

# **Trim Market House Visitor Centre, Trim, Co. Meath**

## **EIA Screening Report**

**June 2022**



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This environmental impact assessment screening report has been prepared by MacCabe Durney Barnes on behalf of the Office of Public Works and Meath County Council, as part of a Part 8 Planning Application at Trim Market House, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath, C15 TXA5. It has been prepared in respect of the proposed development of extensive renovations to Trim Market House (a protected structure) and its conversion to a visitor centre for the adjacent Trim Castle.

This document has been prepared in order to assist Meath County Council in the determination of an application of the development at the subject site.

## 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.

Pursuant to Article 81(ca) of the Regulations 2001, a Planning Authority must indicate its conclusion under article 120(1)(b)(i) (a preliminary examination) or screening determination under article 120(1B)(b)(i) in the public notices that form part of a Part 8 process.

Where a local authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

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:

- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) online dataset - <https://www.gsi.ie>
- Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Meath County Council website
- 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 the following project specific reports were utilised to inform this report:

- *Screening for Appropriate Assessment – Market House, Trim* (NM Ecology, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021)
- *Trim Visitor Centre, Market House, Castle Street, Trim Co. Meath - Archaeological Impact Assessment* (OPW Archaeological Consultancy Services, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022)
- *Bat Assessment of Trim Market House Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath* (Wildlife Surveys, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020)

## 2 The Site and Surroundings

### 2.1 The Surroundings

The subject site is located in an urban setting in the centre of Trim. The grounds of Trim Castle are located to the south and east of the site (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004-). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078. It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089- and ME036-048090- located just to the east. The western boundary of the site adjoins Castle Street, and French's Lane is located to the north. The broader surroundings are characterised by public open space (Trim Castle and associated green areas), shops and small residential developments.

**Figure 1: Context of Subject Site**



Source: Myplan.ie

The site is located beside a pedestrian ramp, which leads to the main entrance to Trim Castle. The site is bounded by the curtain walls and entrance ramps to Trim Castle. The Boyne River runs to the North East of the site. The Castle Street Road runs to the west of the site. This two-lane road runs along the western front of Trim castle and is a curved road, relatively flat with pedestrian pavements on both sides and with bus pull-ins in certain areas.

The population of Trim settlement was 9,194 in 2016. The development at the subject site provides a new visitor centre, demolition and refurbishment works. The new visitor centre will be designed to a universally accessible standard. The proposed development is situated in close proximity to the existing uses, services and facilities of Trim's town centre. The Visitor centre will contribute positively to tourist and economic prosperity of the town centre in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The subject site is located in an accessible location with an hourly bus service - operating between Navan and Trim. An hourly bus service operates between Trim and Dublin at off peak hours, while at peak hours this service operates at every 30 minutes.

## 2.2 The Site

Market House is a c. 1850s two-storey structure that has historically been used as a town hall. This protected structure consists of the former Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, and is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH 14328035. The building was remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The site is also located within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048. The site totals c1,460 sqm.

**Figure 2: Application Site**



Source: Google Earth

## 2.3 Environmental sensitivities of the site

The information set out below was derived from the data available from the EPA, the Meath County website and the relevant local statutory planning documentation the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

### 2.3.1 Bedrock and Subsoils

Subsoils are made ground for most of the site, but there is bedrock near the surface on the eastern portion of the site.

All land within the site boundary consists of buildings and hard surfaces, so it is effectively isolated from the underlying bedrock. However, the site is underlain with shale and sandstone.

### 2.3.2 Soils

All land within the site boundary consists of buildings and hard surfaces, so it is effectively isolated from the underlying soils. According to the EPA database the soil type at the site is manmade and other deposit type which is described as bedrock at or close to surface.



**Figure 3: Soils and Bedrock**



Source: EPA Mapping

### 2.3.3 Hydrology

The closest major watercourse is the River Boyne, which is located approx. 100 m north-east of the proposed development site. There are no other substantial watercourses (as per the EPA database of rivers and streams) in the vicinity of the site. The Boyne flows north-east through County Meath and reaches the coast at Drogheda approx. 60 km downstream. Under the Water Framework Directive Status Assessment 2013-2018, it is of “Moderate to Good” status.

Both foul and surface water drain to local authority combined sewer on Castle Street.

### 2.3.4 Aquifer and Groundwater

The subject site is underlain by an aquifer which is identified as a “Poor Aquifer”. It is identified that the Bedrock is Generally Unproductive except for Local Zones. However, as mentioned above all lands within the site boundary consist of buildings and hard surfaces, therefore, it is effectively isolated from underlying groundwater.

