

Kildare County Council Architectural Services
Kildare County Council,
Devoy Park,
Naas,
W91 X77F

1st October 2024

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: Planning Permission for Infill Development

Enviroguide has been commissioned by DOBA to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening letter in relation to a Halting Site (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development), at Andrew Halting Site, Athy, Co. Kildare.

The purpose of this letter is to:

- Identify the applicable EIA development thresholds under the Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended (the Regulations);
- Review the scale, use, nature and location of the Proposed Development against the Regulations;
- Comment on whether the development is likely to be considered a 'sub-threshold' development, or whether it is likely an EIA will be requested by the competent planning authority; and,
- Identify any potential environmental planning risks that could effect the EIA screening decision.

This letter has been reviewed and approved by Catherine Keogan, Technical Director at Enviroguide Consulting. Catherine holds a B.Sc. (Hons) in Analytical Science and a Post Graduate Diploma in Renewable Energy Technology Systems. Catherine's previous roles have required the management of projects from feasibility study to completion and operations. She has been responsible for the complete management of a number of large-scale infrastructure, industrial and energy projects as well as constraints and due diligence mapping.

The Proposed Development includes for:

- The construction of 5 no. two storey detached houses consisting of:
 - 4no. 5 bedroom houses,

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- 1no. Three bedroom house,
- The demolition of the existing single storey caretaker unit and the construction of 1 no. new single storey caretaker unit.
- The conversion of four of the existing semi-detached day houses and gardens into two detached day houses with gardens.
- Boundary improvement works including:
 - Removal of part of the boundary to the northeast of the existing site.
 - Removal of existing evergreen trees to the Fortbarrington Road boundary.
 - Removal of existing boundary railings to Fortbarrington Road and construction of proposed new site boundary treatment consisting of rendered masonry walls and railings,
 - Removal of existing vehicular and pedestrian entrance walls to the Fortbarrington Road and construction of new vehicular and pedestrian entrance walls at the same location.
- Site works including:
 - Undergrounding of existing services.
 - New nature-based surface water drainage including surface water attenuation.
 - New foul drainage to integrate with existing drainage.
 - Extension of water, telecoms, and electrical infrastructure.
 - New Street lighting.
 - New site landscaping.
 - New boundary walls to enclose proposed extended site.
 - Extension and upgrade of the existing access road to accommodate the proposed new dwellings and,
 - Associated site works.

The Proposed Development is a project listed as a development type in Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. The Proposed Development is considered a sub-threshold development. A sub-threshold development is defined as a “development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development”. Sub threshold developments can be screened to determine if an EIA is required.

The Proposed Development does not meet the criteria set out in Schedule 5, Part 2, specifically;

“10. Infrastructure projects

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

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The Proposed Development includes for the construction of 5 residential units, and the conversion of four existing semi-detached day houses and gardens into two detached day houses with gardens. This is below the threshold of 500 dwelling units. It is therefore considered a mandatory EIAR is not required.

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

The site is approximately 1.043 hectares in size and is not considered to be located within an urban area or a business district. The site is less than 20 hectares in size. Therefore, a mandatory EIAR is not required.

14. Works of demolition carried out in order to facilitate a project listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of this Schedule where such works would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7

The Proposed Development includes for the demolition of an existing single storey caretaker unit, the removal of existing boundary railings to Fortbarrington Road, removal of existing vehicular and pedestrian entrance walls to the Fortbarrington Road.

The demolition works are considered to be relatively small scale and it is therefore not expected that the works would result in significant effects on the environment.

15. Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

The Proposed Development has been considered having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 5 Part 2, (15).

A desk based study has been undertaken to assess any potential sensitivities on the site. There are no recorded monuments on the site (Historic Environment Viewer, 14/08/2024), the closest recorded monument (KD035-031: Enclosure: ARDREW) is approximately 400m north east of the site.

The site is surrounded by existing housing developments and is considered to be in keeping with the surrounding area.

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With regard to ecological impacts, a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report have been prepared by Enviroguide Consulting for the Proposed Development, all dated August 2024. The AA Screening Report has assessed the relevant European Site, River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and concluded that:

“On the basis of the screening exercise carried out ..., it can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and objective information, that the possibility of any significant effects on the above listed European sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded in light of the above listed European sites’ conservation objectives. Thus, there is no requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of the Appropriate Assessment process; and the preparation of a NIS is not required.”

Conclusion

It is Enviroguide Consulting’s view that the Proposed Development constitutes a sub-threshold development under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Whilst the potential for likely significant effects cannot be ruled out at this stage, it is considered that potential likely significant effects can be reduced through good design and environment management measures.

Kind regards

Rachel Redmond

Rachel Redmond
Environmental Consultant
Enviroguide Consulting

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