

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Proposed Burial Ground at
Boher, Ballina, Co.
Tipperary





DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: **Tipperary County Council**

Project Title: **Proposed Burial Ground at Boher, Ballina, Co. Tipperary**

Project Number: **190559**

Document Title: **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

Document File Name: **Boher Burial Ground EIA SR **D1**-2019.08.16-190559**

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Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved By
01	Draft	16/08/2019	OC	MW
02	Final	22/10/2019	OC	MW

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1. INTRODUCTION

McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan Ltd. (MKO) has been instructed by Tipperary County Council (TCC) to complete an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report to accompany a Section 8 Planning Application for the development of a Burial Ground including access roads, parking areas and toilet facilities at Boher, Ballina, Co Tipperary. The proposal includes for the construction of an access roads, car park with c. 48 no. spaces (incl. 6 no. Disabled Parking spaces), set down area, access road including hearse turning area, footpath link to neighbouring school, reflective garden with seating and planting, installation of lighting, toilet facilities and boundary treatments. It should be noted that the proposed car park will also cater for the adjoining community centre which lies to the west of the proposed burial grounds site

This EIA Screening exercise was undertaken to determine if EIA is required for the proposed development works in their entirety as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the Act) and set in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended (Regulations). Certain projects, listed in Schedule 5 of the regulations, due to their always having the potential for significant environmental effects, require mandatory EIA. Others, also listed in the Schedule 5 of the regulations, contain threshold levels and for projects that fall below these thresholds it is the decision of the competent authority to decide if an EIA (and the associated EIAR) is required.

Whether a ‘sub threshold’ development should be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in significant environmental effects. Significant effects may arise due to the nature of the development, its scale or extent and its location in relation to the characteristics of the receiving area, particularly sensitive environments.

This report documents the methodology employed to complete the screening exercise, having regard to relevant legislation and guidance documents. It also sets out a clear rationale for each decision made in the process.

The application is also accompanied by an “Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report”, which was prepared by Scott Cawley.

The findings of all survey reports and assessments which accompany the application and the relevant site and desk studies are referenced where appropriate in this EIA Screening Report.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

The proposed site is located in the townland of Ballinteenoe along the Boher Road, Boher, Ballina, Co. Tipperary (Irish Grid Reference: R75223 72286) and covers an area of approximately 1 hectare. The village of Ballina is located approximately 4.5km west of the site.

The site is bounded by Boher National School to the east, Boher Parish Hall/ Boher Community Centre to the west, Boher Road to the north and agricultural lands to the south. Boher Church lies c.270m south-west of the subject lands and a small parking area is also present outside Boher National School. The site comprises agricultural grassland with boundary hedgerows.

Figure 2-1 shows the general location of the proposed burial ground.

