

SOUTH KERRY GREENWAY (CLOGHANELINAGHAN SECTION)

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Prepared for:
Kerry County Council

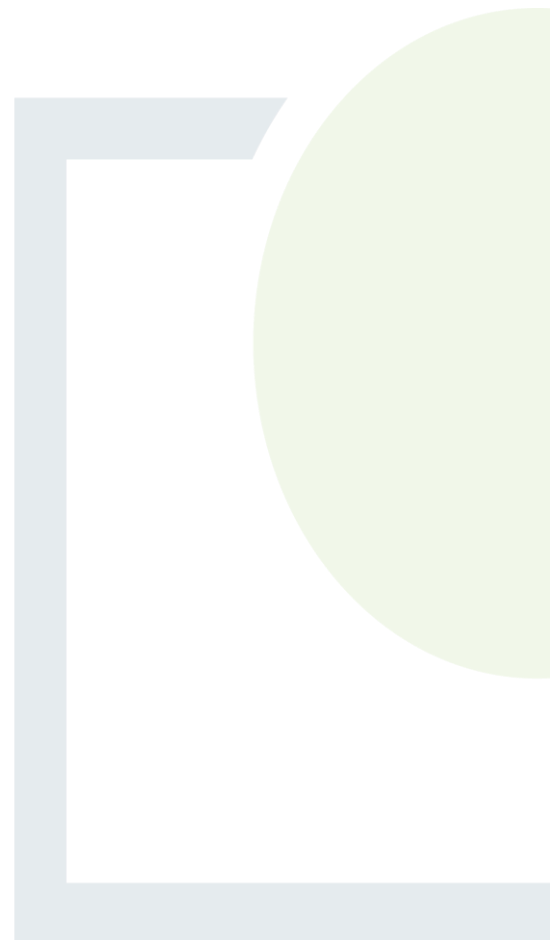


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Core House, Pouladuff Road, Cork, T12 D773, Ireland
T: +353 21 496 4133 | E: info@ftco.ie

CORK | DUBLIN | CARLOW
www.fehilytimoney.ie



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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report to Kerry County Council for South Kerry Greenway (Cloghanelinaghan Section).

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Fehily Timoney and Company have been commissioned by the applicant Kerry County Council (KCC), to provide consultancy services - including the preparation of this EIA Screening Report - for the design of the proposed new greenway and associated facilities (hereafter, referred as the Proposed Development) in the townland of Cloghanelinaghan, northeast of Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry. The section of new greenway, comprising shared cycle and pedestrian infrastructure, will be approx. 1.3km in length.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Projects is a key instrument of European Union (EU) environmental policy. It is currently governed by the terms of European Union Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private Projects on the environment (EIA Directive). The relevant regulations transposing this Directive are referenced within this report. The EIA Directive requires that public and private Projects that are likely to have significant effects on the environment be made subject to an assessment prior to grant of planning permission referred to as Development Consent. Before Development Consent can be granted, an EIA is required if a Project is likely to impact significantly upon the environment. Under Irish legislation transposing the EIA Directive, there are four instances in which the need for an EIA can arise:

- specified project types for which an EIA is mandatory (Projects listed in Annex I of the EIA Directive);
- sub-threshold developments (which doesn't exceed the quantity, area or other limit specified) where the planning authority considers it would have likely significant effects on the environment or at least a screening for EIA (Projects listed in Annex II of the EIA Directive);
- the development is a change or an extension to an existing EIA project;
- the development is integral to an EIA project.

This report presents an assessment of whether or not the proposed project should be subject to EIA. The screening first considers whether the proposed development would require a mandatory EIA; the report then goes on to consider whether a sub-threshold EIA might be required. The screening for sub-threshold EIA involves considering the potential for impacts on environmental sensitivities, in addition to the interrelationship between those environmental sensitivities. The last part of this report is the formal EIA Screening, which concludes on whether an EIA is required for the proposed development. This screening exercise has regard to the criteria set out in the relevant Planning Act and Roads Act, ; and the criteria set out in the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU).



2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

2.1 Project Description

2.1.1 Project Location

The scheme aims to provide a new section of the South Kerry Greenway / active travel facility in the townland of Cloghanelinaghan, northeast of Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry. The scheme is located approx. 600m northeast of the Valentia Estuary Viaduct. The scheme will mainly involve the installation of a new shared cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve active travel provision and local amenity.

2.1.2 Project Overview

The proposed route of this section of greenway travels in a northeasterly direction from the starting point, approx. 600m northeast of the Valentia Estuary Viaduct. The alignment begins by running northwest along a field boundary for approx. 250m, before turning northeast and continuing parallel to the south of the L7528 Local Road for approx. 1,050m. The alignment will be located parallel to the south of the L7528 and will sit behind the existing hedgerow within the adjacent fields. The construction compound will be located directly east of the easternmost point of the site boundary. The subject scheme would provide a safe route off of this section of the public road (L7528) for both pedestrians and cyclists, and an added benefit is that it connects into the permitted South Kerry Greenway infrastructure (approved under ABP Ref: 302450) to the west and east as shown on Figure 2.1.

The overall length of the greenway is approx. 1.3km. The alignment crosses 10 field accesses and gated access will be provided on both sides of the greenway to facilitate landowner access. The greenway will not be lit. Line marking & signage will be required to supplement proposed infrastructure.