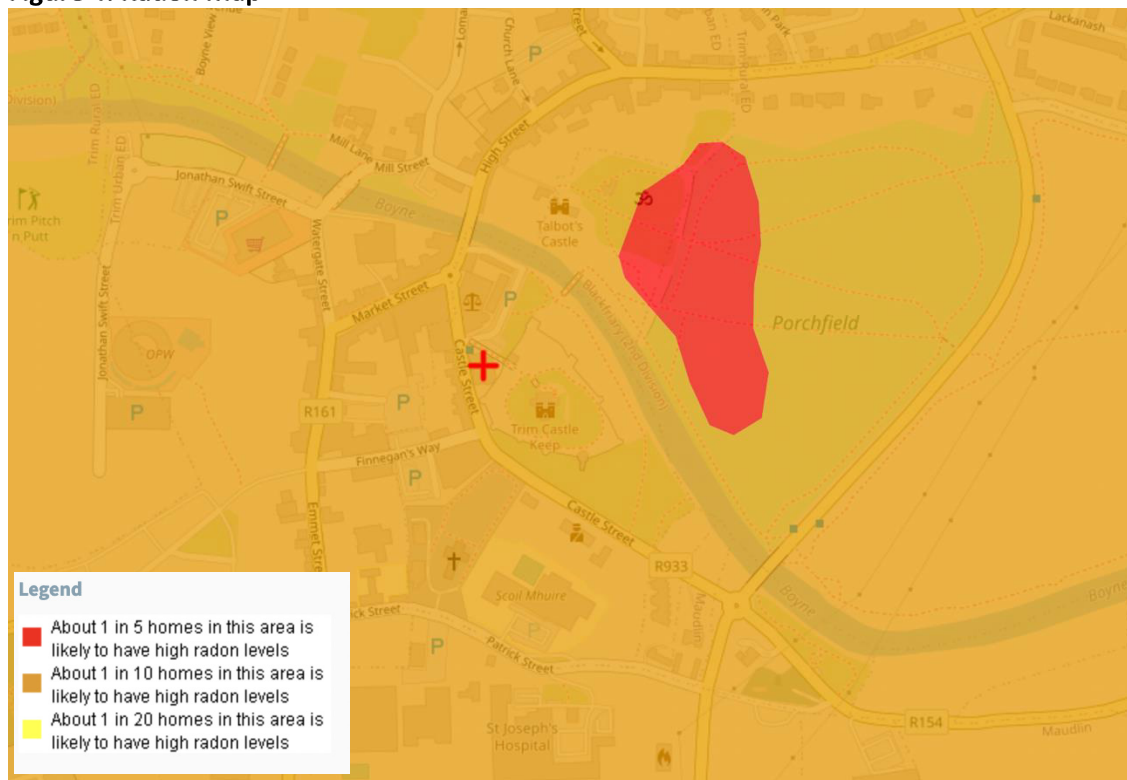
### 2.3.5 Ground Water Vulnerability

The EPA portal shows that the groundwater vulnerability at the site is “Extreme Vulnerability” and “X Rock at or Near Surface or Karst”.

### 2.3.6 Radon

Between one in ten homes in the area are estimated to have high radon levels.

**Figure 4: Radon Map**



Source: EPA Radon Map

**2.3.7 Air quality**

The site falls within Air Quality Index Region where the Index indicates that the air quality is 'Good'.

**2.3.8 Designated sites**

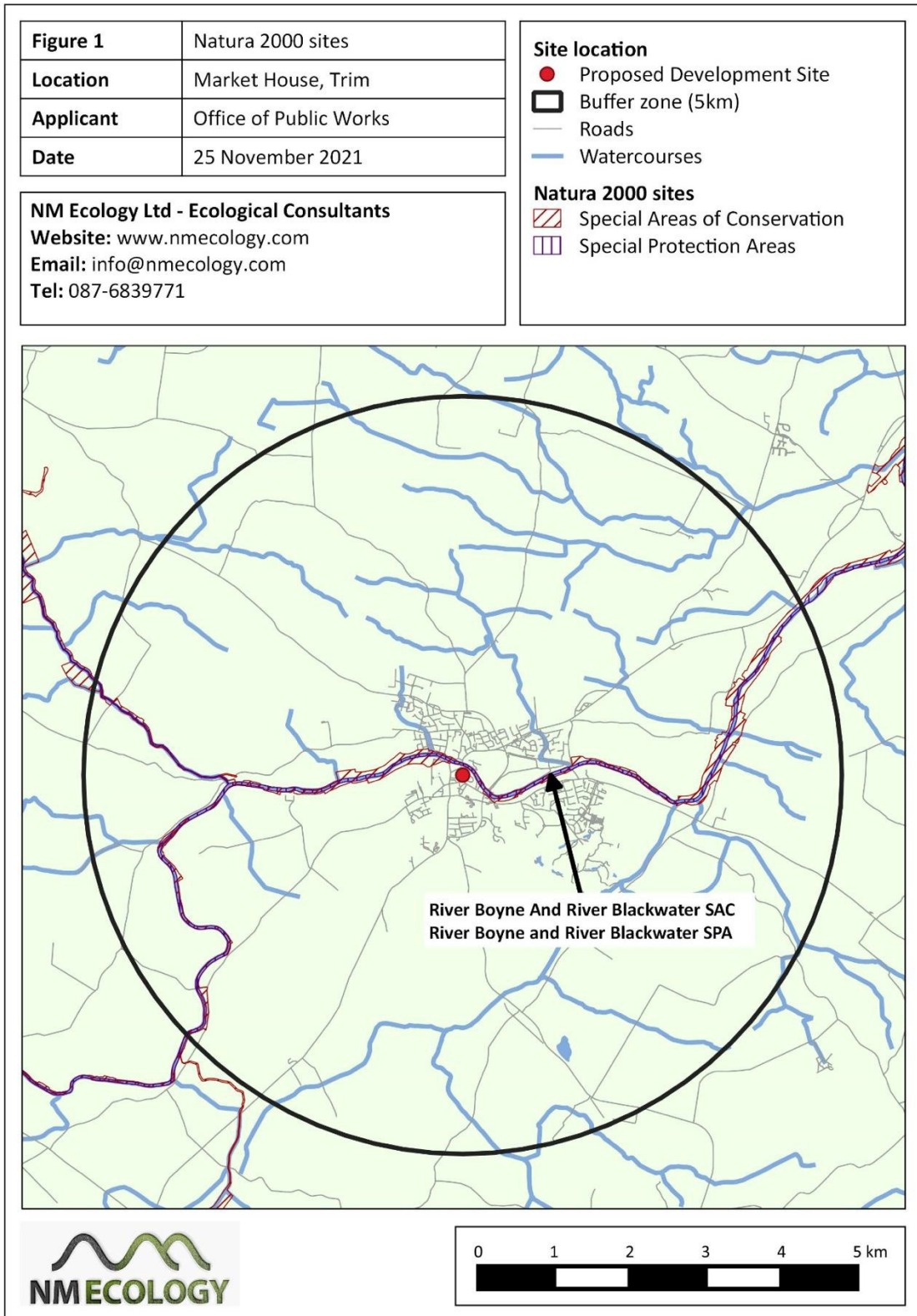
The subject site is not within a European site. The nearest European site to the subject site is 100 m away (River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC). The nearest official EPA Water Framework Directive watercourse to the subject site is the River Boyne and River Blackwater approximately 100 m to the south of the site boundary.

