

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION TO  
AN BORD PLEANÁLA

FOR APPROVAL OF (I) THE N6 GALWAY CITY RING ROAD  
PURSUANT TO SECTION 51 OF THE ROADS ACT 1993 (AS  
AMENDED); (II) THE N6 GALWAY CITY RING ROAD  
MOTORWAY SCHEME 2018; and (III) THE N6 GALWAY CITY  
RING ROAD PROTECTED ROAD SCHEME 2018

ABP Ref. ABP-302848-18 and ABP-302885-18

ORAL HEARING

STATEMENT of Evidence

Responses to Landscape and Visual Aspects

Objections/Submissions

by

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## 1 Qualifications and Experience

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- 1.1 My name is Thomas Burns and I am a Partner and Landscape Architect with Brady Shipman Martin, environmental, landscape and planning consultants. I hold a Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree in Landscape and a postgraduate Diploma in Environmental Impact Assessment Management from University College Dublin, and an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law from King's Inn.
- 1.2 I have been involved in the carrying out of landscape and visual assessments for over 30 years. During the course of that time I have completed assessments for a wide range of projects relating to infrastructure developments – including over 750km of national primary and secondary roads, as well as for industrial, residential and institutional developments and have provided evidence at public oral hearings on a regular basis.

## 2 Role in Proposed Road Development

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- 2.1 On this project I was involved in the assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed road development and in the identification of proposed landscape and visual mitigation measures.

## 3 Key issues in relation to Landscape and Visual Aspects

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### 3.1 Overview of Landscape and Visual Aspects

- 3.1.1 The EIAR is to be taken as read and is not replicated here. To assist the Board in its consideration of the application and to put the response to objections and submissions in context, some of the key items pertaining to the landscape and visual assessment as detailed in Chapter 12 of the EIAR are summarised briefly in the following.
- 3.1.2 The proposed road development passes through a generally rural and urban edge landscape to the west, north and east of Galway City. Residential development is a prominent feature throughout, but especially along local roads from Bearna through to Letteragh; in suburban areas at Barnacranny and Dangan to the north of the city; along the N84 Headford Road at Ballindooley and around the village settlement of Castlegar to the east/northeast of the city.
- 3.1.3 The key aspects of landscape and visual significance and sensitivity as set out at Section 12.3.1.10 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR include:
- the River Corrib corridor and its wider setting, which includes the prominent ruins of Menlo Castle
  - the semi-natural character of sections of the landscape, particularly west and north of Bearna and northeast of Galway City

- The amenity, recreation and sports grounds of NUIG Sporting Campus on the west bank of the River Corrib
- the open recreational lands of Galway Racecourse
- the number, prominence and visual amenity of residential properties located along the proposed road development, most notably north of Bearná; northwest of Galway City; to either side of the N59 Moycullen Road, north of the city; along the N84 Headford Road at Ballindooley Lough and at Castlegar northeast of the city; and from Ballybrit through to Coolagh-Briarhill to the east of the city

3.1.4 The construction and initial operational stage of the proposed road development will give rise to significant landscape and visual impacts until such stage as the extensive landscape and visual proposals have established and become increasingly effective in mitigating these impacts.

3.1.5 The principal aspects or characteristics of the proposed road development likely to give rise to potential landscape and visual impacts are set out under Section 12.4 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR, both under construction phase (Section 12.4.1) and operational phase (Section 12.4.2). The key landscape and visual considerations are impacts on:

- properties, landscapes and amenities
- landscapes west and north of Bearná, and from the River Corrib through to Ballindooley
- suburban residential landscapes located to either side of the N59 Moycullen Road and from Ballindooley through Castlegar and Ballybrit
- the corridor of the River Corrib, including NUIG Sporting Campus

3.1.6 The proposed road development includes a comprehensive and detailed suite of measures for the avoidance, reduction and remediation of landscape and visual impacts. The detail of these mitigation measures is provided in Section 12.6 and Tables 12.7 and 12.8 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR and on Figures 12.1.01 to 12.1.15 in Volume 3 of the EIAR.

3.1.7 I am aware that a significant number of objections and submissions raise queries in relation to the proposed landscape measures along the proposed road development. Therefore, I go through the proposed landscape mitigation measures in some detail under responses to submissions.

3.1.8 Some degree of residual visual impact will continue to arise for residential and other properties located close to or adjoining the boundary of the proposed road development – most notably to either side of the N59 Moycullen Road, at Ballindooley and at Castlegar – and where the proposed road development, including the River Corrib Bridge, crosses sensitive landscape areas, including the River Corrib and the NUIG Sporting Campus.

- 3.1.9 While the proposed road development does give rise to significant landscape and visual effects, the project also includes a comprehensive and detailed suite of measures for the avoidance, reduction and remediation of landscape and visual impacts. These include construction and operation stage scheme-wide measures applied across the proposed road development, as well as specific measures that address particular landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.1.10 The proposed modification of the Parkmore Link Road includes for berming and associated 3m wide screen planting (as per provided for in Table 12.8 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR) to mitigate any potential visual impact on Galway Racecourse. The proposed modification of the Parkmore Link Road will not have any significant landscape or visual impact either locally or in the wider setting and does not alter the assessment of the landscape and visual impact of the proposed road development provided in Chapter 12 of the EIAR.
- 3.1.11 NUIG has made a separate application for planning permission (Galway City planning ref. no.: 19372) for a proposed 3G all-weather and grass pitch development at Dangan, Newcastle. The proposed pitch development is to be located south of existing soccer pitches and to the immediate north of the proposed road development. The layout of the pitch development has been designed to take account of the proposed road development. The proposed pitch development also includes for provision of a biodiversity enhancement area to the north (riverside) of the existing pitches.
- 3.1.12 The proposed pitch development is located within the existing NUIG Sporting Campus and the development does not give rise to further cumulative landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.1.13 The removal of the proposed all-weather pitch does not have any significant landscape or visual impact either locally or in the wider setting and while referenced in the assessment, its removal does not alter the findings of the assessment of the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed road development presented in Chapter 12 of the EIAR.
- 3.1.14 It is proposed to provide a potential nest site for peregrine falcons on a c.25m high lighting- column style pole within City Council lands at Knockayarragh, Castlegar. An access gate and access track will also be provided off the N84 Headford Road to the structure via these lands. The location is close to where peregrine falcons are already found in Lackagh Quarry.
- 3.1.15 The proposed lightweight thin structure and access arrangements will not result in any significant landscape or visual impact either locally or in the wider setting and does not alter the findings of the assessment of the landscape and visual impact of the proposed road development provided in Chapter 12 of the EIAR.
- 3.1.16 The following proposed developments were lodged for permission post the application for approval for the N6 GCRR:

- Plot 229: Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application for 238 residential units at Ballyburke (ref.: ABP-304762-19) – permitted October 2019.
- Plot 469 (S\_003): Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application for 332 residential units at Gort na Bró, Ragoon (ref.: ABP-305982-19) – decision due by 30 March 2020.
- NUIG Sports Pitch Development (Galway City planning ref. no.: 19372).

