

WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Local Authority Development
Construction of 33 No. residential units and associated site
development works at Arcadia, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

File Ref. LA(A) 2016-02

**Planning Report in Accordance with Section 179 of the Planning
and Development Act 2000-2012**

1.0 Site/Location Context

The subject lands are accessed via an established internal route which serves St. Mary's mixed primary school from an access road off the McDonagh Road (L-4003) to the north, a short distance from junction 11 off the N6 Athlone Bypass in the townland of Arcadia. These lands were previously utilised as a borrow pit with the resultant ground levels now predominantly consistent with the road level, save for substantially elevated ground located along the eastern portion of this site. The site is flanked by undeveloped lands to the north, educational (Athlone Mixed National School (Church of Ireland)) and residential lands to the east, residential to the south (Assumption Road) and recreational (soccer club) and undeveloped lands to the west.

1.1 Existing services within Proximity to Subject site.

There are a range of additional services within close proximity to this site, including a primary school, St. Kieran's Community Centre, soccer pitch, Clonbrusk medical centre, service station with associated convenience store and coffee shop and two pharmacies within a very short walk to the north.

In terms of accessibility, this site is located at a distance of c. 1 mile from the town centre and is a c.10- 15 minute walk to Athlone Train Station.

2.0 Advertising and Referrals

The application was advertised locally in the Westmeath Independent on Saturday 12th November 2016 and also by placing a site notice along both the road side boundary of the application site and along an established accessway to the rear of the site.

The application was also referred to the following bodies:

Referrals:	Person of Contact	Response Received
External Bodies		
An Taisce		No
Department of Housing, Planning, Community and	Austin O'Dowd Planning Policy Section Dept. of Housing, Planning,	Yes

Local Government	Community & Local Government	
Development Applications Unit	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	No
Irish Water HQ		No
Internal Sections		
Planning Section	Terry McCague Senior Planner	Yes
Transportation Section	Michael Connolly Senior Engineer	Yes
Water Services	Blaithnaid Cox Executive Engineer	No
District Office	Paula Hanlon District Planner	Yes
District Office	Pat Nally District Engineer	Yes
Water/Environment Services	Greg Duggan Senior Engineer	No

2.1 Summary of the responses received from referrals.

2.1.1 Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government

(24/11/2017)

States that the Department will not be making comments in relation to this proposal. Advise that this proposed development be referred to the Development Applications Unit of the DAHRRG for comment and state that they were informed by staff in the Municipal District that a copy of these plans was already forwarded to the Development Applications Unit for comment.

2.1.2 Terry McCague Senior Planner

The subject site is located within the plan boundary of the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and is zoned for residential purposes. The proposed development is consistent with this zoning objective.

(23/01/2017)

Recommends that the following be considered in the approval process for this development:

The existing access road to the south of this site which currently serves residential properties on Assumption Road will be enclosed on its northern and eastern side by the southern boundary of this development. This will result in the creation of an enclosed cul-de-sac laneway to the rear of properties on both Assumption Road and the proposed housing scheme. There is serious concern that this arrangement would not meet standards in relation to safety and security in that it would most likely result in the creation of a locus for anti-social behaviour. It is therefore proposed that a controlled access/locked gate arrangement be provided at the south western corner of the site, with access solely permitted to existing households on Assumption Road and that this area is thus not open for public unrestricted access.

The overall development shall provide for a reduced car parking provision in accordance with the standards set out in the Athlone Town Development Plan. A parallel parking arrangement is preferable to the perpendicular parking arrangement proposed in that it reduces the visual impact created and presents opportunities for greening up of this scheme. It is considered that the reduction in car spaces proposed will enable the provision of a green linear strip on both sides of the internal access road throughout this development.

The width of the internal road should be reduced from 6 metres to 5.5 metres.

2.1.3 P.J. Carey, Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation Section

(12/01/2017)

States that the drawings submitted are for the most part in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).

Notes that the drawings show 4.8m x 2.4m parking spaces. This appears to be a printing issue and the spaces are in fact 5.0 x 2.5m which is the standard required. This shall be conditioned.

Having regard to the foregoing, recommends that the engineers for the scheme be requested to submit revised drawings taking cognisance of the following.