The features of interest and the potential impact of the development on each European site and features of interest, are displayed in Table 1. Watercourses, SPA's, and SAC's proximate to the subject site are seen in Figure below. No potential impacts are foreseen on European sites beyond 5 km as there is no direct or indirect pathways to these sites.

**Table 1. Proximity to designated sites of conservation importance**

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (site code 2299)	100m north	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> alkaline fens, alluvial forests <b>Annex II species:</b> river lamprey, salmon, otter
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (4232)	100m north	<b>Special Conservation Interests:</b> kingfisher

**Figure 5: SAC, SPA and Watercourses Identified within 5km of the subject site**



Source: NM Ecology Ltd

### 2.3.9 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)

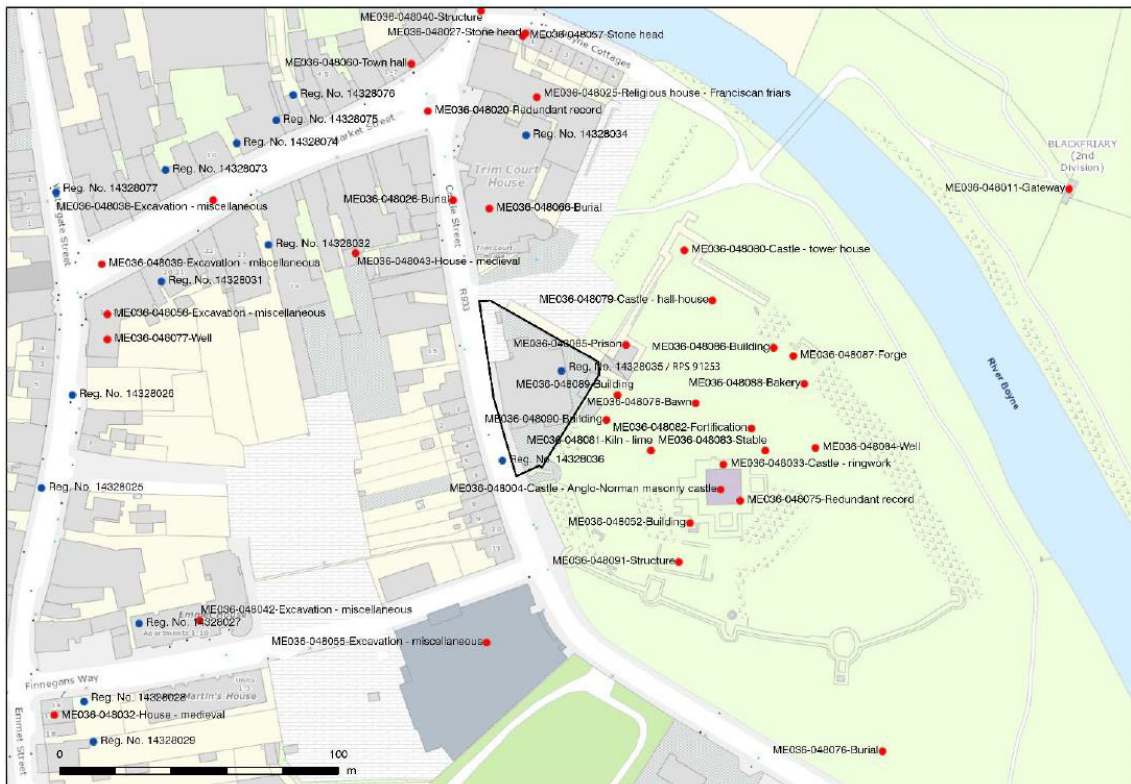
Trim Wetlands is designated as a pNHA's within the vicinity of the subject site.

### 2.3.10 Archaeology

An Archaeology Impact Assessment was carried out on the subject site as part of this application. The Market House is located on the east side of Castle Street and adjacent to the Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004-). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the curtain wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078. It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089- and ME036-048090- located just to the east. The Market House is a Protected Structure listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This protected structure consists of the former Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, and is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) 14328035. The building is a former market house, built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The site is also located within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048.

The proposed development will involve extensive renovations to Trim Market House (a protected structure) and its conversion to a visitor centre for Trim Castle. It will involve the demolition of 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions to the structure, renovation of the original 18<sup>th</sup> century structure, and construction of new extensions. Any potential impact identified at the subject site have been carefully considered and various mitigation measures have been proposed in the Archaeology Impact Assessment Report, including all works on site are to be carried out in strict supervision of an archaeologist.

**Figure 6: Recorded Monuments and Buildings recorded in NIAH**



(Source: National Inventory of Architectural Heritage)

### 2.3.11 Zoning at the subject site

Under the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 the site is zoned as B1 Commercial/ Town or Village Centre with a stated objective ‘to protect, provide for and/ or improve town and village centre facilities and uses.’ This zone also covers most of the urban area to the west and north of the site. Trim Castle and grounds are in Zone H1 - High Amenity.

The site also falls within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048. The proposed uses are consistent with the land use designations as outlined above.

### 2.3.12 Ecological nature of site

A bat assessment has been undertaken to accompany this application. Three species were recorded on the subject site. The main species recorded was the common pipistrelle, with most activity occurring towards the rear of the site. No bats were observed entering or exiting the existing buildings on site.

**Figure 7: Map of Main Bat Activity on Site**



Source: Bat Assessment prepared by Wildlife Surveys

A number of recommendations have been included in the bat assessment accompanying this application to mitigate any potential effects of the proposed development on the species. No other habitats or species of ecological note have been identified on the site to date.

