

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

for the proposed

**redevelopment of the Áras Phádraig Site,
Lewis Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry**



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

Contents

Section 1 - Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction and Context	1
1.2 Legislative requirements and screening methodology	1
Section 2 - Overview	3
2.1 Overview of other relevant environmental assessments carried out	3
2.2 Assessment of effects using the criteria set out in the EIA Directive and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.	4
2.3 Schedule 7A information compiled taking into account, where relevant the criteria set out in Section 2.2 above.	20
Section 3 - EIA Screening Examination	25
Section 4 - Conclusion.....	33
4.1 Reasons for Conclusion	33
Appendix 1	34

Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Context

This project seeks to redevelop the Áras Phádraig site and carpark in Killarney town. As part of the development, a New Theatre 1750m² (200–250 seats) with toilets, changing rooms, prop stores for performers, etc will replace the existing building. The stage area will have the option to open out onto the public plaza and will include stage lighting, a sound system, and a stage to incorporate a platform. A retail unit/Cafe on the ground floor is to be included. A Public Realm Proposal for new plaza, footpaths, and pedestrian crossing on Lewis Road. A Primary Care Building is to be provided with a shell and core design with an area of approximately 5,200m² to accommodate a HSE brief (to be determined with the HSE). Wastes generated will be disposed of at an appropriately authorised place of disposal. The site area is 0.83 Hectares.

The mandatory EIA thresholds for Infrastructure project types are outlined in Appendix 1 of this report. It is considered that this project is a ‘sub-threshold’ type project. As part of this, urban development greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district requires EIA. This proposal has a site area of 0.83 Hectares which is substantially below this threshold.

This report considers the requirement for EIA for this sub-threshold project. As part of this, the likelihood of significant effects on the environment is assessed.

1.2 Legislative requirements and screening methodology

This report is being prepared as required by A120(1)(b)(ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and constitutes an EIA Screening exercise for the proposed development. This report is written per the guidelines provided in:

- Guidance for EIA Screening, European Commission, June 2001,
- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in an EIS, EPA, March 2002,
- EIA, Guidance for Consent Authorities Regarding Sub-Threshold Development, DoEHLG, August 2003.
- Environmental Impact Assessment of National Roads Schemes – A Practical Guide, Revision 1, November 2008
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on Carrying Out Environmental Impact Assessment, DHPLG, August 2018.
- Circular Letter PL 5/2018 from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government,
- Preparation of guidance documents for the implementation of EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)/18, Screening Annex 1 to the final Report, ENV/07.0201/2015/SI2.723866/ETU/A3, April 2017, and

- OPR Practice Note PN02 - Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, June 2021.

Section 2 of this report contains the information specified in Article 120(1A) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. As part of this, the following is included:

- Information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account;
- Information specified in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended;
- Any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment;
- A description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.

Section 3 of this report contains an examination of, at the least, the nature, size, or location of the development for the purposes of a screening determination and has regard to the information contained in section 2 of this report.

Section 4 contains the conclusion of the Environmental Assessment Unit on whether or not an EIAR is required in this instance. Reasons for the conclusion and a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development are outlined.

Section 2 - Overview

2.1 Overview of other relevant environmental assessments carried out

Overview of other relevant environmental assessments carried out	
Assessment	Overview
Archaeological Impact Assessment Report	Concerning the project and based on the forwarded drawings, there are no recorded monuments in proximity to the proposed development, and the ground in the area of the proposed works is at least partly disturbed. As such the archaeological potential would be low. The County Archaeologist has advised that no archaeological mitigation is required.
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for the project?	The project has no potential for significant effects on European (Natura 2000) sites.
Is an IED/IPC or Waste Licence (or review of license) required from the EPA?	No.
Have any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives – for example, SEA, WFD, and HDA?	SEA, SFRA and HDA were undertaken at the plan level as part of the preparation of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028, which incorporates the Killarney Town Plan.

2.2 Assessment of effects using the criteria set out in the EIA Directive and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

1. Characteristics of projects

The characteristics of the proposed development, in particular

(a) The size and design of the whole project

It is proposed to redevelop the Áras Phádraig site and carpark at Lewis Road, Killarney. As part of the development a new Theatre (1750m² with 200–250 seats) with toilets, changing rooms and prop stores for performers, etc. will replace the existing building. The Theatre space can accommodate 225 patrons seated or approximately 340 people in a standing format for musical concerts or dances. The stage area will have the option to open out onto the public plaza. Stage lighting, sound system, and stage to incorporate a rising platform. A reception desk, admission area, cloakroom waiting area, and public toilets are required near the entrance. A retail unit/Cafe on the ground floor is to be included Public Realm Proposal for a new plaza, footpaths, and pedestrian crossing on Lewis Road, landscaping, seating, lighting, paving finishes, signage, water feature, etc.

A Primary Care Centre (PCC) building is to be provided with a shell and core design with an area of approximately 5,200m² to accommodate a HSE brief to be determined with the HSE. The PCC building will accommodate the provision of comprehensive primary care health services for the people of Killarney in line with Government policy.