The greenway will consist of the following items:

- A 3.0m wide shared use path with 1.0m verges and earthworks where required.
- Fencing will typically be required along one side of the greenway when parallel to the existing road, with the existing hedgerow providing containment on the other side. However, fencing on both sides will be required from the start point up to the local road.
- The greenway will be accessible to pedestrians and cyclists from the L7528 at two locations, the first at the western end of the scheme and the second towards the eastern end. A staggered gated system will be provided at each access point.
- A 2.1m high x 3.0m wide (internal dimensions) underpass at approx. ch. 950 will be provided to facilitate livestock crossing of the existing L7528 Local Road and the proposed greenway. This underpass will take the form of a precast box culvert. Provision of the animal underpass will require temporary traffic management arrangements to be implemented on the L7528 and the excavation of approximately 260m³ of material to facilitate installation of the underpass. Upon installation, the underpass will be backfilled and the road surface reinstated.
- The greenway is contained entirely within agricultural lands. Excavation for the greenway pavement will extend up to approx. 250mm to 300mm below existing ground. Additional earthworks may be required at the western end of the scheme, between the start point and the L7528 Local Road, where the existing topography is relatively steep.



- Drainage for the scheme will consist of over the edge drainage along the length of the scheme with precast concrete piped culverts required at up to 9 locations where the greenway crosses existing field drains/watercourses.
- Vegetation removal will be necessary when the alignment passes through existing hedgerows, and this will occur at 13 locations. Vegetation will also be removed for approx. 40m on the existing rail embankment at the western tie-in.



Figure 2-1: Proposed Development Layout

2.1.3 Planning Policy Context

2.1.3.1 *Kerry County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028*

Within the Kerry County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028, which came into effect in August 2022, the subject site falls within a ‘visually sensitive area’, with a number of Views and Prospects identified on the opposite side of the estuary overlooking the subject lands. Policy KCDP 11081 notes that an objective of the Council is to

“Prohibit development that have a material effect on views designated in this plan from the public road or greenways towards scenic features and/or public areas.”

It is recognised that this area is visually sensitive along the Wild Atlantic Way and preservation is a key objective, however the sustainable optimisation of such resources must be factored in. This proposal is for a section of greenway to ensure pedestrian and cycle safety along a section of existing roadway. Section 11.6.5 of the Kerry CDP states that,

“The Wild Atlantic Way has a number of existing viewing points along its route. In order to maximise the potential of the Wild Atlantic Way these existing viewing points will be protected. The Council will work with Fáilte Ireland in the sustainable development of these viewing points, and the identification of additional viewing locations along the route.”

In tandem to this, taking into account sustainable tourism and climate action, Policy KCDP 10-2 states,

“Facilitate sustainable tourism development throughout the County and particularly in areas where tourism is currently underdeveloped and where there is a need for local tourism development initiatives including Greenways, Blueways, Peatways, Cycleways, Walkways and Marine Leisure.”

