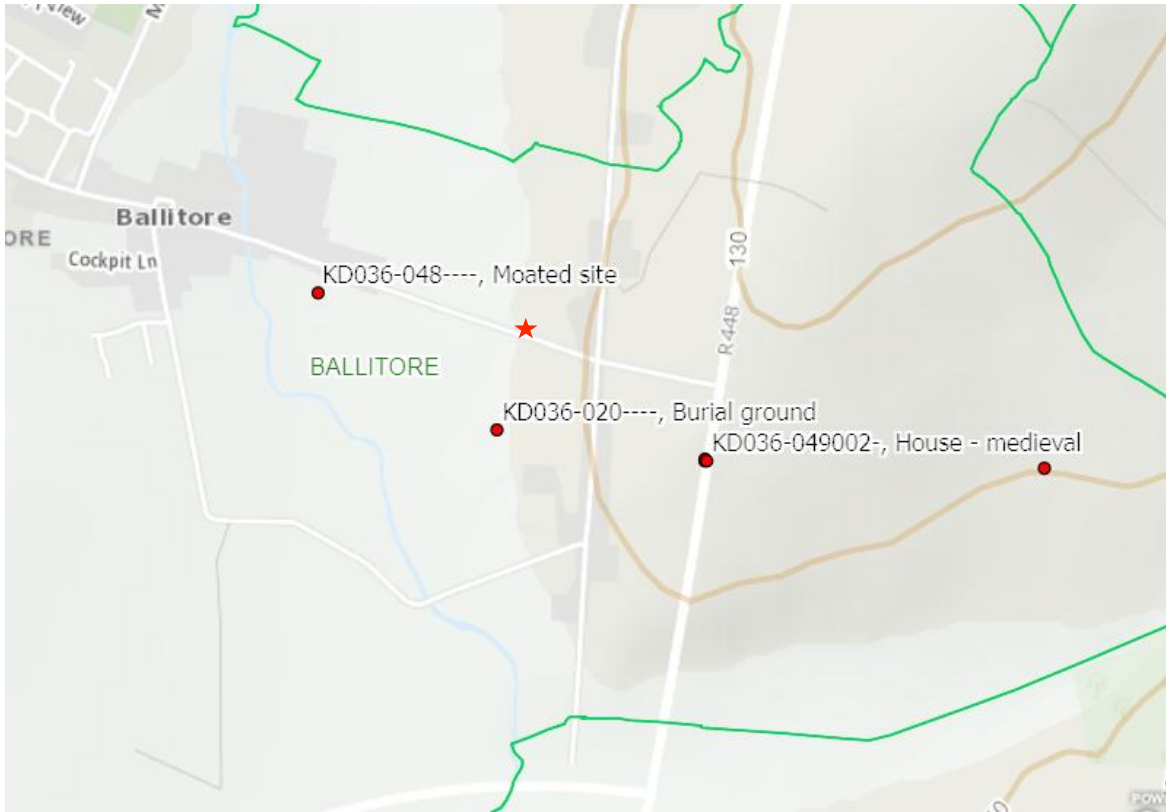


Figure 12: National Monuments in the context of the subject site (subject site location at red star)
(Source: Myplan.ie)

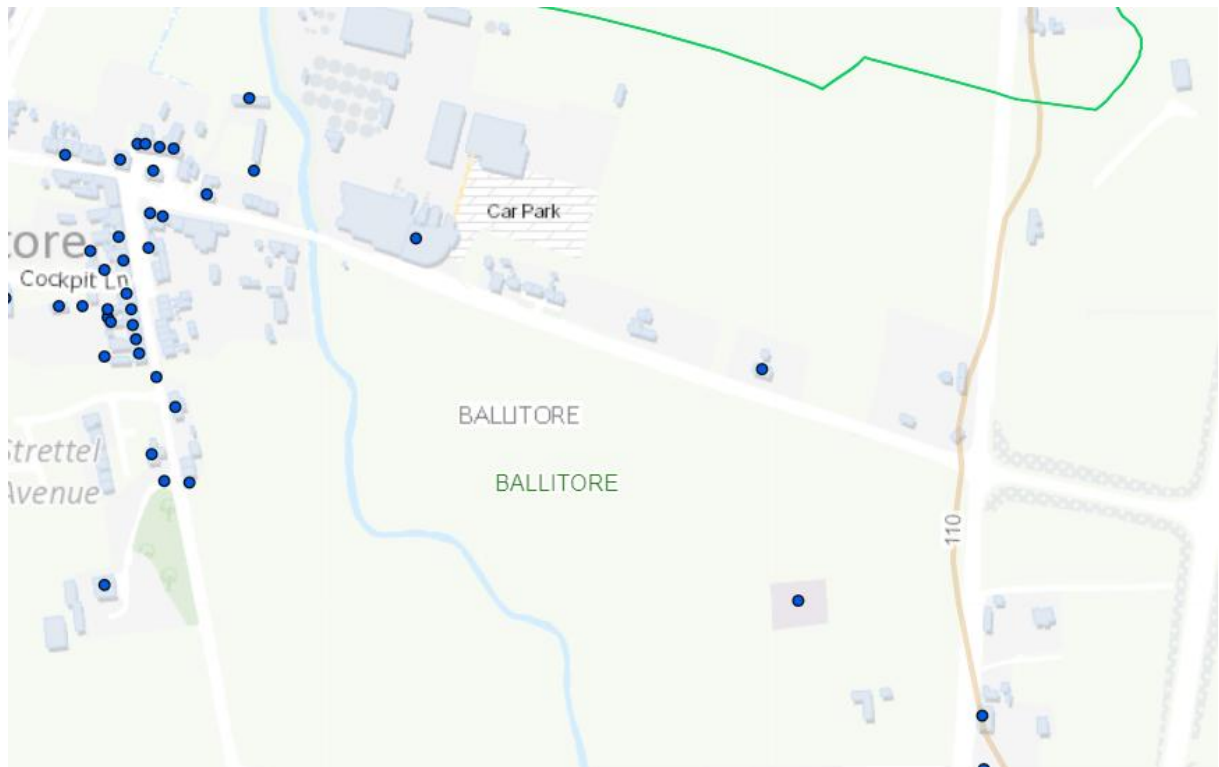


Figure 13: National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Regional Sites

2.3.11 Zoning at the subject site

Under the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 the site is zoned as 'Existing Residential/Infill'.

The zone aims to 'protect and improve existing residential amenity, to provide for appropriate infill residential development and to provide for new and improved ancillary services'.

The proposed site falls outside of the Ballitore Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

The proposed development of a proposed Infill Housing scheme at the Former Garda Station. Works consist of the provision of six dwellings compatible with the permissible uses stipulated in the Kildare County Development Plan and their land use zoning objectives for the area. The proposed development is complying with the zoning objectives of the subject site.

