

Proposed Killarney Town Cycle Paths Project
Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE 6
OF THE
EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC



Environmental Assessment Unit
Kerry County Council

1. Introduction

Introduction

This proposal, under assessment, seeks to provide cycle paths within Killarney Town, principally along the following roads:-

- Park Road – Park Road roundabout to Friary Church,
- Rock Road – Car Park to north of N22 Roundabout,
- Upper Lewis Road,
- Deer Park Road,
- Leisure Centre to Deer Park Road

Several additional quiet routes are also proposed which will provide interconnectivity between the various key routes and will provide safe access to the town centre. These quiet routes will be established with minimal construction inputs such as line markings and street signage. The cycle lane routes extend for approximately 3800m, the quiet routes extend to 1500m.

For the most part the works will be accommodated within the existing road space. Works will include excavation, undergrounding of services, kerblin adjustment, surfacing, landscaping, lighting, road lining and ancillary site works. At certain locations, the proposals seek to accommodate the cycleway within residential amenity open space areas or through the setting back of the existing roadside boundary. Wastes generated will be disposed of at an appropriate authorised place of disposal.

This report constitutes Stage 1 Screening which considers the likelihood of significant effects on Natura 2000 Sites of permitting the project. It is an assessment carried out in view of the best scientific knowledge to determine if the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on a European site(s). Measures intended to avoid or reduce negative effects on the European sites have not been taken into account in considering whether or not this proposal requires an Appropriate Assessment.

Habitats Directive Requirements

Natura 2000, as an EU wide network of nature protection areas, is the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. The aim of this network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. Natura 2000 is not a system of strict nature reserves where all human activities are excluded. While the network includes nature reserves, most of the land is privately owned, with the emphasis on ensuring that future management is sustainable, both ecologically and economically. Natura 2000 sites, also known as European Sites, incorporate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the 1979 Birds Directive and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated by Member States under the 1992 Habitats Directive, as well sites awaiting final approval, *i.e.* potential Special Protection Areas (pSPA) and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC). The Habitats Directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, SI 94/1997.

As per the requirements of the Habitats Directive, projects can only be permitted after having ascertained that there will be no significant adverse effect on the integrity of the sites in question. This was reinforced in the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling against Ireland (Case 418/04). The European Union has provided guidance as to how to make a Habitats Directive Assessment. This guidance identifies four main stages in the process as outlined below. Each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. If, for example, the conclusions at the end of Stage One are that there will be no significant impacts on the Natura 2000 site, there is no requirement to proceed further.

Stage One: Screening

The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, wither alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

The screening stage is intended to be a preliminary examination. If the possibility of significant effects cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information, without extensive investigation or the application of mitigation, a plan or project should be considered to have a likely significant effect and appropriate assessment carried out.

Where significant effects cannot be ruled out, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, at screening stage, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) report providing a more detailed analysis of the potential effects of a proposed project on Natura 2000 Sites is required. It is the responsibility of the proponent of the plan or project to have a NIS prepared for submission to the Competent Authority in order to assist in the undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment (AA).

The 'test' of likely significant effects as outlined by Advocate General Sharpston in Case C-258/11 Sweetman, paragraph 47 is as follows:- *'It follows that the possibility of there being a significant effect on the site will generate the need for an appropriate assessment for the purposes of Article 6(3). The requirement at this stage that the plan or project be likely to have a significant effect is thus a trigger for the obligation to carry out an appropriate assessment. There is no need to establish such an effect; it is, as Ireland observes, merely necessary to determine that there may be such an effect.'*

Stage Two: Appropriate assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts.

Stage Three: Assessment of alternative solutions

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site. It would be contrary to the requirements of the Habitats Directive to permit an option which would have adverse impacts on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, if non-harmful alternative solutions have been identified.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

An assessment of compensatory measures, where in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest, it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

Guidance Documents

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001) and the European Commission Guidance 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of the Habitats Directive' (EC, 2018) and guidance prepared by the NPWS (DoEHLG, 2009). Regard was also had to the European Commission (2007): Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the Commission and to NPWS reports outlining 'The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland'.

Stage one Appropriate Assessment Screening Methodology

As set out in the NPWS guidance, the task of establishing whether a plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 site is based on a preliminary impact assessment using available information and data and other available environmental information, supplemented as necessary by local site information and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk

that the effects identified could be significant, and if so an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required. The need to apply the precautionary principle in making any key decisions in relation to the tests of AA has been confirmed by European Court of Justice case law. Therefore, where significant effects are likely, possible or uncertain at screening stage, AA will be required.

This Appropriate Assessment Screening exercise will be systematically set out in the following manner:-

2. Establish whether the Plan or Project is necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 site.
3. Description of the Plan or Project.
4. Identification of Natura 2000 sites potentially affected.
5. Identification and description of individual and cumulative impacts of the project.
6. Assessment of the significance of the impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites (through the use of key indicators).
7. Conclusion of Screening Report.

2. Establish whether the plan or project is necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 Site

2.1 Introduction

Plans or projects that are directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of a Natura 2000 site are essentially exempt from further AA related consideration. The DEHLG 2010 Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10, outlines that such exceptions will be comparatively rare and it is recommended that the reasons and justifications, and any possible wider effects and mitigation measures, are assessed and recorded in advance of the decision to proceed in each case, together with evidence of consultation with the appropriate National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) officials of the Department.

2.2 Assessment

It is considered that this project is not one which is necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 site and therefore AA Screening is required.

3. Description of the Project

This proposal, under assessment, seeks to provide cycle paths within Killarney Town. Several additional quiet routes are also proposed which will provide interconnectivity between the various key routes and will provide safe access to the town centre. For the most part the works will be accommodated within the existing road space. Works will include excavation, undergrounding of services, kerblin adjustment, surfacing, landscaping, lighting, road lining and ancillary site works. At certain locations, the proposals seek to accommodate the cycleway within residential amenity open space areas or through the setting back of the existing roadside boundary. Wastes generated will be disposed of at an appropriate authorised place of disposal.

Characteristics of the Plan or Project	
Size, scale, area, land take	<p>This scheme proposes to provide cycle paths along existing infrastructure within Killarney Town</p> <p>The works call for the provision of cycle lanes along</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Park Road – Park Road roundabout to Friary Church,• Rock Road – Car Park to north of N22 Roundabout,• Upper Lewis Road,• Deer Park Road,• Leisure Centre to Deer Park Road <p>Several additional quiet routes will provide interconnectivity between the various key routes and will provide safe access to the town centre. These quiet routes will be established with minimal construction inputs such as line markings and street signage.</p> <p>The cycle lane routes extend for approximately 3800m, the quiet routes extend to 1500m.</p> <p>For the most part the works will be accommodated within the existing road space. Works will include excavation, undergrounding of services, kerblin adjustment, surfacing, landscaping and road lining. The nature and location of the project, which is primarily on public roadways, is such that a limited area will be under excavation at any one time. Existing roadside boundaries will also be set back at certain locations. New LED public lighting is proposed along Park road and Upper Lewis road in lieu of existing lighting where the overhead ESB cable network will be</p>

Characteristics of the Plan or Project

undergrounded. Improved LED lighting will be provided on Rock Road. LED lighting will be limiting LED intensity and will have improved spectral composition toward warmer colors.