It is considered that the proposed developments do not result in significant cumulative landscape or visual impacts with the proposed road development. Screen planting has been provided as part of the proposed road development through Plot 229 as per Figure 12.1.04. The lands at Plots 229 and 469 are already zoned for development, and the NUIG site is part of the existing Sporting Campus at NUIG, which is zoned for recreation and amenity use.

## 4 Responses to Objections/Submissions

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### 4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Landscape and Visual aspects are raised in a considerable number of the submissions and objections submitted to An Bord Pleanála with respect to the application (October, 2018) as well as in a small number of the submissions and objections submitted to An Bord Pleanála with respect to the Response to the Request for Further Information (August, 2019). Responses to these landscape and visual issues are included with this statement of evidence.

4.1.2 The items raised in relation to landscape and visual aspects are:

- Details of the Landscape (Planting) Measures.
- Landscaping of Attenuation/Drainage Ponds.
- Stone Walls.
- Road Lighting.
- Visual Impact on Properties.
- Impact on NUIG Sporting Campus and Menlo Castle.

## 4.2 Details of the Landscape (Planting) Measures

### Issues raised in objections/submissions

4.2.1 Landscaping / planting measures are inadequate or details on proposed measures are inadequate.

The following objections/submissions raised this point: Ob\_102; Ob\_105; Ob\_115; Ob\_117; Ob\_134; Ob\_135; Ob\_136; Ob\_139; Ob\_141; Ob\_145; Ob\_151; Ob\_152; Ob\_155; Ob\_156; Ob\_158; Ob\_167; Ob\_168; Ob\_177; Ob\_187; Ob\_195; Ob\_197; Ob\_199; Ob\_201; Ob\_204; Ob\_205; Ob\_207; Ob\_208; Ob\_209; Ob\_211; Ob\_212; Ob\_216; Ob\_217; Ob\_219; Ob\_222; Ob\_223 & 261; Ob\_229; Ob\_238; Ob\_239; Ob\_272 & 462; Ob\_298; Ob\_468 & 501; Ob\_484; Ob\_485; Ob\_493; Ob\_496; Ob\_498; Ob\_499; Ob\_545 & 561; Ob\_569; Ob\_575; Ob\_589; Ob\_603; Ob\_620; Ob\_626; Ob\_628 & 702; Ob\_629; Ob\_631; Ob\_632; Ob\_634; Ob\_639; Ob\_643; Ob\_663; Ob\_666; Ob\_684; Ob\_688; Ob\_705; Ob\_716; Ob\_750; Ob\_751; Ob\_757; S-029; S\_059; S\_065; S\_067.

### Response

4.2.2 Landscape mitigation measures and landscape proposals are set out Section 12.6 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR, with specific details provided in Tables 12.7 and 12.8. The locations of specific screen planting proposals are identified on Figures 12.1.01 – 12.1.15 in Volume 3 of the EIAR. This description of the measures includes an introduction to the approach and guidance used in the development of landscape mitigation measures as well as a description of the general and specific measures proposed during the construction and operation phases.

4.2.3 **Construction Stage:** Many of the proposed construction stage measures involve best practice in terms of minimising the potential effects of construction works and in adhering to the working practices and measures set out in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP – Appendix A.7.5 of the EIAR). By way of example the following specific measures are set out in Section 12.6.2 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR:

- Storage areas will be located so as to avoid impacting further on existing residential and other property, woodlands, trees, hedgerows, drainage patterns, etc.
- Solid site hoarding of minimum 2.0m in height will be provided alongside construction works adjoining residential property or recreational amenities
- Solid hoarding or similar, of minimum 2.0m in height will be provided along any side of a proposed construction compounds, where they are located within 100m of residential properties
- Construction compounds will be fully-decommissioned and reinstated to their pre-construction condition at the end of the construction contract

- Side slopes and other landscape areas along the proposed road development will be prepared for soiling, and either seeded and/or planted at the earliest possible opportunity. As such, some scope may exist for undertaking significant areas of seeding and planting prior to the end of the construction works

4.2.4 **Operation Stage:** Mitigation measures proposed for the operation phase of the proposed road development (as detailed in Section 12.6.3 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR) are set under:

- Project-wide Landscape Measures (Section 12.6.3.1) that are applied along the length of the proposed road development and detailed in Table 12.7 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR
- Specific Landscape Measures (Section 12.6.3.2) that address particular landscape and visual impacts along the proposed road development and are detailed in Table 12.8 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR and identified, as appropriate, on Figures 12.1.01 to 12.1.15 of the EIAR

4.2.5 The overriding consideration in the design of the planting mitigation is to establish a relatively low-growing but dense planting that will provide for effective screening of the proposed road development and of associated traffic and that will also provide the best opportunity for assimilation of the development into its wider landscape setting. This is best achieved through the use of a broad range of deciduous and evergreen native species that are also appropriate to the particular area.

4.2.6 While landscape proposals seek to address landscape fragmentation, visual impact, visual intrusion, planting diversity and habitat development, in proposing these measures, I am also aware that the exposed nature of the landscape in certain areas will, in the way of indigenous planting, have the effect of restricting the overall growth and height of proposed planting. However, this will have the effect of helping to maintain existing open views from properties and the landscape generally whilst screening the proposed road development.

The key landscape proposals are set out in the following sections.

4.2.7 **Boundary Hedgerow:** New hedgerow planting will be established along the full extent of the fenceline boundary of the proposed road development, excluding at structures – bridges, tunnels etc., or where retained hedgerows form the new boundary. New hedgerows will also be planted around attenuation ponds.

4.2.8 Hedgerow planting will comprise a double staggered hedgerow with tree planting, where locally appropriate.

4.2.9 In western areas, hedgerow planting will comprise 30% blackthorn, 40% hawthorn and 10% holly, interspersed with 20% of species such as elder, willow and others found in the local environment.