1. Longitudinal Gradient for main road.

- a. The Council will have to take this road in charge. The longitudinal gradient shown on the drawings, 0.5 %, is too flat. Whilst it may technically be the flattest gradient allowed by design standards, the gradient shown on the drawings pushes the allowable design envelope too far. Local Authority. experience is that a longitudinal fall of 0.5% will not work sufficiently, due to laying inaccuracies, tolerances, and workmanship meaning that ultimately the road will have surface water ponding issues, and thus have potential hazards when frozen. The civil engineers for the scheme shall lodge revised drawings both plan and longitudinal section whereby no 20m stretch of the road shall have a longitudinal gradient of less than 1.00%.
- b. Resulting from this revised longitudinal gradient for the road, the civil engineers for the scheme shall submit a revised surface water layout and provide a S.W. longitudinal section, and gully layout so that there are no gullies at high points or in car parking areas where they will not receive any rain water. Such longitudinal section shall have minimum cover to pipes (finished road level to crown of pipe) of 600mm and where less than 600mm apply detail TII CC-SCD-00521 type Z. Notes on side bar of Drg 161-423-401-D1 shall be updated to current nomenclature.

2. CBR and Sub base & Capping

- a. The CBR of the subgrade shall be tested and the results submitted to the Roads Authority. The depth of the sub base and capping layer required (if any) shall be determined from the CBR results using Chapter 4 of TII Publication DN-PAV-03021. Details of the above shall be submitted for the written agreement of the R.A. prior to commencement on site.

3. Road Drawings

Drawing No. 161-423-700-Revision D-2 Titled Proposed Road layout shall be re-submitted in accordance with point 1 above and also change the typical road cross-section and road build up thus:

- All materials to new Series 900 nomenclature
- Wearing Course 40mm Dp Cl 3.1.7 AC 14 Close Surf 70/100 des
- Binder Course 60mm Dp Cl 3.1.4 AC 20 dense bin 40/60 des
- Base Course 80mm Dp Cl 3.1.1 AC 32 dense base 40/60 des
- Sub base: Minimum 150mm Dp Cl 804 and as calculated from Chapter 4 of TII Publication DN-PAV-03021
- All standard car spaces shall be constructed 5.0m x 2.5m wide.
- Disabled Parking : Once the initial make up of the house occupants is known, then disabled parking, taken from the 59 spaces parking allotment, shall be provided and road marked accordingly.

4. Joints / Notes / Material References

- a. Joints between the existing road and the new road shall be to the TII CC-SCD-00703. (SDC: Standard Construction Detail) ORS Drawing 161-423-700-Revision D-2 Titled Proposed Road layout shall be amended accordingly to take cognisance of the new TII Standard Construction Details and all references to the old Series 900 materials in the notes side bar and on the drawing itself, shall be updated to the new material references.

5. Desire Line and footpaths

It has been noted that there is a desire line present on the site which is not catered for under the proposed footpath layout. The desire line runs from the south west corner of the site (at the rear of Assumption Villas units 38/39 and Tormey Lane) directly out to the main access road and onwards to the roundabout on the L 4003. It is recommended to provide a 2.0m wide footpath along the western side of the access road (which runs in a N-S direction) from the southwest corner of site (Tormey Lane) to the northern access point on the on the L 4003 and to tie in to the existing footpaths at the L4003 which are on both sides of the road. New footpath to be similar in width to the footpaths already provided in the scheme.

2.1.4 Athlone District Engineer

(20/01/17)

Recommends that the following be considered in the approval process for this development:

Roadways and Footpaths (Drawing 161-423-700)

- a) Generally 5.5m wide carriageway is required with the exception of areas at bends where local widening may be required. This can be provided by means of overrun areas that contrast both visually and texturally with the normal road surface.
- b) The sub base material to the carriageway shall be 150mm thick.
- c) All concrete footpaths in the public realm to be reinforced with A252 mesh fabric.
- d) Tactile paving shall be provided at all crossing points.
- e) A crossing point shall be provided across the existing road in the vicinity of units 7 and 8 to cater for pedestrian desire lines from the new development.
- f) A controlled pedestrian crossing shall be provided across the L4003 (Mac Donagh Rd) to Arcadia Retail Centre to cater for the additional pedestrian traffic this development will generate.

Services

- a) All public services for the proposed development including electrical, television, telephone cables and equipment shall be located underground throughout the development.
- b) Infrastructure to be provided under new footpaths for the provision of future communication services to residents in the new development.
- c) Public lighting within the development shall be in accordance with the ESB's current "Public Lighting in Residential Areas" or similar approved standard.