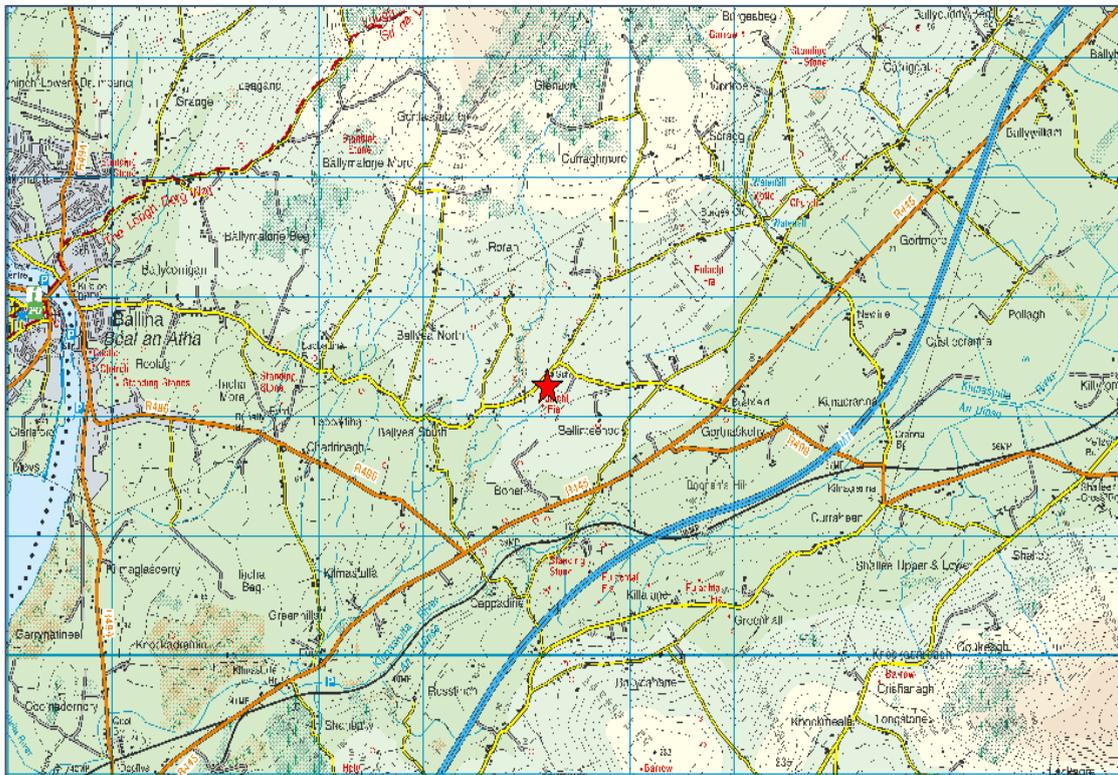


Figure 2-1 Site Location

2.2 Development Description

The proposed development will comprise the following elements:

- The construction of a car park with c. 48 no. spaces (incl. 6 no. Disabled Parking spaces), set down area, access road and various other infrastructure including hearse turning area, footpath link to neighbouring school, reflective garden with seating and planting, installation of lighting and boundary treatments.
- The provision of 374 double burial plots, meaning that the burial capacity of the proposed burial ground is 748 burials plus 26 urn plots.

- Welfare facilities which will include the provision of toilets, wash-up/WC facilities for burial ground operatives and an associated wastewater treatment system and percolation area.

2.3 Construction Methodology

This section describes the construction methodologies for the proposed for each element of works.

2.3.1 Access Roads and Parking Areas

The internal access roads and parking areas will be the main element of the site infrastructure. The roads will provide the access to and define the areas where the burial plots will be located. The access roads and parking areas will be installed using the following methodology:

- A 360-degree excavator will be used to excavate the areas to a competent subgrade as per the locations outlined in the Detailed Design Drawings which accompany this application.
- The area where any excavations are planned will be surveyed and all existing services will be identified.
- All relevant bodies i.e. ESB, Gas Networks Ireland, Eir, Tipperary County Council etc. will be contacted and all drawings for all existing services sought.
- All plant operators and general operatives will be inducted and informed as to the location of any services.
- The excavated material will be set aside for re-use as part of road edge re-instatement and ground preparation of the burial plot areas. Any surplus material will be removed to a licenced tip facility.
- The excavation will be infilled with 6F2 or Cl 804 stone material as appropriate
- The road verge reinstatement and road side landscaping will be completed as the excavations are backfilled with the stone material.
- The internal access roads and parking areas will be finished with a layer of hot rolled asphalt surface.

The drainage infrastructure will be installed as part of the access roads and parking areas and is further summarised in Section 2.3.4 below.

It should be noted that the proposed car park will also cater for the adjoining community centre which lies to the west of the proposed burial grounds site

2.3.2 Burial Plots

The layout of the burial plots will be managed by TCC as and when plots are made available. TCC will manage and coordinate the alignment and positioning of the burial plots as per the Detailed Design Drawings which accompany this application. The access roads serving each area of burial plot will provide access for plot excavation and burials. The initial construction works associated with burial plot will be restricted to ground preparation which will be completed as part of the access road construction. Plot excavation will only occur immediately prior to a burial. Maximum burial depths are expected to be 2.4mbgl in the upper portion of the site and limited to 1.8mbgl in the last three rows. This is in line with updated Tipperary County Council Burial Ground Bye-Laws. It should be noted that these depths allow a minimum unsaturated zone thickness of 1m beneath all burials to be provided.