Above: Aerial view of the overall development site

(b) Cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects

As part of this assessment a review was undertaken of existing land use, KCC's online planning enquiry system, and EPA licensed operators. Permitted projects in the area are mostly small-scale urban development projects. These include the permitted Killarney Cycleway project, which includes works on the upper Lewis Road. This project is not likely to result in cumulative impacts such projects.

(c) The nature of any associated demolition works

This project will require the demolition of the existing Áras Phádraig Building. This will involve the full demolition of the building and the removal of all concrete, timber, slate, asbestos, glass windows and doors, etc, total circa volume of 2,200m³. Material will be separated and disposed of at an appropriately licensed facility.

The existing bituminous front area and eastern green area for foundations, total volume circa 3800m³. Material will be disposed of at an appropriately licensed facility.

Existing kerbs and footpaths, total volume circa 60m³. Material will be disposed of at an appropriate licensed facility.

(d) The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity

The proposed project will be located on an existing brownfield site. The proposed primary care /theatre building would be accommodated within the footprint of the existing Áras Phádraig site – with little requirement for natural resources other than standard building materials. The overall project would occupy a land take of approximately 0.83 Ha and would require the removal of soil, subsoil, vegetation/habitat underlying aggregate to facilitate construction works. Habitats on site are of low ecological value and no watercourse is located close to the works. Some trees within the project site would be lost, comprising a laurel hedgerow and mature non-native trees that are not of high ecological value (Monterey Pine and Monterey Cypress).

The material removed will be disposed of at an appropriately licensed facility. The main natural resources required, are land, and geo-resources, and are typical for a relatively small-scale construction project such as this. The brownfield nature of the land reduces the use of soil and biodiversity.

(e) The production of waste

A relatively small amount of waste would be generated as part of the project associated with the demolition & construction works outlined. All waste would be disposed of at an appropriately authorised place of disposal. Where possible acceptable waste could be re-used on site (fill and landscaping requirements).

(f) Pollution and nuisances

Construction projects such as this can result in some temporary nuisance during the construction stage associated with construction activities. In this

instance, the proposed works do not adjoin a large number of sensitive receptors. A small number of dwellings to the west of the proposal would be located in close proximity to the construction works associated with the proposed development and may experience a degree of nuisance during the construction stage. However, it is noted that standard practice construction techniques for noise and dust suppression, as outlined in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP), will be employed to minimise adverse impacts on neighbouring areas.

In general, operational impacts can be expected to be similar to existing ones. The proposed uses would be characteristic of those found in urban areas. It is noted that the proposed stage area will have the option to open out onto the public plaza and will include stage lighting, a sound system, and a stage to incorporate a platform. This element has the potential to generate disturbance. However, the scale of the plaza is relatively small and therefore it can be expected that large-scale events will not be provided for.

(g) The risk of major accidents and/or disasters that are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge

Given the temporary short-term nature of the construction stage and the scale of the project, the risk of disasters (typically considered to be natural catastrophes e.g., very severe weather events, wildfires) or accidents is considered low. The site has been identified as being within Flood Zone C (where the probability of flooding from rivers is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000)) and is appropriate for development of this type. There is no watercourse of any significance located within the sub-catchment upstream of Lough Leane. The proposed development is not likely to affect flooding upstream or downstream of the site, given the extent of the site currently hard surfaced. It is further noted that a flood risk assessment has been provided as part of the proposal and storm water attenuation provided for.

(h) The risks to human health (for example due to water contamination, noise, or air pollution)

No substantive risks to human health are likely to arise as a result of this proposal. There will be temporary manageable nuisances during the construction phase of the project. Operational impacts would be similar to existing ones. The introduction of outdoor theatres has some potential to result in localised noise nuisance. However, this risk of same in this instance is considered to be low, particularly given the scale and location of the proposal and that the operation of the space will be overseen by Kerry County Council. The proposed development is not located within a water supply source protection area. Drinking water for the area is supplied from the Central water supply scheme (Lough Guitane) supply which is located within a different

water sub-catchment to the proposed site. No significant risk to human health is considered to be likely.

2. Location of projects

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:

(a) The existing and approved land use.

Existing on-site land uses are the original theatre and offices. Commercial lands adjoin the development site primarily to the north and south and include a carpark and retail units. Residential units are located directly west, and a Friary is located to the east. The proposed development site and the adjoining car park are described as an 'Opportunity Site', 1 Ha in size, with development potential described as *mixed cultural/heritage/community use with associated car parking provisions*, and a Town Centre Zoning (M2) in the Killarney Town Plan as described in Volume 2 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028. Development objectives are also included which support the proposal. These plans were subject to AA, SEA, and SFRA.

(b) The relative abundance, availability, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water, and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.

Killarney has an abundance of natural resources including agricultural land, woodlands, watercourses, lakes, and aggregate deposits (sand and gravel). A relatively modest volume of soil and mostly brownfield lands would be affected as a result of this proposal. The regenerative capacity of the same would be low. It is estimated that the site area will be approximately 0.83 Ha. Water and biodiversity resources are not likely to be impacted to any significant degree.

(c) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:

(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;

None are located within or adjoining the site. There are no watercourses of significance within, adjoining the site, or within the project's sub-catchment. Lough Leane is located over 2 km downstream of the proposed development.

(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;

None are located within or adjoining the site.