Drainage

Surface water network to be installed as per drawing 161-423-401 D1 except for the following:

- a) The surface water outfall shall be restricted to 5L/sec/hectare.
- b) All gully pots shall be trapped.
- c) All Gully, SW and Foul manhole covers shall be Class D400 lockable in the paved carriageway and within 2m of the paved carriageway.
- d) Surface water shall be disposed of on a separate system basis to the foul drainage.

General

- a) All property boundaries shall be of solid blockwork wall construction.

Works to Service Lane at Rear of Properties on Assumption road

Recommends that the following be provided on the service lane at the interface with the properties on Assumption Rd:

- a) Provide public lighting to the service lane.
- b) Surface water drainage network to be installed along access road and connect to proposed development storm drainage network.
- c) A bituminous surface shall be constructed to the laneway, details to be agreed with District Engineer.

3.0 Description and extent of the proposed development

Under this application, the development comprises of the following:

	Type	Number of Units
i.	Three bedroom two-storey semi-detached units	4
ii.	Three bedroom two-storey end-terrace units	6
iii.	two bedroom two-storey end-terrace units	6
iv.	three bedroom two-storey mid-terrace units	5
v.	four bedroom two-storey mid-terrace units	6
vi.	two-bedroom single-storey semi-detached	4
vii.	a three-storey unit with 1 no. two bedroom apartment at ground level and 1 no. three bedroom duplex over.	1 + 1

The proposal also provides for site development works including the provision of boundary walls and fencing, roadways, footpaths, site services, attenuation, public lighting, cut and fill of ground and landscaping.

4.0 Public Observations/Submissions Received

There were 7 no. public submissions received during the public consultation period (i.e. 9th November 2016 – 18th January 2016) including:

1. Sheila and Brendan Kenny, 8 Ardilaun, Athlone
2. Adrienne Dermody & Eamonn Quinn, 5 Ardilaun, Athlone
3. Residents Association of Assumption Road, Athlone (C/o Emily & Ann Monaghan)
4. Paddy Cahill, 7 Ardilaun, Athlone
5. Beechpark West Residents Association
6. Deputy Boxer Moran, Pearse Street, Athlone
7. Concerned resident, Assumption Road, Athlone

4.1 Summary of the public submissions received and the issues/concerns raised

Boundary Treatment (Privacy & Security)

- Query on boundary treatments including type/heights etc. and distance between the properties of Ardilaun and the boundary line of this scheme. Express concerns regarding security, privacy and noise.
- Seek to retain existing hedgerow along the entire length of Ardilaun boundary with an additional tall fence to enclose and provide a secure buffer zone. Also request climb-proof fencing, high trees and full landscaping to rear gardens at Ardilaun boundary.
- Request a wall of sufficient height to prevent future issues (privacy, noise and disturbance) between the proposed development and Assumption Road. (i.e. southern boundary of proposed scheme).

Open Space and Recreation

- State that greenspace provision proposed is not adequate for children to play on.
- Query positioning of proposed steps as a gathering area for anti-social behaviour.
- Query maintenance of landscaped areas.

Management of Estate

- Query how the Council propose to manage this estate
- Seek assurances that there will be no possibility of dumping in the new boundary area between Ardilaun and the proposed development.

Roads & Infrastructure

- Query whether a traffic assessment has been carried out for the development.
- Express concerns regarding pedestrian safety and request that a pedestrian crossing be put in place. State that a map was attached identifying proposed location of crossing, however this map was not received by the Council.

- Comment on infrastructure improvement requirements to meet the increasing needs of cyclists, pedestrians and public transport.
- States that an emergency vehicle will not be able to turn and will block off the access road.

Services Provision

- Query sewerage system capacity and comment that there has been ongoing problems in a nearby estate for a number of years.

Access road to south of site and potential for anti-social behaviour/privacy issues

- Residents of Assumption Road request that gate be erected along this route with a key to be provided to local residents and emergency services for access. Also request that this access be resurfaced.
- Concerns expressed regarding the width of the access road (2 vehicles will not be able to pass each other and vehicles will not be able to turn outside their own gardens).

Flooding

Concerns expressed that land to the back of Assumption Road (along the access lane) is prone to flooding. Request that 3 gullies be provided removing the excess surface water via the main drainage system.

