



Laois County Council Comhairle Chontae Laois



Stradbally Fire Station

Proposed Development by a Local Authority

Part 8

In accordance with Part XI, Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, and Part VIII, Article 80 & 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)

October 2021



1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared in compliance with Part 8 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Regulations, 2001 -2011.

The background and reasons for the development are set out below. The principal features of the project, together with the methodology for delivering the project, are set out in Section 2.

Laois County Council has a number of objectives to meet when considering the provision of an emergency response service to the community. These objectives are determined by both statutory and service delivery requirements.

The Fire Services Act 1981 and 2003 requires that ***“A fire authority shall—***

(a) make provision for the prompt and efficient extinguishing of fires in buildings and other places of all kinds in its functional area and for the protection and rescue of persons and property from injury by fire, and

(b) establish and maintain a fire brigade, provide premises and make such other provision as it considers necessary or desirable for such purpose”.

Furthermore, the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires the Fire Authority to, among other things, ***provide a safe place of work, provide and maintain welfare facilities and to provide training for its employees.***

The primary functional requirements of a Fire Station can be summarised as follows:

1. To facilitate the emergency turn-out of the fire brigade,
2. To accommodate fire brigade appliances and equipment, in a state of permanent readiness for use,
3. To provide appropriate facilities for fire brigade personnel, commensurate with the level of fire brigade activity,
4. To facilitate routine testing and maintenance of appliances and equipment and,
5. To facilitate ongoing training of fire brigade personnel



2.0 Need for the Proposed Development –

The existing Fire Station in Stradbally was built in 1954. The Fire Station is no longer fit for purpose and the training and welfare needs, required of a modern fire and rescue service, cannot be sustained in the existing Station.

In parallel, call volumes have increased significantly, and Stradbally Fire Station is now one of the busiest Fire Stations in County Laois, responding to in excess of 100 emergency calls annually.

State funding is required to deliver a new Stradbally Fire Station. Laois County Council has prioritised 2 Fire Stations to the Department of the Environment for capital investment, Stradbally and Rathdowney.

In pursuit of this planning consent, Laois County Council is seeking to address an acute need for upgraded Fire Services infrastructure in Stradbally and also to support a specific allocation of funding for a shovel ready project.

3.0 Principal Features of this development –

The points set out below should be read in conjunction with drawings set out in Section 3 and contained in Appendix 1 to this Explanatory Booklet. The main features of the proposed development are as follows:

- A new 2 bay fire station with suitable training, welfare and storage facilities
- Demolition and removal of existing building (Civil Defence) Fire Service Drill tower
- Underground water storage tank for pump purposes
- Drill yard
- Temporary Depot /Parking for Civil Defence for local events
- The utilisation of “green” technology including rainwater harvesting



4.0 Drawings

The full extent of the proposed works is detailed on the following drawings (See Appendix 1):

Drawing No:	Title:
LS18 – SL – V3	Site Layout
LS18 – EE V1	End Elevations & Section
LS18 – FRE V1	Front Elevation
LS18 – FP V1	Floor Plan

5.0 Design Criteria

The project shall be designed and managed in accordance with “**PLANNING AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES FOR FIRE STATION PROJECTS**” (2000) published by the Dept. of the Environment and Local Government.

6.0 Funding

The project will be funded by way of a 100% grant from the Department of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Fire Service Capital Programme).

7.0 Impact on adjoining Landowners and Residents

The location of the proposed development is on lands owned by Laois County Council.

There is an adjoining residential property to the west of the proposed site. A substantial landscaping belt has been retained between the proposed development and the residential property to protect residential amenity.

The proposed Fire Station has been set back from the adjoining N80 in a manner as to facilitate sightline requirements for adjoining lands.



8.0 Public Display Period

A copy of the Public Notice is contained in Appendix 4 to this Explanatory Booklet.

9.0 Submissions

Any person may, from **22nd October 2021 to 22nd November 2021** inclusive, apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Plans and particulars of the above proposed development are available for viewing on our online consultation portal at <https://consult.laois.ie> from from **22nd October 2021 to 22nd November 2021** inclusive. Plans and particulars are also available for inspection by appointment only at the offices of Laois County Council, Áras an Chontae, JFL Avenue, Portlaoise from from **22nd October 2021 to 22nd November 2021** inclusive. Appointments must be arranged in advance by emailing fireofficer@laoiscoco.ie or by contacting 057 8664000.