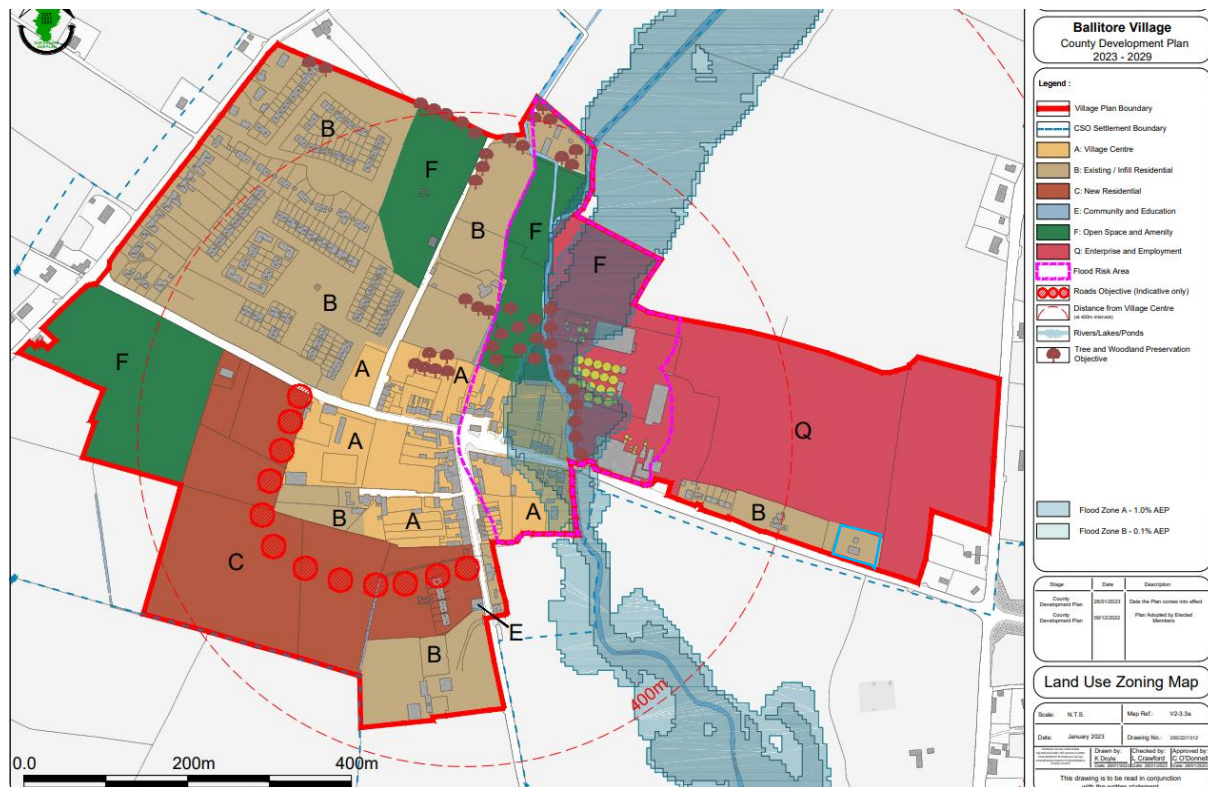


Figure 14: Land Use Zoning Objectives Map – subject site located in blue outline (source: Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029)

2.3.12 Ecological nature of site

There are no identified habitats or species of ecological note within the site. The appropriate assessment report states the site is currently "overgrown garden of dry meadow, ornamental / non-native shrubs and hedgerows".

2.3.13 Other Site Environmental Sensitives

The proposed development includes the refurbishment of the existing former Garda Station into two dwellings (1 no. 2 bed dwelling and 1 no. three bed dwelling) and associated garage; the construction

of 4 no. new dwellings (2 no. one bed bungalows and 2 no., storey and a half, two bed dwellings); new carparking; revised site entrance; and associated site works. All works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice protocols. It might be noted that the existing building to be refurbished is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) which is classified as being of architectural, historical and social importance.

The NIAH structure is a detached five-bay two-storey Garda Síochána Station, built 1942 and refenestrated, c.1990. It is set back from road in own grounds with lawns to forecourt. It has a rendered boundary wall located to its front (south) with rendered piers having iron gates. The structure is identified on the Heritage Environment viewer website and can be viewed on the map below.

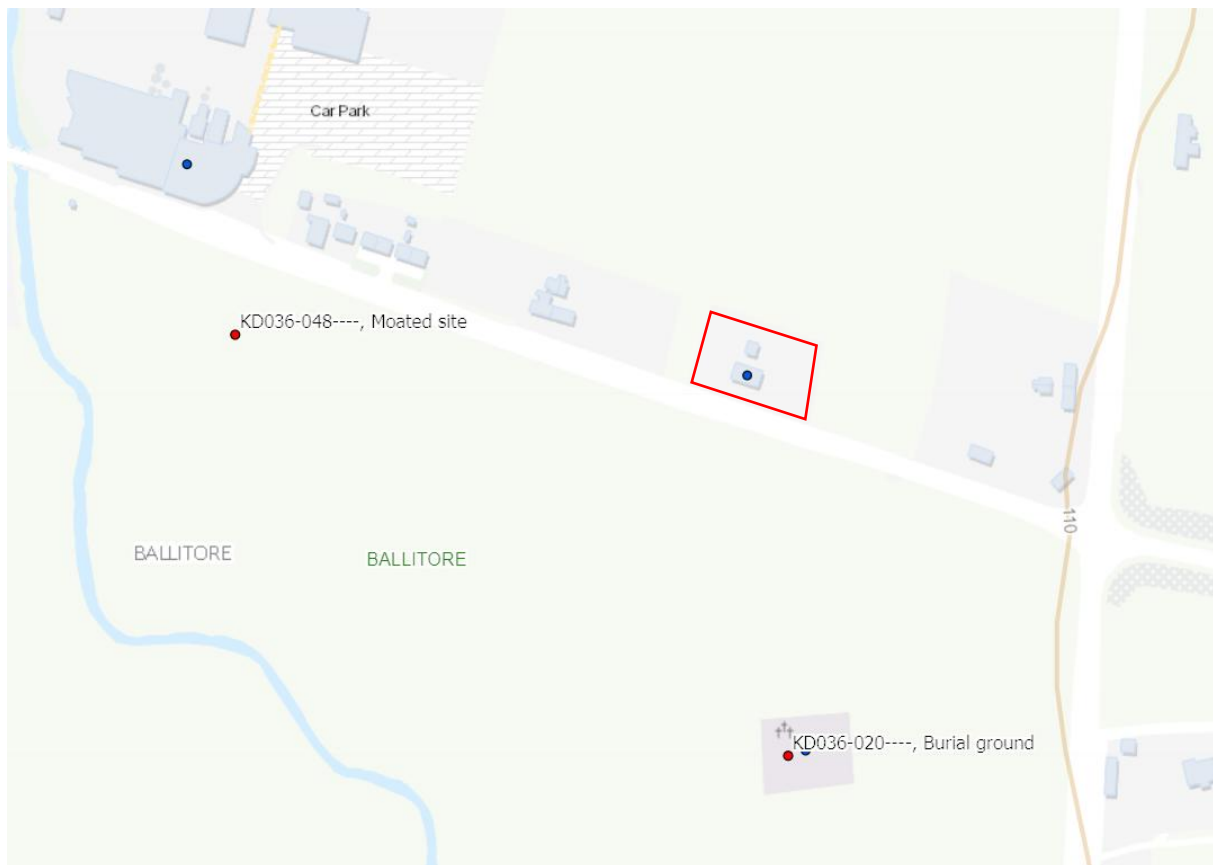


Figure 15: Site Location in the Context of the listed NIAH Structure (Source: Heritage Environment Viewer)

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Summary of Proposed Development

The proposed development is located east of Ballitore Village centre on a 0.23ha site. for a proposed infill housing scheme proposal which comprises the following:

- Refurbishment of the existing former Garda Station:
 - Into two dwellings: 1 no. 2 bed dwelling and 1 no. three bed dwelling and associated garage.
- Construction of 4 no. new dwellings:
 - 2no. one bed bungalows and 2 no., storey and a half, two bed dwellings.
- New carparking.
- Revised site entrance.
- Associated site works.