- 4.2.10 In eastern areas, hedgerow planting will comprise 30% hazel, 40% hawthorn and 10% holly, interspersed with 20% of species such as blackthorn, elder, willow and others found in the local environment.
- 4.2.11 Hawthorn plants (40% of planting) will be minimum 90cm in height and planted at 50cm centres in each of two double staggered rows set 25cm apart. Other plants will be minimum 50cm high.
- 4.2.12 The hedgerow will be interspersed with half-standard trees (6-8cm girth – circa 2.4 to 2.8m high) of alder, birch and/or oak species planted in a random manner averaging c.1 tree/25 metres.
- 4.2.13 In total this will result in the planting of over 68km of new hedgerow with c.275,000 hedgerow trees and shrubs, which includes over 2,700 half-standard sized trees.
- 4.2.14 **Screen Planting:** Depending on available width, screen planting is proposed for mitigation of visual impact in planting belts of 3m to 6m, or more, in depth as set out on Figures 12.1.01 to 12.1.15 of Volume 3 of the EIAR. In some locations of larger embankment, planting depth increases up to a maximum of 18m.
- 4.2.15 Screening planting will be established at 1m centres and will include for quick growing and adaptable native tree species (alder, birch, rowan and Scots pine) and shrub species (blackthorn, elder, geulder rose, holly, hawthorn, hazel and willow).
- 4.2.16 Evergreen species will comprise 35% of the planting numbers, with Scots pine trees at 20% and holly at a further 15%. Trees planted as half-standards and standards (i.e. British Standard (BS 3936-1) tree sizes of 6-8cm girth and 8-10cm girth and c. 2.4 to 3.0m high) will comprise a minimum 10% of the planting numbers.
- 4.2.17 In total this will result in the planting of over 300,000 sqm of screen planting with c.300,000 trees and shrubs, which includes c.40,000 standard/half-standard-sized trees.
- 4.2.18 **Other Planting:** In addition to the proposed boundary hedgerow and screen planting described above, planting is also proposed along noise barriers/bunds, in small landscape areas along the proposed road development and for specific ecological mitigation.
- 4.2.19 In overall terms, landscape proposals as detailed in Chapter 12 of the EIAR will result in the establishment of over 500,000sqm of new planting using approximately one million trees and shrubs.
- 4.2.20 Together the proposals comprise a comprehensive suite of locally appropriate measures that will avoid, remediate and/or mitigate the identified landscape and visual effects of the proposed road development. The overall objective of the measures is, insofar as possible, to provide a landscape setting for the effective integration of the proposed road development into its receiving environment.
- 4.2.21 The specific landscape measures applying to each submission that raised this issue is highlighted in the following.

**Ob\_102:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of section of existing stone wall on the west side of the access link off the proposed Bearna West Roundabout
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belts as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development, where other measures are not provided

**Ob\_105:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of section of existing hedgerow on the western boundary of the garden
- Retention of section of stone wall field boundary on north side of plot 105a.203
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belts as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development, where other measures are not provided

**Ob\_111:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along east side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_115:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along east side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_117:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of short sections of existing stone wall boundaries
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_134:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the property side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- The planting as proposed will have some impact on longer views south from the property, but the design approach for the planting is to provide dense low level screening of the proposed road development
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments on Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development through this area

**Ob\_135:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing garden and field boundaries to the rear of the property
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the property side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments on Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development through this area

**Ob\_136:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing garden and field boundaries to the rear of the property
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the property side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- The planting as proposed will have some impact on longer views south from the property, but the design approach for the planting is to provide dense low level screening of the proposed road development
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments on Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development through this area

**Ob\_139:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed road development and Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road North as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments on Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01

- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_141:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed road development and Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road North as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments on Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the residential property boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_145:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed road development and Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments on Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the residential property boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_151 & 152:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed road development and Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road South as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the Link Road where it ties into the existing road as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt around the side of the proposed attenuation pond facing the property as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the residential property boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_155:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt around the proposed access junction off the realigned section of the Troscaigh Road at Ch. 1+550/1+600 as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the residential property boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing
- It is proposed to extend the proposed of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the north side of the proposed road development west from Ch. 1+760 back to Ch. 1+580

**Ob\_156:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt around the proposed Na Foraí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road North at Ch. 1+550/1+600 as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_158:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt around the proposed Na Foraí Maola to Troscaigh Link Road North at Ch. 1+550/1+600 as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankments leading to the Troscaigh Overbridge as indicated on Figure 12.1.01
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the residential property boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_167:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_168:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along part of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_177:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the property residential boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_187:** No specific landscape measures are proposed as there will be no impact on the existing property. Screen hedgerow planting is provided along the proposed road development, which is over 400m from the property.

**Ob\_195:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along full property boundary with the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the property boundary interface with the proposed Bearna East roundabout as indicated on Figure 12.1.02
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the property residential boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_197:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_199:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Northern and western boundaries are retained as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- Provision of between 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the realigned section of An Chloch Scoilte junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.03

- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_201:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of between 3m and 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- Planting proposals include for a range of native species and plant sizes which seek to provide an adaptable quick establishing mix. The mix includes for 35% of evergreen species and 10% of trees at up to 3.0m in height at planting
- The planting as proposed will have some impact on longer views south from the property, but the design approach for the planting is to provide dense low level screening of the proposed road development
- Provision of between 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the realigned section of An Chloch Scoilte junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_204:** Specific landscape measures include:

- The existing southern boundary is retained as indicated on Figure 12.1.03.
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the realigned section of An Chloch Scoilte junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_205:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_207:** Specific landscape measures include:

- The mainline is in cutting past this property
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the embankment of the proposed access road on east side off Aillie Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.03

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the west side of Aillie Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Any impacted section of the property residential boundary wall will be reconstructed to match existing

**Ob\_208:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_209:** Specific landscape measures include:

- The mainline is in cutting through this property
- Provision of a new tree-lined boundary hedgerow along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_211:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_212:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Existing boundaries are retained as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_216:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted sections of the property boundaries to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the southern side of AR4/05 immediately south of the house as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development south of the property as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_217:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted sections of the property boundaries to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the southern side of AR4/05 on the northern boundary of the property as indicated on Figure 12.1.03
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development south of the property as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_219:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted sections of the residential property boundary to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development south of the property as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_222:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the residential property boundary to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development north of the property as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_223 & 261:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the proposed road development though property 223 as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the north side of the proposed road development and a 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the north side of the proposed road development though property 261 as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_229:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the residential property boundary at Ballymoneen Road to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the north side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the Ballymoneen Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.04
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_238:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of between 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belt along the south side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- Provision of between 3m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belt along the Ballymoneen Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_239:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary at Ragoon Road to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- Provision of between 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belt along the south side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- Provision of between 3m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belt along the Ballymoneen Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_272 & 462:** Specific landscape measures include:

- The mainline of the proposed road development is in cutting through plots 272 & 462
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed road development and junction access lanes through plots 272 & 462 as indicated on Figures 12.1.05 & 12.1.06
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the N59 Link Road North and South and along sections of the Letteragh Road through plots 272 & 462 as indicated on Figures 12.1.05 & 12.1.06

- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_298:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary at Rahoon Road to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belts along both sides of the proposed road development and junction access lanes as indicated on Figures 12.1.05 & 12.1.06
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the N59 Link Road South and along sections of the Letteragh Road as indicated on Figures 12.1.05 & 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_468 & 501:** Specific landscape measures at plots 568 & 501a include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belts along both sides of the proposed road development and junction access lanes as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the N59 Link Road North as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development
- Plots 501b.201, 501b.202 & 501c.201 relate to the road carriageway only at Radharc An Locha – no landscape mitigation measures apply as indicated on Figure 12.1.06

**Ob\_485:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary at Letteragh Road to match existing as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along both sides of the proposed N59 Link Road South development as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the Letteragh Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_493:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries where possible
- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary as indicated on Figure 12.1.12

**Ob\_496:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries where possible
- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary as indicated on Figure 12.1.12
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along cut slopes on both sides of the proposed N59 Link Road South development as indicated on Figure 12.1.12
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the top of the cut slopes on the west side of the proposed N59 Link Road South development as indicated on Figure 12.1.12

**Ob\_498:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries where possible
- Provision of between 3m and 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the top of the cut slopes on the west side of the proposed N59 Link Road South development as indicated on Figures 12.1.06 & 12.1.12
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_499:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries where possible
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the top of the cut slopes along the proposed N59 Link Road South development as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_506:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries where possible
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the top of the cut slopes along the proposed N59 Link Road South development as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_545 & 561:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries and plantings where possible
- Provision of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along the eastern embankment leading to the proposed bridge as indicated on Figure 12.1.07
- Provision of tree planting at the top of the embankment from approx. Ch 9+600 to 10+100 as indicated on Figure 12.1.07
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_569:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of existing boundaries where possible
- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary as indicated on Figure 12.1.07
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt on embankment slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.07
- Provision of tree planting at the top of the embankment from approx.ch 9+600 to 10+100 as indicated on Figure 12.1.07
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_575 & 589** These plots relate to the road carriageway only at Coolough Road – no landscape mitigation measures apply as indicated on Figure 12.1.07.

**Ob\_603:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of multiple layers of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment slopes along the proposed road development and AR 11/02 as indicated on Figure 12.1.08
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_620:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of multiple layers of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment slopes along the proposed road development and AR 12/01 as indicated on Figure 12.1.08
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_626:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of multiple layers of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_628 & 702:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of layers of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of planted wildlife overpass bridge structure
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_629:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of layers of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of planted wildlife overpass bridge structure
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_631:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt on south side of AR 12/04 as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt on north side of AR 12/04 as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of layers of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_632:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of large areas of existing planting, as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt on south side of AR 12/04 as indicated on Figure 12.1.09

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belts around attenuation ponds as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of layers of 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_634:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along northern boundary of property as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of layers of 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_639:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Retention of large areas of existing planting, as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt western rear boundary of property as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of layers of 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_643:** It is proposed to acquire this property. Notwithstanding this, specific landscape measures through this area include:

- Provision of layers of 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_663:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of layers of 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development and around the proposed attenuation pond as indicated on Figure 12.1.09

- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_666:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Reconstruction/replacement of the impacted section of the property boundary as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development and around the proposed attenuation pond as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision of 6m wide mixed screen planting belt along south side of the City North Business Park Link as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_684:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m to 18m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development and around the Parkmore Link Road Junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.10
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the N83 Tuam Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_688:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 6m to 18m wide mixed screen planting belts on embankment and cut slopes along the proposed road development and around the Parkmore Link Road Junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.10.
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the N83 Tuam Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_705:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of up to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on cut slopes along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.09
- Provision 6m wide mixed screen planting belts along the property boundary with the proposed fenceline
  - A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_716:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m to 6m wide mixed screen planting belts along the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.10
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_750:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of layers of 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on cut slopes along the proposed road development and between link roads in the Coolagh Junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.11
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the boundary of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.11
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_751:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of layers of 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on cut slopes along the proposed road development and between link roads in the Coolagh Junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.11
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the boundary of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.11
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**Ob\_757:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of layers of 6m wide mixed screen planting belts on cut slopes along the proposed road development and between link roads in the Coolagh Junction as indicated on Figure 12.1.11
- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt along the boundary of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.11
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**S-029:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m wide mixed screen planting belt between the N59 Link Road south and Bóthar Diarmuida as indicated on Figure 12.1.13
- Planting in the existing entrance area will be protected during construction by the provision of a temporary protective fence as illustrated on Figure 1.6.26 of Appendix A.1.9 of the RFI Response
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**S-059 & S\_065:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of between 6m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belt along the south side of the proposed road development as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- Provision of between 3m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belt along the Ballymoneen Road as indicated on Figure 12.1.05
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**S\_067:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on the embankment along the north side of the proposed road development through Aughnacurra as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of additional 6m wide mixed screen planting belts along acquired property boundaries through Aughnacurra as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of tree planting along the CPO boundary through Aughnacurra as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

**S\_077:** Specific landscape measures include:

- Provision of 3m to 12m wide mixed screen planting belts on the embankment along the north side of the proposed road development through Aughnacurra as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of additional 6m wide mixed screen planting belts along acquired property boundaries through Aughnacurra as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- Provision of tree planting along the CPO boundary through Aughnacurra as indicated on Figure 12.1.06
- A new tree-lined boundary hedgerow will be established along the fenceline of the proposed road development

## 4.3 Landscaping of Attenuation/Drainage Ponds

### Issues raised in objections/submissions

- 4.3.1 Queries have been raised in relation to “unsightly” Attenuation / Drainage Ponds and details of associated landscape proposals.
- 4.3.2 The following objections/submissions raised this point: Ob\_134; Ob\_151; Ob\_152; S-029; S\_56; S\_077.