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and the sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, **may be made online** at <https://consult.laois.ie> **before 5.00 p.m. on 06th December, 2021.**

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and the sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, **may also be made in writing** to: **Simon Walton, Director of Services, Laois County Council, Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laois** to be received not later than **5.00 p.m. on 06th December, 2021.**

Submissions should be clearly marked: **New Fire Station – Stradbally – Part VIII.**

-----,
Declan Power,
Chief Fire Officer,
Laois County Council.

Approved By;

-----,
Simon Walton,
Director of Services,
Laois County Council,

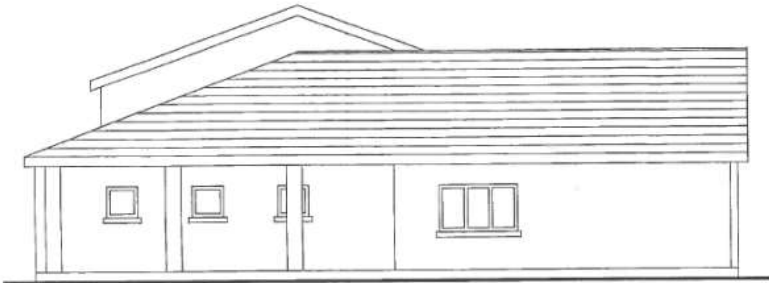


APPENDIX 1

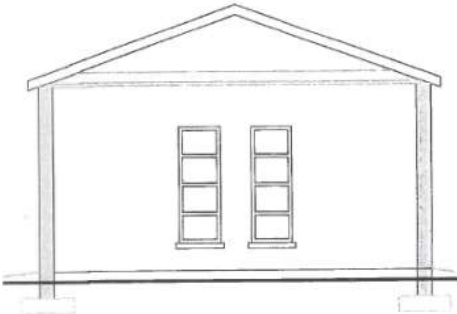
Drawings



Site Layout Plan



End Elevation



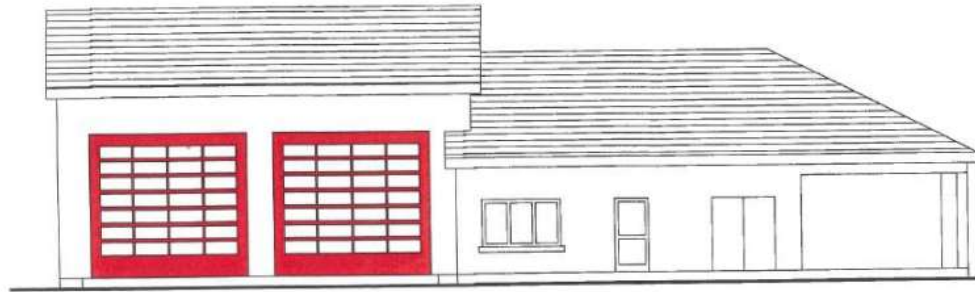
Section A-A



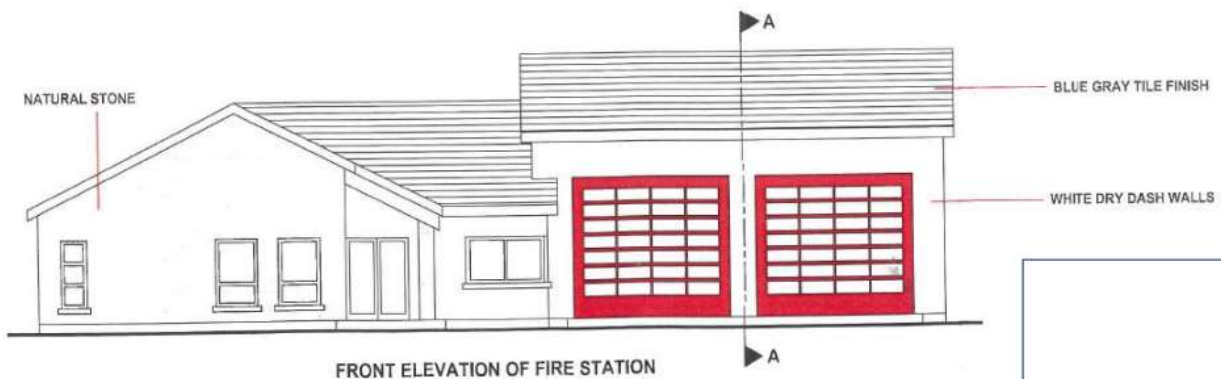
End Elevation

DO NOT SCALE

	Proposed New Stradbally Fire Station
	End Elevations & Section
	DWG No:- LS18- EE V1