Figure 16: Site Layout Plan (Source: Kildare County Council)

4. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

4.1 Guidance on Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) has issued guidance on EIA screening in the form of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note, May 2021 which aids planning authorities as the Competent Authority (CA) in this area.



Figure 17: Extract from OPR EIA Screening Guidance Note

This report has had regard to the OPR guidance and methodology.

The proposed application is a project for the purpose of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Stage1 stage (a) of the OPR guidance.

4.2 Sub-threshold Development

A list of the types or classes of development that require EIA or screening for EIA is provided in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. 'Sub-threshold development' comprises development of a type that is included in Part 2 of Schedule 5, but which does not equal or exceed a quantity, area or other limit (the threshold).

In Part 2 of schedule 5, the following is the relevant to assessment of sub-threshold development.

10. Infrastructure projects

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

(ii) Construction of a car-park 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 a shopping centre 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.

("business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

In relation to proposed development none of the thresholds above are exceeded, but those highlighted in bold indicate the thresholds of relevance to the subject proposal.

Accordingly, the project is sub-threshold development with reference to the above thresholds and under Step 1(c) of the OPR guidance a preliminary examination is required under Step 2.

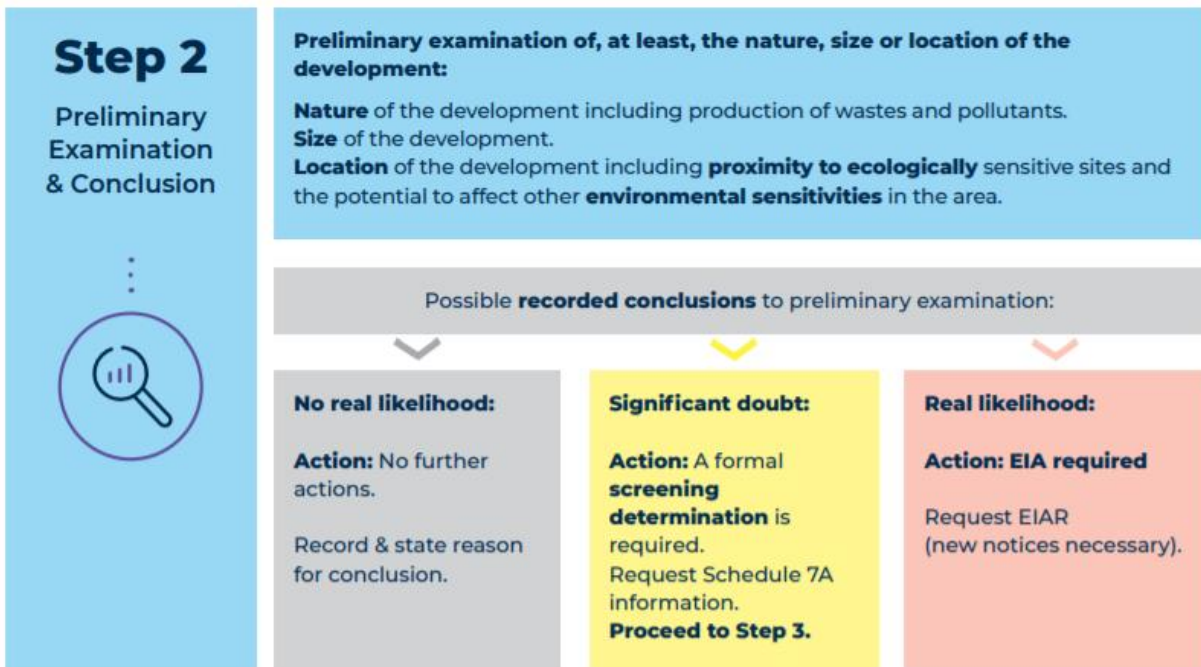


Figure 18: Extract from OPR EIA Screening Guidance Note

4.3 Preliminary Examination considerations

Preliminary examinations must consider at least the following:

- The nature of the development including the production of wastes and pollutants;
- The size of the development; or
- The location of the development including the potential to impact on certain ecologically sensitive sites and the potential to affect other environmentally sensitive sites in the area.

The OPR guidance states a number of questions to assist the preliminary examination.

This overlaps with the submitted Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening report and consideration of hydrological and other connections to European sites.

4.4 Nature of the development:

i) *Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?*

The nature of the development is consistent with and does not detract from the objectives of Kildare County Council's Development Plan 2023-2029. The site is zoned as Existing/Infill Residential, whose objective is to '*protect and improve the existing residential amenity, to provide appropriate infill residential development and for to provide for new and ancillary services*'. Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with the zoning objectives on site.

The proposed works consist of the provision of six residential dwellings, which includes the refurbishment of the existing former Garda Station and construction of 4 no. new dwellings, will provide an active re-use of a vacant structure and will be in keeping with the existing built fabric; therefore the proposed development will not be out line with the existing build environment.

ii) *Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?*

The proposed development will involve the partial clearance of the site, which will give rise to waste during clearance works. During the construction phase, any waste generated from the proposed development will be dealt with in the appropriate manner in accordance with the appropriate standards and best practice methodology. The proposed residential development by its nature will not cause any significant waste, emissions, or pollutants during operation.

iii) *Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?*

The size of the development is not exceptional in the context of the existing environment.

The development will result in the refurbishment of the existing former Garda Station (into two dwellings, 1 no. 2 bed dwelling and 1 no. three bed dwelling and associated garage) and the construction of 4 no. new dwellings (consisting of 2 no. one bed bungalows and 2 no., storey and a half, two bed dwellings). The site is located out the eastern outskirts of Ballitore on a site already developed; therefore, the proposed development is not considered exceptional in a village context. Moreover, the lands are zoned as Existing/Infill Residential, '*protect and improve the existing residential amenity, to provide appropriate infill residential development and for to provide for new and ancillary services*'.

iv) *Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?*

There are no recent planning applications/permissions on the subject site. It is noted, cumulative effects have the potential to negatively impact the environment. Relevant planning applications in the vicinity of the area included in the table below.