Rock Road Cycle Paths:

Rock Road cycle paths consist of segregated 1.8m wide cycle paths on either side of the road with a 2.0m footpath. A green verge of up to 2.0m in width has been incorporated on the western side to enhance and reinstate the aesthetics of the approach to the town. Carriageways will be reduced to 6.5m in width along the length of the proposed works. The grass verge will be raised by 125mm above the carriageway with a traditional precast concrete kerb line. On the eastern side a flush cobble strip defines the edge of this carriageway. This permits the multitude of entrances on this side to be accessed without continually raising and lowering kerbs. The course texture will clearly indicate to drivers that they have entered onto another surface should they pass over the stone. The cycle paths are segregated with an additional 50.0mm change in level to the footpath.

There will be circa 273m² of take required along a Kerry County Council housing development. This setback has already been accommodated within the housing planning process. No works are proposed to the grotto.

Drainage on the scheme will be reviewed at detailed design stage but it is anticipated that all existing connections will be utilized.

Undergrounding of ESB and comms services along the route will form part of the works.

Upper Lewis Road Cycle Paths

Upper Lewis Road will include a two-way cycle path and a 1.8m wide footpath on the western side of the existing carriageway with minimal works to the eastern side. The carriageways will be reduced to 6.0m in width along the length of the proposed works. The cycle paths will link Bridgefield estate and anticipated future cycle traffic from the north and link to quiet routes to the north of Fitzgerald's Stadium via St Finnian's and to the south via Daltons Avenue. This route ultimately links to Rock Road Town Centre and onto Park Road.

Characteristics of the Plan or Project

Land takes will be required on the western side of the road to achieve the widths required. The total area required is circa 636m².

Drainage on the scheme will be reviewed at detailed design stage but it is anticipated that all existing connections will be utilized.

Undergrounding of ESB and comms services along the route will form part of the works.

Park Road

Park Road is the order of 790m long. Cycle Paths will be required to pass through a roundabout and a restricted railway junction.

Carriageways will be reduced to 6.5m in width along the length of the proposed works. One-way cycle paths will be provided on each side of the road. These paths will be segregated where possible. At the train underpass the paths will be taken off the road edge and will enter the Cinema site, pass under an existing underpass and re-join the main route.

Land takes will be required at isolated locations to achieve the widths required. The total area required is 1500m².

Drainage on the scheme will be reviewed at detailed design stage but it is anticipated that all existing connections will be utilized.

Undergrounding of ESB and comms services along the route will form part of the works.

Deerpark Road to KCC Leisure Centre Car Park

This section is in the order of 825m long. Cycle paths will be accommodated on either side of the existing road along Deerpark Road and returning into Chestnut Drive. A two-way cycle path commences at the Gaelscoil and continues to the final connection point at the Leisure Centre.

Land takes will be required at isolated locations to achieve the widths required. The total area required is 177m². It is also proposed to upgrade the existing track from Pinewood estate to the Gaelscoil to cycleway standard.

Characteristics of the Plan or Project	
	<p>Drainage on the scheme will be reviewed at detailed design stage but it is anticipated that all existing connections will be utilized.</p>
<p>Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal</p>	<p>The proposed works will be located on existing streets and paths apart from where land takes are required. The land takes consist of moving boundary walls 1m to 2m with the one exception of the boundary along Fitzgerald’s Stadium. This section of wall will move in by approximately 4.0m.</p> <p>Road widths will be narrowed to typically 6.4m, this will require the removal of existing kerbs and footpaths and the construction of new kerb lines. Levels will generally remain consistent with existing and multiple property entrance constraints will have to be adhered to.</p> <p>It is not envisaged that underground services will be altered as the level differences proposed if any will be so minimal. Area of existing roads will be planed to accommodate the re alignment and to ensure the road camber will be central. Where existing road surfaces are particularly poor these will be re surfaced.</p> <p>New road markings and signage will be required throughout the scheme. The extents of this is as detailed on the drawings.</p> <p>The drainage regime will be maintained with existing gullies being retained or locally relocated to accommodate the new kerb lines.</p> <p>ESB and coms infrastructure will be undergrounded, this will require trenching along the sides of the roads with associated arisings and backfilling.</p>
<p>Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation and decommissioning of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)</p>	<p><u>Materials Requirement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bituminous surfacing, 15000m² typically 50mm deep • Concrete 2500m³ • Precast Kerbing 6500 linear m • Ducting 6000 linear m • 1000m³ of imported General Fill Material

Characteristics of the Plan or Project

- 550m³ of Topsoil
- 25 Replacement Street Lighting Poles
- Street Furniture
- Mature Trees
- Grass Seed
- Thermoplastic Road Signage
- Street Furniture, Benches, Bins and Planters
- Street Signage
- Bollards

Plant Requirement:

- 4 Tracked/Rubber excavators over a 12-month period
- Mini Dumpers
- 12T – 15T excavator for general excavation and placement of Material
- Delivery Truck for Fill Material
- Utility Scanners
- Road Planners
- Concrete Breakers
- Concrete cutting equipment.
- Site Offices, Canteens, Toilets and Storage

Personnel Requirement:

- Site Management 3 Persons Full time for 12 months
- Demolition crews for a 9-month period
- Paving Crews for a 9-month period
- General Operative for 12 months
- Four persons for excavator operation, traffic management and general site duties (10 days)
- 2 persons for hedge planting
- ESB Crews

Characteristics of the Plan or Project									
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coms Crews 								
Description of timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)	<p>The works will be undertaken in separate phases though these phases can run concurrently. The works sections are as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock Road • Upper Lewis Road • Park Road • Deerpark Road • Quiet Routes. <p>Starts dates will be subject to funding Approval. Potential start September 2021 with shut downs for Christmas period and completion in October 2022.</p>								
Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal	<p>Waste is expected to consist of broken concrete footpaths and surface planings from the existing roadways. All waste materials will be tested prior to being allocated a waste criterion. All waste will be disposed of in suitably licensed facilities.</p> <p>Volumes are estimated as follows:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Precast Kerbing</td> <td>3500 linear m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Concrete</td> <td>1000m³</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Surfacing</td> <td>500m³</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stone hardcore arisings</td> <td>250m³</td> </tr> </table> <p>Redundant signage Redundant Furniture ESB Poles and Public Lighting Poles</p>	Precast Kerbing	3500 linear m	Concrete	1000m ³	Surfacing	500m ³	Stone hardcore arisings	250m ³
Precast Kerbing	3500 linear m								
Concrete	1000m ³								
Surfacing	500m ³								
Stone hardcore arisings	250m ³								
Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction	Traffic Management will be implemented as appropriate.								
Other	This proposal will result in a moderate increase in noise and human presence during the construction phase. The result of the project will be a safer layout for road users.								