(iii) mountain and forest areas;

None are located within or adjoining the site. The site is located in Killarney town centre.

(iv) nature reserves and parks;

Killarney National Park and its associated nature reserve is located on the far side of Killarney Town away from the proposed site. The lands in question form part of the Kerry Biosphere transition area, which is an extensive area encompassing the Lough Leane Catchment and the Macgillycuddy Reeks Mountain Range.

(v) *areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;*

Natura 2000 sites located in the wider vicinity are as follows:

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

- SAC 000343 - Castlemaine Harbour;
- SAC 000382 – Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog;
- SAC 000365 - Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC;
- SAC 002170 – Blackwater River (Cork / Waterford) SAC;
- SAC 001890 – Mullaghanish Bog SAC;
- SAC 000106 – St Gobnet's Well SAC;
- SAC 000364 – Kilgarvan Ice House SAC;
- SAC 002041 – Old Domestic Dwelling, Curraglass Woods SAC.

Special Protection Areas (SPA)

- SPA 004029 - Castlemaine Harbour SPA;
- SPA 004162 - Mullaghanish to Musheragh Mountains SPA;
- SPA 004161 – Stacks to Mullagherisk Mountains, West Limerick Hills & Mount Eagle' SPA;
- SPA 004108 – Erik Bog SPA;

While located within differing hydraulic sub-catchments, the proposed site is situated c.900m from the nearest edge of the Deenagh River, which forms part of the Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy Reeks and Caragh Rover Catchment SAC. This Natura 2000 site, Killarney National Park SPA, Castlemaine Harbour SAC, and Castlemaine Harbour SPA are all located downstream of but are well buffered from the proposed works.

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure:

None

(vii) densely populated areas.

Killarney Town with a recorded population in 2022 of 14,412 people is the second most populous town in the County (the number of visitors to the town is likely to have increased this figure). The proposed works are located close to the centre of the town in an area with a combination of residential and commercial developments. Much of the land in the vicinity has been developed. Geo-directory data indicates that approximately 222 residential dwellings are located within 200m of the proposed development.

Several residential properties and other community facilities are located adjacent to the proposed development.

This Áras Phádraig site has been left vacant and derelict for several years. The redevelopment of this site would bring back to life this area of the town and provide much needed new state of the art theatre.

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.

Killarney Town has several Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA). The nearest ACA is Emmett's Terrace across the road from the proposed works. Additionally, the Sunnyhill Upper ACA and Sunny Hill Lower ACA are located directly west of Emmett's Terrace.

The closest Protected Structure to the proposed works is the Franciscan Friary to the east of the development site. The proposed works are not located within the zone of archaeological potential or notification. One recorded monument KE066-069 is located to the east of the proposed development, and the ground in the area of the proposed works has been previously disturbed. Franciscan Friary (Reg no. 21400818) is of architectural importance and is located beyond the eastern boundary of the proposed development. There are no protected landscapes or special amenity designations in the area.

3. Type and characteristics of Potential Impact

The potential significant effects of the projects on the environment must be considered in relation to the criteria set out in parts 1 & 2 above and having regard to the factors specified in Article 3(1) (of the EIA Directive) taking into account aspects of the impact as outlined below.

Article 3(1) Factors

- a) population and human health;
- b) biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;
- c) land, soil, water, air and climate;
- d) material assets, cultural heritage, and the landscape;
- e) the interaction between the factors referred to in points (a) to (d) above.

Aspects of the Impact	Population and human health
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Limited to the development site itself and its immediate vicinity. The proposed development is not located within a drinking water protection area. There are approximately 222 residential dwellings within 200m of the proposed development.
The nature of the impact	Potential nuisance impacts such as noise, dust, and vibration at the construction and operational stage. There will be potential temporary nuisance impacts from noise, dust, workers, and traffic arising during the construction phase. Given the temporary nature of the works within an urban environment and adjacent to a busy road, This construction project will occur in an urban environment and best construction practices as outlined in the OCEMP

will be employed during its development. These measures will reduce impacts on the population and human health to low levels.

At the operational stage, the potential exists for impact on residential amenity by way of overshadowing, noise and general disturbance. It is noted that a shadow study was commissioned by Kerry County Council to assess the potential impact of shading once the project is complete and to assess the potential impact on residential properties in the area. The interpretation of the data collected from the shadow study has outlined *that the risk of shadow on the residential amenity is minimal to negligible.*

There is potential for an increase in traffic volumes and footfall resulting from the proposed development. In terms of an increase in traffic volumes resulting from the proposed development, traffic modelling has shown that the *'development traffic is less than 4% of the existing baseline and within an urban environment is deemed appropriate.'* Therefore, the impact of traffic will not be significant.

It should be noted that the building on the site operated for many years as a theatre before its closure and buildings to the rear are still used for offices. Therefore, the site and its surroundings would have historically had a high level of activity associated with them. It is noted that the stage area will have the option to open out onto the public plaza and will include stage lighting, a sound system, and a stage to incorporate a platform. This has the potential to generate noise and disturbance. Significant effects can be ruled out given the relatively small scale of the proposal, the town centre location, and its mixed cultural heritage and community use and opportunity site zoning.