### *2.3.13 Other Site Environmental Sensitives*

The proposed development includes demolition and refurbishment works on the site. All works will be undertaken in accordance with a Construction and Environmental Management Plan that will be prepared setting out a series of construction phase measures/mitigation measures which will be adhered to in accordance with best practice principles.

An asbestos and demolition survey was conducted and some low risk asbestos containing materials were identified, which will be removed prior to any works commencing on the site and carried out in accordance with S.I. No. 386 of 2006 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006 and amended version 2010 and Guidelines issued by the Health & Safety Authority in Ireland.

### 3 Proposed Development

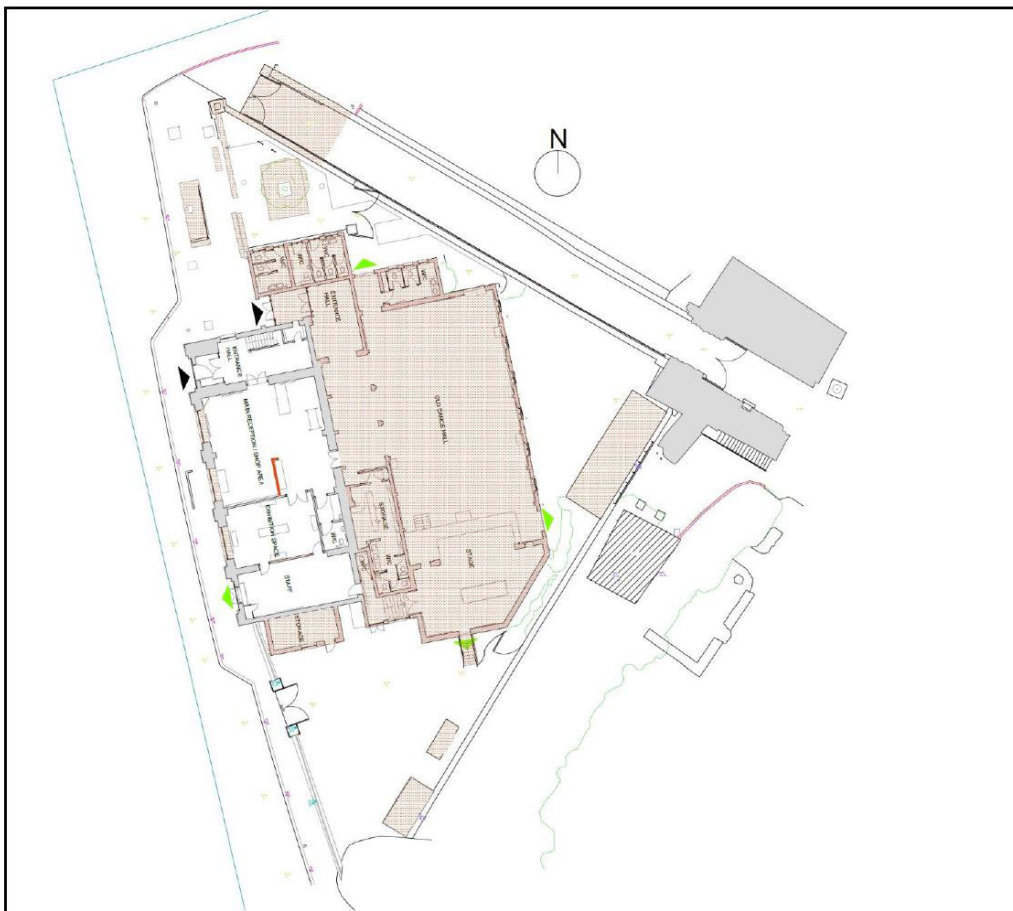
The Office of Public Works in partnership with Meath County Council intend to apply for Part 8 approval for the proposed works. 'Part 8' is reference to Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 which sets out the procedure for carrying out such developments. This document is submitted to Meath County Council to support the Part 8 application.

The proposed works include the refurbishments of Trim Market House, protected structure (TT036-049 – NIAH 14328036), demolition of later additions and extensions to rear to create a Visitor centre for Trim Castle, National Monuments (No. 514).

This will also include demolition of the 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions to the original five bay Market House, the registered protected structure, (TT036-049 – NIAH 14328036). Extensions include the dance hall, stage area, fly tower, public entrance area, public toilet facilities, and the service areas to the rear and side of the building.

The proposed development will involve extensive renovations to Trim Market House (a protected structure) and its conversion to a visitor centre for Trim Castle. All services will be upgraded to modern specifications. It is intended that foul water and surface water will be separated, so that use of the combined sewer can cease. Rainwater from the roof of the structure will be harvested and re-used. The landscaping scheme will incorporate some vegetation and other soft features, thus allowing surface water to percolate to ground.

**Figure 8: Proposed Demolition Works**



**Figure 9: Proposed Site Layout**



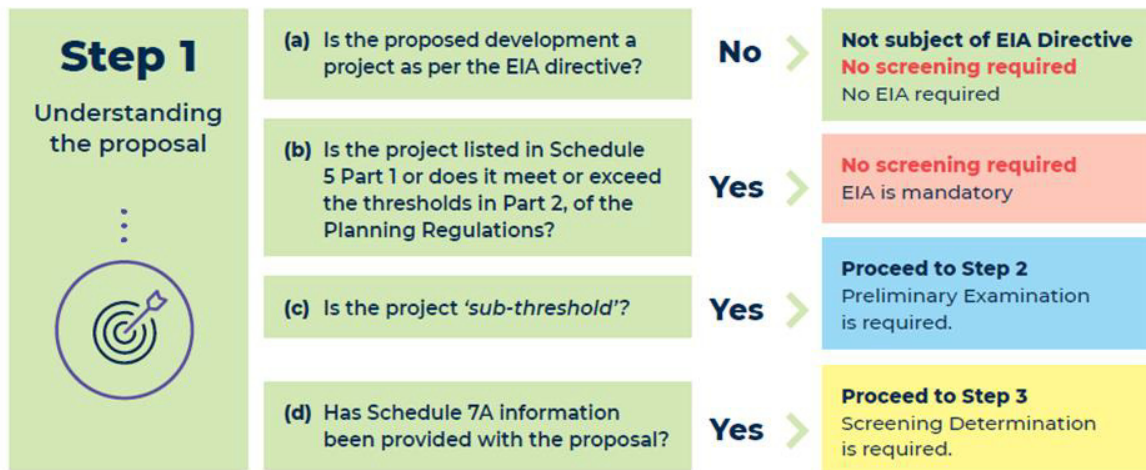


## 4 Preliminary Examination

### 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 10: Extract from 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 (with particular reference to those items in bold).