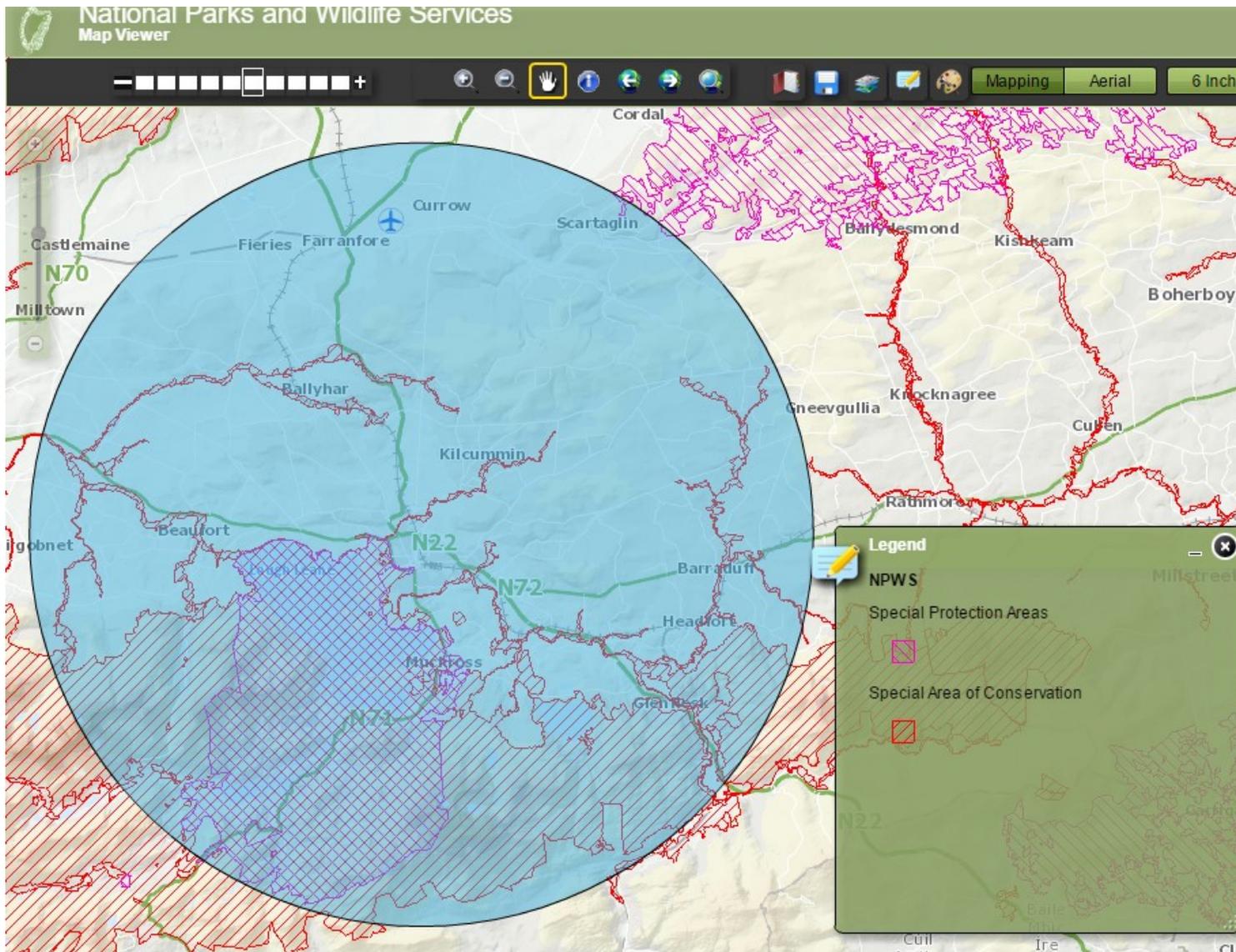
4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites potentially affected

The proposed works are located upstream of the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC, the Killarney National Park SPA, the Castlemaine Harbour SAC and the Castlemaine Harbour SPA. A number of others are located within the wider area. As part of this assessment the following Natura 2000 sites which are located within 15Km of the development location and or which are located downstream of the works where taken into consideration.

Natura 2000 sites located in the vicinity:-

- 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 002041 – Old Domestic Dwelling, Curraglass Woods

- SPA 004029 - Castlemaine Harbour
- SPA 004038 - Killarney National Park SPA
- SPA 004161 – Stacks to Mullagherisk Mountains, West Limerick Hills & Mount Eagle' SPA



Above: Natura 2000 sites located within 15Km of the proposed works

Preliminary assessment to identify which Natura 2000 Sites could potentially be significantly effected

Preliminary Appropriate Assessment Screening matrix: A preliminary assessment of *likely significant effects* of the project on European Natura 2000 Sites

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
<p>SAC 000343 - Castlemaine Harbour</p> <p>Habitats</p> <p>1130 Estuaries</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines</p> <p>1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts</p> <p>1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)</p> <p>1410 Mediterranean salt</p>	<p>5km to the proposed development.</p> <p>Hydrological connection via Lough Leane</p>	<p>http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000343.pdf</p> <p>Only meaningful ecological connection identified is hydrological. The proposal is located upstream of this Natura 2000 site. Notwithstanding this, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposal it is considered that any pollution which could possible arise would be well dissipated prior to reaching the Natura 2000 site or impacting on its conservation interests. As part of this, it is noted that</p>	<p>No possibility of in combination effects</p>	<p>Screened out for need for Appropriate Assessment</p>

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
<p>meadows (Juncetalia maritimi)</p> <p>2110 Embryonic shifting dunes</p> <p>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</p> <p>2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)*</p> <p>2170 Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>)</p> <p>2190 Humid dune slacks</p> <p>91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)*</p> <p>Species</p> <p>1106 Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)</p> <p>1099 River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</p> <p>1395 Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>)</p>		<p>the expanses of Lough Leane are located between Killarney and this Natura 2000 site.</p> <p>No possibility of effects due to the separation distance from the development and lack of meaningful pathway of impact.</p>		