REAR ELEVATION OF FIRE STATION



FRONT ELEVATION OF FIRE STATION

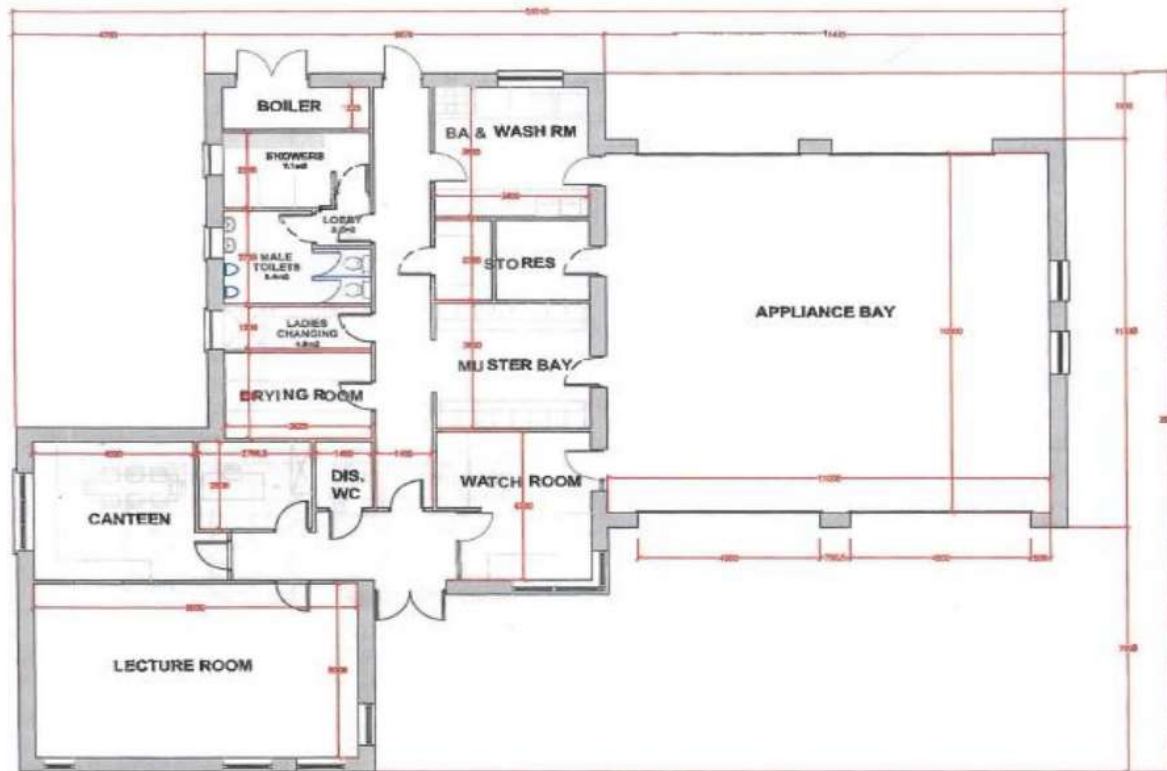


DO NOT SCALE



Proposed New Stradbally Fire Station
Front & Rear Elevations
DWG No:- LS18- FRE V1

Front Elevation – LS18 – FRE V1



INTERNAL FLOOR AREA 310MSQ
(INCLUDING INTERSTITIAL SPACES)

DO NOT SCALE



Proposed New Stradbally Fire Station
Floor Plan
DWG No:- LS18- FP V1

Floor Plan – LS18 – FP V1



APPENDIX 2

Appropriate Assessment (Screening Report)
Consenting Authority Screening Assessment



Appropriate Assessment (Screening Report)

Laois COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

EIA Screening Determination

1) Introduction

This report has been informed by:

- Schedules 5, 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended);
- ‘Guidelines for Planning Authorities and an An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environment Impact Assessment’, issued by the DHPLG (2018); and,
- Part VIII planning documents

2) Proposed Development

Laois County Council is proposing to develop a new fire station under with Part XI, Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). The development will consist of the following:

- A new 2 bay fire station with suitable training, welfare and storage facilities
- Fire Service Drill tower
- Underground water storage tank for pump purposes
- Drill yard



- The utilisation of “green” technology including rainwater harvesting

3) Legislative Basis for EIA

EIA is a process by which information about the environmental effects of projects is collected, evaluated and presented in a form that provides a basis for consultation. Decision makers can then take account of these effects when determining whether or not a project should proceed. EIA in Ireland must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) regulations 1989 (as amended) (the EIA Regulations).

This legislation sets down the types of projects that may require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). Part 1 in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (amended) defines mandatory projects that require an EIAR and Part 2 of the same schedule defines projects that are assessed on the basis of set mandatory thresholds for each of the project classes.