Operational stage noise and disturbance

The proposed stage area will have the option to open out onto the public plaza. Stage lighting, sound system, and stage to incorporate a rising

	<p>platform element of the project have the potential to result in noise and disturbance. However, given the proposal's urban location and the County Council's oversight of operations, significant impacts are not envisaged. It is also noted that the proposal as designed allows for the provision of temporary acoustic barriers along the Lewis road, if required.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the sale of alcohol or consumption will not be permitted within the plaza area. Normal hours of operation will not exceed 11pm. Anti-social behaviour is not envisaged or considered likely at this location.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that this proposal would make Killarney Town Centre a more attractive place to live and visit. This proposal would have a positive impact on the local population and visitors by way of urban renewal and provision of high-quality public realm and services within the town centre.</p>
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Negative impacts associated with the construction stage will have a low-intensity type impact ameliorated by standard construction management measures. Construction will take place over a relatively short period of approx. 18 months. Impacts are not complex in nature. Operational phase impacts will not be intense or complex and will not be significant.
The probability of the impact	Localised nuisance-type impacts associated with construction are probable. Operational stage impacts are not considered to be probable. Significant impacts are unlikely to occur.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	Construction stage impacts and nuisances will be temporary in nature coinciding with the construction phase of the project.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc. existing and approved projects)	Cumulative noise and vibration with the existing residential, commercial, and traffic on Lewis Road.

<p>The possibility of effectively reducing the impact</p>	<p>While significant effects are not considered likely, best construction practices have been outlined in the OCEMP and these are to be employed during its development.</p> <p>Regarding the use of the outdoor platform space, it is noted that operating protocols will be in place and therefore significant effects are not considered likely. It is further noted that a management mobility plan has been prepared, which will encourage users to use alternatives to cars.</p>
<p>Aspects of the Impact</p>	<p>Biodiversity</p>
<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact</p>	<p>Encompasses the site and locality. Spatial extent is unlikely to extend as far as watercourses downstream, given the nature of the works and the lack of drainage conduits in the vicinity of the proposed works.</p>
<p>The nature of the impact</p>	<p>Habitat loss of low local importance is associated with a brownfield land take (circa 0.83 Ha) and localised tree removal within the site. The removal of the existing mature trees is not likely to result in any meaningful impact as these are non-native trees and are not considered to be of high ecological value (Monterey Pine and Monterey Cypress).</p> <p>No potential for impact on landscape connectivity given the urban nature of the site and the lack of landscape features of value. Pollution risk from earthworks in a contained site for a small development is considered low, particularly having regard to distances from watercourses. No designated habitats, watercourses, riparian habitats, or wetlands are located in the vicinity.</p> <p>Potential Lesser horseshoe bat foraging and commuting habitat would not be impacted. No habitat of potential use for the species is located within or in the vicinity of the site. Operational stage impacts will be similar in nature to existing ones and will not be significant. It is noted that a Habitats Directive Assessment has been prepared in support of the proposal which has concluded that significant</p>

	effects on Natura 2000 sites are not likely in this instance.
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Impacts on biodiversity are not considered intense or complex either during construction or operation phases. Habitat loss would occur over a short period of site stripping but would not be complex.
The probability of the impact	Habitat loss is low probability and significant impacts are unlikely to occur.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	No meaningful pollution risk to the aquatic environment – any such Impacts would be reversible.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc existing and approved projects)	The potential for cumulative habitat loss with existing and permitted developments is unlikely.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	None required. This is a relatively small-scale town centre urban development project and is not complex either in its design or scale.
Aspects of the Impact	Land and Soil
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact	Limited to the exiting brownfield site, approximately 0.83Ha in area. The project site is underlain by topsoil and subsoil, including possible gravel quaternary gravel sediments common in the area.
The nature of the impact	Limited impacts due to the nature of the site which contains an existing building and roadway.
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Intensity is considered low taking into account modest land take, soil, and aggregate loss. Impacts are not complex.
The probability of the impact	No meaningful impact is probable.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	No meaningful impact is considered likely.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc.	None of significance is envisaged or likely.

existing and approved projects)	
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	None required.
Aspects of the Impact	Water
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No watercourses of significance nearby in the catchment. Groundwater vulnerability is high. The aquifer is locally important but there are no known wells, springs, or karst features located within the project area. Once operational drainage will be directed to the existing town drainage system, with surface water attenuation, incorporating nature-based solutions and interceptors provided for.
The nature of the impact	<p>Potential for minor pollution risk to groundwater during the construction phase, associated with spillages. No significant impact is envisaged or likely.</p> <p>At the operational stage, it is noted that stormwater attenuation is provided for, in addition to connection to the municipal drainage system.</p>
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	The intensity of construction phase impacts is considered low. Impacts are not complex.
The probability of the impact	Spillages that could impact water quality are not considered probably.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	Impacts on water quality are reversible.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc existing and approved projects)	Cumulation with other water quality pressures such as agriculture. However, significant cumulative impacts are not considered to be likely.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	While significant effects are not considered likely, best construction practices have been outlined in the OCEMP and these are to be employed during its development.

