

Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

for proposed

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



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

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Environmental Assessment Unit (Planning and Sustainable Development Department) has been requested to assess whether the proposed project, should be subject to EIA Screening or EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment). This report comprises a Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report and is based on objective professional judgement and expertise.

1.2 Legislative context

In the first instance, it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type (or 'class') that may require EIA. 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 that can be subject to case-by-case analysis or thresholds to be determined by member states.

1.2.1 Class of Development - Urban Development

The project is located within Killarney Town, it could be argued that the project is a subthreshold urban development project.

Having reviewed the EIA Directive, the Planning and Development Regulations, the Roads Regulations, and relevant EU Guidance including interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive (EU, 2015) and Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (EU, 2017), the EAU is satisfied that the project is a project type to which the EIA Directive applies.

The project relates to the redevelopment of the redevelopment of the Áras Phádraig site and carpark on Lewis Road, Killarney. The proposal would see the existing building demolished and replaced with a new Theatre, retail unit/Café, Primary care Building, and a public realm area.

The thresholds for urban development infrastructure project types are outlined in Appendix 1 of this report. Suffice it to say, that with an overall area of less than 0.83 hectares, this project is substantially below any such thresholds.

1.3 Methodology

Following an outline of the project as described in Section 2 of this report, the preliminary screening exercise will be outlined in Section 3. Section 4 contains the conclusion of the exercise.

2 Project Description

This proposal, under assessment, seeks the redevelopment of the Áras Phádraig site and carpark at Killarney. As part of the development of a New Theatre 1750m² (200–250 seats) approximately with toilets, changing rooms, 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 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 appropriate authorised place of disposal. The site area is 0.83 Hectares.

Characteristics of the Plan or Project	
Size, scale, area, land take	<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</p>
Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal	<p><u>General Site Clearance</u> 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 circa volume of 2,200m³. Material will be separated and disposed of at an appropriate licensed facility. • 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.

Characteristics of the Plan or Project

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning and jetting of existing drainage systems • Removal of several trees including aging Monterey Pine and Monterey Cypress. <p><u>Construction</u></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.
<p>Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)</p>	<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

Characteristics of the Plan or Project	
	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).
Description of the timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)	Construction is expected to last approximately 18 Months, the anticipated start date is late Q3 2024 with a finish date of Q4 2025. Night works will be required for elements of the project, such as large deliveries of materials and utility connections, to minimise the impacts of any traffic congestion and temporary road closures.
Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal	Approximately 7,000T of material 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 by authorised waste facilities approved by Kerry County Council. Any recyclable material will be disposed of at a recycling centre. All bituminous material is confirmed as being non-hazardous and can be recycled into new asphalt material, or along with excavated concrete, reused as general fill material, subject to EPA Article 27 approval for the contractor.
Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction	The project comprises of online construction in an urban area and will require night works at various stages to minimise traffic delays. Elevated levels of traffic disruption and noise pollution are anticipated. A detailed traffic management plan and limitations on noise and nighttime works will be included in the contract documents.
Other	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. The new PCC building will accommodate the provision of comprehensive primary care health services for the people of Killarney in line with Government policy.

3 Preliminary Screening Exercise

As outlined the proposed development is not one which requires mandatory EIA. Construction-type projects listed in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive as amended were taken into account.

In consideration of the requirement for significant effects on the environment, the Source-Pathway-Receptor model is used to review the characteristics of the proposed development, the location of the proposed development, and the characteristics of the potential impacts. As outlined in Section 2 above, the characteristics of the proposed development include a standard construction development within an urban environment. The proposal will result in the redevelopment of a vacant and derelict building and replacing it with a new Theatre, retail unit/Café, Primary care Building, and a public realm area.

The project is located within Killarney Town with a number of protected structures and Architectural Conservation Areas located in the adjoining streetscape. Killarney National Park which is designated as both a SPA and a SAC is located to the southwest. There are no recorded monuments in proximity and from an archaeological point of view, the area has previously been disturbed.

However, given the proximity of the proposed redevelopment to cultural and ecological designations and residential properties. It is considered that the potential for effects should be considered within the context of Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

While these works are relatively small-scale and do not involve the creation of significant pollution or waste, risk of major accidents, or risk to human health it is considered, having regard to the precautionary principle, that an EIA Screening should be carried out.

4 Conclusion


Having regard to the above, and in particular, to the nature, scale and location of the proposed project, it is considered that this proposal requires EIA Screening.

4.1 Reasons for conclusion

There is some potential for significant effects given the proximity of the proposed redevelopment to cultural and ecological designations and residential properties.

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: 31/07/2024

Signed: 

Declan O Malley

Senior Executive Planner (SEP)

Date: 31/07/2024

Appendix 1.

Threshold summaries of legislative requirements for EIA Screening for Urban Developments (in Ireland).

Urban Development

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.

Appendix 2: Photographic Record



Above: Existing building.