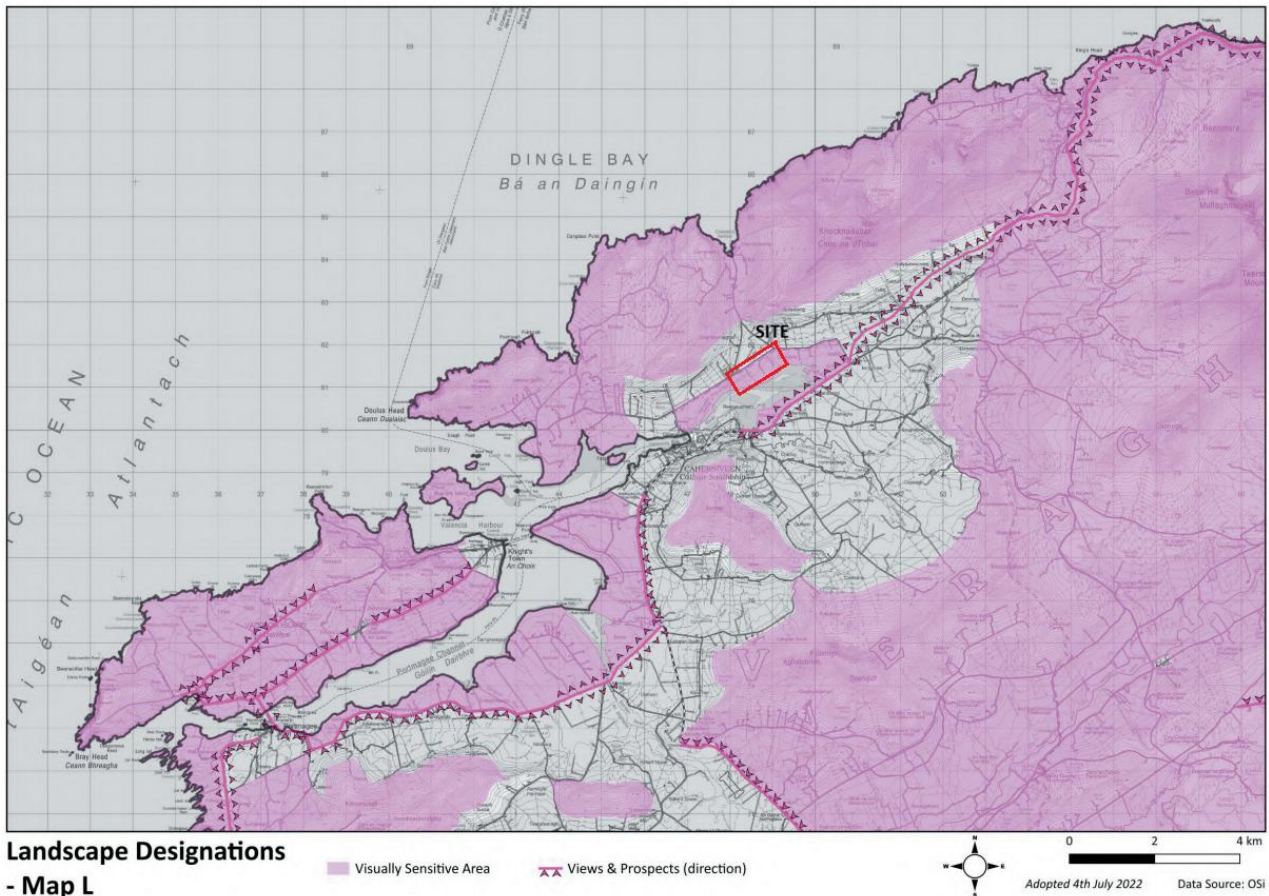


Figure 2-2: Extract from Kerry CDP – Landscape Designations Map L

2.1.3.2 Kenmare Municipal District Local Area Plan (2024-2030)

Within the Kenmare Municipal District Local Area Plan (KMDLAP), which came into effect in May 2024, the South Kerry Greenway is given special mention as it notes that ‘the greenway follows the line of the abandoned railway line from Renard to Glenbeigh. The entire route is approximately 32km in length and traverses a mixed variety of land and seascapes affording safe recreation and presenting iconic views of the area. Permission has been obtained for the section from Glenbeigh to Cahersiveen, the route is shown on Figure 2.14’ of the plan (see extract at Figure 2-3 below). The plan states that the ‘redevelopment of the railway corridor as a greenway will see it once again act as an enabler of rural economic regeneration in order to sustain the local economy. An outcome of the development of the South Kerry Greenway will be to extend the tourism season and visitor dwell time and will broaden the visitor experience and offering in the South Kerry area’. With a Greenway Objective KENMD-40 noting:

“Ensure the sustainable development of the South Kerry Greenway route in its entirety, along or near the route of the railway corridor from Glenbeigh through to Renard pier, by linking with its permitted sections.”

In addition, Policy KENMD-64 seeks to,

“Support the sustainable provision of farm-tourism enterprises associated with the South Kerry Greenway, such as the renovation of farm buildings for tourism purposes, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and development management standards as set out in the KCDP.”



Figure 2-3: Extract Figure 2.14 of the KMDLAP South Kerry Greenway Route



3. EIA SCREENING

3.1 Introduction

Before development consent can be given to this section of the South Kerry Greenway (Cloghanelinaghan), there is a requirement to determine if it is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Where significant effects are likely, the planning authority is required to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). There is legislation and guidance which defines projects where significant effects are deemed likely due to the nature of the project and in these cases, a mandatory EIA is required. In other instances, the planning authority must determine through a screening process whether the proposed project is likely to have significant effects on the environment and whether an EIA is required.

3.2 EIA Legislative Background

The first test is to examine whether the project is a type that is prescribed in the EIA Directive, as transposed into Irish law via the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) ('the Regulations') and the Roads Act 1993 (as amended). If a project is not of a type that is included in the Regulations, then there is no statutory requirement for it to be the subject of an EIA.

The European Union Directive 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, requires member states to ensure that a competent authority carries out an assessment of the environmental impacts of certain types of projects, as listed in the Directive, prior to development consent being given for the project.

The EIA Directive requires that:

"in order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures and EIA assessments should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including where relevant, its subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and, where relevant demolition phases."

The requirements for the EIA of various types of development are transposed into Irish legislation under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) and associated Regulations.

Schedule 5, Part 1 of the Planning Regulations includes a list of projects which are subject to EIA based on their type. Part 2 of the same schedule includes a list of projects which by reason of scale also fall into the EIA category, for example under 'Part 10 - Infrastructure Projects (b)(iv)' states that, "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", fall into Part 2.

Schedule 5: Part 2 of the P&D Regulations includes a section relating to 'sub-threshold' (discretionary) EIA:

"Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7."



Any project listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit (e.g. 10 hectares of a built-up area), should be subject to EIA where the project would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

Following a legislative change, it is appropriate to consider whether a proposed development consists of restructuring of a rural land holding. Under S.I. 383 of 2023 Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2023, Class 1 of Part 2 of Schedule 5, is amended by the insertion of the following:

(a) Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment)(Agriculture) Regulations 2011, where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares.

Furthermore, under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations, 2011, by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, it is noted that rural restructuring of farmland requires screening. Part A of Schedule 1 of the 2011 Regulations sets out the following thresholds for screening for EIA:

Restructuring of rural land holdings	Screening Required
Length of field boundary to be removed	Above 500m
Re-contouring (within farm-holding)	Above 2 hectares
Area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries	Above 5 hectares

The proposed development also falls under the EIA requirements of the Roads Act 1993 as amended by the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) and the Roads Act (2007) as well as regulations made under the Roads Acts, The European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 1989-2001, and EU's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). A road within the 1993 act is defined to include:

- a) any street, lane, footpath, square, court, alley or passage,
- b) any bridge, viaduct, underpass, subway, tunnel, overpass, overbridge flyover, carriageway whether single or multiple, pavement or footway,
- c) any weighbridge or other facility for the weighting or inspection of vehicles, toll plaza or other facility for the collection of tolls, services area, emergency, telephone, first aid post, culvert, arch, gully, railing, fence, wall, barrier, guardrail, margin, kerb, lay-by, hard shoulder, island, pedestrian refuge, median, central reserve.

In addition, a cycleway is referred to in Section 68 of the 1993 Act as follows:

68. (1) In this section "cycleway" means a public road or proposed public road reserved for the exclusive use of:

- a) pedal cyclists, or
- b) a combination of pedal cyclists and either or both people driving powered personal transporters and pedestrians.



- (2) (a) A road authority may construct (or otherwise provide) and maintain a cycleway.
- (b) Where a road authority constructs or otherwise provides a cycleway it shall by order declare that the cycleway is for the exclusive use of—
- (i) pedal cyclists, or
 - (ii) a combination of pedal cyclists and either or both people driving powered personal transporters and pedestrians.
- (c) Any person who uses a cycleway in contravention of an order under paragraph (b) shall be guilty of an offence.

3.3 Establishing if the proposal is 'Sub-threshold development'

Table 3-1 reviews the South Kerry Greenway Scheme (Cloghanelinaghan) against Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 and the Roads Act and its Regulations (as amended).