#### 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.

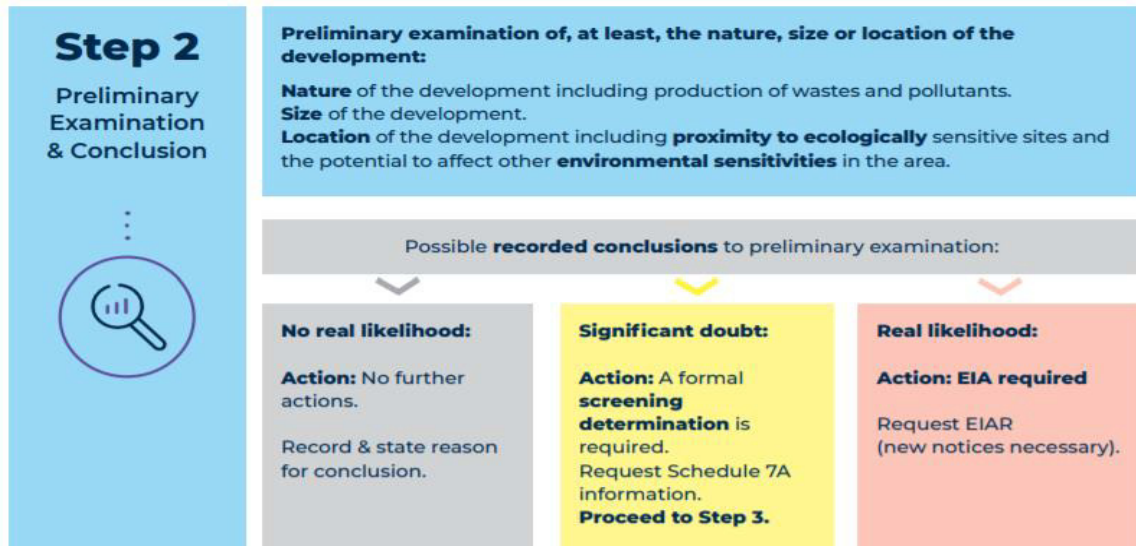
(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than **2 hectares** in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

("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 11: Extract from 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.

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

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

### 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 the delivery of refurbishments to Trim Market House, demolition to later additions and extensions to rear to create a Visitor Centre for Trim Castle. It is considered that the development is not exceptional in the context of the existing urban environment. The proposed development is in accordance with the zoning objectives stated in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

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

The nature of the proposed use is a visitor centre at Trim Market House. The proposed development by its nature will not cause any significant emissions or pollutants during the operation. Any waste arising during the demolition and construction phase will be dealt with in the appropriate manner in accordance with the appropriate standards and best practice methodology. Any asbestos will be removed in accordance with the relevant regulations. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be prepared and submitted to Meath County Council prior to any works commencing on site setting out measures/ approaches relating to construction waste arising and any emissions or pollutants arising during construction.

**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 enhance the prosperity of the town centre by providing additional amenity space in the form of a visitors' centre and dance hall with a stage area. The proposed design of the development has had regard to Trim Castle and the surrounding built environment of Trim town.

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

The following developments have been permitted in the vicinity of the subject site.

To consider potential in-combination effects, planning applications in the vicinity of the site were reviewed on the online planning records of Meath County Council. Two relevant applications were identified, both of which were associated with Trim Castle Hotel approx. 50 m south of the proposed development site. They can be summarised as follows:

- Reg. Ref.TA180191: Development will consist of ground floor office extension basement over the existing basement carpark. The application was granted planning permission on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018.
- Reg. Ref. TA190860: Development will consist of 3 and partial 4 storey extension comprising 43 bedrooms over the existing basement car park and surface car park with a first floor link to the existing hotel, minor alterations to the first floor to allow access to the link, rearrangement of the surface car park, minor elevational changes to the existing hotel, connection to public services and all associated site works. This application was granted planning permission on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

Cumulative impacts do not have the potential for significant effects.

#### 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 nearest designated Natura 2000 sites are as follows:-

**Table 3. Proximity to designated sites of conservation importance**

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (site code 2299)	100 m north	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> alkaline fens, alluvial forests <b>Annex II species:</b> river lamprey, salmon, otter
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (4232)	100 m north	<b>Special Conservation Interests:</b> kingfisher

The subject site is not within a European site. The nearest European site to the subject site is 100 m away (River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA). The nearest official EPA Water Framework Directive watercourse to the subject site is the River Boyne and River Blackwater approximately 100 m to the south of the site boundary.

Other watercourses proximate to the subject site are seen in section 2 of this report. While there are European sites within the zone of influence, no potential impacts are foreseen on these designations as there is no direct or indirect pathways to these sites.

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

The Market House is located on the east side of Castle Street and adjacent to the Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004-). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078-. It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089- and ME036-048090- located just to the east. The Market House is a Protected Structure listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This protected structure consists of the former Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, and is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH 14328035. The building is a former market house, built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The site is also located within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048.

There are potential effects upon archaeological heritage.

**4.6 Preliminary Examination Conclusion**

Following preliminary examination, the planning authority is recommended to conclude that there are doubts regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and to proceed to stage 3 a screening determination.

## 5 Schedule 7 Assessment and Schedule 7A Information

Where the requirement to carry out EIA is not excluded at preliminary examination stage, 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.