Plots will be surfaced with grass with a narrow plinth for headstones at the head of each row of plots, and with grassed access footpaths. This is in line with Tipperary County Council policy for burial grounds.

The burial pattern will follow a ratio of 1:1, southern end: northern end, which is in line with updated Tipperary County Council Burial Ground Bye-Laws;

The burial rate will not exceed 25 burials per year. The Boher site is envisaged as a replacement for the existing Ballina burial ground. Data from Tipperary County Council show that between 2008 and 2012 the burial rate at the Ballina Burial Ground site was 12 per annum.

2.3.3 Welfare Facilities

It is proposed to construct toilet facilities for visitors to the burial ground post construction. These facilities are proposed for the south of the site and will include wash-up/WC facilities for burial ground operatives. This structure will be a standard masonry build with an area of 52.7m². The wastewater from this building will be directed to and treated at an on-site Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) and associated percolation which will be located adjacent to the toilet building.

2.3.4 Site Drainage

All surface water runoff from roof areas, access roads and car parking areas shall be collected by a traditional gravity pipe network before discharging to the existing drain to the south of the site. All proposed road gullies to be constructed will have silt traps, and bypass fuel interceptors will be provided to minimise pollutants entering the existing drain. This drain ultimately discharges to the Roran stream to the south-west. The bypass fuel interceptor will prevent potentially contaminating substances such as hydrocarbons etc. from entering the downstream environment.

As the proposed development will result in an increase in the impermeable area, it is proposed to limit surface water run-off to greenfield run-off rates. This is to be achieved by using an attenuation tank to limit flows from the newly constructed area. The attenuation tank will have a Hydro-Brake downstream to limit forward flow to the greenfield run-off rate of 1.38 l/s. The attenuation tank will be 28.4 m³ and designed for a 1:30 year rainfall event and checked for flooding for a 1:100-year rainfall event.

The WWTP which will serve the toilet facility will have a design capacity of 4 – 8PE (Population Equivalent). The treated water will be directed to the percolation area which will provide a polishing with an area of 30m². A maintenance contract will be put in place with the systems manufacturer so as to ensure the continual servicing of the plant on an annual basis (or as required).

3. EIA SCREENING EXERCISE

3.1 Relevant EIA Legislation

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (and as amended in turn by Directive 2014/52/EU).

The consolidated European Union Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the 'EIA Directive'), was transposed into Irish planning legislation by the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2018 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2018 (the 'Regulations'). The EIA Directive was amended by Directive 2014/52/EU which has been transposed into Irish law with the recent European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018).

The new legislation requires screening to be undertaken to determine whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made.

3.2 Methodology

Screening is a process used to establish whether an EIA is required for a proposed development. There are a number of steps in the screening process.

The mandatory requirement for an EIA is generally based on the nature or scale of a proposed development, as set out in EU Directive.

These identify certain types and scales of development, generally based on thresholds of scale, for which EIA is mandatory. In the case of a sub-threshold development proposed by a local authority, the authority is required to carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development. Where there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 for the purposes of a screening determination.

The European Commission (2017) have published a *Guidance on Screening* document (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended 2014/52/EU) which summarises the need for an EIA based on specific measures and/or limits, according to predefined criteria such as the projects characteristics, location and/or certain project features such as a projects potential impacts.

In addition, there is sometimes a requirement for EIA 'sub-threshold' developments and, in this respect, it may be necessary to undertake a screening exercise to assess whether the proposed development requires the preparation of an EIAR.

A methodology was developed to formally screen the proposed development, which was based on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), *Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development* (EPA, 2003) and the recent 2017 guidance issued by the EU. The screening exercise is divided into a section on Mandatory EIA and another on Sub-threshold or Discretionary EIA. In each section below a screening matrix is presented which examines the requirement for EIA according to the criteria set out in the relevant legislation. The rationale behind the responses within the matrix is provided at the end of each section.