Table 3: Applications in the Vicinity of the Subject Site

KCC and/or ABP Reg. Ref	Lodged	Planning Status	Description of Development Summary	Development Address	Distance from Site (KM)	Applicant
42493	2023	GRANTED	the demolition of 19 No. redundant Grain Silos, Electrical Switch room, and Dryer Building including all gantries and associated equipment	Glanbia Ireland DAC,	0.4km	Glanbia Ireland DAC,
40667	2021	GRANTED	construction of a new concrete plinth, installation of two 4m diameter silos and all associated site works. This facility holds an industrial emissions licence issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. Development	Glanbia Ireland DAC,	0.3km	Glanbia Ireland DAC,
37064	2019	GRANTED	the upgrade of an existing loading bay containing 2 No. docklevellers, upgrade of cladding, construction of a dispatch office, installation of a new fire escape door and all associated siteworks.	Glanbia Ireland DAC,	0.25km	Glanbia Ireland DAC,
32172	2016	GRANTED	Bungalow, domestic garage, connect to existing sewage mains and all ancillary works and services	Ballitore Hill, Ballitore, Co. Kildare	0.35 km	Alma Willis
22562	2009	GRANTED	the demolition and removal of an existing conservatory and part of the existing living area and roof to the North of the house. The erection of a two part extension consisting of a new living area, parlour, ensuite master bedroom and study with a mezzanine level. The remodelling of the existing facades, the existing dining area, bedrooms and all associated landscaping.	Ballitore, Athy, Co.Kildare	0.28 km	Patrick Dawson

KCC and/or ABP Reg. Ref	Lodged	Planning Status	Description of Development Summary	Development Address	Distance from Site (KM)	Applicant
19697	2007	GRANTED	the demolition of the existing conservatory area the erection of a two part single storey extension consisting of a new garden room and bedroom to the side and rear of the existing dormer bungalow with related hard and soft landscaping	Ballitore, Co.Kildare	0.25km	Patrick Dawson
10493	2005	GRANTED	Development will consist of extension to front of existing house,to incorporate new living space.	Ballitore, Co. Kildare	0.25km	John Ging

4.5 Location

i) Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?

The site is not located within or adjacent to any European sites Potential indirect impacts were considered using the source-pathway-receptor model, and a distant surface water pathway to the River Barrow and River Nore SAC was identified. The closest watercourse is the River Grease flows through the village of Ballitore and is located west and south of subject site, approx. 250m at its nearest point to the subject site.

The River Barrow and River Nore SAC is c.19 km downstream of the site via the River Grease. The SAC was designated to protect a range of freshwater and coastal habitats and species throughout the Barrow and Nore catchments. The AA Screening Report notes there are no agricultural drains or other surface water connections to the nearest watercourse – the River Grease – or any other watercourse further downstream including the River Barrow.

There is no feasible hydrological pathway for pollutants to European sites. The figures below identifies watercourses on the context of the subject site as well as surface water links between the subject site and watercourses.

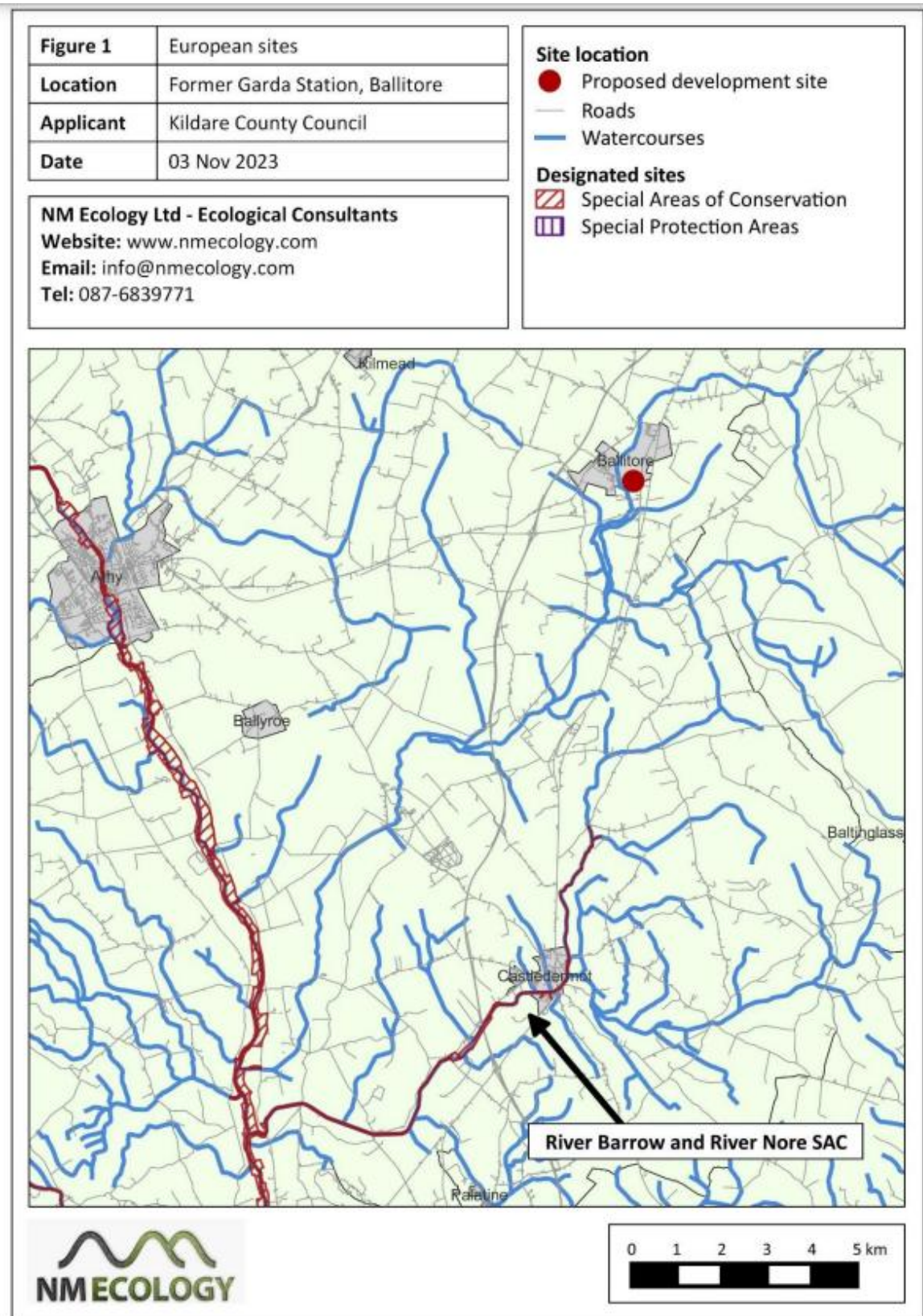


Figure 19: European Sites located in the context of the site (Source: Figure 1 of AA Screening Report, NM Ecology Ltd)

ii) Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?