Figure 12: Extract from Guidance Note

**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.

### 5.1 Schedule 7 criteria

#### 5.1.1 1. Characteristics of proposed development

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

The characteristics of proposed development, in particular—

- (a) **the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,**

The proposed works at the site include refurbishment of Trim Market House and extension to rear to create a Visitor centre for Trim Castle. This will also include demolition works on selected elements of the extensions to the original five bay Market House. The proposal for the existing Market House building (approximately 400 m2) will include conserving original fabric where applicable and reinstatement or new interventions as required to the rear, (approximately 165 m2).

The proposed development provides an appropriate and compatible form of development within an urban context on lands which are zoned B1 Commercial/ Town or Village Centre. The size and design of the proposed development is not likely to cause significant effects on the environment. The refurbishment of the protected structure has been designed in accordance with the existing built environment surrounding the site and will bring the building in line with current building regulations.

***(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 planning applications for the assessment of cumulative effects. Together, with the proposed development at the subject site and the other permitted developments in the vicinity of the site are not likely to give rise to significant effects. In arriving at this conclusion, permitted developments have been taken into account.

***(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,***

The proposal entails the demolition of selected elements of the extension of Trim Market House. The Construction and Environmental Management Plan that will be prepared in advance of development commencing will detail the methodologies employed for the control, management, monitoring and disposal of waste from the site to mitigate any potential impacts.

Due to the demolition works proposed on the site a bat survey has been undertaken and submitted with this application. Three species were recorded on site, with most of the activity occurring towards the rear of the site. No bats were identified entering or exiting the existing buildings on site. The bat assessment prepared by Wildlife Survey includes a number of recommendations to mitigate any potential effects from the proposed development.

Any asbestos in existing structures to be demolished will be removed in accordance with the relevant regulations.

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

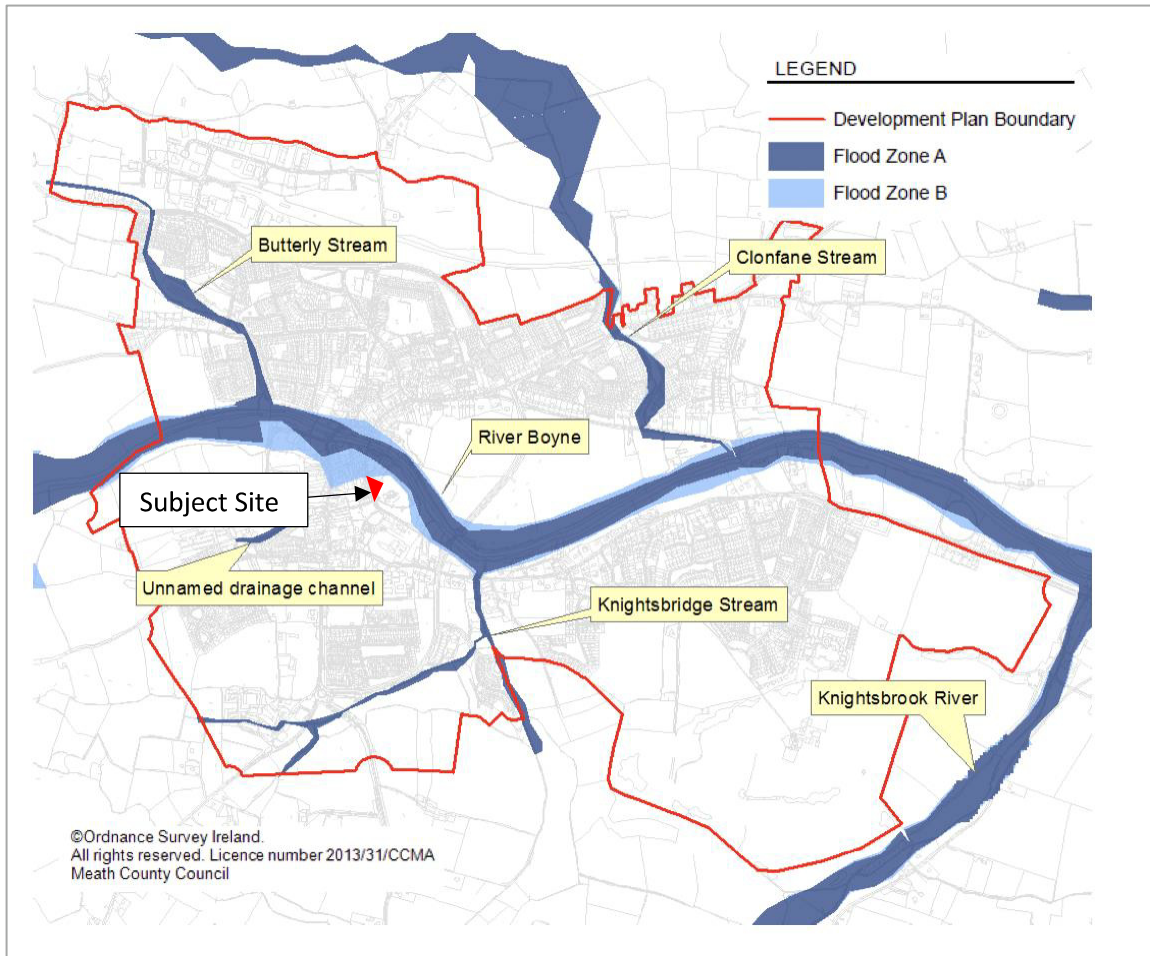
The nature of the proposed use and scale of development is such that its development would not result in a significant use of natural resources. There will be no use of natural resources at the site given the nature of works proposed.

The scale and quantity of construction materials used will not be such that would concern in relation to significant effects on the environment.

The development will generate water demands during the construction and operational phases of the development. Water will be supplied from the public watermain which the building on site is already connected to on Castle Street.