Table 3-1: Assessment Against Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001

Category	Assessment
<p><u>Part 10 (b) (iv) Infrastructure Projects, Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Planning Regulations 2021 (as amended).</u> 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.</p> <p>(In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)</p>	<p>The proposed development does not constitute Urban Development. The proposed development comprises a c.1.3km long greenway, and an animal underpass (2.1m headroom) provided under the proposed greenway and existing L7528 local road. Notwithstanding this the scheme falls below the 20 hectares threshold with the development area being circa 1.3 hectares.</p>
<p><u>Class 13: Changes or extensions, Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Planning Regulations 2021 (as amended).</u> Any change or extension of development already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension referred to in Part 1) which would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and (ii) result in an increase in size greater than 25 per cent, or an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater. 	<p>This project is not a project listed in Part 1 and this project is not a development listed in paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of Schedule 5. The Project can act independently to the South Kerry Greenway which is consented. Cumulatively it does not result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or Part 2, or result in an increase in size greater than 25 per cent or 50 per cent of any threshold.</p>



Category	Assessment
<p><u>Under S.I. 383 of 2023 Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2023, Class 1 of Part 2 of Schedule 5:</u></p> <p><i>“(a) Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment)(Agriculture) Regulations 2011, where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares.”</i></p>	<p>Not applicable to this proposal, as there will not be 4km or more of field boundary removed, re-contouring above 5ha, or an area of land restructured by removal of field boundaries above 50 hectares.</p>
<p><u>Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994:</u> 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.</p> <p>a) the construction of 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 kilometers or more in length in a rural area or 500 meters or more in length in an urban area</p> <p>b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 meters or more in length</p>	<p>The proposed greenway route, as per definition of Section 68 of the 1993 Act is considered a public road or proposed public road reserved for the exclusive use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pedal cyclists, or a combination of pedal cyclists and either or both people driving powered personal transporters and pedestrians <p>However, it does not involve the construction or widening of a road of four or more lanes. The proposed greenway does not exceed 8km in rural areas. There are no proposed bridges or tunnels and none exceeding the 100m length threshold.</p> <p>Therefore, an EIA is not triggered under the Roads Act and Regulations criteria</p>

Taking the above information into account, it is evident that the South Kerry Greenway (Cloghanelinaghan) is significantly below the threshold for mandatory EIA, however this project falls into the EIAR category for sub-threshold assessment pursuant to Part 15 of the Regulations, and therefore a Schedule 7 Assessment on the development in compliance with Annex III to the amended EIA Directive is carried out below, this is notwithstanding the project falling significantly below the EIA Screening threshold as set out in Part A of Schedule 1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations, 2011.

3.4 Sub-threshold EIA Screening

The following criteria are laid down in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the purposes of assessing if a proposed development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. These criteria have been updated in accordance with Annex III of the 2014 Directive 2014/52/EU:



1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The characteristics of projects must be considered, regarding:

- a) the size and design of the whole project;
- b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;
- c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- d) the production of waste;
- e) pollution and nuisances;
- f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;
- g) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location of the Proposed Development

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

- h) the existing and approved land use,
- i) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
- j) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - ii. coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - iii. mountain and forest areas;
 - iv. nature reserves and parks;
 - v. areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;
 - vi. areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;
 - vii. densely populated areas;
 - viii. landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account:

- a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the affected population likely to be affected);
- b) the nature of the impact;
- c) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- e) the probability of the impact;



- f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment; and
- h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

3.5 EIA Screening Guidelines

In order to assist the Competent Authority in their assessment, this report has been structured so as to present the information required under Schedule 7A against the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

This assessment was undertaken having regard to the following guidance:

- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR) (EPA, 2022);
- Guidance on EIA Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU), European Commission, 2017;
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development DEHLG (updated December 2020);
- Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A Practical Guide (NRA, 2008);
- NTA - Guidance for EIA and AA Screening of Active Travel Projects Funded by the NTA (2023);
- Office of the Planning Regulator Practice Note (PN02) 'Environmental Impact Assessment Screening' (OPR, 2021);
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009 (revised 2010); and
- TII's Environmental Planning of National Road and Greenway Projects (RE-ENV-07008).

3.6 Receiving Environment

Section 171A of the Planning and Development Act outlines the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed scheme, which must be considered in EIA. These are:

- population and human health;
- biodiversity and land;
- soil and water;
- air and climate;
- material assets; and
- cultural heritage and landscape.

A summary of each of the above topics as they relate to the receiving environment is provided below.



3.6.1 Population and Human Health

The proposed development comprises the construction of approximately 1.3km of new greenway infrastructure and an animal underpass (2.1m headroom) provided under the proposed greenway and existing L7528 local road, within the townland of Cloghanelinaghan, northeast of Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry. The proposed development is located within a rural agricultural landscape. The area in general is rural in nature and not densely populated, with 4 no. residential receptors within c. 200m of the site boundary.

3.6.2 Biodiversity and Land

The proposed development comprises the construction of approximately 1.3km of new greenway infrastructure and an animal underpass (2.1m headroom) provided under the proposed greenway and existing L7528 local road, within the townland of Cloghanelinaghan, northeast of Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry. The majority of works will take place within agricultural lands, with the alignment running parallel to the L7528 Local Road for most of its length and the animal underpass (2.1m headroom) to be constructed under the proposed greenway and existing L7528 local road. Construction will require localised vegetation removal, including the removal of sections of hedgerow at 13 locations and clearance of vegetation along approximately 40m of overgrown rail embankment at western tie-in. These works will result in habitat loss and fragmentation at a local scale.

The site is not located within, or directly adjacent to, any European or nationally designated sites for nature conservation. The nearest European designated sites are located in the wider Cahersiveen–Valentia area, well removed from the works area. One watercourse crossing along the route forms part of the mapped hydrological network, and the scheme will require up to nine culvert installations where the greenway intersects existing field drains or watercourses. Instream works at these locations may give rise to temporary impacts on aquatic habitats if not appropriately managed.