The works consist of the partial clearance of the site with the refurbishment of existing former Garda Station into 2 no. new dwellings and garage, and the construction of 4 no. new dwellings, car park and associated works. The existing former Garda Station/Constabulary Barracks is listed as being of architectural, historical and of social importance on the NIAH (reg. no: 11822021).

4.6 Preliminary Examination Conclusion

Following the preliminary examination, it is concluded that, having regard to cumulative effects with other developments and the potential impact upon archaeological heritage, there may be doubts regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and to proceed to a Step 3 assessment as per the OPR Guidelines.

5. SCREENING DETERMINATION - SCHEDULE 7 ASSESSMENT AND SCHEDULE 7A INFORMATION

Where the requirement to carry out EIA is not excluded at preliminary examination stage, because there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, the planning authority must carry out a screening determination.

In making its screening determination, the competent authority must have regard to:

- Schedule 7 criteria,
- Schedule 7A information,
- Any further relevant information on the characteristics of the development and its likely significant effects on the environment submitted by the applicant,
- Any mitigation measures proposed by the applicant,
- The available results, where relevant, of preliminary verifications or assessments carried out under other relevant EU environmental legislation, including information submitted by the applicant on how the results of such assessments have been taken into account, and
- The likely significant effects on certain sensitive ecological sites

Step 3
Formal
Screening
Determination

Screening Exercise:
Is the proposal likely to have significant effects on the environment?

In making the determination, the planning authority must have regard to Schedule 7 criteria, Schedule 7A information, results of other relevant EU assessments, the location of sensitive ecological sites, or heritage or conservation designations. Mitigation measures may be considered.

Screening Determination: Recorded outcomes to screening determination must state main reasons and considerations, with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Schedule 7 of the Regulations and mitigation if relevant.

Figure 20: Extract from OPR EIA Screening Guidance Note

5.1 Schedule 7 criteria for determining whether development should be subject to an environmental impact assessment

The 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities Regarding Sub-Threshold Development', groups criteria for deciding whether or not a proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment under three headings which correspond to the updated Schedule 7.

Schedule 7 criteria for determining whether development listed in part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an environmental impact assessment.

- Characteristics of the proposed development.
- Location of the proposed development.
- Characteristics of potential impacts.

5.1.1 Characteristics of proposed development

OPR guidance –“If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent):

(a) the size of the proposed development

The proposed works at the site include the clearance of the site and the construction of 4 no. new residential units on a site c. 0.24 ha. The proposed development is for an infill housing scheme proposal comprises the following refurbishment of the existing former Garda Station into two dwellings (1 no. 2 bed dwelling and 1 no. three bed dwelling and associated garage) and the construction of 4 no. new dwellings (2no. one bed bungalows and 2 no., storey and a half, two bed dwellings), the inclusion of a new carparking space, revised site entrance and associated site works. The proposed development provides an appropriate and compatible form of development within the village context on lands, which are zoned Existing Infill/Residential. The land use zoning objective states, ‘*protect and improve the existing residential amenity, to provide appropriate infill residential development and for to provide for new and ancillary services*’. The size and design of the proposed development is not likely to cause significant effects on the environment and has been cognisant of the surrounding environment and existing buildings.

(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,

Section 4.4 (iv) of this report identifies relevant applications for the assessment of cumulative effects. Together, with the proposed development at the subject site and the other permitted development in the vicinity of the site are not likely to give rise to significant effects. In arriving to this conclusion, other permitted development has been taken into account.

(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,

The proposed development includes the demolition of a listed structure on the NIAH. The historic, social and architectural significance of the structure has been noted. However, the structure is currently vacant and will develop into dereliction if continually left vacant. All works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice protocols to ensure no impacts on the environment as a result of the proposed development.

(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity

The nature of the proposed use and scale of the development is such that its development would not result in a significant use of natural resources. The proposed development makes efficient use of lands

and is aligned with development patterns in the vicinity. There will be no use of natural resources at the site given the nature of works proposed.

The scale and quantity of construction materials used will not be such that would impose significant effects on the environment. The development will generate water demands during the construction and operational phases of the development.

During construction the contractor will be required to implement standard measures during the construction phase.

The operation of the scheme would not use such a quantity of water to cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment. Storm water from roofs and hard surfaces will be directed to soakaways, and other hard surfaces will be permeable, allowing rainwater to soak to ground. The potential impact of climate change has been considered in the design of the surface drainage network and storage system.

The use of natural resources in relation to the proposed development is not likely to cause significant effects on the environment. The overall environmental impact under these headings is considered to be low. In addition, the AA Screening report accompanying this application concludes that there clearly no likelihood of direct or indirect impacts of any European sites.

(e) the production of waste,

All inert material and non-hazardous waste will be disposed of from the site in accordance with the categorisation of waste and in accordance with the relevant licencing and regulatory requirements.

Normal builders waste (rubble, excess building materials) will be generated during the construction phase. Foul water will be discharged to an Irish Water foul sewer and conveyed to the Ballitore Wastewater Treatment Works. Storm water from roofs and hard surfaces will be directed to soakaways, and other hard surfaces will be permeable, allowing rainwater to soak to ground.

(f) pollution and nuisances,

It is not considered that the refurbishment of existing former Garda Station into 2 no. dwellings and the construction of 4 no. dwellings would give rise to pollution and nuisances. Noise, vibration, lighting, and dust arising from construction activities and construction traffic have the potential for pollution or nuisance. Any risk of surface water pollution can be avoided by adherence to best practice construction and environmental management during the construction phase which will ensure that the development would not result in pollution of groundwater or surface water. Dust nuisance during construction can be controlled by a dust minimisation plan.

No operational impacts in this regard are anticipated. The proposed development is for 6 residential dwellings and associated works. Accordingly, there are no significant expected residues or emissions. Significant negative effects on the environment are not likely to arise due to pollution or nuisance.

(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and

Standard construction practices will be employed throughout the construction phase. The subject lands are not proximate to any Seveso site. There are no technologies or substances to be used in the development which may cause concern for having likely significant effects on the environment. There is no significant risk of accidents or disasters.

The site is not located in a flood risk zone according to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment prepared in respect of the County Development Plan.