### Response

- 4.3.3 Proposed attenuation ponds/drainage ponds will not be unsightly features in the landscape. While secure paladin fencing will be erected around the ponds for safety reasons, the ponds have the potential to add to local landscape, visual and ecological diversity.
- 4.3.4 New hedgerows will be established around the secure fencing and sections of screen plantings will be established where residential properties overlook such ponds. Areas around ponds will be finished to include a diverse landscape of low maintenance grassland/species-rich grass sward with a variety of scrub, shrub and low canopy woodland plantings as set out in Table 12.7 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR.
- 4.3.5 The overall objective of the landscape treatment around pond features is to provide a sustainable, low maintenance and ecologically diverse landscape of grassland and mixed planting with new hedgerows along secured boundaries.

## 4.4 Stone Walls

### Issues raised in objections/submissions

- 4.4.1 Queries are raised on the detail of proposed boundary treatments and requests have been made for replacement / new stone boundary walls. These queries have been addressed in the statement of evidence present by Ms. Eileen McCarthy of Arup.
- 4.4.2 A number of objections/submissions also query the impact of removal of stone walls on landscape character and landscape planning considerations.
- 4.4.3 The following objections/submissions raised this point: Ob\_116; Ob\_134; Ob\_197; Ob\_216; Ob\_311.

### Response

- 4.4.4 The approach to proposed boundary treatments is set out in Section 5.5.4.3 of Chapter 5 of the EIAR and in relation to stone walls in Table 12.8 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR. This approach has been further clarified at Section 2.6.2 of the RFI Response and in associated Figures 1.6.01 to 1.6.30 (Appendix A.1.9, August 2019), and again in the detailed statement of evidence presented by Ms. Eileen McCarthy.

- 4.4.5 In Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards, the Galway City Development Plan includes references to retention of stone walls “*where possible*” (section 11.2.8, pages 176-180); and “*where feasible*” (section 11.3.1 (a), page 185).
- 4.4.6 Likewise, Galway County Development Plan contains similar references to retention and incorporation of features such as stone walls into development, “*wherever possible*” or “*wherever feasible*” (e.g. Objective NHB 11, page 162 and DM Standard 41, page 239).
- 4.4.7 These references are acknowledged in Section 12.3.1.6 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR and in this context it is also recognised that stone walls are a feature of the local landscape (refer to section 12.3.1.2, and Table 12.2 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR), as is the fact that the stone walls in the landscape are often dilapidated and overgrown with scrub. As such the stone wall field boundaries along the proposed road development are not – and never were – of a character or quality of the stone wall landscape of east Galway. In most places these original field boundary features are fading into the background landscape and the original prominence they may have had is continually declining. Nevertheless, these features are retained along the proposed road development, wherever possible (refer to Figures 12.1.01-12.1.15 of the EIAR).
- 4.4.8 Stone walls of various type and age are a notable feature around residential and other properties along the proposed road development. Therefore, it is proposed to retain and/or replace, wherever possible, existing stone walls along local roads and where such features are impacted around residential properties.
- 4.4.9 Where stone walls are removed and not replaced as part of the proposed road development, the stone will be retained and made available for re-use by the adjacent property owners for the construction of a new stone wall their side of the proposed development boundary if they wish.
- 4.4.10 It would be impractical, and importantly, inappropriate to build new stone walls along the fenceline of the mainline of the proposed road development. Given the varied and understated nature of indigenous stone walls in the landscape, newly constructed stone walls along the proposed road development would in themselves be overbearing, out of character and visually incongruous in this landscape.

## 4.5 Road Lighting and Light Impact

### Issues raised in objections/submissions

- 4.5.1 Queries have been raised on the extent and potential impact of road lighting.
- 4.5.2 The following objections/submissions raised this point: Ob\_111; Ob\_151; Ob\_195; 207; Ob\_213; Ob\_216; Ob\_296; Ob\_298; Ob\_457; Ob\_O-511.07; Ob\_512; Ob\_517; Ob\_677; Ob\_678; Ob\_688; S-029; S-031; S-042; S-051; S-059; S-065; S-071.

### Response

- 4.5.3 Road lighting is proposed for limited sections / locations along the proposed road development as set out on Figures 5.4.01 to 5.4.15 of Volume 3 of the EIAR.
- 4.5.4 West of the proposed N59 Letteragh Junction, lighting is restricted to the immediate approaches to/junctions at:
- Mainline of the N6 GCRR / R336 Bearná West Roundabout (Ch. 0+031)
  - Mainline of the N6 GCRR / L1321 Bearná East Roundabout (Ch. 2+800)
  - Mainline of the N6 GCRR / Cappagh Road Junction (Ch. 4+455)
  - Mainline of the N6 GCRR / Ballymoneen Road Junction (Ch. 5+640), where road lighting is already adjacent on the Ballymoneen Road
- 4.5.5 East of the proposed N59 Letteragh Junction, lighting is restricted to:
- The approach to the western portal of Lackagh Tunnel (Ch. 10+920 to 11+140)
  - The section of the mainline from the eastern portal of Lackagh Tunnel (Ch. 11+420), through the N84 Headford Road Junction (Ch. 12+110) to the N83 Tuam Road Junction (Ch. 14+000). Road lighting is already present along the N83 Tuam Road and is close by on the N84 Headford Road and at Castlegar
  - Along the proposed City North Business Park Road and the Parkmore Link Road
  - The approach to either portal of the Galway Racecourse Tunnel, and along a section of Racecourse Avenue, where road lighting is already present in the wider environment at Parkmore Road and in the Parkmore West Business Park
  - At Ballybrit Crescent Junction, where road lighting is already present
  - Along the Briarhill Link and proposed Coolagh Junction, where road lighting is already present through most of this area