Design of Scheme & Density

- State that the proposed houses are aesthetically unattractive and colourful, reflective of past social housing schemes.
- Concerns expressed regarding the overall density proposed which will lead to an increase for demand of services and overall traffic volumes for the area. Request that the total number of houses be reduced to prevent overdevelopment of this site and in the community.
- Request that the proposed development includes an increase in the number of older people dwellings and people with disability needs.

Over-intensification of Social Housing in One Area

Comments that there are c.80 local authority houses adjacent to this site and that the proposal will result in 113 social houses in total within this area.

States that this is contrary to Minister Coveney's statements to the media regarding future social housing and provides direct quotation from the ministers press statements in 2016.

Anti-social Behaviour

Queries what measures are being put in place regarding anti-social behaviour.

Queries whether the Council will appoint a second housing liaison office as one officer is not sufficient to cater for the needs of Athlone town.

Building Regulations

Query whether the proposed houses are being constructed to current Building Regulations and query heating systems proposed to be installed in this scheme.

Adjoining Lands

Reference made to adjoining lands and the need to protect same for open space provision/sporting facilities.

Lack of detail on Drawings

Comment that required measurements on drawings submitted (including site layout map are not shown).

5.0 Housing Requirement and Policy Context

Rebuilding Ireland, the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016)

Rebuilding Ireland, the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness was published in July 2016 with the overarching aim of increasing the supply of housing across all tenures. Among the five core pillars of the plan is that of accelerating social housing, and it is stated that nationally 26,000 units will be built exclusively for social housing over the lifetime of the plan to 2021. In this context, the Housing Section of Westmeath County Council sought capital investment funding of €6.3m from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for the development of houses at Arcadia.

Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020

The Policies and Objectives which are of particular relevance in the assessment of this application are set out in the table below:

It is the policy of the Council:	
P-H1	To provide sufficient land to meet anticipated demand and to facilitate and implement the Housing Strategy and its policies.
P-H2	To secure the provision of social and affordable housing, to meet the needs of all households and disadvantaged sectors in Athlone, including the elderly, first time buyers, single person households on modest incomes, people with disabilities and special needs etc.
P-H5	To ensure the provision of a suitable range of house types and sizes to facilitate the demographic profile of the town.
P-H6	To have regard to the provisions of the 'Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual' in assessing applications for housing development.
P-H7	To require diversity in the form, size and type of dwelling within residential schemes.
P-SR3	To ensure all new residential development complies with the evaluation criteria for determining the suitability of housing in an urban area, as set out in the National Spatial Strategy.
P-RLD1	To achieve attractive and sustainable development and create high standards of design, layout, and landscaping, for new housing development.
P-RLD2	To determine the layout of new development before or at the same time as the road layout with connections to social infrastructure identified.
P-RLD3	To require that appropriate provision is made for amenity and public open space as an integral part of new residential or extensions to existing developments.

P-RLD4	All new housing schemes shall be designed to reduce energy demand and shall comply with the Building Regulations energy performance standards.
P-RLD5	To ensure that all residential properties are designed with flexible and adaptable layouts to suit the home owner with regard to Lifetime Homes.
P-POS1	To ensure that the provision of public and private open space for new residential development is of a high standard, overlooked and integral to the overall development. Narrow tracts of land or 'left over areas' will not be included within open space provision.
P-POS2	To require a detailed landscaping plan with all new housing developments by a suitably qualified professional. The landscaping design shall include a survey of the existing natural features on the site and indicate those to be retained.

It is the objective of the Council:

O-H1	To continue to monitor, the extent and type of residential development in the town to ensure sufficient housing type and land is zoned to meet housing demand.
O-H2	To continue to provide for the accommodation needs of single parent families, single homeless persons, people with disabilities, the elderly, etc. through the Council's housing programme as resources permit.
O-H3	To continue as a provider of accommodation including rental accommodation for households whose financial circumstances dictate that they cannot provide for their own housing needs.
O-SR1	To promote connectivity and linkages between open spaces and existing residential developments in the town.

Table 3.3 Density for New Residential Development within the Athlone TDP

Location for new Residential Development	General Density Parameters
Town Centre & Brownfield Sites	Site Specific 35 per ha
At strategic locations including public transport nodes	35 units per ha
Inner suburban/Infill	Site Specific
Outer Suburban/Greenfield	30-35 per ha
Outer edge of Urban/Rural Transition	20-35 per ha

6.0 Primary Considerations

The primary considerations which form the basis of my report are set out under the following sub-headings:

6.1 Principle of the development at this location

Athlone town is part of the linked Gateway as designated in the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020. The Core Strategy of the Athlone Town Development Plan outlines that that 3,310 housing units will be required up to 2020 to meet projected population targets set in the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022. In the Core Strategy it is noted that the waste water treatment capacity will be a constraint to meeting overall population targets, however, the upgrade and expansion of the municipal waste treatment system is underway and there will be sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development.