Mandatory Environment Impact Assessment

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the legislative basis for mandatory EIA. It states the following:

“An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by a planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for proposed development where either:

the proposed development would be of a class specified in –

- (i) Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either*
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or*
 - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned,*

or

- (ii) Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either –*
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or*
 - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned,*

or

- a) (i) the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and*
- (ii) the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.”*

Under the provisions Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 “Sub-threshold EIAR”, where a local authority proposes to carry out sub-threshold development, the authority proposing shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at least the size or location of the development. The obligations with regard sub-threshold are outlined in Section 3.4 below.

Further to the above, Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out a number of classes and scales of development that require EIA. There is no class set out under schedule 5 in relation to the provision of a burial ground.

Under the provisions of Schedule 5 and considering the various infrastructural elements proposed, the closest type of project to the subject development is:

The provision of “*all private roads which would exceed 2,000 metres in length*”, as per Item 10 (a)(dd) of the Schedule.

The proposed development will involve the provision of c111m of access road which is below the threshold and therefore is not subject to EIA

With regards to the WWTP proposed as part of the development, the provisions of Schedule 5 Part 1 Item 13 require an EIA to be undertaken where it is proposed to carry out - construction of “*Waste water treatment plants with a capacity exceeding 150,000 population equivalent as defined in Article 2, point (6), of Directive 91/271/EE*”. The provisions of Schedule 5 Part 2 Item 11(c) require an EIA to be undertaken where it is proposed to carry out construction of “*Waste water treatment plants with a capacity*

greater than 10,000 population equivalent as defined in Article 2, point (6), of Directive 91/271/EEC not included in Part 1 of this Schedule”.

The proposed WWTP will have a design capacity of 4 – 8PE (Population Equivalent) therefore, the mandatory trigger for EIA has not been reached.

In addition, Item 10(b)(ii) of Schedule 5 Part 2 require an EIA to be undertaken where it is proposed to construct a carp-park providing more than 400 spaces. The proposed development will provide a total of 48 no. car-parking spaces therefore this threshold will not be reached.

Item 10(b)(iv) sets out a requirement for EIA for developments on sites in areas other than business districts and urban areas with an area exceeding 20 hectares. The proposed site has an area of one hectare therefore this threshold will not be reached.

3.4 Sub-threshold Development

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, also sets out the basis for EIA for developments which may not be of a scale included in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This allows a consenting authority to require EIA where it is of the opinion that a development (although sub-threshold) is likely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore should be subject to EIA. In this context, the consideration of ‘significant effect’ should not be determined by reference to size only and the nature and location of a project must also be taken into account.

Class 15 of Schedule 5 provides for EIA/EIAR for developments under the relevant threshold, where the works would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This states the following:

“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.”

It is considered that the type of project subject to EIA remains those listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The proposed development, as outlined in Section 2 above, is not a project type listed in either Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended and therefore does not constitute a ‘Project’ that falls beneath any of the specified thresholds in Part 2.

As the proposed development is not a ‘Project’ listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, EIA is not required.

Notwithstanding the above an evaluation of the Schedule 7 criteria is provided below in the interests of completeness.

3.5 Projects for the Cumulative Assessment

The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment.

The online planning system for Tipperary County Council, was consulted on the 29/08/2019 for the townland of Ballinteenoe.

A total of three complete applications with associated decisions made by the local authority were returned for the last 5 years all three of which related to the construction of new or extension to existing dwellings.

Given the nature of the developments i.e. residential units, the potential for ongoing environmental effects and associated potential cumulative effects with the currently proposed development are low.

3.6

Sub-threshold Assessment

The 1997 amending Directive (97/11/EC) introduced guidance for Member States in terms of deciding whether or not a development is likely to have ‘significant effects on the environment’. The criteria have been transposed in full into Irish legislation, in the Third Schedule to the EC EIA (Amendment) Regulations 1999 (S.I. No. 93 of 1999) and in Schedule 7 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001) as amended.