Aspects of the Impact	Air and Climate
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	<p>Greenhouse gas emissions have global effects. This project is not located within an identified flood-risk area and is not vulnerable to climate change.</p> <p>It is noted that there are approx. 222 residential and 47 commercial properties within 200m of the proposal, while the 2022 census recorded a population of 14,412 people in the town.</p>
The nature of the impact	<p>The construction phase will give rise to additional air emissions from construction vehicles, plant, and machinery. However, this will be short-term and considering the scale of the project, will not be significant. Additionally, standard practice construction techniques for noise and dust suppression, as outlined in the OCEMP, will be employed to minimise adverse impacts on air quality associated with construction aspects.</p> <p>The proposal which seeks to renew brownfield lands in the town centre, is an appropriate use of urban serviceable lands and is in keeping with compact town centre first development principles – which align with climate change objectives. The proposal while providing for car parking, is not located at a car-dependent location. It is further noted that a management mobility plan has been prepared, which will encourage users to use alternatives to cars.</p>
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications. GHG emissions have global effects, however, given the scale and size of the development, any GHG emissions will be very low.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Intensity and complexity are considered low.
The probability of the impact	Significant impacts are unlikely to occur.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	Increased air emissions from construction will be short-term

The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc existing and approved projects)	Cumulation with other emission sources is unlikely to be significant.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	While significant effects are not considered likely, best construction practices have been outlined in the OCEMP and these are to be employed during its development.
Aspects of the Impact	Material assets
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The Áras Phádraig site contains a derelict building that has been vacant for several years. The redevelopment of this site would bring back to life this area of the town and provide much needed new state of the art theatre. The new PCC building will accommodate the provision of comprehensive primary care health services for the people of Killarney in line with Government policy. Negative impacts not envisaged or considered likely.
The nature of the impact	Material assets in the area will be improved as a result of this proposal.
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Intensity is considered low. Impacts are not complex.
The probability of the impact	Significant impacts are unlikely to occur.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	Negative impacts not envisaged or considered likely.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc existing and approved projects)	Negative impacts not envisaged or considered likely.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	None required

Aspects of the Impact	Landscape and cultural heritage
<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The proposed theatre and primary care centre would form new features and alter the streetscape at this location. As part of this, the existing building would be removed as well as 2 landmark Monterey trees and replaced with a 3-storey theatre and community building, a 6-storey primary care centre building, and a landscaped plaza public realm space. The PCC building in particular would be a highly visible building, when viewed from the Lewis Road northern approach.</p> <p>The Killarney Town Development Plan does not contain listed views, protected views, amenity designations or Tree Preservation orders for the site or vicinity.</p> <p>Killarney Town has several Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA), including Emmett's Terrace on the Lewis Road, to the west of the proposed works. The Emmett's Terrace, Sunnyhill Upper and Sunny Hill Lower ACAs are also located to the west. The closest Protected Structure to the proposed works is the Franciscan Friary to the east of the development site. There are no recorded monuments in proximity to the proposed development and the ground in the area of the proposed works has been previously disturbed.</p> <p>Development character in the area is highly varied, with an apartment block to the south, terrace development to the west, a large open carpark and detached dwellings to the north and a friary to the east.</p> <p>Overall, the predicted magnitude of change and spatial extent, in landscape and cultural resources, is considered to be low to moderate and localised.</p>
<p>The nature of the impact</p>	<p>The proposed development will have a visual impact. As part of this, the proposal would provide 'landmark' buildings at this location. However, it is considered that no visual impact of significance is likely to arise.</p>

Buildings of the nature, scale and location proposed, require careful architectural consideration, high-quality external finishes and landscaping. In this regard, it is noted that the architectural approach of the Theatre Buildings front façade incorporates the use of stone reflective of other public buildings of importance in the town. It is also reflective of the Franciscan Friary in that the stone finish is a combination of smooth stone with a honed finish and more rough cast hewn stone. The taller more prominent Primary Care building façade treatment consists of an articulated deep copper tinted aluminium frame over a selected copper-coloured render system, which it is noted is deliberately different to the stone-clad Theatre in order to provide visual variety, legibility, identity and contrast. It is further noted that the metal frame and window system follow the same proportion system as the Theatre façade so that the two buildings are proportionately aligned as they address the public square. The Plaza space will also provide an entrance sequence to the Theatre and will include street furniture such as planting boxes, benches and bike stands. Within the proposed public realm space, urban trees are proposed to form the street edge of Lewis Road, providing for the replacement of the Monterey trees.

The primary view of the Franciscan Friary from Fair Hill will not be impacted by this project. While the protected structure is visual from Lewis Road these views are more distant and are compromised by the existing carpark and are somewhat obscured by existing trees and development.