The surrounding landscape comprises steep agricultural fields, mature field boundaries, and rural road corridors. Habitats within the footprint of the scheme are typical of improved agricultural land use, with hedgerows providing the main ecological features of value. Fencing, earthworks and vegetation clearance may impact locally important habitats; however, no ecologically sensitive or protected habitats are expected to be directly affected.

There are 3 no. European sites identified as being present within the potential ZOI of the Proposed Development, namely:

- Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC (000365)
- Valentia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC (002262)
- Iveragh Peninsula SPA (004154)

No QI habitats were identified as being present within or directly adjacent to the Proposed Development. Habitats within and adjacent to the Site compromise primarily private dwellings, agricultural grasslands for livestock and hay meadows, wet grassland, drainage ditches intersecting agricultural fields. No invasive flora was identified on or adjacent to the Site.



The lands surrounding the Site comprise the rural areas near the town of Cloghanelinaghan, northeast of Cahersiveen, and the Ferta estuary c. 80m of south from the southernmost boundary of the Site. Habitats possibly capable of supporting Otter are present within the Site, namely, the 9 no. drainage ditches which traverse the Site (refer to Figure 2.1 of the AA Screening), however, given the suboptimal nature of the drainage ditches to support fish on which otter feed, and the more suitable available foraging and commuting habitats in the wider area in the form of the habitats of Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC, Valentia Harbour and the variety of watercourses in the wider area, the Site is not deemed of significance for Otter. Furthermore, there were no breeding holts identified within 150m of the Proposed Development, nor have Otter been historically recorded within the NBDC 2km grid squares which encompass the Site (V48Q and V48V).

Lesser Horseshoe Bat roosts are identified within the Conservation Objectives document for Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC (NPWS, 2017).

The suitability of the Proposed Development Site and its surrounding environs to support SCI birds of nearby SPAs (namely, Iveragh Peninsula SPA) was assessed, please refer to the AA Screening. This SPA is designated for cliff nesting birds and seabirds. Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*), Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) and Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*). There is no suitable nesting habitat to support any of the above species within or directly adjacent to the Site. While chough may forage in agricultural fields such as those within the Proposed Development Site, only one individual chough was recorded during the walkover survey.

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been undertaken to assess the potential for the project, including associated instream works and vegetation removal, to result in likely significant effects on any European Sites.

3.6.3 Soil and Water

The proposed 1.3km greenway and animal underpass will be constructed within agricultural lands, requiring earthworks and shallow excavations generally 250–300mm deep, with some additional cut-and-fill at the western end. These works will temporarily disturb and compact soils, although all excavated material is expected to be reused on site, minimising the need for off-site disposal.

The alignment crosses several existing field drains and minor watercourses, with up to nine culverts required. Instream works at these locations may cause temporary increases in sediment or risk of localised contamination if not appropriately managed. Only one of these watercourses is shown on the EPA river network.

Surface water drainage will be managed through over-the-edge drainage along the route, allowing runoff to infiltrate naturally into adjacent land and maintaining existing hydrological patterns. No water supply connections or process effluent are required for the scheme.

With the use of standard construction and pollution-prevention measures—particularly at watercourse crossings—the potential for significant effects on soils or water quality is low. The AA Screening Report will examine any downstream pathways to designated sites.



3.6.4 Air and Climate

The EPA host an air quality monitoring station at Valentia Observatory, Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry (Station 45) monitoring PM10 and PM2.5, Nitrogen Dioxide and ozone. The station was commissioned in June 2020. Recent data from the station is available up to 14th November 2024 and this data indicates 'Good' Air Quality Index for Health. The second nearest station, at Tralee Library, Co. Kerry (Station 71) also indicates 'Good' Air Quality Index for Health in the area.

3.6.5 Material Assets

The proposed development will be constructed within agricultural lands parallel to the L7528 Local Road, and beneath the L7528 local road itself. The works will require temporary use of lands for construction, including access for machinery and storage of materials. The greenway will permanently occupy a narrow strip of agricultural land along the route; however, gated access will be provided at 12 field entrances to maintain landowner access and normal farm operations.

Construction will require typical materials such as stone, asphalt, concrete, precast culverts, fencing, and signage. These materials are standard for greenway construction and will be sourced from established suppliers. The volume of waste generated will be limited, primarily arising from vegetation removal and minor excavation. Excavated soils are expected to be reused on site where possible, reducing the need for off-site disposal.

The greenway will not require connections to utilities such as water, electricity, gas or telecommunications, and no existing structures will be demolished. Road access to the scheme during construction will be via the L7528, with associated traffic expected to be low and temporary in nature.

3.6.6 Cultural Heritage

There are no records of any National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) features within or surrounding the site boundary or any National Monuments.



4. ASSESSMENT AGAINST SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA

Having considered the above environmental factors, the aim of the next section is to address likely impacts on the environment by the implementation of the proposed scheme. A brief overview of the sensitivities and impacts are highlighted. Whether an EIA would be deemed relevant to the scale of the project and the environment is determined. The following sections present the EIA Screening based on the criteria contained in Schedule 7 of the P&D Regulations and are grouped under the following headings:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Scheme – Table 4-1
2. Location of the Proposed Scheme - Table 4-2
3. Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact – Table 4-3
4. EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions - Table 4-4

Table 4-1: Characteristics of the Proposed Scheme

Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent)
The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (including any demolition works).	The proposed scheme entails the construction of approximately 1.3km of new greenway infrastructure within agricultural lands northeast of Cahersiveen and an animal underpass (2.1m headroom) provided under the proposed greenway and existing L7528 local road. The greenway will comprise a 3.0m wide shared-use path, with 1.0m verges, localised earthworks, and fencing where required. The alignment follows existing field boundaries and the L7528 Local Road and includes no demolition of existing structures. Vegetation removal will occur at 13 hedgerow crossings and along approx. 40m of overgrown former rail embankment at the western tie-in location. The scale and design of the development are modest, and effects on land take are limited and not significant.
Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects.	The proposed scheme is located within a rural agricultural area however, the planned construction of the wider South Kerry Greenway is to be delivered immediately east and west of this Cloghanelinaghan section. The permitted section of South Kerry Greenway infrastructure (approved under ABP Ref: 302450) immediately east of the proposed Cloghanelinaghan section is scheduled to commence construction in Q3 2026. Should the construction of the Cloghanelinaghan section overlap temporarily with the construction of the adjacent greenway, the cumulative effects would primarily be short-term and localized, relating to increased construction traffic and associated noise/dust in the broader area, and temporary disturbance to surrounding areas and local road networks.



Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent)
	<p>While the schemes are physically connected and their construction could overlap, both projects are linear in nature and their main operational impacts (once complete) are positive and related to transport/recreation. Given the small footprint of the 1.3km section and the temporary duration of construction activities, the resulting meaningful cumulative effects are anticipated to be generally low and manageable, mainly confined to the construction phase duration.</p>
<p>Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity.</p>	<p>Construction materials such as stone, asphalt, concrete and fencing will be required, and these will be sourced locally where possible. Earthworks will involve shallow excavation of 250–300mm and limited cut-and-fill, with excavated material reused on site. The project will result in the removal of hedgerow sections at 13 no. locations, and vegetation clearance along the western rail embankment tie-in, representing a modest local loss of biodiversity.</p> <p>The areas of hedgerow removal are far below the thresholds that would apply under the Agriculture (EIA) Regulations and will not result in significant land restructuring or recontouring.</p> <p>No significant use of water or other natural resources is expected.</p> <p>The AA screening concludes that there are no notable pathways for the propagation of significant effects between the Proposed Development and the SAC's (Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC; Valentia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC) and its QIs were identified. Furthermore no notable pathways for the propagation of significant effects between the Proposed Development and the Iveragh Peninsula SPA and its associated SCIs were identified.</p>
<p>Production of waste.</p>	<p>Construction will generate typical volumes of solid waste, including vegetation arisings and surplus soil. Waste volumes requiring off-site disposal will be minimal.</p> <p>Material will be reused within the scheme where suitable, with all remaining waste sent to authorised waste facilities. No operational waste is expected.</p>
<p>Pollution and nuisances.</p>	<p>Temporary, localised nuisance from construction activities (noise, dust, sediment runoff) may occur. These will be controlled through best-practice construction methods, including dust suppression, silt fencing at watercourse crossings, noise dampening, and restricted working hours.</p> <p>Surface water will infiltrate naturally via over-the-edge drainage, maintaining existing hydrological patterns. Works near watercourses may generate short-term sediment mobilisation, but impacts will be mitigated through standard pollution control measures.</p> <p>During operation, no significant pollution or nuisance is expected, and the completed greenway will provide long-term amenity benefits.</p>



Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent)
Major accidents and disasters.	<p>The construction of greenway infrastructure is low risk and routinely carried out in Ireland without significant accident or disaster potential.</p> <p>The site is not located within an area identified as being at flood risk, and risks associated with climate change (e.g. increased rainfall, storm events) are low given the nature and scale of the project. No major accident or disaster risks are anticipated.</p>
Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution.	<p>No risks to human health are expected provided standard construction management practices are adopted. Potential risks from dust, noise, or accidental pollution during construction are limited, short-term and controllable.</p> <p>During operation, the scheme will provide a safe, segregated facility for pedestrians and cyclists and offer long-term positive effects through improved active travel opportunities and reduced exposure to traffic hazards.</p>



Table 4-2: Location of the Proposed Scheme

<p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development:</p>	<p>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):</p>
<p>The existing and approved land use.</p>	<p>The proposed greenway is located entirely within agricultural lands in the townland of Cloghanelinaghan, northeast of Cahersiveen, running parallel to the L7528 Local Road and the animal underpass (2.1m headroom) will be provided under the proposed greenway and existing L7528 local road. The development will not replace existing transport infrastructure, and the established agricultural land use will be maintained post construction. Surrounding land use consists of improved pasture, field boundaries, and rural roadside habitats, with scattered residential properties located at a distance from the alignment.</p> <p>The proposed development is consistent with local amenity and active travel objectives and will enhance access and connectivity without introducing incompatible land uses.</p>
<p>The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.</p>	<p>The project occupies a narrow linear corridor and will not result in significant loss of land or natural resources. Earthworks are shallow (250–300mm) and designed to minimise disturbance of natural soils. Excavated material is expected to be reused locally, preserving soil resources.</p> <p>There are several minor drains and one mapped watercourse intersecting the alignment; effects on water quality will be temporary and managed through standard construction controls.</p> <p>The scheme will require removal of sections of hedgerow at 13 no. locations, and vegetation clearance along the old rail embankments, but these habitats are common locally and have strong regenerative capacity. Vegetation reinstatement can be implemented where appropriate to support landscape integration.</p>
<p>The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment; (iii) mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and; (vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; (vii) densely populated areas;</p>	<p>The proposed development is located within a rural agricultural landscape with limited environmental sensitivity. It is not situated within or adjacent to wetlands, riparian complexes, or designated conservation areas.</p> <p>The nearest European sites occur several kilometers away in the wider Cahersiveen–Valentia area, such as Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC, Valentia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC, and Iveragh Peninsula SPA. The AA Screening confirms that there is no potential for significant effects during construction via a hydrological pathway from the site and the SAC. There are no pathways for the propagation of significant effects from the Site to this SAC during the Operational Phase.</p> <p>There are no recorded NIAH structures or National Monuments or protected cultural heritage features within or adjacent the site boundary.</p>



The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development:	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	<p>The landscape is characterised by fields, hedgerows and the roadside corridor, and the project is not located within any area of noted landscape sensitivity or along a designated scenic route.</p> <p>Given the scale and nature of the development, the receiving environment has a high capacity to absorb the proposed works without significant effects.</p>

For criteria 3 'Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact' the Regulations require that the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed scheme (in relation to criteria set out under 'Characteristics of the Proposed Development' and 'Location of the Proposed Development') are assessed for the environmental topics set out in section 171A of the Planning and Development Act (i.e. population and human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air and climate, material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape) taking into account:

- i. the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- ii. the nature of the impact;
- iii. the transboundary nature of the impact;
- iv. the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- v. the probability of the impact;
- vi. the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- vii. the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment; and
- viii. the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.