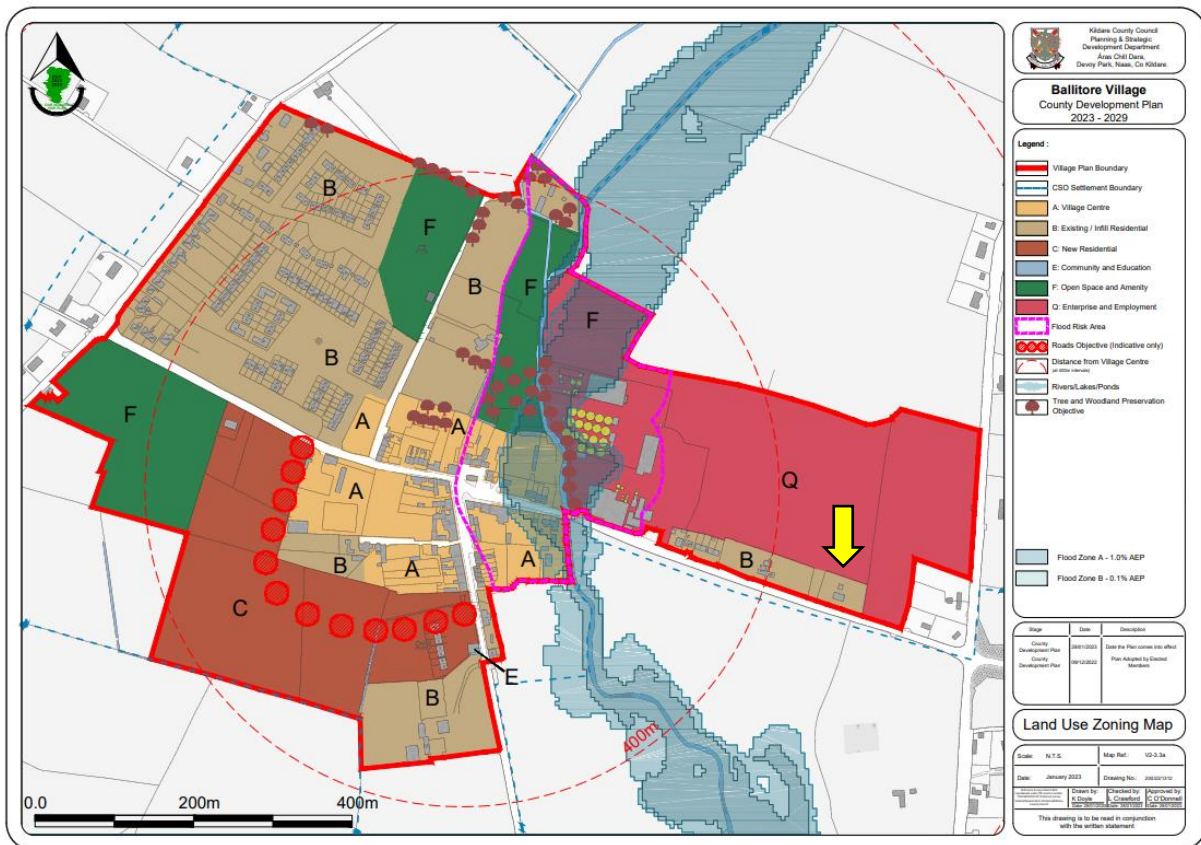


Figure 21: Flood Zone overlaid on the Land Use Zoning Map (Source: Kildare County Development Plan Villages & Rural Settlements 2023. Yellow arrow indicates site)

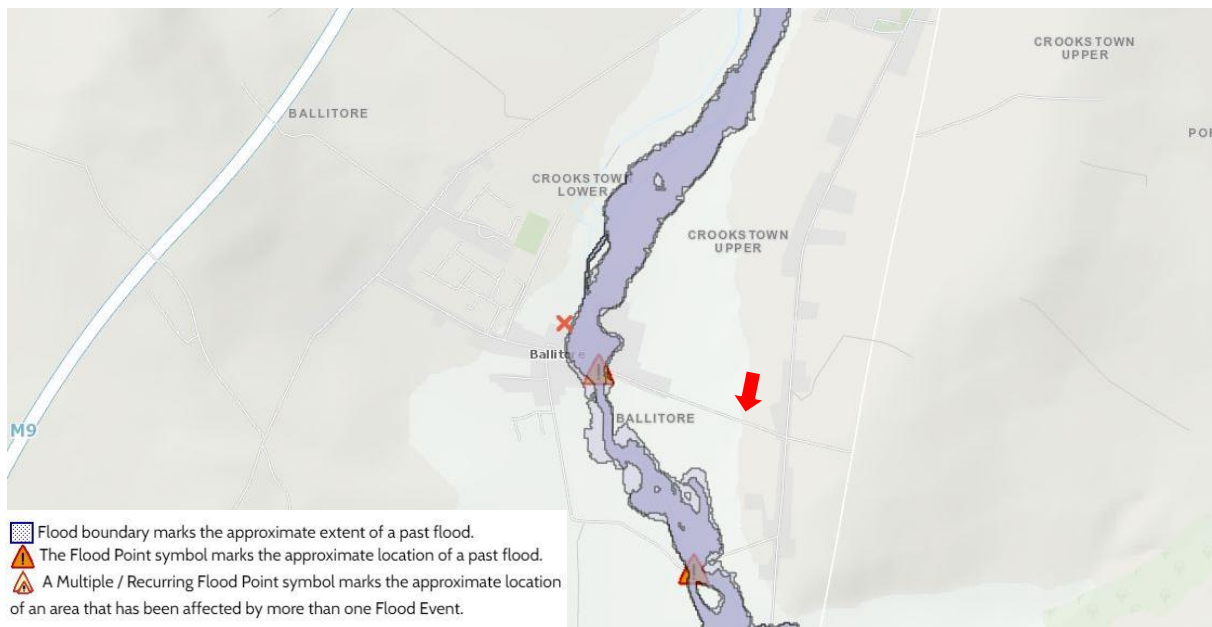


Figure 22: Extract from floodinfo.ie showing extent of river and fluvial risks (source: OPW), a red arrow shows the site location.

A site-specific flood risk assessment will be undertaken in relation to the site which will incorporate specific mitigation measures.

h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

The nature of the proposed development and the engineering provisions will not lead to the likelihood of any risk to human health. Any risk arising from construction will be localised and temporary in nature. The proposed development is of standard construction method and of appropriate scale and does not require the use of particular substances or use of technologies which of themselves are likely to give rise to significant environmental effects. There are no Seveso / COMAH sites in the vicinity of this location. Foul water will discharge to the public sewer. Surface water will discharge to the public sewer following attenuation. With appropriate mitigation during construction there will be no risk of contamination of any watercourses or groundwater. There is no risk to human health within the meaning of the Directive. Flood risk on the site will be addressed through mitigation.

5.1.2 Location of Proposed Development

(a) the existing and approved land use,

The land use surrounding the site according to myplan.ie (Figure 2 in Section 2.1 Site Context) is mostly residential. Under the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 the site is zoned as Existing/Infill Residential as part of the Ballitore Village land use zoning objectives map.

In determining the zoning of the subject site, the Planning Authority will have thoroughly assessed the nature of the site as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Appropriate Assessment for Ballitore to ascertain its capacity to accommodate such development and merit a zoning as designated.

There are no apparent characteristics or elements of the design of the scheme that are likely to cause significant effects on the environment. The addition of this development is not considered to have a significant impact on the environmental sensitivities of the area.

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

The nature of the proposed development is such that the natural resources used in its development are limited and there would be minimal ongoing use of natural resources from the proposed use of the site.

The subject lands are well serviced by infrastructure, public transport (no. 888 bus service) and services, including a shop, a post office, a café, a chip shop and where the objective of the zoned lands is “B: Existing / Infill Residential”. The subject proposal maximise the site’s development potential on an already developed site.

The proposed development site contains no features of any ecological significance.