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
1355 Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) 1095 Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)				
SAC 000382 – Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog Habitats 7110 Active raised bogs* 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration	3km to the proposed development. Outside of water catchment area and no other ecological or hydrological connections/pathways exist. No potential for dust arising from the development site reaching this Natura 2000 site.	http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000382.pdf No possibility of effects due to the separation distance from the development and lack of meaningful ecological connections.	No possibility of in combination effects	Screened out for need for Appropriate Assessment
SAC 000365 - Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC Habitats 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals	The proposed works area comes within 100m of this Natura 2000 site (Rock Street to the River Deanagh which forms part of the SAC).	http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000365.pdf		Screened in for need for more detailed Appropriate Assessment Screening

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
<p>of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae)</p> <p>3130 Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</p> <p>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation</p> <p>4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix</p> <p>4030 European dry heaths</p> <p>4060 Alpine and Boreal heaths</p> <p>5130 Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> <p>6130 Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae</p> <p>6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)</p> <p>7130 Blanket bogs (* if active)</p>	<p>Located within receiving catchment of watercourses in the SAC</p>			

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
<p>bog)</p> <p>7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion</p> <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles</p> <p>91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)*</p> <p>91J0 Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles*</p> <p>Species</p> <p>1065 Marsh Fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>)</p> <p>1095 Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</p> <p>1096 Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)</p> <p>1099 River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</p> <p>1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>)</p>				

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1106 Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) 1303 Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) 1024 Kerry Slug (<i>Geomalacus maculosus</i>) 1833 Slender Naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) 1355 Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) 1421 Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>) 5046 Killarney Shad (<i>Alosa fallax killarnensis</i>)				
SAC 002170 – Blackwater River (Cork / Waterford) Habitats 1130 Estuaries 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand 1330 Atlantic salt meadows	15km to the Proposed development. Outside of water catchment area and no other ecological or hydrological connections/pathways exist.	http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002170.pdf No possibility of effects due to the separation distance from the development and lack of ecological connections.	No possibility of in combination effects	Screened out for need for Appropriate Assessment

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
<p>(Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles 91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)* Species 1096 Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) 1106 Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) 1421 Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>) 1095 Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</p>				

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
1355 Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) 1103 Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax fallax</i>) 1092 White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) 1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) 1099 River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)				
SAC 002041 – Old Domestic Dwelling, Curraglass Woods Species 1303 Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>)	14.5km to the proposed development. Outside of water catchment area and no other ecological or hydrological connections/pathways exist.	http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002041.pdf No possibility of effects due to the separation distance from the development and lack of ecological connections.	No possibility of in combination effects	Screened out for need for Appropriate Assessment
SPA 004029 - Castlemaine Harbour	17.5Km to the proposed development.	Only meaningful ecological connection identified is hydrological. The proposal is located upstream of this Natura 2000 site.	No possibility of in combination effects	Screened out for need for Appropriate Assessment

European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
		<p>Notwithstanding this connection, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposal it is considered that any pollution which could possible arise would be well dissipated prior to reaching the Natura 2000 site or impacting on its conservation interests. As part of this, it is noted that the expanses of Lough Leane are located between Killarney and this Natura 2000 site.</p> <p>No possibility of effects due to the separation distance and lack of meaningful pathway of impact between the SCI birds / their ecological requirements and the proposed development site.</p>		
SPA 004038 - Killarney National Park SPA	250m to the proposed development (East	http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-	No possibility of in combination effects	Screened out for need for Appropriate

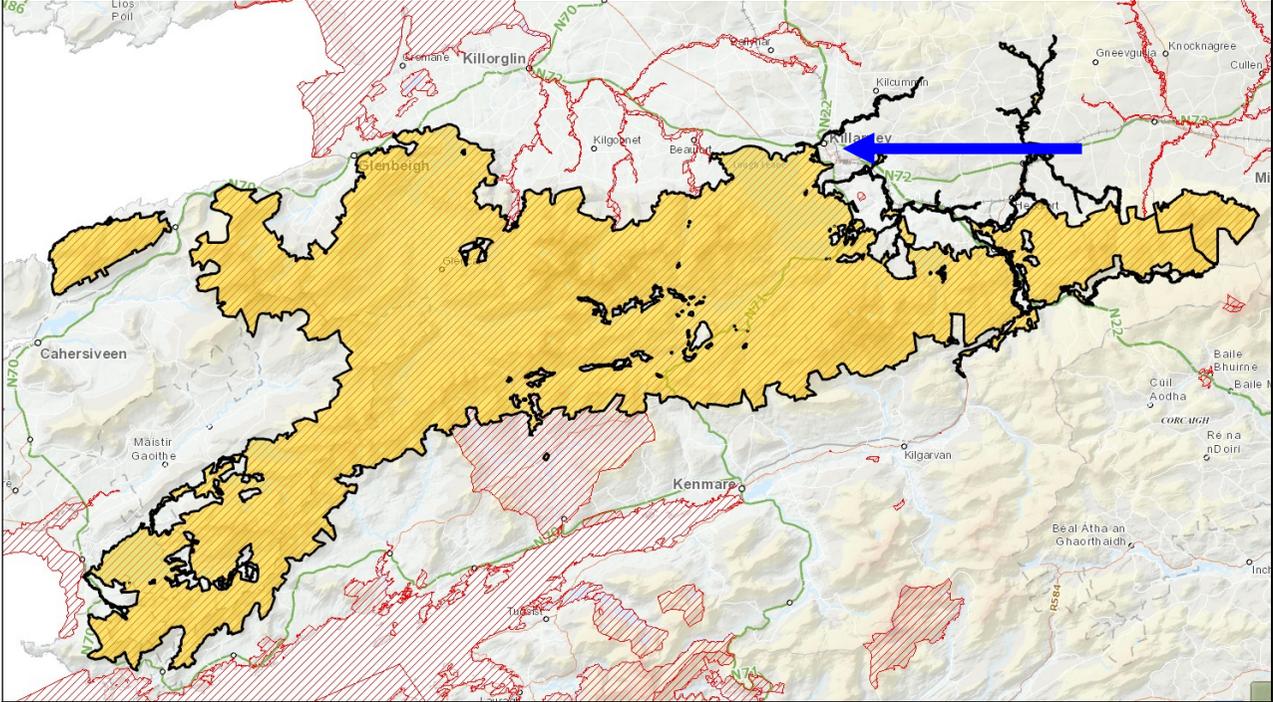
European /Natura 2000 Site and qualifying interests (* denotes a priority habitat). Source: www.npws.ie	Distance from proposed development/ Source, pathway, receptor (nearest edge)	Conservation Objectives and consideration of possible significant effect (alone)	In combination effects	Preliminary Screening conclusion
<p>Birds A098 Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>)</p>	Avenue to Kenmare Place	<p>sites/conservation objectives/CO004038.pdf</p> <p>No possibility of effects due to the separation distance from the development. There is no likely meaningful ecological connection between the SCI birds (Merlin and the Greenland White-fronted Goose) / their ecological requirements and the proposed development site.</p>		Assessment
<p>SPA 004161 – Stacks to Mullagherisk Mountains, West Limerick Hills & Mount Eagle’ SPA SPA 004108 – Erik Bog SPA</p> <p>Birds A082 Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)</p>	<p>15Km to the proposed development.</p> <p>Outside of water catchment area and no other ecological or hydrological connections/pathways exist.</p>	No possibility of effects due to the separation distance from the development and lack of ecological connections.	No possibility of in combination effects	Screened out for need for Appropriate Assessment

