

# **Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

**for the proposed**

**Public Realm Improvements, Main Street to  
Kenmare Place, Killarney, Co. Kerry**



**Environmental Assessment Unit  
Kerry County Council  
August 2024**

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# 1. Introduction & Context

## 1.1 Introduction

The Environmental Assessment Unit (Planning and Sustainable Development Department) has been requested to assess whether or not the proposed project, should be subject to EIA Screening or EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment). The following report provides the information required to enable Kerry County Council to conclude whether an EIA screening determination or an EIA is required for the proposed project.

## 1.2 Legislative context

EIA legislation sets down the types of projects that may require an EIA. Annex I of Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU' defines mandatory projects that require an EIAR and Annex II lists projects which can be subject to case-by-case analysis or thresholds to be determined by member states. The relevant threshold summaries of legislative requirements for EIA Screening for road-type developments (in Ireland) are set out below.

### 1.2.1 Requirement for mandatory EIA under the Roads Act, (1993) as amended

Section 50 (1) of the Roads Act (1993) (as amended by S.I No 279 of 2019) relates to road developments subject to Environmental Impact Assessment. The thresholds for mandatory EIA of a road development are set out in Section 50(1)(a) below. The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purposes of Section 50 (1)(a)(iv) are set out in Article 8 of SI 119 of the 1994 Roads Regulations and are also set out below.

Roads Act (1993), as amended

“50. (1) (a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:

(i) the construction of a motorway;

(ii) the construction of a busway;

(iii) the construction of a service area;

(iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.

SI 119 of 1994 Roads Regulations. Part V Environmental Impact Assessment (Article 8). The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of section 50 of the Act shall be:

(a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;

(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length”

The proposed project is neither a motorway, busway, service area, nor does it consist of the construction of a new road of four or more lanes or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes of greater than 500m in length. In fact, the proposed scheme involves the reallocation of existing road space to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities, improved junctions and pavement. In addition, the proposed scheme does not involve the construction of a new bridge or tunnel greater than 100m in length. Therefore, a mandatory EIA is not required.

### **1.2.2 Sub threshold development proposals and EIA requirements**

Where a proposed development is 'sub threshold' in nature, the planning authority shall decide whether the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

#### **Roads Act, (1993), as amended**

Section 50(1)(b) states that where An Bord Pleanála considers that a proposed road development (other than development as listed in Section 50(1)(a)) consisting of the "construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road" would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall decide that it will be subject to EIA.

Section 50(1)(c) states that where a road authority considers that a proposed road development that it proposes (other than development as listed in Section 50(1)(a)) consisting of the "construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road" would be likely to have significant effects on the environment (i.e. it must carry out EIA Screening), it shall inform An Bord Pleanála in writing prior to making an application for approval of the proposed scheme.

#### **Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended**

In accordance with A120. (1) (a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, where a local authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

The purpose of the preliminary screening exercise is to conclude either that:

- (i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,
- (ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or
- (iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall— (I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

### **1.3 Methodology**

In order to determine if the proposed road development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, and in accordance with the legislative requirements outlined

and supported by OPR guidance, a preliminary examination of the project is therefore required. This is an examination of, at least, the nature, size or location of the development.

Preliminary examinations must consider at least the following:

- The nature of the development including the production of wastes and pollutants;
- The size of the development; or
- The location of the development including the potential to impact on certain ecologically sensitive sites (including European sites, NHAs, pNHAs, Nature Reserves) and the potential to affect other environmentally sensitive sites in the area.

As part of this the project location and description will be outlined in Section 2 of this report followed by the preliminary screening exercise in Section 3 and the conclusion in Section 4 of this report.

## 2. Project Description and location

This project proposes to revise and upgrade the public realm areas of Main Street to Kenmare Place in Killarney, Co. Kerry. The works will involve the provision of improved cycling and pedestrian infrastructure along Kenmare Place with tie-ins along Main Street, Plunkett Street and the N71 roundabout. Main Street will be converted to a one-way 3.7 m wide single lane road from the N71 at Kenmare Place to Plunkett Street junction. The locations of the existing bus set down/loading bays and raised uncontrolled will be revised. All works will be undertaken within established road boundaries and no additional land take will be required. Wastes generated will be disposed of at an appropriate authorised place of disposal.

Full project details are provided below:

<b>Characteristics of the Plan or Project</b>	
Size, scale, area, land take	The scheme involves the provision of a public realm area with cycle and pedestrian infrastructure along Kenmare Place with tie-ins along Main Street, Plunkett Street and on the northwest quadrant of the N71 roundabout. The scheme includes the narrowing of Kenmare Street to a single lane northbound and revised pedestrian, cycle and parking/loadings along Kenmare Place.
Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal	<p>The works at Main Street/ Kenmare Place Public Realm works will involve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scheme involves the provision of a public realm area with cycle and pedestrian infrastructure along Kenmare Place with tie-ins along Main Street, Plunkett Street and on the northwest quadrant of the N71 roundabout.</li> <li>• The conversion of the public road at Main Street to a one-way 3.7 m wide single lane road wide with improved footpaths, public realm and landscaping from the junction of the N71 at Kenmare Place to Plunkett Street junction.</li> <li>• The scheme includes for revisions to bus set down/loading bays, raised uncontrolled crossing and revised location of accessible space.</li> </ul>