In addition to Part 1 and Part 2 projects as referred to above, there are also sub-threshold projects. These projects may require the submission of an EIAR depending on individual assessments in accordance with certain criteria. They can be categorised by thresholds or can be assessed individually. The guiding principle is that *projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location* should be subject to EIA. Significant effects may arise by virtue of the type of development, the scale or extent of the development and the location of the development in relation to sensitive environments.

4) EIA Screening

EIA screening can be defined as the process of assessing the requirement of a project to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment based on the project type and scale and on the significance of the receiving environment.

Mandatory EIA



In the case of the proposed development, it is evident that it would fall under a category of development which would automatically require an EIAR as per Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, outlines the categories of development for the purposes of Part 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended – that is development that requires EIAR.

The following categories are relevant:

Schedule 5, Part 2

10. Infrastructure projects:

(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 zoned residential 1 in the Laois County development Plan 2017-2023. The site is not considered as a business district based on the meaning outlined above. Consequently, the threshold of 2 hectares is not applicable in this instance. The relevant threshold is 10 hectares. However, with a site area of **0.34 ha** approx the proposed development is sub-threshold and does not automatically require EIAR.



Sub-threshold EIA

The key issue with regard to the possible need for EIA of sub-threshold development is whether the development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended states the following

120. (1) (a) Where a local authority proposes to carry out a sub threshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

(b) 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.

(1A) (a) Where the local authority prepares, or causes to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A,

For sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, a screening determination is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, on preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.

Schedule 7

The proposed development is considered against the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This is based on the existence of realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment and considering the nature, size and location of the proposed development in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations,



The competent authority must proceed to a further examination to determine whether EIA is required pursuant to Schedule 7A to the 2001 Regulations in order to facilitate a formal screening determination.

Characteristics of the proposed development

Size of the proposed development

The area of the application site is given as **0.34ha.**

The cumulation with other proposed development

Impacts caused by one project, which may be considered minor and insignificant, can combine with other environmental impacts from existing or planned development. When taken in combination, these impacts could be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Existing development in the surrounding area predominantly comprises institutional and residential uses with a church and school to the north and a housing scheme to the east. The lands to the south are agricultural in use.

The adjoining land uses are of a small-medium scale which are in themselves sub threshold developments.

Subject to appropriate restrictions on the proposed development in relation to traffic movements, noise and dust emissions, mostly during the construction phase, it is considered that the potential for significant impacts on the environment from cumulative effects will not arise.

Nature of any associated demolition works

On the basis of the information provided with the Part VIII, the proposed development will only involve the demolition of the existing Civil Defence Buildings. Waste produced during the



demolition phase will be managed by a site-specific construction and demolition waste management plan.

The Use of Natural Resources

Natural resources on the site and in the surrounding area include:

- River Barrow/River Nore SAC is located approx. 500m to the south east
- Ballyprior Grassland SAC is located approx. 1.2m to the south

Given the scale of the development, available services and the distance involved in connecting to the SAC and the lack of a hydrological link it is considered that there will be no likely significant effect on the European Site. Also, as the proposed development has no discharges of note it is considered that there will be no potential for significant impacts on watercourses.

Soil excavated for construction will be reused on site or removed off site for re-use elsewhere.

Any vegetation removed during construction works will be replaced as part of a landscaping plan for the site.

Production of Waste

The proposal will not generate significant quantities of waste. Waste produced during the construction phase will be managed by a site-specific construction and demolition waste management plan.

During the operational phase there will be non-hazardous waste and packaging waste, WEEE, empty containers and landscaping waste.



Pollution and Nuisances

The proposed development has the potential to result in pollution and nuisances in the area during the construction phase due to dust and noise. Mitigation measures are proposed to deal with these issues including proper construction methodology.

It is considered that soil and water pollution impacts are insignificant and will not result in pollution or nuisance.

Subject to the implementation of the best practice measures identified as part of the proposed development, it is considered that these impacts would not be significant.

Risk of Accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used

None identified

Risks to Human Health

Risks to human health from the proposed development can principally arise from noise and dust emissions during construction.

Subject to the implementation of the mitigation and best practice measures identified as part of the proposed development, it is considered that these impacts would not be significant.

The characteristics of the development do not require EIAR to be carried out.



6) Location of the proposed development

The application site, given as **0.34 hectares**, is situated on a serviced and zoned site within the town boundaries of Stradbally. The site is bounded by residential properties to the west and an open field to the south. The site occupies a corner site with the junction of the N80 and the R427.

The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area and its underground

The proposed development is not likely to have significant effect on any Natura 2000 site owing to the separation distance, the lack of discharges and the existing connection to the public sewer network.