Summary of preliminary AA Screening Exercise

The proposed works are located upstream of the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC, the Killarney National Park SPA, the Castlemaine Harbour SAC and the Castlemaine Harbour SPA. It is also located in close proximity to the aforementioned Natura 2000 sites associated with Killarney National Park. There are no other connecting pathways between the development (source) and Natura 2000 sites (receptors).

The potential for impact on Castlemaine Harbour SAC and SPA can be ruled out beyond reasonable scientific doubt given the intervening distance between the site works and the Natura 2000 sites and the dilution capacity available within Lough Leane which is located between same. Potential for impact on Killarney National Park SPA can be ruled out beyond reasonable scientific doubt as the species of conservation interest for that site are birds associated with woodland and wetlands and there is no potential pathway for impact on same or on their supporting habitats. Potential for significant effect on Killarney National Park SAC will be considered further in this assessment.

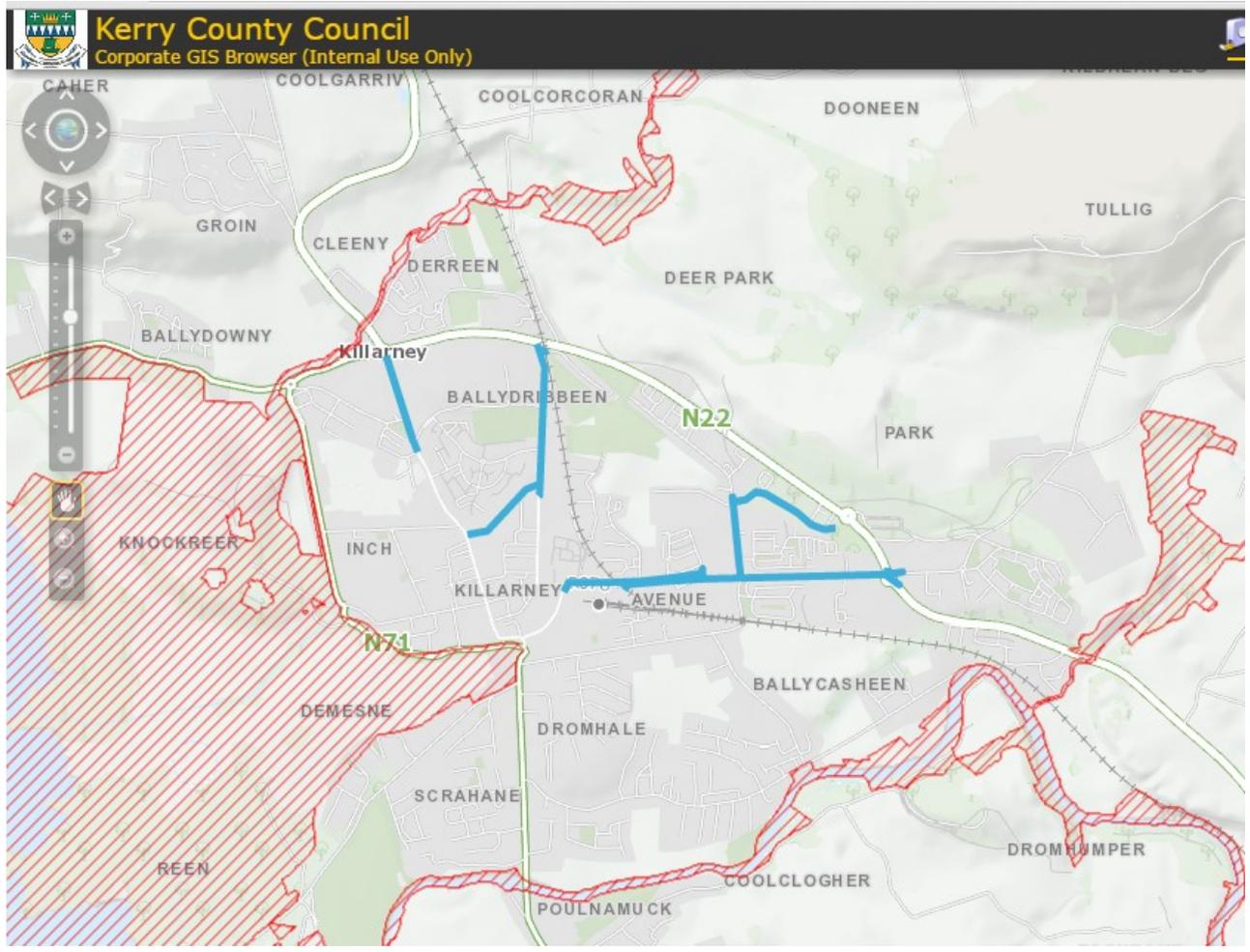
5. Identification and description of potential individual and cumulative impacts of the Plan or Project

Natura 2000 Site: Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC (Site Code 000365)	
Name	Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC (Site Code 000365)
Site designation status	Special Area of Conservation
Natura 2000 site highlighted in yellow. Killarney located by the blue arrow.	
Natura 2000 Site Description	This very large site encompasses the mountains, rivers and lakes of the Iveragh peninsula, and the Paps Mountains which stretch eastward from Killarney towards Millstreet. It is the most mountainous region in Ireland and includes Carrauntoohil (1039m), the highest peak in the country.