The subject site is located within the plan boundary of the Athlone Town Development Plan and is *zoned* for residential purposes. This zoning objective aims to provide for residential development, associated services and to protect and improve residential amenity. The proposed development is therefore consistent with this zoning objective.

The *density* of the proposed development is 27.5 dwellings per hectare. This is slightly below the minimum recommended density of 30 per hectare as per the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009, however it is considered that, having regard to the location of the proposed development within the outer area of Athlone town on an undeveloped infill site, that the proposed density of social housing is appropriate. This is in accordance with the Councils recommended densities set out in table 3.3 of the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 (refer to section 5 of this report).

6.2 House Design and Type

The design of the development provides for a variety of housing need which will allow for an associated mix of household profiles within the scheme. There are seven different unit types included in the proposed development which will provide for a range of household types, including housing for older people and families.

Image: 3d facing east



The proposed buildings vary in height from one storey to three storey. There is one three storey building within the proposed development and this is located at the corner closest to the entry (northwestern side). This is intended to provide a gateway feature into the development. Four number single storey dwellings are also proposed within the centre of this scheme to allow for the needs of older people and people with disabilities, for whom stairs within the home can create mobility barriers. The remainder of the dwellings is three and four bedroom, semi detached and terrace dwellings.

6.3 Design and Layout

6.3.1 Traffic & Pedestrian Safety (Provision of Car Parking)

This site is accessed via a roundabout on the Coosan Road. The internal road within this scheme is designed to be a vehicular cul de sac, with a turning bay to be provided at the west end of the site, that will accommodate delivery vehicles and bin lorries and allow for fire tender access. The provision of a pedestrian access to the southwestern side of this site via the access road associated with the back lane of Assumption road to the east, will allow for greater connectivity and permeability between this site and St. Kieran's community centre. Note that open space provision along the northern side of this established accessway (i.e. lands to the west of the subject site and outside of the remit of this Part 8 application) allows for passive surveillance.

I note the comments expressed in the submissions received and also by the Transportation Section and the District Engineer with regards to surfacing, width of internal road, provision of pedestrian crossings etc. I note that the proposal to reduce the width of the internal road to 5.5 metres is in accordance with DMURS. I therefore consider that this proposal is acceptable, subject to complying with the relevant standards, best practice and ensuring the safety of road users and pedestrians. In terms of the revised car parking arrangement proposed by the Senior Planner, I am satisfied with the current proposal and in favour of the proposed parking provision, given that the space is available without compromising the quantity and quality of open space.

With respect to the house designs proposed, I welcome the mix of unit types incorporated into this scheme and consider that this mix will strengthen its own unique 'sense of place' and ensure the success of this development as being a sustainable community for its residents. The house design is acceptable. I have considered the issue of the colour painted smooth sand/cement plaster finish feature on front elevation of units and planning recommendation to replace this with white roughcast render finish consistent with that currently proposed as part of the exterior of these units. I acknowledge that this matter was raised in a public submission received by the Council. However, taking into account the advice of the Senior Executive Architect dated 25 January 2017, I am of the view that an acceptable rationale for the proposed limited colour treatment of the front doors and first floor detailing has been provided. However, I propose that the tones or colours as shown on the part 8 drawings be reviewed and that these be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to commencement.

Finally, I note that boundary Treatment both on the Ardilaun and Assumption Road side of this scheme has been expressed as a concern on the public submissions received in terms of privacy and security and also with respect to visual amenity. I acknowledge same and consider that this matter can be resolved as part of the overall development of this scheme. I propose that details

regarding boundary treatment be agreed with the Planning Authority in advance of construction stage.

6.3.2 Access lane to the south of this site, (travelling west) which serves households on Assumption Road.

I note that by virtue of the construction of a southern boundary to the rear of this site, that this will result in enclosing an established rear access serving the residents of Assumption Road to the north. There is serious concern that this arrangement would not meet standards in relation to safety and security in that it would most likely result in the creation of a locus for anti-social behaviour and impact on the privacy of adjoining residents. This matter was expressed in a number of submissions as part of the statutory process and was also expressed by the Senior Planner in his report. Having regard to this and in the interest of public safety, I consider it appropriate that it would be appropriate to provide a controlled access/locked gate arrangement at the southern western corner of the site, with access solely permitted to existing households on Assumption Road and that this area not be open for public unrestricted access. This matter should be referred to the Athlone Municipal District for consideration and implementation.