It is considered that the proposal would not have a significant cultural impact. It would not impact in any meaningful way on the Emmett's Terrace to the west. As part of this, there is no potential to impact the aspects of the ACA's 'special character' as set out in the Killarney Town Development Plan. The proposal, which is a contemporary one, would not in any way interfere with the distinctiveness and

	<p>special character of Emmet’s terrace. The creation of a high-quality plaza public realm space fronting Lewis Road will allow for greater visibility and appreciation of the ACA.</p> <p>There are no recorded monuments in proximity to the proposed development and the ground in the area of the proposed works has been previously disturbed. As such the archaeological potential would be low. It is considered that the proposal would not encroach on and would not unduly impact the Franciscan Friary protected structure or its setting, to the east.</p> <p>The proposal is compatible with the land use zoning, ACA and protected structure development plan objectives for the area. The shape and form of the buildings follow on from the constructed apartment development to the south, and would not impact protected views, landscape designations or form a discordant feature in the landscape. The proposed project would add visual interest to the area while not significantly impacting the existing landscape, streetscape or cultural heritage of the area.</p>
The transboundary nature of the impact	None. No cross-border implications.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Intensity is considered low. Impacts are not complex.
The probability of the impact	The probability of locally low to moderate impact occurring is high given the ‘landmark’ nature of the proposal. It is considered that the prominence of the proposal would reduce in the years following construction as people grow more accustomed to and appreciative of its functions and architectural qualities. Significant impacts are unlikely to occur.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	The impact will commence in the early stage of the construction project as the 2.No mature trees are removed. The impacts are theoretically reversible though realistically this is not envisaged or considered likely.

The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other projects (inc existing and approved projects)	None envisaged or considered to be likely.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	It is noted that high-quality materials and finishes and landscaping are proposed. None required
<p>The interaction between the factors referred to above</p> <p>The potential for interactions between one aspect of the environment and another can result in direct or indirect impacts, which may be positive or negative. In the case of this project, the interactions are considered minor in nature and do not pose a significant threat to the environment.</p>	

2.3 Schedule 7A information compiled taking into account, where relevant the criteria set out in Section 2.2 above.

1. Description of the proposed development, including in particular	
a) description of the physical characteristics of the whole project and, where relevant, of demolition works	<p>This proposal, under assessment, seeks the redevelopment of the Áras Phádraig site and carpark at Lewis Road, Killarney. As part of the development of a New Theatre 1750m² (200–250 seats) approximately with toilets, changing rooms and Prop stores for performers etc. The stage area will have the option to open out onto the public plaza. Stage lighting, sound system, and stage to incorporate rising platform. A reception desk, admission area, cloakroom waiting area, and public toilets are required near the entrance. A retail unit/Cafe on the ground floor is to be included Public Realm Proposal for a new plaza, footpaths, and pedestrian crossing on Lewis Road, landscaping, seating, lighting, paving finishes, signage, water feature, etc. A Primary care Building is to be provided with a shell and core design with an area of approximately 5,200m² to accommodate a HSE brief to be determined with the HSE.2</p> <p>Site clearance will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition of Existing Áras Phádraig Building. This will involve the full demolition of the building and the removal of all concrete, timber, slate, asbestos, glass windows and doors, etc, total

	<p>circa volume of 2,200m³. Material will be separated and disposed of at an appropriate licensed facility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of existing bituminous front area and eastern green area for foundations, total volume circa 3800m³. Material will be disposed of at an appropriate licensed facility. • Removal of existing kerbs and footpaths, total volume circa 60m³. Material will be disposed of at an appropriate licensed facility. • Cleaning and jetting of existing drainage systems • Removal of several trees including aging Monterey Pine and Monterey Cypress. <p>Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of a new three-storey theatre which will accommodate 225 patrons seated or approximately 340 standing. The theatre is supported by a triple-height entrance foyer space which contains a small café. The Áras Phádraig Theatre and Community Building will also provide space for community and educational activity in the building. The Kerry Parents and Friends Association will have an Activity and Educational Room on the first floor with its own dedicated kitchen and facilities and there is also a studio space with kitchen and meeting rooms on the second floor. • A Six-story, 5,200m² Primary Care Centre will be constructed by the HSE for healthcare services for Killarney town. As well as providing much needed HSE funded services, it will accommodate the provision of comprehensive primary care health services. • A Public Plaza will be constructed in front of the New Áras Phádraig Theatre and will serve both the Theatre and the new Primary Care Centre. • Minor Landscaping works. Planting of new trees and shrubbery. Provision of street furniture such as planting boxes, benches, and bike stands. • Minor modifications to existing lighting at Pedestrian Crossing.
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials required to construct the project will include, 2,600m³ of concrete, 4,100m³ of clean limestone, 1500m² of Granite paving, 300m of precast concrete kerbing, 10 gully pots, and 600m of PVC drainage pipes. Additionally, 80m of ducting along with associated electrical and telecommunications cabling and installations, will be required for Building lighting, public lighting, and features. Building names, information signage and other ancillary items will also be required. All of these materials will need to be imported to the site through public road haulage. • Plant on site is anticipated to comprise of Crane (18 months) 5T-40T Excavators (6 months) large Roller (18 days), small roller (4 months), teleporter (18 months), along with various other electrical handheld plant and tools. • The anticipated time Scale for the project is 550 days with an average of 40 construction workers on site per day, additionally traffic management crew of 2 people will be required for the 18-month duration. A total resource of 22000 person days is anticipated. **(260 working days per year).
<p>b) description of the location of the project, with particular regarding the environmental sensitivity and of the geographical areas that are likely to be affected</p>	<p>The project is located close to the centre of Killarney town. Existing on-site land uses are the original theatre and offices. Commercial lands adjoin the development site primarily to the north and south and include a carpark and retail units. Residential units are located directly west and south. The proposed development site is described as an 'Opportunity Site' in the Killarney Town Zoning Map, located in Volume 4 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028.</p> <p>Consideration of environmental sensitivities and geographical areas</p> <p>Population and human health Killarney Town is the second most populous town in the County. It is also a famed tourist town. Low to Medium-density residential areas are located in the vicinity to the south and west with lower-density development to the north.</p>

Biodiversity and Water

The proposed site is of low ecological value (predominantly built ground in an urban environment). The proposal would result in the removal of a number of non-native trees and a laurel hedge planted on the western boundary of the development site. Hedgerows on site are of local importance only and are not likely to be of wider landscape connectivity value given their quality and disconnected nature.