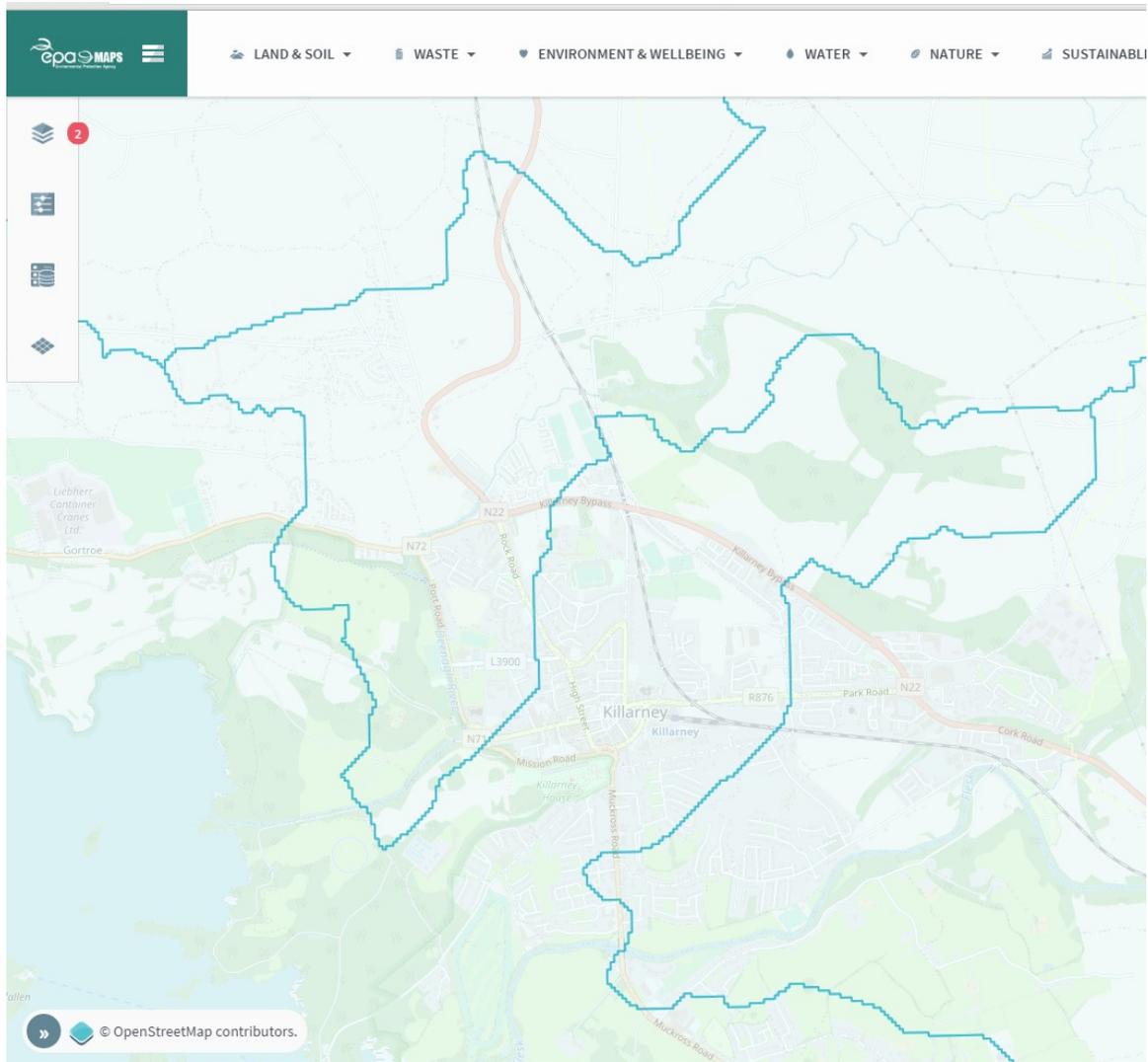
Natura 2000 Site: Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC (Site Code 000365)	
	<p>The underlying geology is almost entirely Old Red Sandstone. The dramatic sandstone ridges and valleys have been shaped by glacial processes and many of the lakes are impounded by glacial moraines. Located close to the Atlantic in the south-west of Ireland, the site is subject to strong oceanic influences. Generally, the Lusitanian flora and fauna is well represented, while the high peaks and cliffs support arctic-alpine relicts. The site is of great ecological interest, with at least ten habitats which are listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.</p>
Qualifying species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alosa fallax</i> (Killarney shad), • <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern), • <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad), • <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> (Kerry spotted slug) • <i>Euphydrias aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) • <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) • <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) • <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (European Brook Lamprey) • <i>Salmo salar</i> (Atlantic Salmon) • <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) • <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (European Otter)
Qualifying habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion; • Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>); • Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or of the <i>Isoëto-Nanojuncetea</i>; • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation; • European dry heaths; • <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; • Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i>; • <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>); • Blanket bog;

Natura 2000 Site: Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC (Site Code 000365)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles; • Alpine and Boreal heaths; <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles; • Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae); • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>
Unit size	76,445Ha
Non-qualifying species and habitats of interest	<p>An additional twenty-two Red Data Book plant species have been recorded, but only twelve of these have been seen recently. These are Pillwort (<i>Pilularia globulifera</i>), Kerry Lily (<i>Simethis planifolia</i>), Irish Lady's Tresses (<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>), Slender Cottongrass (<i>Eriophorum gracile</i>), Slender Cudweed (<i>Logfia minima</i>), Betony (<i>Stachys officinalis</i>), Heath Cudweed (<i>Omalotheca sylvatica</i>), Alder Buckthorn (<i>Frangula alnus</i>), Alpine Saw-wort (<i>Saussurea alpina</i>), Hoary Whitlowgrass (<i>Draba incana</i>), Smooth Brome (<i>Bromus racemosus</i>) and Holly Fern (<i>Polystichum lonchitis</i>). The first seven of these species are legally protected (Flora Protection Order, 1999). The site is very important for oceanic bryophytes, particularly the woodland species. It also contains good representative examples of the Northern Atlantic Hepatic Mat community and other oceanic montane communities. Killarney Oak woods and mountains have been nominated as a site of international importance for bryophytes. Additional plant species of interest include a fern (<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> subsp. <i>stilluppensis</i>) and a Whitebeam (<i>Sorbus anglica</i>), both at their only Irish locations.</p> <p>The Killarney Woods are notable for the number of rare species of Myxomycete fungus that have been recorded, namely <i>Collaria arcyronema</i>, <i>Craterium muscorum</i>, <i>Cribraria microcarpa</i> (only known Irish site), <i>C. rufa</i>, <i>C. violacea</i>, <i>Diderma chondrioderma</i>, <i>D. lucidum</i>, <i>D. ochraceum</i>, <i>Fuligo muscorum</i>, <i>Licea marginata</i>.</p> <p>The site has six bird species which are listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. A small flock of Greenland White-fronted Geese, which winters on the boglands within the National Park, is now the only regular flock in the south-west. The site has one of the highest concentrations of breeding Peregrines in the country, as well as some breeding Merlin. Chough is found both in the coastal areas and inland areas of the site, with possibly up to 30 pairs breeding. Kingfisher is a species associated with the lakes and rivers, especially in the National Park and probably breeds. Finally, a</p>