Table 4-3: Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact

Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below. (including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
Population & Human Health	Potential for localised temporary nuisance during construction from noise, dust and construction traffic. Small number of nearby residential receptors may experience short-term disturbance. Operational phase will provide improved safety, amenity and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.	Best practice construction controls including dust suppression, noise management, restricted working hours and safe temporary access arrangements.	Slight temporary negative effect during construction. Positive long-term effect upon completion.
Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive	Removal of hedgerow sections at 13 locations and vegetation clearance along approx. 40m of former rail embankment. Habitat value is local and typical of agricultural land. Temporary impacts possible at small drains during culvert installation. No designated sites within or adjacent to the works.	It is noted that the AA Screening report has concluded there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests or special conservation interest or the associated site-specific conservation objectives of any designated European site, either alone or in combination with other projects.	Negligible to slight effect. Not significant. There are no notable pathways for the propagation of significant effects between the proposal and the SPA, SAC'S within the study area.
Land, soil, water, air and climate	Shallow excavation (250–300mm) and limited cut-and-fill causing short-term soil disturbance. Potential for sediment release at watercourse crossings. Over-the-edge drainage maintains natural hydrology. No significant operational emissions. Works include up to nine culverts	Pollution prevention measures including silt fencing, controlled watercourse works, designated refuelling areas, dust suppression, and adherence to CIRIA guidance.	No significant long-term effects.



Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below. (including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
	across existing field drains. However, the AA Screening also confirms that there are no European sites with ecological connectivity via air and hydrological pathways caused by the Proposed Development during any of its phases.		
Air and climate	Temporary increases in dust and exhaust emissions from machinery during construction. No long-term air quality impacts expected. No climate-related impacts due to the small scale of the project.	Best practice dust suppression, machinery maintenance, and limited construction hours.	Slight short-term effect during construction. Not significant.
Material assets, Cultural heritage and the landscape	Temporary interruption to landowner access during construction. Permanent occupation of a narrow strip of agricultural land. No interaction with NIAH structures or known archaeology. Agricultural landscape has high absorption capacity.	Manage access in consultation with landowners; pre-construction utility checks; hand-digging near services; standard procedures for unexpected archaeological finds.	Temporary slight effects. No significant effects on heritage or landscape.
Cumulative Effects	Should the construction of the Cloghanelinaghan section overlap temporarily with the construction of the adjacent 7km section, the cumulative effects would primarily be short-term and localised, relating to increased construction traffic and associated noise/dust in the broader area, and temporary disturbance to surrounding areas and local road networks.	N/A	Temporary short-term effects. No significant cumulative effects are anticipated as a result of these two projects being undertaken concurrently.



Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below. (including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
	<p>While the schemes are physically connected and their construction could overlap, both projects are linear in nature and their main operational impacts (once complete) are positive and related to transport/recreation. Given the small footprint of the 1.3km section and the temporary duration of construction activities, the resulting meaningful cumulative effects are anticipated to be generally low and manageable, mainly confined to the construction phase's duration.</p>		
Transboundary Effects	<p>Distance from any national borders and small project scale prevent any transboundary interactions.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No transboundary effect</p>



Table 4-4: EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions

EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
1. Will construction, operation, decommissioning, or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	Yes. Minor localised physical changes from greenway construction (shallow excavation, hedgerow removal, small culverts). No changes to land use or waterbodies.	No. All changes are small-scale and fully contained within modified agricultural land with high absorption capacity.
2. Will construction or the operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	Yes. Use of typical construction materials (aggregates, concrete, asphalt, fuel).	No. Quantities of materials are relatively small; no long-term depletion of natural resources.
3. Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes. Fuels, oils and concrete handled during construction.	No. Best practice construction management techniques and guidance will be followed during the construction of the proposed development.
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes. Vegetation arisings and minor spoil will be generated during construction.	No. The quantity of solid waste which will be produced will be small given the nature and scale of the proposed works. Low volumes; waste reused on site where possible or disposed of appropriately.
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC?	Yes. Only temporary dust and plant emissions during construction. No operational emissions.	No. Emissions are short-term, and minor.
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes. Temporary construction noise, minor vibration, and limited lighting.	No. All effects short-term.
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes. Potential for sediment runoff or accidental spills. Likely effects of pollution to groundwater can be mitigated through best practice construction methodologies and environmental controls. The AA Screening	No. The proposed development will be constructed in accordance with best practice guidelines which will ensure no release of contaminants into adjacent lands or waterbodies.



EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
	confirms no hydrological pathway to any European site.	
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project that could affect human health or the environment?	Yes. Standard construction accident risks.	No. The proposed development will be constructed in accordance with best practice guidelines which will ensure no release of contaminants into adjacent lands or waterbodies. Risks are low and controlled under the CEMP Emergency Response Plan.
9. Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes. Positive long-term recreational and accessibility improvements.	No. No negative environmental or social effects expected; overall positive long-term recreational outcome.
10. Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	No. Adjacent South Kerry Greenway (ABP Ref: 302450) has been permitted. The construction of this permission is scheduled to commence construction in Q3 2026. likely to be initiated prior to construction works beginning for this section. Should the construction of the 1.3km section overlap temporarily with the construction of the adjacent 7km section, the cumulative effects would primarily be short-term and localized, relating to increased construction traffic and associated noise/dust in the broader area, and temporary disturbance to surrounding areas and local road networks.	No. AA confirms no cumulative pathway to any European site. No significant impacts are considered to occur due to consequential development.
11. Is the Project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?	No. Route is entirely outside Natura 2000 sites and not hydrologically connected in any meaningful way.	No. The AA Screening identified that there are no likely significant effects identified to any European sites. Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the sources for impacts,



EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
		taking account of the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interest or the conservation objectives of any designated European site.
<p>12. Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g., wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the Project</p>	<p>Yes. There are 3 no. European sites within the potential ZOI of the subject site.</p>	<p>No. The AA Screening confirms that there are no potential for significant effects on Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC (000365), Valentia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC (002262) or Iveragh Peninsula SPA (004154) as a result of the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development. There are no pathways for the propagation of significant effects from the Site to these SAC's during the Operational Phase. No in-combination effects of significance are anticipated as a result of these two projects being undertaken concurrently.</p>
<p>13. Are there any areas on or around the location that are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g., for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes. Hedgerows may support nesting birds; no protected species or habitats confirmed onsite.</p>	<p>No. Hedgerow removal limited; timing restrictions prevent significant effects. No connection to European sites. The AA screening notes that there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests or special conservation interest or the associated site-specific conservation objectives of any designated European site, either alone or in-combination with other projects.</p>



EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Excavation near small drains and areas of moderate groundwater vulnerability.	No. No hydrological connection to Natura 2000 sites; water protection measures prevent impacts.
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	No. The route traverses ordinary agricultural landscape with no scenic designations.	No. Landscape has high absorption capacity; no sensitive receptors.
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Construction may temporarily affect local road users.	No. During the construction phase of the proposed project traffic disruptions may occur as a result of the works. However, these will be short-term in nature. Construction traffic will be managed through a construction stage TMP.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion, or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Minor construction traffic impacts on local roads.	No. During the construction phase of the proposed project, traffic disruptions may occur as a result of the works. Effects are temporary and negligible; greenway does not generate operational traffic.
18. Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	No. Works are in rural farmland with few nearby receptors.	No. Visual and noise impacts are limited and short-term.
19. Are there any areas or features of closed or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	No. No recorded monuments, NIAH features or cultural designations along the route.	No. No cultural heritage impact.
20. Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be a loss of greenfield land?	Yes. Small areas of agricultural land will be converted to greenway.	No. Land take is minimal and does not alter agricultural viability or land use patterns.
21. Are there existing land uses within or around the location e.g., homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Temporary disturbance to farm access during works.	No. Managed through landowner coordination; effects are minor and temporary.



EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
22. Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	No. No future land uses will be adversely affected.	No. Greenway supports local tourism and amenity strategies.
23. Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the Project?	No. Area is not densely populated.	No. Only temporary construction nuisance; negligible overall.
24. Are there any areas within or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g., hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, that could be affected by the Project?	No. No schools, hospitals or sensitive receptors nearby.	No. Not applicable.
25. Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g., groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be Affected by the Project?	No. No scarce or sensitive environmental resources within or near the route.	No. No environmental receptors at risk. During the construction phase mitigation measures will be in place, which will mitigate any potential negative effects to the environment. There will be no discharges to groundwater or surface waters as a result of proposed project.
26. Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g., where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, that could be affected by the Project?	No. No existing pollution sources or contaminated lands identified.	No. With CEMP measures, no risk of pollution or deterioration of water quality (AA Screening Report).
27. Is the Project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g., temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the Project to present environmental problems?	No. Route is not in a flood zone and natural hazard risk is low.	No. Climate-related or hydrological risk is negligible.



5. CONCLUSION

This EIA Screening assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended). The report has assessed the potential impacts of this 1.3km Cloghanelinaghan section of the proposed South Kerry Greenway, in conjunction with the approved South Kerry Greenway (approved under Ref: ABP Ref: 302450), as well as any other relevant projects within the wider Cahersiveen context.

Based on all available information, and taking account of the scale, nature, and location of the proposed project, it is our opinion that the preparation of an EIAR is not a mandatory requirement under Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning Regulations and the criteria set out in Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended). The project is deemed a sub-threshold development; therefore, the potential for significant environmental effects has been evaluated in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A and Schedule 7.

The proposed scheme consists of the construction of approximately 1.3km of new greenway, including a 3m shared-use path, animal underpass, shallow cut-and-fill earthworks, hedgerow removal at 13 locations, several minor watercourse crossings, and associated boundary, drainage and access works within agricultural lands northeast of Cahersiveen.

- No significant effects are likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the proposed scheme. The works are modest in scale and relate to the development of segregated walking and cycling infrastructure within an agricultural setting. Impacts are temporary, localised and typical of small civil works.
- No significant effects are likely to arise associated with the location of the proposed scheme. There are no European sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the Project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them. And there are no European sites with ecological connectivity via air and hydrological pathways caused by the Proposed Development during any of its phases.
- The types and characteristics of potential impacts will not result in significant environmental effects. The predicted impacts relate primarily to temporary disturbance during construction (noise, dust, sediment runoff and traffic movements). Implementation of standard Best Practice Construction measures, including pollution control, silt management, vegetation protection and noise/dust mitigation, will ensure that these effects remain slight and short-term in nature.

In addition, an Appropriate Assessment Screening has been carried out for the proposed development which concludes that there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests or special conservation interest or the associated site-specific conservation objectives of any designated European site, either alone or in combination with other projects.

In summary, no significant adverse impacts to the receiving environment are likely to arise from the proposed South Kerry Greenway (Cloghanelinaghan Section). It is therefore submitted that sub-threshold EIA is not required for the project due to its limited scale, the low sensitivity of the receiving environment, the absence of any significant pathways for effects, and the effective mitigation measures available at construction stage. This determination has been made with reference to Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), Annex II of the EIA Directive, and the European Commission's EIA Screening guidance checklist, as set out in this report.



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