While no watercourses adjoin the site, the works area is located upstream of the Killarney National Park SPA and the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC. Potential foraging areas for Lesser Horseshoe Bats associated with this SAC and which are located outside of the SAC have been identified in the Conservation Objectives report for the SAC. None of these lands are located within or adjoin the site.

The source of drinking water for Killarney and the wider mid-Kerry area is at Lough Guitane which is outside of the zone of influence of this project.

Land and Soil

Much of the site is located within the footprint of the existing Áras Phádraig site and adjacent carpark. There will be no land take outside of the existing site. These lands largely consist of the existing building and car parking facilities. Glacial gravels are likely to underlie the soils at this location.

Air and Climate

The proposal would facilitate pedestrians in the area.

Material Assets

Facilities in Killarney for locals and tourists would be enhanced as a result of this proposal.

Cultural Heritage

There is a low potential to encounter sub-surface archaeological remains associated with previously

	<p>undocumented archaeological sites on the lands proposed to be redeveloped.</p> <p>There is no potential to impact the aspects of the Emmett's Terrace, Sunnyhill Upper and Sunny Hill Lower ACAs. The proposal, which is a contemporary one, would not in any way interfere with the distinctiveness and special character of Emmet's terrace.</p> <p>Landscape The lands in question are not located within landscape designations. The development is located in an urban environment on a brownfield site. The proposed works are compatible with the visual and landscape character of the area and acceptable in visual and landscape terms.</p>
<p>2. Description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development</p>	
	<p>This proposal is unlikely to significantly impact the environment.</p>
<p>3. Description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such impacts, of the proposed development on the environment, resulting from</p>	
<p>(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant;</p>	<p>Residues and emissions are similar to existing ones.</p> <p>Standard construction waste will be generated and disposed of at authorised places of disposal.</p>
<p>(b) the use of natural resources, soil, land, water, and biodiversity in particular</p>	<p>No significant use of natural resources.</p>

Section 3 - EIA Screening Examination

Section 3 of this report contains an examination of, at the least, the nature, size, or location of the development for the purposes of a screening determination and has regard to the information contained in section 2 of this report. This examination also incorporates the source-pathway-receptor assessment approach.

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
Characteristics of the proposed development (including demolition, construction, operation, and decommissioning).		
Is the project significantly different in character or scale from the existing surroundings or environment?	No	The character of the project is a town centre one, located on appropriately zoned lands with similar characteristics to previous uses on the site. The project while differing in scale from the existing development on the site, cannot be said to be significantly different from the existing surroundings or environment. The development scale in the area is highly varied, with an apartment block to the south, terrace development to the west, a large open carpark and detached dwellings to the north and a friary to the east. No significant effects are likely.
Will construction, operation, decommissioning, or demolition works cause physical changes to the locality (topography,	Yes	Non-material physical changes to topography and land use would result. Project in keeping with land use policy for the area. No significant effects are likely.

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
land use, or waterbodies)?		
Will the construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals, or energy, especially resources that are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	Resources used typical of a building project, including non-renewable aggregate resources. None of which would be in short supply. No significant effects are likely.
Will the project involve the use, storage, transport, handling, or production of substances that would be harmful to human health or the environment?	Yes – vehicular fuel, oils, and emissions.	Quantities are insignificant and comparable to existing background levels. No significant effects are likely.
Will the project produce solid waste, release pollutants, or any hazardous/toxic/noxious substances?	Yes	The construction stage will produce waste and vehicular emissions. Waste generated will be disposed of at authorised places of disposal. Operational emissions will be similar to existing ones. No significant effects are likely.
Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters,	Yes	Potential for groundwater contamination during the temporary short-term construction stage however no significant effects are envisaged or likely.

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
groundwater, coastal waters, or the sea?		At the operational stage, it is noted that stormwater attenuation is provided for, in addition to connection to the municipal drainage system. No other realistic pathway for contamination is likely to result in significant risk.
Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy, or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	Noise and vibration may be expected to increase during the construction phase. Any increases would be localised and adequately ameliorated by way of standard construction practices. Once operational noise and vibration will not be significant. No significant effects are likely.
Will there be any risks to human health, for example, due to water contamination or air pollution?	No	Potential noise impacts are discussed above. No other realistic pathway for risk. No significant effects are likely.
Will there be any risk of major accidents that could affect human health or the environment?	No	The project is not one which has the potential to cause a risk of major accidents or the environment. The addition of the Primary Care Centre will have a positive impact on human health. No significant negative effects are likely.
Will the project affect the social environment (population employment)?	Yes	Positive impact by way of improved material assets. No significant effects are likely.