- At the City East Business Park Junction, where road lighting is also already present
- 4.5.6 Road lighting is provided along the full extent of the N59 Link Road North and the N59 Link Road South. Road lighting is already an existing feature along the corridor of N59 Link Road South and at the N59 Link Road North tie-in to the N59 Moycullen Road at Bushypark.
- 4.5.7 As detailed at Section 5.5.4.4 of Chapter 5 of the EIAR, proposed road lighting has been designed to limit light trespass and measures include:
- The use of modern LED fittings with well-defined, controlled light beam distribution
  - The use of horizontal, lighting cut-off fittings, which prevents light emission to the sky and minimises light direction off the proposed road development
- 4.5.8 While the extent of road lighting is limited, it is noted in Section 12.5.5 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR that, where road lighting is not an existing feature of the landscape, new lighting will emphasise the degree of change brought about by the proposed road development.
- 4.5.9 In addition to the lighting design measures above, proposed landscape planting measures will also ensure that roadside screening is provided to filter out the effect of roadside lighting and lights from traffic using the proposed road development.
- 4.5.10 The specific measures applying to each submission that raised this issue is highlighted in the following.
- **Ob\_111:** The property is located over 200m north of where road side lighting is being provided for the Bearna West Roundabout. Given the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, the property will not be adversely impacted by illumination at the roundabout.
  - **Ob\_151:** No road lighting is provided in the vicinity of this property. As set out under section 4.2 to the statement of evidence (and on Figure 12.1.01 of EIAR), significant planting is proposed along Na Foraí Maola Link Road South to ensure that lighting from road traffic does not impact the property.
  - **Ob\_195:** The property is located adjacent to the Bearna East Roundabout. In addition to the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, significant planting (up to 6m deep – see Figure 12.1.03 of the EIAR) is also provided along the property boundary at the proposed junction. Nevertheless it is acknowledged that the impact of the proposed road development, including the proposed lighting, on the setting of this property is significant.
  - **Ob\_207:** The property is located over 450m east of the Bearna East Roundabout, the nearest location of proposed road lighting. Given the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design and the extent of planting proposed around the roundabout (up to 6m deep – see Figure

12.1.03 of the EIAR), the property will not be adversely impacted by road lighting proposals.

- **Ob\_213:** The property is located adjacent to the Cappagh Road Junction, where road lighting is proposed. However, it is also noted that up to 6m deep of screen planting is proposed along the proposed road development and along the Cappagh Road at this property (refer to Figure 12.1.04 of the EIAR). It is also noted that existing road lighting is already a feature in the wider landscape around this area, with road lighting c.200m to the south at the Western Distributor Road and at the Binn Bhán residential estate to the southeast. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the impact of the proposed road development, including the proposed lighting, on the setting of this property is significant in the short-term.
- **Ob\_216:** The property is located c.100m north of the nearest proposed road lighting at the Cappagh Road Junction. Given the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, the property will not be adversely impacted by road lighting at the junction.
- **Ob\_296:** The property is located c.200m north of the nearest proposed road lighting at the N59 Letteragh Junction. Given the significant extent of planting proposed around the junction (refer to Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR) and the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, the property will not be adversely impacted by road lighting at the junction.
- **Ob\_298:** The property is located c.150 west of the nearest proposed road lighting at the N59 Link Road South/N59 Letteragh Junction. Given the significant extent of planting proposed around the junction (refer to Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR) and the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, the property will not be adversely impacted by road lighting at the junction.
- **Ob\_457:** The property is located adjacent to the N59 Letteragh Junction which includes proposed road lighting. In addition to the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, significant planting (refer to Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR) is also provided throughout the proposed junction and at the property boundary. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the impact of the proposed road development, including the proposed lighting, on the setting of this property is significant.
- **Ob\_511.07 & 512:** These properties are located in The Heath c.400m from proposed road lighting at the N59 Letteragh Junction. Street lighting is also an existing feature within The Heath. Given the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, the extensive planting proposed at the junction and the distance, the property will not be adversely impacted by road lighting.
- **Ob\_517:** The property is located at Árd na Locha on the N59 Moycullen Road, an area within the established road lighting limit of Galway City and

there are no proposals for additional road lighting in this area. Noise barriers are provided along the proposed road development through this area and there will be no glare or impact from road traffic lights.

- **Ob\_677 & 678:** The property is located close to the existing road lighting limit of Galway City and it is proposed to extend this road lighting c.300m further along the N83 Tuam Road. This is appropriate given the nature of the N83 Tuam Road through this urban edge location. Given the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, road lighting will not adversely impact the property.
- **Ob\_688:** The property is located close to the existing road lighting limit of Galway City and it is proposed to extend this road lighting c.300m further along the N83 Tuam Road. No lighting is proposed at the adjoining Parkmore Business Park Junction. Given the location and the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, road lighting will not adversely impact the property.
- **S\_029, S\_031, S\_051 & S\_065:** Rosán Glas is located within the existing road lighting limit of Galway City and roads within the estate are already fitted with road lighting standards. While it is proposed to provide road lighting along the N59 Link Road South given the suburban location and the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, road lighting will not adversely impact the properties.
- **S\_042:** The property is located c.250m north of proposed lighting at the Cappagh Road Junction. Given the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, the property will not be adversely impacted by road lighting at the junction.
- **S\_059:** Árd Na Gaoithe is located over 200m from proposed road lighting at Ballymoneen Road Junction. Árd Na Gaoithe is also within the existing road lighting limit of Galway City and roads within the estate are fitted with road lighting standards. While it is proposed to provide road lighting along the N59 Link Road South given the suburban location and the measures outlined for the proposed lighting design, road lighting will not adversely impact the properties.
- **S\_071:** Noise barriers are provided along both side of the proposed road development from the bridge west to where the road enters deep cutting approaching N59 Letteragh Junction. Lighting from traffic will not adversely impact properties at Barnacranny.

## 4.6 Visual Impact on Properties

### Issues raised in objections/submissions

- 4.6.1 A number of objections/submissions raise concerns on the visual impact on properties as a result of the proposed road development
- 4.6.2 The following objections/submissions raised this point: Ob\_135; Ob\_136; Ob\_158; Ob\_159; Ob\_312; Ob\_457; Ob\_493; Ob\_O-511; Ob\_517; Ob\_569; Ob\_607; Ob\_677; Ob\_678; Ob\_S-008; Ob\_S-011; Ob\_S-029; Ob\_S-037; Ob\_S-053; Ob\_S-059; Ob\_S-065;