As previously mentioned, there are no significant watercourses within the proposed development site, however, the River Grease flows along the eastern boundary of the subject site. According to the AA screening report, the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is approx. 19 km downstream of the site via the River Grease. It is possible that pollutants generated during the construction of the proposed development could reach the River Grease and flow downstream. However, the 19 km of intervening watercourse would dilute any pollutants to negligible concentrations before they could reach the SAC boundary. On this basis, the river is not considered to provide a feasible surface water pathway to the SAC, therefore, the risk of contamination of any watercourses or groundwater is extremely low.

The nature of the proposed development will generate demand for water, but this is for residential and use only and given the scale of this development is not considered significant. The site is not located in a flood zone according to the flood zone mapping in the County Development Plan and no past flood events were identified on the subject site itself.

The site is part of the Carrighill Formation with Calcareous greywacke siltstone & shale, and underlain by limestone which is a locally important gravel aquifer and subsoils are alluvium. According to the EPA Mapping tool the subject site is underlain by an aquifer, which is identified as a “Poor Aquifer”. The bedrock is categorised as generally unproductive.

In addition, during construction all appropriate best practice construction methods and measures are being employed at the subject site. The construction of the project will be managed and carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced nominated contractor who will ensure that best practice measures are used in terms of the subject site and its environs to ensure the safeguarding of natural resources (such as soil, land and water).

c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:

(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;

The closest watercourse is the River Grease which flows south-west of the subject site and is located approx. 250m at its nearest point. The proposed development is not likely to give rise to significant effects on wetlands, riparian areas, and river mouth.

(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;

The site is located c. 50 km from the coast. The proposed development is not likely to give rise to significant effects on coastal zones and the marine environment.

(iii) mountain and forest areas;

This site is not located proximate to mountains or forested areas.

(iv) nature reserves and parks;

The site is approximately located 19 km from the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;

The subject site is not used by any protected species for feeding purposes. Direct and indirect pathways to the Natura 2000 sites are examined in the AA screening prepared by NM Ecology. The AA screening concludes that:

"Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the first conclusion, because there is no likelihood of significant impacts on any European sites. This is based on three conclusions:

- The Site is not within or adjacent to any European sites, so there is no risk of direct effects*
- There are no surface water or other pathways linking the Site to any European sites, so there is no risk of indirect effects*
- Habitats within the Site are unsuitable for any of the birds associated with nearby SPAs, so there is no risk of indirect effects from noise or visual disturbance"*

(vi) 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;

Under the Water Framework Directive status assessments 2016 – 2021, the River Grease is of Poor status and is at risk. The River Barrow is of Moderate status for the majority of its course.

(vii) densely populated areas;

The development is located on the outskirts of the existing village centre. The subject site shared its northern and eastern boundary with agricultural lands and there is some residential uses to its east and west but no other sensitive land uses. In 2016, Ballitore settlement area population consisted of 667 persons. The total population of Kildare in 2022 was 24,774 persons. The population of Ballitore was 579 in 2016, indicating an increase of 88 between 2016 and 2022. The proposed development is considered at scale in the context of the surrounding environment.

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance

No archaeological monuments are located on the site. According to Geohive no protected structures or national monuments are located on or adjoining the site. However, the existing structure 'Ballitore Garda Síochána Station : garda station/constabulary barracks' on site is registered on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The structure is categorised as architectural, historical and social interest according to the Inventory. The description of the structure in 2003 was as follows:

Detached five-bay two-storey Garda Síochána Station, built 1942. Refenestrated, c.1990. Hipped roof with slate. Red clay ridge tiles. Red brick chimney stack. Overhanging sproketed timber eaves. Cast-iron rainwater goods. Roughcast walls. Painted. Square-headed window openings (in round-headed panels to ground floor). Stone sills. Replacement uPVC casement windows, c.1995. Square-headed door openings. Profiled rendered advanced doorcases. Replacement timber panelled doors, c.1960. Set back from road in own grounds. Lawns to forecourt. Rendered boundary wall to front (south) with rendered piers having iron gates.

The appraisal recorded in 2003 on the Inventory is as follows:

Ballitore Garda Síochána Station, which has been well-maintained, is of considerable social and historical interest as one of the earliest purpose-built Garda Síochána stations in County Kildare. Built by the Board of Works (later the Office of Public Works) to replace outmoded Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks, the building follows a standard design comprising a symmetrically-planned block with door openings to the end bays to ground floor – the building is identical to the Garda Station at Kilcock (11802017/KD-05-02-17), which attests to a common planning source. Composed of graceful proportions the front (south) elevation is provided with subtle decoration in the form of round-headed panels to the window openings to ground floor and profiled doorcases. The station retains some of its original features and materials including a slate roof, although the replacement fenestration is not an attractive addition and the re-instatement of timber fenestration (using the extant models at Kilcock as a reference) would benefit the composition. The station forms an attractive feature on the road leading out of Ballitore to the east. The proposed development includes a proposal to replace the existing collapsed structure with a new crafts facilities building on the existing footprint of the structure.

The closest structure listed on the Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) is a Moated Site (KD036-048) and a Burial Ground (KD036-020). These are located approx. 280m and 200m respectively from the subject site.

Having regard to the proposed development, mitigation measures have been recommended to mitigate any potentially significant effect occurring due to the proposed development.

5.1.3 Types and characteristics of Potential Impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development relate to those criteria set out in paragraph (b)(i)(l) to (v) of section 171A of the Act, taking into account—

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

The OPR's Practice Note on EIA Screening considers what are **likely significant effects**. Refer to Box 1 below.

Box 1: Likely Significant Effects

1. Are the effects identified likely to occur?

This refers to the effects that are expected to occur, those that can be reasonably foreseen as normal consequences of project construction and operation, including where relevant associated demolition, remediation and/or restoration.

2. Are the effects, which are likely to occur, significant?

EPA draft guidelines define a 'significant effect' as an effect, which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment. The same draft guidelines provide useful definitions in relation to quality of effects, significance of effects, context of effects, probability of effects and duration and frequency of effects.

3. Will identified likely significant effects impact the environment?

Likely significant effects should cover the direct and indirect, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the project.

The factors of the environment to be described and assessed are:

- **population and human health;**
- **biodiversity, with particular attention to protected species and habitats;**
- **land, soil, water, air and climate;**
- **material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; and**
- **the interaction between the factors.**

The following table summarises the likelihood of effects on the environmental factors listed in the box above, having regard to the analysis set out in sections 2 and 4 of this assessment.