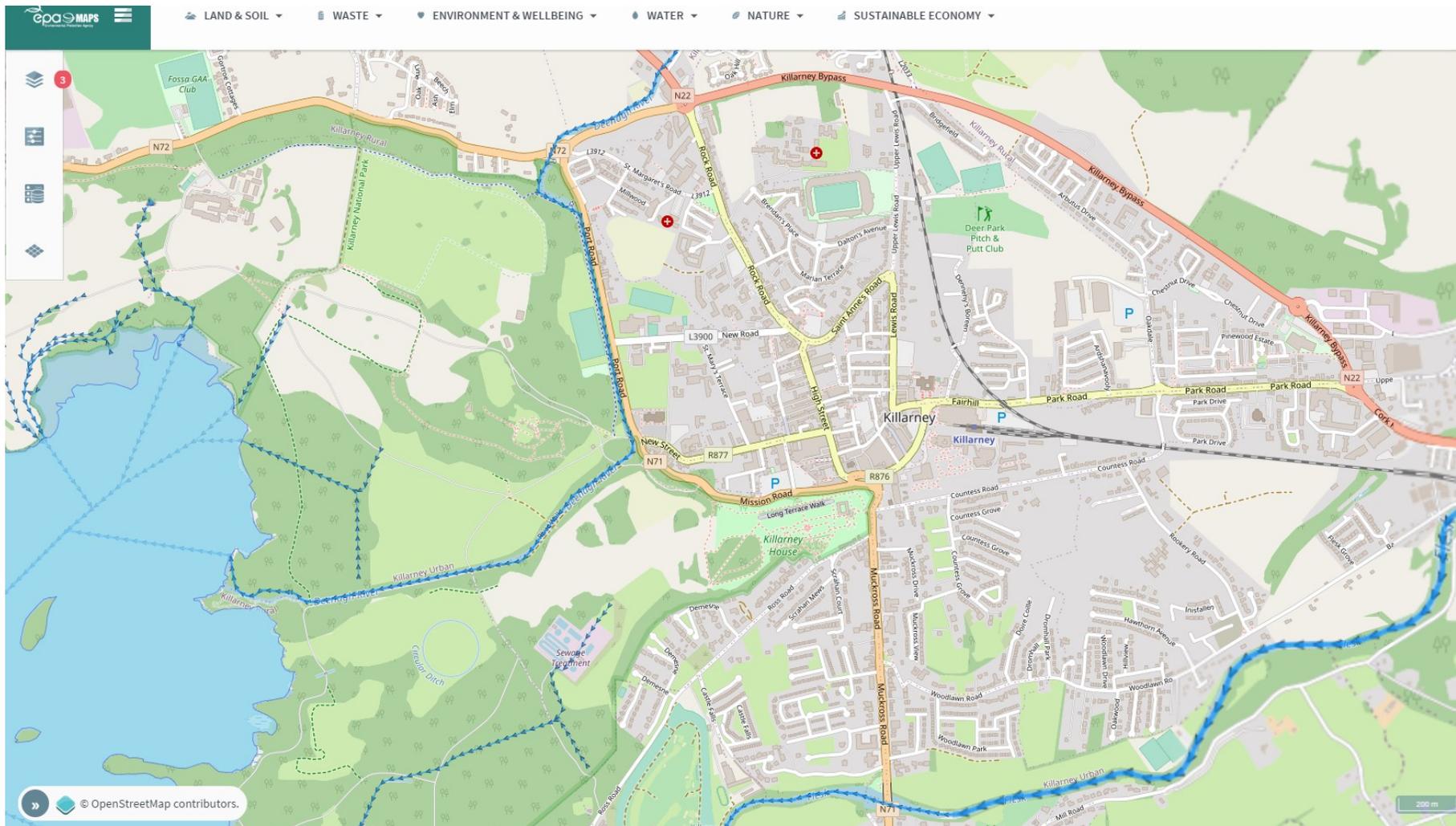
Natura 2000 Site: Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC (Site Code 000365)	
	<p>few pairs of Common Tern breed within the site. The woodlands provide habitat for a variety of breeding birds, most notably Garden Warbler, Blackcap, and probably a few pairs each of the rare Redstart and Wood Warbler. Lough Leane is a site for wintering wildfowl with the following the average counts for the two winters 1995/96 and 1996/97: Teal (208), Mallard (350), Pochard (81), Tufted Duck (323) and Coot (169).</p> <p>Also of note is the glacial relict, Arctic Charr (<i>Salvelinus alpinus</i>), a Red Data Book fish species, a unique form of which is found in Lough Coomasaharn.</p> <p>Other invertebrate species of note include: three chironomids of international importance found in the River Flesk; a wood ant (<i>Formica lugubris</i>) at one of only four Irish sites; a snail (<i>Limnaea involuta</i>), in Lough Crincaum, at its only known location; two dragonflies (<i>Cordulea aenea</i> and <i>Somatochlora arctica</i>), the former at one of only two known sites in Ireland and the latter at its only known Irish location; and several other aquatic and woodland species at their only known Irish locations.</p>
Unit size	72,960Ha
Condition / threats	Grazing from sheep and deer is a threat to certain habitats within the site. Most of the lakes are very acid sensitive and therefore vulnerable to afforestation within the catchment areas. Most are also oligotrophic and so are vulnerable to nutrient pollution. The bogs are sensitive to grazing and are also threatened by turbary, burning and afforestation. The site is also under threat from invasive non-native species, including zebra mussels and rhododendron. A rhododendron removal programme is underway in the National Park and in the McGillycuddy Reeks.



Above: location of proposed principle works areas (blue) relative to SAC (Red hatching)



Above: Hydrological sub catchments



Above: Watercourses in Killarney

Identification and description of the individual and cumulative impacts of the Plan or Project	
<p>Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on Natura 2000 Sites</p>	<p>Consideration of ‘in combination’ effects</p> <p>Plans The proposed development site is located within the area of influence of the ‘Killarney Town Development Plan’ the ‘Killarney Municipal District Local Area Plan’ and the ‘Kerry County Development Plan 2015-2021’. These documents outline the importance of transport connectivity, smarter travel and also of biodiversity protection.</p> <p>Projects Land use in the area is urban in nature. A planning search revealed no permitted (unbuilt) developments at the general location of the proposed works, which could result in ‘in-combination’ effects. It is noted that KCC / TII have separate plans to upgrade the Lewis Road and Kilcummin Road Junctions on the Killarney Bypass.</p> <p>Climate change Climate change is likely to result in more extreme weather events.</p> <p>Elements of the project, either alone or in combination, with potential to give rise to impacts:- The proposed project is located within the zone of influence of the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy’s Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC (Site Code 000365).</p> <p>The potential for significant adverse effects on European sites arising from the proposed development are discussed in the following section.</p> <p>Construction aspects, which will involve the use of machinery, could potentially result in species disturbance and or the degradation of habitat. Loss of habitat is not possible as works are confined to within or adjoining existing roadways and residential amenity areas (disturbed ground, made ground, amenity grassland and other non -qualifying interest habitat). Excavations associated with the construction phase which will generate unconsolidated material. The small scale and the nature of the work in this instance, which involves a limited area under excavation at any time ensure that the potential for such an impact arising in this instance is low. Potential operations stage impacts are limited to potential impacts on Lesser Horseshoe Bat activities by way of light pollution.</p>