### Response

- 4.6.3 A detailed assessment of visual impacts on properties is provided in Chapter 12 of the EIAR. This includes a Visual Impact Schedule (VIS), in Appendix 12.1 of Volume 4 of the EIAR, which assesses the potential visual impact at each property or group of properties along the full length of the proposed road development.
- 4.6.4 The VIS includes an assessment of the potential visual impact:
- during the construction stage
  - at pre-establishment stage, i.e. at opening, when planting is not mature
  - at post-establishment stage, i.e. when planting has matured sufficiently to provide the envisaged mitigation. Therefore, the effectiveness of mitigation is enhanced with growth and increased density of planting. While progressive, this usually requires a period of 5 to 7 years of development
- 4.6.5 As well as the assessment presented in the VIS, the potential landscape and visual impact of the proposed road development is further described in Chapter 12 of the EIAR on an area by area basis along the length of the proposed road development from west to east, with reference to the different landscape character areas (LCA) as follows:
- **West and North of Bearna (Landscape Character Area 9)**  
Construction Stage: Section 12.5.3.1 Ch. 0+000 to Ch. 6+300  
Operation Stage: Section 12.5.4.1 Ch. 0+000 to Ch. 6+300
  - **Northwest of Galway City: including Mincloon, Ragoon, Letteragh (Landscape Character Area 12)**  
Construction Stage: Section 12.5.3.2 Ch. 6+300 to Ch. 8+000  
Operation Stage: Section 12.5.4.2 Ch. 6+300 to Ch. 8+000
  - **North of Galway City: including The Heath Árd na Locha / Aughnacurra / Dangan / River Corrib Valley (Landscape Character Area 11)**

Construction Stage: Section 12.5.3.3 Ch. 8+000 to Ch. 11+800

Operation Stage: Section 12.5.4.3 Ch. 8+000 to Ch. 11+800

- **Northeast of Galway City: including Lackagh, Ballindooley, Castlegar (Landscape Character Area 5)**

Construction Stage: Section 12.5.3.4 Ch. 11+800 to Ch. 14+200

Operation Stage: Section 12.5.4.4 Ch. 11+800 to Ch. 14+200

- **East of Galway City: including Parkmore, Ballybrit, Dougishka, Coolagh-Briarhill (Landscape Character Area 3)**

Construction Stage: Section 12.5.3.5 Ch. 14+200 to Ch. 17+540

Operation Stage: Section 12.5.4.5 Ch. 14+200 to Ch. 17+540

4.6.6 Where potentially significant visual impacts are identified, mitigation measures are proposed as set out in Section 12.6 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR and as further detailed under Section 4.2 of this statement of evidence. While it is acknowledged that significant visual impacts will arise as a result of the proposed road development, and that not all visual impacts can be fully mitigated, it is considered that appropriate and comprehensive measures have been set out to avoid, reduce or remediate visual impacts, wherever possible.

4.6.7 The specific measures applying to each objection/submission that raised this issue is highlighted in the following.

- **Ob\_135:** It is acknowledged in the landscape and visual assessment that the proposed road development will introduce major change in to the landscape north of Bearna. However, this impact has been offset by appropriate and extensive landscape and visual mitigation measures as set out in Section 12.6 of the Chapter 12 of the EIAR and again detailed in this statement of evidence.
- **Ob\_136:** For the most part the mainline of the proposed road development through this area is in cutting. It is on embankment where it crosses locally low-lying areas. The proposed mitigation planting is detailed as dense low growing measures, set out to screen the embankments and views of traffic on the new road. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the proposed road development will alter views from properties along its corridor.
- **Ob\_158:** While Na Foráí Maola to Troscaigh overbridge is elevated over the proposed road development, the mitigation includes for a 6m depth of screen planting on roadside embankments leading to the overbridge and for additional screen planting and new tree-lined hedgerows along the mainline of the proposed road development.
- **Ob\_159:** The realigned section of the Troscaigh Road ties-in to the existing Troscaigh Road to the front of the property. As such there is no

appreciable change in existing road levels or in views overlooking the property from the existing road.

- **Ob\_312:** The mainline of the proposed road development is partially at grade and partially on embankment to the east and south of the property. Screening planting 3m deep is provided along sections of the mainline at grade, and 6m deep screening planting is provided on embankments. In addition 3m deep screen planting is provided along the property side of the intervening realigned Clybaun Road as set out on Figure 12.1.05 of the EIAR.
- **Ob\_457** This residence is being acquired given its proximity to the proposed road development.
- **Ob\_493** The existing boundary wall will be set back, and where possible existing vegetation will be retained. However, some of the existing planting along the boundary of the garden will be removed and this will be replaced with new planting of a similar species along the proposed set back location of the property boundary wall.
- **Ob\_511:** The proposed road development, including the proposed N59 Letteragh Junction is set within deep cutting through the Barnacranny / Letteragh / Ragoon / Ballagh area, which is located in an elevated area north of Galway City. This cutting has the effect of providing for natural screening of the proposed road infrastructure through this area. This inherent screening is reinforced by the extensive nature of proposed screening planting measures along this section of the proposed road development as set out on Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR.
- **Ob\_517 & S\_037:** It is acknowledged in the assessment presented in Chapter 12 of the EIAR that the proposed road development will have a significant impact on the existing residential properties located in the Dangan Lower and Dangan Upper (N59 crossing) area north of Galway City. Notwithstanding this assessment, the property at Ob\_517 & S\_037 are located c.150m from the proposed road development and there is a substantial extent of mitigation planting on embankments along the proposed road development as set out on Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR.
- **Ob\_569:** It is acknowledged in the assessment presented in Chapter 12 of the EIAR that the proposed road development will have a significant impact on existing residential properties located at Bóthar Nua, Menlo, to the north of Galway City. In recognition of this assessment, mitigation measures provide for a substantial extent of mitigation and other planting on embankments through this area as set out on Figure 12.1.07 of the EIAR.
- **Ob\_607:** The plot is located to the north of the proposed road development and while it is acknowledged in the assessment presented in Chapter 12 of the EIAR that the proposed road development will have a significant impact on the wider landscape setting of this area, it will not adversely impact any

views that the properties have of Ballindooley Lough. The proposed road development also includes for mitigation in the form of a substantial extent of proposed planting measures on embankments and along the proposed road development, as set out in Section 12.6 of Chapter 12 and on Figure 12.1.07 of the EIAR.