Screening Considerations

Aspect	Phase	Potential Effect	Extent	Probability	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
Landscape	C	Loss of grassland, trees, and scrub species – will be replaced by housing units	Local	Likely	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
	O	Provision of some landscaped garden space for the dwellings	Local	Likely	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
Visual	C	Perceived negative changes due to emergence of plant and machinery and site clearance works	Local	Likely	Moderate	Negative	Short Term
	O	Changes to visual aspect of site from roadside	Local	Likely	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
Biodiversity	C	Loss of some evergreen trees towards the rear of site, deciduous trees around the boundary will be retained	Local	Likely	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
	O	Planting selection comprises mix of various species and provision of measures to enhance natural habitats and biodiversity	Local	Likely	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
Land & Soil	C	Loss of subsoil from site Potential contamination due to accidental spillage.	Local Local	Likely Not Likely	Moderate Imperceptible	Negative Neutral	Permanent Brief
	O	Residential development	Local	Likely	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
Human Health	C	None Predicted	-	-	-	-	-
	O	None predicted	-	-	-	-	-
Water	C	Accidental pollution events occurring to nearby stream or the groundwater table	Local	Not Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Brief - Temporary
	O	Discharge of treated attenuated surface water to existing surface water network	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Permanent
	O	Discharge of foul and wastewater to existing waste water network	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Permanent

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Air Quality & Climate	C	Reduction of air quality as a result of construction traffic and HGVs, and emissions from construction and plant machinery	Local	Likely	Not significant	Neutral	Temporary
	O	None predicted	-	-	-	-	-
Noise	C	Increase in noise as a result of construction activity, and operation of plant and machinery.	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Negative	Temporary
	O	Increase in noise level as a result of vehicular movements in and out of residential development	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Permanent
Cultural Heritage: Built Heritage	C	A current structure, which is of architectural, social and historical interest, is now vacant will be refurbished for new residential use.	Regional	Likely	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
	O	A new refurbished residential building use within the existing structure.	Regional	Likely	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
Cultural Heritage: Archaeology	C	None predicted					
	O	None predicted					

I. Interaction of Effects

There is potential for interaction of effects during the construction phase in relation to soil, water and biodiversity, built heritage. The negative impacts arise from potential risk of pollution, dust and noise. However, best practice construction measures will be put in place during the construction phase and these measures will continue to be employed in the completion and construction of the remaining elements of the proposed development which will ensure that there are no significant effects on the environment. Section 5.4 of this report outlines mitigation measures in respect of the proposed development.

II. Cumulative effects

It is considered that cumulative impacts with other existing and/or approved projects are not likely to cause significant effects on the environment.

No significant adverse effects have been identified, no measures are recommended to avoid or prevent such impacts.

III. Transboundary effects

Owing to the scale, nature, and location of the development there will be no transboundary effects. No mitigating measures are required.

IV. Residual Effects

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that there are no residual effects, as a result of the works at the subject site.

5.2 Schedule 7A information

1 A description of the proposed development, including in particular—

(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and

Response

Refer to Section 5.1.1 of this report.

(b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.

Response

Refer to Section 5.1.2 of this report.

2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

Response

Refer to Section 5.1.3 of this report.

3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—

(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant,

Response

The development will include mitigation measures that will ensure there is no likely significant effects on the environment. Waste and emissions arising during the operational phase are not considered to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.

(a) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

Response

Refer to 5.1.1. of this report.

4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

Response

Please refer to section 5.1 of this report.

5.3 Any further relevant information

Response:

The Planning Authority are referred to the information submitted with this report to support the conclusions included in it, this comprises:

- Screening for Appropriate Assessment – prepared by NM Ecology

5.4 Any mitigation measures

Given the nature and location of the proposed development, the following mitigation measures are proposed:

- An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment Report should be undertaken to assess the condition of the listed NIAH feature on the site.
- A construction and environmental waste management plan (CEMP) to mitigate any potential environmental effects during the construction phase.

5.5 Available Results under other EU Environmental Legislation

Other relevant EU environmental legislation may include:

- SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]
- Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]
- Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- Ambient Air Quality Directive and Heavy Metals in the Ambient Air Directive
- Industrial Emissions Directive
- Seveso Directive

- Trans-European Networks in Transport, Energy and Telecommunication
- EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC

Table 4: EU Legislation

Directive	Results
SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]	The proposed development is compatible with the zoning under the County Development Plan. These have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]	An appropriate assessment (AA) screening report prepared by NM Ecology Ltd. accompanies this Part 8 application – it states: <i>“There is no risk of direct impacts on European sites. Potential pathways for indirect impacts were considered, but none were found to be feasible. Habitats within the site are unsuitable for any of the species associated with nearby SPAs. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. The assessment can conclude at Stage 1 of the Appropriate Assessment process, and it is not necessary to proceed to Stage 2.”</i>
Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]	Foul water will be discharged to an Irish Water foul sewer and conveyed to the Ballitore Waste Water Treatment Works. Storm water from roofs and hard surfaces will be directed to soakaways, and other hard surfaces will be permeable, allowing rainwater to soak to ground. Rainwater is unpolluted, so it will not pose a risk to surface water or groundwater, and there is no risk that the surface water outflow could have a negative impact. The CEMP will mitigate any impacts upon designated waterbodies during the construction phase.
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	The site is located inland, away from the coast, there is no likely impact given the distance.
Ambient Air Quality Directive and Heavy Metals in the Ambient Air Directive	n/a to proposed development
Industrial Emissions Directive	n/a to proposed development
Seveso Directive	There are no Seveso sites in the vicinity
Trans-European Networks in Transport, Energy and Telecommunication	n/a to proposed development
EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC	n/a to proposed development

5.6 Likely significant effects on certain sensitive ecological sites

Sensitive areas include:

i) a European site,

Response

An appropriate assessment (AA) screening report accompanies this application. The AA screening concludes:

"Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the first conclusion, because there is no likelihood of significant impacts on any European sites. This is based on three conclusions:

- The Site is not within or adjacent to any European sites, so there is no risk of direct effects*
- There are no surface water or other pathways linking the Site to any European sites, so there is no risk of indirect effects*
- Habitats within the Site are unsuitable for any of the birds associated with nearby SPAs, so there is no risk of indirect effects from noise or visual disturbance"*

ii) an area which is the subject of a notice under Section 16(2)(b) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 (No. 38 of 2000),

Response

It is not subject to a notice under Section 16(2)b of the Wildlife Act 2000.

iii) an area designated as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA) under Section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000),

Response

No likely significant effects on a Natural Heritage Areas have been identified.

iv) land established or recognised as a nature reserve within the meaning of Section 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act 1976 (No. 39 of 1976),

Response

No likely significant effects on a nature reserve have been identified.

v) land designated as a refuge for flora or as a refuge for fauna under Section 17 of the Wildlife Act 1976,

Response

No likely significant effects on a refuge for flora or a refuge for fauna have been identified.

vi) a place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation or protection of which is an objective of a development plan or local area plan, draft development plan or draft local area plan, or proposed variation of a development plan, for the area in which the development is proposed,

Response

The AA Screening document has not identified any likely significant effect on a place, site or feature of ecological interest.

vii) a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).

The AA Screening document has not identified any likely significant effect on any pNHA.

6. SCREENING CONCLUSION

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development which is below the thresholds set out in Class 10 of Part 2 of Schedule 5, the criteria in Schedule 7, the information provided in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and the following:

- The scale, nature and location of the proposed impacts
- The potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures
- The results of the any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment

It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and it is concluded that an environmental impact assessment report is not required.



20 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2, D02YV58,
Ireland



Phone. +353 1 6762594



planning@mdb.ie



www.mdb.ie