Identification and description of the individual and cumulative impacts of the Plan or Project	
	<p>Summary of elements of the project which have the potential to give rise to significant effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excavations associated with the construction phase can generate unconsolidated material which could potentially make its way to watercourses and reduce water quality (sedimentation). • Operational stage lighting can impact on bat activity.
<p>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size and scale • Land-take • Distance from Natura 2000 Site or key features of the Site • Resource requirements • Emissions • Excavation requirements • Transportation requirements • Duration of construction, operation etc • Others 	<p>Size and scale This proposal is a relatively small-scale road improvement project. For the most part it seeks to reallocate existing public road space for pedestrians and cycling infrastructure.</p> <p>Distance from Natura 2000 Site or key features of the Site At its nearest this proposed project is located 100m from the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy Reeks & Caragh River Catchment SAC. No watercourses adjoin the proposed works area. The nearest known Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roosts are located within Killarney National Park and are geographically removed from the works areas and there is no potential for impact on same.</p> <p>Land take There will be no land take or loss of qualifying or potentially supporting habitat associated with the Natura 2000 site network as a result of this proposal. The Conservation objective report for the SAC outlines potential foraging habitat for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat (LHB) – none of which would be impacted by way of this proposal. Lesser Horseshoe Bats favour woodland habitat, little of which are located in Killarney Town between the SAC and the Killarney Bypass (the general works area). Impact of the replacement lighting is considered to be similar to existing and is not likely to significantly impact on LHB commuting routes in the area. No treelines or other features of potential landscape connectivity for the species will be impacted.</p> <p>Resource and excavation requirements Minimal requirements for road building materials. No large-scale excavation works required.</p> <p>Emissions Emissions will not be significantly different to those associated with maintenance and usage of the existing roadway. The proposed works are small in scale, short in duration and unlikely to result in a significant</p>

Identification and description of the individual and cumulative impacts of the Plan or Project

increase in emissions.

Transportation requirements

Works will be facilitated by the existing national secondary road network.

Duration of construction, operation etc

It is anticipated that these works will be carried out within a relatively short construction period of approximately 13 months. The operational aspects of the proposal will be permanent.

6. Assessment of the significance of the impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 Sites

<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of habitat area • Disturbance of key species • Habitat or species fragmentation • Reduction in species density • Changes in key indicators of conservation value • Climate change 	<p>Loss / Reduction of habitat area Proposal largely accommodated within the existing road space. Greenfield element, mostly located within residential amenity areas, will result in a very minor loss of non-qualifying interest habitats (negligible magnitude) which are not likely to support any species for which the SAC is designated. There will be no habitat loss or reduction of any Natura 2000 qualifying habitat or functionally linked supporting habitat.</p> <p>Changes in key indicators of conservation value such as decrease in water quality and quantity Construction projects can release sediment once soil is disturbed. In this instance, the small scale and the nature of the work, which involves a limited area under excavation at any time, ensures that the potential for such an impact arising in this instance is low. It is considered that any such release would not impact on Natura 2000 or functionally linked habitat quality downstream having regard to the minor scale of the works generally within existing road boundaries.</p> <p>Disturbance to key species Disturbance of species can be ruled out with certainty in this instance as the noise and activities associated with the development works will be undertaken during daylight hours, will be temporary in nature and will not differ significantly from those associated with the existing use of land in the area. Operational stage impacts will be similar to existing and are not likely to be significant. This will be further assessed below:-</p> <p>Impact on qualifying species, having regard to conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity (reduction in density etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) The location of potential foraging and commuting habitat for the species outlined in the conservation objectives report for the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC was taken into account as part of this assessment. It is considered that there is no potential for these to be impacted by way of this proposal. No significant loss of habitat or of any potential commuting routes is
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	<p>considered likely. The lighting proposals will not differ significantly to that of the existing and would not fragment potential commuting routes for the species or otherwise significantly affect the species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) No significant loss of habitat or of any potential commuting routes is considered likely. The proposal does not impact on bridges or make culverts less accessible to Otters and is not one which could impact on or disturb Otter movements in the landscape. • Other species Potential impact on other species can be ruled out given the scale, nature and location of the works. <p>Climate change Climate change is likely to result in more extreme weather events. This consideration has taken into account as part of this assessment. Having regard to the above it is considered that significant changes to Natura 2000 sites or to key habitats or species are not likely to occur.</p>
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference with the Key relationships that define the structure of the site • Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site 	<p>Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site: Key relationships that define the structure of the Natura 2000 Sites will not be interfered with or impacted by way of this proposal.</p> <p>Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site: Key relationships that define the function of the Natura 2000 Sites will not be interfered with or impacted by way of this proposal.</p>
<p>Describe from the above those elements of the project, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale of magnitude of impacts is not known.</p>	<p>Construction works associated with this project make use of the existing road infrastructure and overall are relatively minor in scale, complexity and duration and do not have the potential to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites in the area or elsewhere. The potential for significant effects of the proposal have been ruled out beyond reasonable scientific doubt. Consequently, this Appropriate Assessment screening exercise concludes that a Stage 2 Natura Impact Statement / Appropriate Assessment is <u>not</u> required in this instance.</p>

7. Conclusion of Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Conclusion Statement

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans/projects are not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (Natura 2000 site). It is therefore considered that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment / Natura Impact Statement under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), is not required.

Reasons for Conclusion

- The location of the proposed development outside of any Natura 2000 site, within or in close proximity to existing public roads,
- The nature of the works which are small in scale, short in duration and which involve limited excavation works,
- The lack of in-combination effects arising from other proposed and permitted development in the vicinity,
- That there would be no significant loss or degradation of Natura 2000 habitat or functionally linked habitat,
- That there would be no significant direct or indirect impact on qualifying habitat or species associated with Natura 2000 sites as a result of the proposal.

Measures intended to avoid or reduce negative effects on the European sites have not been relied upon in reaching this conclusion.



Eoin Kelleher
Executive Planner and Ecologist
Environmental Assessment Unit

Appendix one: Photographs



Above: Park Road and Ardshanavooley open space area



Above: Chestnut drive



Above: Disused railway tunnel linking the cinema site to the Killarney outlet center



Above: Fitzgerald Stadium roadside boundary wall on upper lewis road



Above: Rock Road