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
Is the project part of a wider large-scale change that could result in cumulative effects on the environment?	No	The land use plans for the area contain various other development proposals, including additional active travel routes within the town. These were subject to public consultation, Strategic Environmental Assessment, and Habitats Directive Assessment at the plan preparation stage. A planning search revealed no permitted (unbuilt) developments at the general location of the proposed works, which could result in 'in-combination' effects. Climate change is likely to result in more extreme weather events. These considerations have been taken into account as part of the consideration of potential cumulative and in-combination impacts. No significant or cumulative effects are likely.
Location of the proposed development		
Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining, or have the potential to impact any of the following - European Site - NHA /pNHA - Designated Nature Reserve	No	

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated refuge for flora or fauna - Place, site, or feature of ecological interest, the preservation/conservation / protection of which is an objective of a development plan / LAP/draft plan or variation of a plan 		
<p>Could any protected, important, or sensitive species of flora or fauna that use areas on or around the site, for example: for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?</p>	No	
<p>Are there any other features of landscape, historic, archaeological, or cultural importance that could be affected?</p>	No	<p>A number of mature trees (non-native) on the western boundary of the development site would be lost as well as a laurel hedgerow. The potential to encounter sub-surface archaeological remains on the site is considered low as the ground in the area of the proposed works was previously disturbed.</p> <p>There is no potential to impact the aspects of the Emmett's Terrace,</p>

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	<p>Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact).</p> <p>Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.</p>
		<p>Sunnyhill Upper and Sunny Hill Lower ACAs. The proposal, which is a contemporary one, would not in any way interfere with the distinctiveness and special character of Emmet’s terrace. The creation of a high-quality plaza public realm space fronting Lewis Road will allow for greater visibility and appreciation of the ACA.</p> <p>It is considered that the proposal would not encroach on and would not unduly impact the Franciscan Friary protected structure or its setting, to the east.</p>
<p>Are there any areas on/around the location that contain important, high-quality, or scarce resources that could be affected?</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>Are there any water resources including surface waters for example: rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or groundwaters which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?</p>	<p>No</p>	

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
Is the location susceptible to subsidence, landslides, or erosion?	No	
Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion or that cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	<p>At times Lewis Road is susceptible to congestion and noise. It is considered that operational stage environmental impacts will be similar to existing and would not be significant. The development is located close to the centre of the town of Killarney and within walking distance of most facilities.</p> <p>Kerry County Council is committed to developing cycling and walking infrastructure consistent with its Transport and Mobility Plan.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
Are there existing sensitive land uses or community facilities (such as hospitals, schools, etc.) that could be affected by the project?	No	The redevelopment is located within an urban environment, close to the centre of the town of Killarney. It will provide a positive effect with the introduction of additional services and amenities to the area.
Any other factors that should be considered that could lead to environmental impacts?		
Cumulative Impacts: Could this project together with existing and/or approved	No	

EIA Screening Examination	Yes / No / Uncertain	Briefly describe the characteristics of any likely significant effects (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact). Mitigation Measures – If a conclusion of no significant effects on the environment is based on specific features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect, these should be specified.
development result in cumulative effects during the construction/operation phase?		
Transboundary: Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No	
Are there any other relevant considerations?	No	

Section 4 - Conclusion

Having regard to the project details, the information contained in this report, and in particular to the nature, scale, and location of the proposed project, by itself and in combination with other plans and projects, it is considered that an EIA is not 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 the mandatory thresholds for EIA;
- The proposal is not a complex one either in nature, scale, or design and is not likely to significantly impact environmental sensitivities in the area or elsewhere;
- Works will be accommodated within the footprint of the existing Áras Phádraig Building and on lands located in close proximity to same;
- The location of the development site is removed from nature conservation, landscape, and environmental designations. The potential for impact on archaeology is low due to the existing land is at least partly disturbed;
- Having regard to the design, scale and location of the proposal, it is considered that the project would not significantly impact Emmet's terrace ACA, the Franciscan Friary Protected Structure or residential amenities, by way of visual impact, overshadowing or otherwise.
- There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development.

Signed:



Brendan O'Connor (Ecologist)

Environmental Assessment Unit (EAU)

Date:

30/07/2024

Signed:



Declan O Malley

Senior Executive Planner (SEP)

Date:

30/07/2024

Appendix 1

Threshold summaries of legislative requirements for EIA Screening for Infrastructure projects (in Ireland).

Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended outlines the following:

10. Infrastructure projects

(b) (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

(In this paragraph, “business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

The EU Guidance on ‘Interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive’ (2015) interprets ‘urban development’ as taking ‘account of, inter alia, the following:

- Projects with similar characteristics to car parks and shopping centres could be considered to fall under Annex II (10)(b). This could be the case, for example, of bus garages or train depots, which are not explicitly mentioned in the EIA Directive, but have similar characteristics to car parks.
- Construction projects such as housing developments, hospitals, universities, sports stadiums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls and other cultural centres could also be assumed to fall within this category. The underlying principle is that all these project categories are of an urban nature and that they may cause similar types of environmental impact.
- Projects to which the terms ‘urban’ and ‘infrastructure’ can relate, such as the construction of sewerage and water supply networks, could also be included in this category.