During the construction the contractor will be required to implement standard measures during the construction phase in order to minimise adverse effects to the sites water and to reduce runoff and prevent pollutants entering the any watercourses. Any contaminated surface water or groundwater will be collected and removed from the site. During construction, the contractor will take all appropriate measures to protect against accidental spillages or pollution. The operation of the scheme would not use such a quantity of water to cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment.

**Figure 13: Extract from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**



Source: Appendix H of the Trim Town Development Plan 2014 – 2020

The subject site is located in close proximity to Flood Zone B which indicates there is a moderate probability of flooding. According to the OPW flood mapping there has been no flooding events at the subject site. The potential impact of climate change has been considered for in the design of the surface water 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 therefore considered to be low. In addition, the AA screening report accompanying this application concludes that the proposed development will not cause any significant impacts on designated sites, habitats, legally protected species, or any features of ecological importance.

***(e) the production of waste,***

The applicant can confirm that 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. The scale of the waste production with the use of licenced waste disposal facilities and contractors does not cause concern for likely significant effects on the environment.

The proposed development will give rise to the demolition of selected elements of the extensions to the original five bay Market House. It is intended that any waste generated from the demolition works which cannot be reused on site will be disposed of by licenced contractors.

Any asbestos in existing structures to be demolished will be removed in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Normal builders' waste (rubble, excess building materials) will be generated during the construction phase. There are demolition works associated with the development. All demolition works will be carried out in accordance with a Construction and Environmental Management Plan.

During the operation, the proposed development will give rise to general non-hazardous waste including paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, electrical equipment and electrical waste commensurate with the commercial use of the site.

***(f) pollution and nuisances,***

The construction phase of the project has the potential to be a source of pollution in relation to water, noise, vibration, dust and traffic. There will likely be potential for localised dust and noise produced during the demolition and construction phases. This will be managed by ensuring construction work largely operates within the approved hours of construction. Standard dust and noise prevention mitigation measures will be employed and monitored. As such, pollution and nuisances are not considered likely to have the potential to cause significant effects on the environment. During the operational phase the principal forms of air emissions relate to discharges from motor vehicles on the adjacent road at Castle Street and heating appliances in the building.

Any asbestos in existing structures to be demolished will be removed in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The potential sources of pollution can be mitigated, and these measures will be detailed in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan prepared for the development.

With the implementation of these mitigating measures, there are no likely residual significant effects on the environment.

***(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,***

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 located in close proximity to Flood Zone B. This indicates that there is a moderate probability of flooding. According to the OPW flood mapping there has been no flooding events at the subject site. The potential impact of climate change has been considered for in the design of the surface water drainage network and storage system.



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

There is no pollutant in the soil and subsoil on site. Contaminants have the potential to have significant effects on human health. The contractor at the subject site will continue to ensure that in the event that any waste arises from the subject site that it will be removed in a manner which meets the appropriate standards and best practice. It can be concluded that with mitigating measures, there would be no significant effect upon human health. There are no Seveso / COMAH sites in the vicinity of this location.

A Utility Survey Report for the site was prepared by Murphy Geospatial in 2021, in which it was found that both foul water and surface water (from roofs and hardstanding areas) drain to a local authority combined sewer on Castle Street. The combined sewer conveys the discharge to the Trim Waste Water Treatment Works. Therefore, pathways via surface water and groundwater can be screened out. There is no pathway over land, because any runoff from the site would be captured by roadside drains on Castle Street. A pathway via air can be ruled out due to the distance involved. It is intended that foul water and surface water will be separated, so that use of the combined sewer can cease. Rainwater from the roof of the structure will be harvested and re-used. The landscaping scheme will incorporate some vegetation and other soft features, thus allowing surface water to percolate to ground.

**5.1.2 2. Location of proposed development**

*The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—*

***(a) the existing and approved land use,***

The proposed uses on site are compatible with the land use zoning of the subject lands. No significant impacts are likely. The subject land use zoning objectives as follows:

B1 Commercial/ Town or Village Centre with a stated objective ‘to protect, provide for and/ or improve town and village centre facilities and uses.’ This zone also covers most of the urban area to the west and north of the site.

The proposed development is compliant with the zoning objectives for the site. 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 and Appropriate Assessment for the County Development Plan 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.

An Appropriate Assessment, Bat Assessment and Archaeology Impact Assessment Report have been prepared and inform this EIA Screening Report. An assessment of the project has shown that significant effects are not likely to occur to these areas alone or in combination with other

plans or projects.

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 major watercourse is the River Boyne, which is located approx. 100 m north-east of the proposed development site. There are no other substantial watercourses (as per the EPA database of rivers and streams) in the vicinity of the site. The Boyne flows north-east through County Meath and reaches the coast at Drogheda approx. 60 km downstream.

*(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;*

The site is not located proximate to a coastal zone or marine environment.

*(iii) mountain and forest areas;*

The site is not proximate to mountains or forested areas.

*iv) nature reserves and parks;*

The site is approximately 100 m from the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA and SAC.

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

The following Natura 2000 sites have been identified in NM Ecology’s report:

**Table 4: Natura 2000 sites within 5 km of the proposed development site**

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (site code 2299)	100 m north	<b>Annex I habitats:</b> alkaline fens, alluvial forests <b>Annex II species:</b> river lamprey, salmon, otter
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (4232)	100m north	<b>Special Conservation Interests:</b> kingfisher

Source: Extract from Table 2 of the AA Screening prepared by NM Ecology

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 Ltd.

The AA screening concludes that:

*“Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. 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. As a result, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required.”*

*(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;*

Under the Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2013 – 2018, the River Boyne is of Moderate to Good status throughout its freshwater and estuarine sections.

*(vii) densely populated areas;*

The population of Trim Town where the subject site is located increased by 6% in the intercensal period of 2011 and 2016. The proposed development will result in a development of a visitor centre which will be used by members of the public as a tourist hub and gateway to the Castle and wider Heritage Town. The site is located in close proximity to Trim Castle, commercial, services, community and public transport facilities. The proposed redevelopment of the Market House will support the existing population of Trim while also enhancing the tourism services in the Town. The proposed development is considered at scale with the existing urban context of the town.