- **Ob\_677 & 678:** Notwithstanding the location of the property along a significant road corridor (the existing N83 Tuam Road), the proposed road development includes for a substantial extent of proposed new planting measures on embankments and along the proposed road development, as set out in Section 12.6 of Chapter 12 and on Figure 12.1.10 of the EIAR.
- **S\_008:** The proposed road development provides for extensive mitigation planting on embankments and along the proposed road development through the Dangan Upper and Dangan Lower area as set out on Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR. This includes for up to 6m deep and more of screening planting on embankments along the proposed road development and for additional screen planting and other planting within the remnant areas of acquired plots through this area. The overall effect is to have a multi-layered approach of dense screen plantings on and adjoining the proposed road development.
- **S\_011, S\_029, S\_056, S\_065:** The Rosán Glas estate is located within the existing developed sub-urban context of Galway City. While the proposed N59 Link Road South is located to the west of the existing estate, it will not give rise to significant landscape or visual impacts. Nevertheless, 3m wide screen planting is proposed as a visual separation and buffer between the existing and proposed road development as set out on Figure 12.1.13 of the EIAR.
- **S\_059** Árd Na Gaoithe is located within the existing sub-urban context of Galway City. While the proposed road development is located to the northwest of the existing estate, it will not give rise to significant landscape or visual impacts. Nevertheless, 6m wide screen planting is proposed as a visual separation and buffer along the proposed road development as set out on Figure 12.1.05 of the EIAR.
- **S-067** The proposed road development provides for extensive mitigation planting on embankments and along the proposed road development through the Aughnacurra area as set out on Figure 12.1.06 of the EIAR. This includes for up to 6m deep and more of screening planting on embankments along the proposed road development and for additional screen planting and other planting within the remnant areas of acquired plots through this area. The overall effect is to have a multi-layered approach of dense screen plantings on and adjoining the proposed road development.

## 4.7 Impact on NUIG Sporting Campus and Menlo Castle

### Issues raised in objections/submissions

- 4.7.1 A number of submissions, including one from NUIG (i.e. Ob\_528, 541, 543 and 557) have raised concerns in relation to the impact of the proposed road development on the scenic quality of the publicly accessible amenity and recreational grounds of NUIG Sporting Campus.
- 4.7.2 At section 5.0, the objection/submission from NUIG (Ob\_528, 541, 543 and 557) comments on visual impacts and queries aspects of the landscape and visual impact assessment, mitigation and the Photomontages presented in Appendix A.12.2. of Volume 4 of the EIAR, acknowledging some of the findings, whilst disagreeing with others.
- 4.7.3 The adverse impact on the amenity and setting of NUIG Sporting Campus has been raised objections/submissions: Ob\_229; Ob\_510; Ob\_O-511.06; Ob\_531; Ob\_531.2; S\_010; S\_024; S\_068.
- 4.7.4 S\_048 raised concerns that the proposed road development would diminish the views of the Menlo Castle and damage the natural beauty of the landscape.

### Response

- 4.7.5 The status and significance of the amenity, recreational and sports grounds at NUIG and the prominence and landscape and visual significance of the ruins of Menlo Castle, and its former demesne, are fully acknowledged in Section 12.3 and Tables 12.2 & 12.4 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR.
- 4.7.6 The potential significant visual impact of the proposed road development on the northern end of the NUIG Sporting Campus, including on the sports pavilion, and on the setting of Menlo Castle is fully acknowledged in Section 12.5 of Chapter 12 and illustrated on the River Corrib Bridge Photomontages which are included in Appendix 12.2 of Volume 4 of the EIAR.
- 4.7.7 Minimising impact on the landscape of the River Corrib valley, including on NUIG grounds, and on the visual setting of Menlo Castle was one of the key considerations in the route selection and bridge design stages of the proposed road development. The outcome of this assessment was the selection of a route corridor that attempts to balance distance from the castle with direct impacts on the sports grounds and on adjoining residential areas.
- 4.7.8 The bridging of the River Corrib requires a significant structure, one that cannot be visually screened and therefore, the selection of an appropriate bridge design is important for mitigating potential adverse landscape and visual impacts. For these reasons, the bridge design process selected a comparatively simple, visually open structure that provides a complete single span of the river and its adjoining banks.
- 4.7.9 Notably, and notwithstanding the impacts acknowledged in the EIAR, the bridging structure respects and retains the landmark prominence and visibility of Menlo

Castle on the river bank; allows for open access and views up and down the river corridor; and facilitates continued access within and around the NUIG grounds, including to and along the river corridor.

- 4.7.10 The route and alignment of the proposed road development was also designed to make best use of the potential screening effect of retained woodlands and vegetation in the wider landscape of the valley. As a result, the rising topography and wooded setting around either embankment helps anchor the structure back into the landscape; and the retained vegetation is substantially augmented and reinforced with extensive new planting on and around the bridge embankments as set out on Figures 12.1.06 & 12.1.07 of the EIAR.
- 4.7.11 Barriers are also to be fitted to the bridge parapets to reduce potential noise impacts within the grounds of NIUG and surrounding areas. In this instance transparent structures are proposed to reduce the otherwise visual massing that solid barriers would add to the bridge structure.
- 4.7.12 The overall effect will ensure that the visual prominence and significance Menlo Castle is maintained in views along the river valley and that effective measures have been incorporated and proposed for the mitigation of impacts on the NUIG Sporting Campus.
- 4.7.13 In a wider context, the broad shallow ‘u-shaped’ topography of the river valley combined with the presence of extensive areas of vegetation, which are further enhanced with proposed planting, ensures that landscape and visual impacts are limited within the wider setting of the valley and surrounding areas.
- 4.7.14 Finally, it is noted that the Photomontages provided in Appendix A.12.2 of Volume 4 of the EIAR do provide an accurate and reasonable representation of the landscape and visual impact of the proposed road development and associated bridge on local and wider setting of the River Corrib valley.

## 5 Conclusion

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- 5.1 It is acknowledged in the landscape and visual assessment presented in the Chapter 12 of the EIAR that the proposed road development will give rise to significant landscape and visual impacts for residents, communities, properties, amenities *etc.* located along the corridor. These impacts are accurately and fully assessed in the EIAR.
- 5.2 Therefore, it is understandable that the proposed road development has attracted a significant level of objection/submission in relation to landscape and visual aspects.
- 5.3 While significant impacts have been identified, it must also be noted that a significant extent of appropriate and comprehensive landscape and visual mitigation measures have been detailed across the proposed road development as set out in Section 12.6 of Chapter 12 of the EIAR. As set out in this statement of evidence, these measures address the significant impacts identified in the assessment and raised in the objections/submissions to An Bord Pleanála.
- 5.4 The findings of the landscape and visual assessment remain as presented in the EIAR, and as clarified in this statement of evidence, and have not been altered by the contents of the objections and submissions.