<b>Characteristics of the Plan or Project</b>	
Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation and decommissioning of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)	<p>The Site will be used as a construction depot for the contractor during the proposed upgrade of the Plant. During the construction the following items may be used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini-digger/JCB/Excavator</li> <li>• Dumper</li> <li>• Tractor &amp; Trailer</li> <li>• Hoist</li> <li>• Concrete Mixer</li> <li>• Small tools</li> </ul> <p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone/Gravel/Sand</li> <li>• Concrete/Granite kerbing &amp; paving</li> <li>• Cement</li> </ul>
Description of timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)	Commencement in Q1 2025. Duration of project will be approximately 8 months
Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal	<p>Approximately 60T of material consisting of concrete, tarmac and soil will need to be removed from the site. All waste material will be removed by an approved Licensed Waste Contractor and disposed of as required to authorised waste facilities approved by Kerry County Council. Any recyclable material will be disposed of at a recycling centre.</p>
Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction	<p>The project comprises of construction in an urban area and will not require night works. Elevated levels of heavy traffic volumes are anticipated during the construction period with concrete, Kerbing, Paving, Tarmac and other materials being delivered to site. A detailed traffic management plan will be included in the contract documents.</p>
Other	When completed the project is expected to have positive benefits to the town and businesses/hotels in the local area. Traffic levels are also expected to reduce as trips through active travel modes will become more attractive.

### 3. Preliminary Screening Examination

Preliminary Examination:		
	Comment:	Yes/No/ Uncertain:
<p><b>Nature of the development:</b> <i>Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?</i></p> <p><i>Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?</i></p>	<p>The proposal seeks to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians, reduce traffic speeds, increase road safety and will result in an improved urban environment.</p> <p>The proposed works are small in scale and do not involve the creation of significant pollution or waste, risk of major accidents or risk to human health. The proposed works are also relatively short in duration and involve limited excavation works and do not involve complex construction. Proposed works are not out of character within an urban setting. Construction stage noise impact would be imperceptible within the context of existing traffic noise on High Street. No adverse operational stage impacts are likely.</p> <p>It is noted that there is no requirement to remove any trees along roadside boundaries.</p>	No realistic potential for significant effects
<p><b>Size of the development:</b> <i>Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?</i></p> <p><i>Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?</i></p>	<p>The proposed scheme is of a small scale in the context of the existing environment. It is comprised of existing road boundaries. The length of the proposed works is c.70m.</p> <p>KCC / TII have separate plans to upgrade the Lewis Road and Kilcummin Road Junctions on the Killarney Bypass and to provide an underpass under the N22. Development consent is also in place for a Cycle lanes project in Killarney town which includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Along Rock Road in Killarney extending the existing cycleway to Cleeny roundabout (currently under construction);</li> <li>• Along Upper Lewis Road along the Fitzgerald stadium;</li> <li>• Along Park road;</li> <li>• From Deerpark to Killarney Sports &amp; leisure centre;</li> <li>• Along Anne's road.</li> </ul>	No realistic potential for significant effects

	<p>Cumulatively, the proposed projects would improve the sustainable transport network in Killarney resulting in a positive impact on the environment by promoting a modal shift from private cars and increasing road safety.</p>	
<p><b>Location:</b> <i>Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?<sup>1</sup></i></p> <p><i>Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?</i></p>	<p>The characteristics of the proposed development include standard road project works within an urban environment and existing road corridors. The project is located within the urban area of Killarney Town. Adjoining land uses are residential, commercial and recreational.</p> <p>As detailed in the Appropriate Assessment Screening report for the project, the proposal is located adjacent to the nearest of the Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks &amp; Caragh River Catchment SAC and Killarney National Park SPA. Lough Leane and the River Flesk which form part of the aforementioned SAC as well as the associated pNHA are located downstream. Excavations associated with the construction phase can generate unconsolidated material which could potentially make its way to watercourses downstream and reduce water quality (sedimentation) – though the risks of same are considered to be low. In addition, the hydrological connection between the works area and watercourses is considered to be weak and interrupted and includes discharge to the municipal drainage system. There is no possibility of discharge to the Deenagh River which forms part of the SAC. No invasive species are located along the works area.</p> <p>Woodlands in Killarney can form part of potential foraging grounds for lesser horseshoe bats. No potential foraging habitat for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat would be impacted by way of this proposal. The proposal would be accommodated within the existing road boundaries. There is no potential for habitat loss or reduction of any qualifying interest habitat or functionally linked supporting habitat or landscape impact.</p>	<p>No realistic potential for significant effects</p>

<sup>1</sup> Sensitive locations or features includes European sites, NHA/pNHA, Designated Nature Reserves, land designated as a refuge for flora and fauna, and any other ecological site which is the objective of a CDP/LAP (including draft plans).



	<p>The County Archaeologist has confirmed that having regard to the nature, scale and location of the proposed works on previously disturbed lands within existing roadside boundaries, it is considered that the likelihood of Archaeological and Cultural Heritage impact is low.</p> <p>The proposed works are adjacent to nature reserves or other sensitive features. However, the proposed development does not have potential to affect ecologically sensitive sites or locations or additional significant environmental sensitivities in the area.</p>	
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## 4. Conclusion

In consideration of the nature, scale and location of the development, it is concluded that there is no significant and or realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. EIA Screening nor EIA are required in this instance.

### 4.1 Reasons for conclusion

- The development is not of a scale that would introduce significant or complex environmental effects and is substantially below mandatory thresholds for EIA;
- The proposal is not a complex one either in nature, scale or design and is not likely to significantly impact on environmental sensitivities in the area or elsewhere;
- The proposed works would be undertaken within the existing road boundaries;
- There are no potential cumulative or in combination effects likely to arise;
- There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development.

### **Influential measures incorporated into the project envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment**

None required

Signed:



**Brendan O'Connor (Ecologist)**

Environmental Assessment Unit (EAU)

Date:

16/08/2024