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

The Market House is located on the east side of Castle Street and adjacent to the Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004-). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078-. It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089- and ME036-048090- located just to the east. The Market House is a Protected Structure listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This protected structure consists of the former Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, and is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH 14328035. The building is a former market house, built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The site is also located within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048. The Archaeology Impact Assessment report accompanying this application includes mitigation measures to combat any potential effects from the proposed works on the subject site.

### *5.1.3 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)(I) 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.**

## Screening Considerations

Aspect	Phase	Potential Effect	Extent	Probability	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
Landscape	C	None predicted	-	-	-	-	-
	O	Planting selection comprises mix of various species to ensure appropriate character for the area and enhance landscape	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 existing street character	Local	Likely	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
Biodiversity	C	Potential impact upon bats	Local	Likely	Moderate	Negative	Temporary
	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	Local	Likely	Moderate	Negative	Permanent
		Potential contamination due to accidental spillage	Local	Not Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Brief
	Increased surface water run-off due to alteration of surface profile and soil compaction	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Temporary	
O	Refurbishment and demolition works	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 Discharge of foul and waste water to existing waste water network	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Permanent
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	Permanent
	O	None predicted	-	-	-	-	-
Noise	C	Increase in noise as a result of construction activity, and operation of plant and machinery.	Local	Likely	Slight	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	Refurbishment of protected structure	Local	Likely	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
	O	Changes to existing structures	Local	Likely	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
Cultural Heritage: Archaeology	C	Potential impact to undiscover subsurface remains*	Local	Likely	Significant	Negative	Long-term
	O	None predicted	-	-	-	-	-

\* Refer to mitigation measure in IV below

### ***I. Interaction of Effects***

There is potential for interaction of effects during the construction phase in relation to soil, water and biodiversity. The negative impacts arise from potential risk of pollution, dust and noise. However, mitigation 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.

### ***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***

The Construction and Environmental Management Plan and the archaeology supervision as included in the Archaeology Impact Assessment report will mitigate any significant effects identified such that there are no residual significant effects. The bat assessment prepared for this application provides a number of recommendations for construction and operational phases of the proposed development that will mitigate any potential effects as a result of works on existing structures at the 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 Construction and Environmental Management Plan related to 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.

**(d) 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 the suite of documentation accompanying this application to support the conclusions included in this report, this includes:

- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared by NM Ecology Ltd;
- Archaeology Impact Assessment prepared by Archaeological Consultancy Service Unit; and
- Bat Assessment prepared by Wildlife Surveys.

### 5.4 Any mitigation measures

The following mitigation measures are proposed as part of the application:

- Ongoing archaeology monitoring during construction works under strict archaeological supervision;
- The bat assessment accompanying this application recommends a number of specific mitigation measures to mitigate any potential impact on the species at the subject site.
- A Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be prepared setting out a series of construction phase measures/mitigation measures which will be adhered to in accordance with best practice principles.

### 5.5 Available results under other relevant EU environmental legislation,

All list of the references/data used in the preparation of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology Ltd. is set out on in the AA Screening report.



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 5: EU Legislation**

Directive	Results
SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]	The proposed development is compatible with the lands located on the lands which have been zoned under the Meath County Development Plan. These have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]	<p>An appropriate assessment (AA) screening report prepared by NM Ecology Ltd. accompanies this Part 8 application.</p> <p>Having taking into consideration the proposed development works and operation, the lack of direct hydrological pathway or biodiversity corridor link to conservation sites and the dilution effect with other effluent and surface runoff, it is concluded that this development that would not give rise to any significant effects to designated sites.</p> <p>The AA screening concludes that:</p> <p><i>“Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. 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. As a</i></p>

Directive	Results
	<i>result, we conclude that <u>Appropriate Assessment is not required.</u></i>
Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]	<p>Foul water from the proposed development will be discharged to a local authority foul sewer and treated in the Trim Waste Water Treatment Works. The WWTW's latest Annual Environmental Report<sup>1</sup> on the EPA website was reviewed. It has a population equivalent of 12,000 and provides tertiary treatment, with a final discharge point into the River Boyne. The discharge was compliant with the ELVs set in the wastewater discharge licence, and it did not have an observable impact either on water quality or Water Framework Directive status downstream of the discharge point. Therefore, foul water from the development is not expected to have any impact on the environmental sensitivities at the site.</p> <p>The proposed development will incorporate a number of SUDS principles, including harvesting / recycling rainwater from the roof of the structure and the replacement of some built surfaces with soft landscaping. Residual surface water output from the site will be discharged to a public authority sewer on Castle Street. A small quantity of surface water will percolate to ground in areas of soft landscaping within the site.</p> <p>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.</p>
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

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Environmental Report 2019 for the Trim Waste Water Treatment Works  
[http://epawebapp.epa.ie/licences/lic\\_eDMS/090151b2807786fd.pdf](http://epawebapp.epa.ie/licences/lic_eDMS/090151b2807786fd.pdf)

Directive	Results
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	The subject site is located in close proximity to Flood Zone B which indicates there is a moderate probability of flooding. According to the OPW flood mapping there has been no flooding events at the subject site. The potential impact of climate change has been considered for in the design of the surface water drainage network and storage system

### 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:

*“In Section 3.2.5 of Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:*

**1. AA is not required**

*Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.*

**2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required**

*Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.*

**3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**

*The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected.*

*Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. 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. As a result, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required."*

***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, the preservation, conservation or protection of which is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

***vii) a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).***

The AA Screening document has not identified any likely significant effect on any pNHA, in particular no likely significant effects on the pNHA Trim Townlands have been identified.

## 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 negative effects on the environment and it is recommended that environmental impact assessment report is not required.