The absorption capacity of the natural environment

The site is not located in any upland or wetland area.

On the basis of the information available from a site walkover and from the Planning Authority's GIS in relation to archaeological and architectural heritage, there are no landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance on or in the vicinity of the application site.

7) Types and Characteristics of the Potential Impacts

Potential impacts can arise in relation to:

- Operational noise, vibration, dust and related nuisances for lands and adjoining properties the site mainly during the construction phase.
- Pollution of groundwater and surface water from during construction.



- There is no archaeological or architectural heritage on or in the vicinity of the site which could be impacted on by the proposed development.

Transfrontier nature of impact

The proposed development will be localised and will take place fully within the administrative area of Laois County Council.

Magnitude and complexity of impact

It is not considered that impacts from the proposed development would have the potential to affect a large range of receptors over a wide geographical area. The spatial extent of impacts would be more localised and the size of the population likely to be affected would not be significant.

Probability of impacts

Impacts from the proposed development can arise over the duration of the construction works, particularly with respect to noise and dust emissions, potential pollution of groundwater and surface water, and traffic impacts on the local road network. Subject to the strict implementation of the mitigation and best practice measures, it is considered that these impacts would not be significant.

Expected Onset, Duration, frequency and reversibility of impact

The development consists of a new fire station and associated works on a zoned and serviced site in the town of Stradbally. It is considered that the duration of any impacts will be during the construction phase of the development which may extend to a 6-12 month time period.



8) Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment as it is not likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of its nature, size or location.

David O'Hara

Senior Executive Planner



**APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT
AND
DETERMINATION**

(A) Project Details	
Planning File Ref	Part VIII
Applicant name	Fire Service
Development Location	Main Street, Stradbally
Site size	0.34ha
Application accompanied by an EIS (Yes/NO)	No – screening report has been prepared in respect of the proposed development
Distance from Natura 2000 site in km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ River Barrow/River Nore SAC is located approx. 500m to the south east ▪ Ballyprior Grassland SAC is located approx. 1.2m to the south



Description of the project/proposed development			
<p>Laois County Council is proposing to develop a new fire station under with Part XI, Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). The development will consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new 2 bay fire station with suitable training, welfare and storage facilities • Fire Service Drill tower • Underground water storage tank for pump purposes • Drill yard • The utilisation of “green” technology including rainwater harvesting 			
(B) Identification of Natura 2000 sites which may be impacted by the proposed development			
			<p>Yes/No</p> <p>If answer is yes, identify list name of Natura 2000 site likely to be impacted.</p>
1	<p>Impacts on sites designated for freshwater habitats or species.</p> <p>Sites to consider: River Barrow and Nore</p> <p>Ballyprior Grassland SAC</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include freshwater habitats and/or species, or in the catchment (upstream or downstream) of same?</i></p>	<p>No</p>
2	<p>Impacts on sites designated for wetland habitats - bogs, fens, marshes and heath.</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include wetland habitats (bog, marsh, fen or heath)</i></p>	<p>No</p>



	<p><u>Sites to consider:</u> River Barrow and Nore</p> <p>Ballyprior Grassland SAC</p>		
3	<p>Impacts on designated terrestrial habitats.</p> <p><u>Sites to consider:</u> River Barrow and Nore</p> <p>Ballyprior Grassland SAC</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include woodlands, dunes or grasslands, or within 100m of same?</i></p>	No
4	<p>Impacts on birds in SPAs</p> <p><u>Sites to consider:</u></p> <p>River Barrow and Nore</p> <p>Ballyprior Grassland SAC</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Protection Area?</i></p>	No

Conclusion:

If the answer to all of the above is **No**, significant impacts can be ruled out for habitats and bird species.

No further assessment in relation to habitats or birds is required.

If the answer is **Yes** refer to the relevant sections of **C**.

(G) SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT		
<i>Selected relevant category for project assessed by ticking box.</i>		
1	AA is not required because the project is directly connected with/necessary to the conservation management of the site	
2	No potential significant affects/AA is not required	X



3	Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain. Seek a Natura Impact Statement Reject proposal. (Reject if potentially damaging/inappropriate)	
Justify why it falls into relevant category above (based on information in above tables)		
Having regard to the proximity of the nearest Natura 2000 site and given the nature and extent of the proposed development, with no direct connections to the hydrology of the SAC/SPA, it is not considered there would be potential for significant effects on the Natura 2000 network.		
Name:	David O' Hara	
Position:	Senior Executive Planner	
Date:	26/08/2021	



APPENDIX 3

Photographs



Existing Stradbally Fire Station



New site - Aerial photo from drone



Lanesborough design (Co. Longford)