6.3.3 Potential Impacts on adjoining properties (including security measures).

I note the concerns regarding the protection of residential amenities of adjoining properties expressed by existing residents in Ardilaun. I concur with same and consider that appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping should be incorporated into this scheme at implementation stage. The proposed boundary treatment & landscaping should be agreed with the Planning Authority in advance of its development.

6.3.4 Provision of Open Space

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009 state the following regarding public open space: *"It is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. Apart from the direct provision of active and passive recreation, it adds to the sense of identity of a neighbourhood, helps create a community spirit, and can improve the image of an area"*. The overall provision of open space is over 18.5% of the overall site area, which exceeds minimum standards of 10-15%, however it is acknowledged that not all of this open space provision is usable. The topography of the subject site rises steeply in the south east corner and forms a boundary with the rear gardens of the Ardilaun estate. This steep slope will be landscaped with low maintenance bushes and shrubs, and will provide visual and biodiversity amenity value. Units 17-20 will provide passive surveillance over this area. A usable open space area is also proposed in the southwestern corner of this site and will be overlooked by units 32 and 33. I also acknowledge the proximity of this scheme to adjoining sporting facilities.

6.3.5 Assimilation of the development into the subject site and the protection of the visual amenity of the area.

Having regard to the location of this site which is undeveloped zoned & serviced lands within Athlone Town and given the established pattern of development in the area, I am satisfied that the proposed scheme will assimilate successfully into this site without compromising the

amenities of adjoining lands or the surrounding area, subject to compliance with my proposed recommendations (set out in Section 9 of my report below).

6.3.6 Archaeology

There are no recorded monuments attributed to these lands.

6.3.7 Services Provision

As you are aware, the Athlone Wastewater Treatment Plant is currently undergoing an extension to increase capacity from 30,000PE. to 40,000PE. There is sufficient capacity within the existing plant to accommodate the proposed development subject to the necessary consent of Irish Water.

The design of drainage will be important to ensure protection of surface water and groundwater. Attenuation will be installed on site, and all surface water will be disposed of at greenfield rates. Having regard to this and whilst noting the comments of the District Engineer, I consider it acceptable that these matters will be considered and addressed fully on adoption of this Part 8 proposal.

7.0 Evaluation of consistency with the proper planning and development of the area having regard to the provisions of the Athlone Town Development Plan.

Subject to adhering to the requirement proposed in Section 9.0, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with adopted policy set out in the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment is now a standard legal requirement for all plans and projects likely to have a significant impact on European sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area (SPA)).

A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment was submitted as part of this application. It is considered that the proposal would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any nearby Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from the development.

9.0 Recommendation

It is considered that the proposal is consistent with the provisions of the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and therefore accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. It is recommended that the development proceed in accordance with the submitted documents and drawings and subject to the following requirements:

- (i) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plans and details received by the Planning Authority on the 9th November 2016 unless subject to modification below.
- (ii) The width of the internal road shall be reduced from 6 metres to 5.5 metres.
- (iv) Access control arrangements, such as a locked gate, for those residents of Assumption Road which currently have a rear access onto the access laneway shall be referred to Athlone Municipal District for consideration and resolution.
- (v)
 - a) Detailed proposals for boundary treatment including the outer perimeter of this site and with respect to individual units to be submitted to the Planning Authority for their consideration and agreement in advance of being constructed.
 - b) A 2 metre high rendered block wall shall be provided along the southern boundary of this site.
- (vi) Landscaping proposals to be submitted to the Planning Authority, for their consideration and agreement in advance of being constructed.
- (vii) A crossing point shall be provided across the existing road in the vicinity of units 7 and 8 to cater for pedestrian desire lines from the new development.
- (viii) A controlled pedestrian crossing shall be provided across the L4003 (Mac Donagh Rd) to Arcadia Retail Centre to cater for the additional pedestrian traffic this development will generate.
- (ix) All other amendments proposed by the District Engineer and Transportation Department to be discussed and agreed prior to the construction of this scheme.



Pat Gallagher
Chief Executive
25th January 2017