As required under Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 “Sub-threshold EIAR” Where there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, the local authority shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination.

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out the information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for environmental impact assessment.

- 1) *A description of the proposed development, including in particular—*
 - a) *a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and*
 - b) *a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.*
- 2) *A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.*
- 3) *A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—*
 - a) *the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and*
 - b) *the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.*

The information required by the Schedule 7A has been set out in Section 2 above as well as the assessment of the criteria for Schedule 7 below. The assessment of the criteria set-out on Schedule 7 provides the description and assessment of any likely significant effects from the proposed development

The Schedule 7 criteria are grouped under three headings as follows:

- 1) *Characteristics of the Proposed Development*
- 2) *Location of Proposed Development*
- 3) *Characteristics of Potential Impacts*

Each of the above groupings includes a number of criteria for consideration. The assessment of the likelihood of significant environmental effects is based on the overall consideration of all criteria and requires clear and rational judgment. The DoEHLG Guidance Document ‘Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development’ states that

‘those responsible for making the decision must exercise their best professional judgment, taking account of considerations such as the nature and size of the proposed development, the environmental sensitivity of the area and the nature of the potential effects of the development. In general, it is not intended that special studies or technical evaluations will be necessary for the purpose of making a decision.’

The Schedule 7 criteria to be reviewed are discussed in more detail, with reference to the proposed development, in the following subsections. The screening questions are based on the criteria listed under each grouped heading in Schedule 7.

In addition, the exercise takes account of updated or additional screening criteria as set out in EIA Directive 2014/52/EU.

Table 3-1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Characteristics of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
Could the scale of the proposed works be considered significant?	No. The geographic extent of the proposed works are confined to the immediate area of the proposed site. Accordingly, there some minor impacts associated with the operational phase, but these are considered short-term. The active works area comprises the access road and parking area excavation and construction, welfare facilities and burial plot ground preparation. This scale of works is not considered significant.
Considered cumulatively with other adjacent proposed developments, would the size of the proposed works be considered significant?	No. The proposed works have been assessed cumulatively with other adjacent proposed developments by MKO within this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening document and the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) by Scott Cawley and concludes that potential cumulative effects are negligible.
Is the nature of the proposed works significant?	No. The proposed development will be carried out in accordance with environmentally sensitive construction methodologies which are well established and will ensure that any potential for significant impacts are either eliminated or reduced to low risk.
Will the proposed works utilise a significant quantity of natural resources?	No. The proposed works will reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of the road verges where possible. Imported stone material and other raw materials for the construction of the development the quantities of which will be required are not considered significant.
Will the proposed works produce a significant quantity of waste?	No. The proposed works will reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of the access road and parking areas where appropriate and in the ground preparation of the burial plots. Waste where it arises, will be dealt with through a suitably licensed contractor and sent to appropriately licensed tip.
Will the proposed works create a significant amount or type of pollution?	No. Waste water generated as part of the completed development will be diverted to the public sewer system and managed at the proposed on-site Waste Water Treatment Plant. Surface water will pass through a hydrocarbon interceptor prior to percolation to ground via a soakaway. The potential for air borne pollution as a result of the proposed works will be short-term and are not considered significant.
Will the proposed works create a significant amount of nuisance?	No. Limited <u>short-term</u> disruption may arise during the proposed construction process, but this will not be significantly different to routine construction works in the area including general road works on adjacent public roads. Any potential environmental nuisance during the operational stage will be short term and is not considered significant.
Will there be a risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used?	No. The proposed works and construction methods to be used are well established and will be subject to contractor’s safety statements and risk assessments.
Would any combination of the above factors be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment?	No. The actual environmental effects of construction projects locally are well established. There are no watercourses on the existing site or any potential impacts to sensitive receptors including European Sites. There are no factors above which when combined would result in the proposed development, due to its characteristics, having a significant effect on the environment.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the nature of the proposed development is not considered to have likely significant effects on the environment.

Reasoning

The scale of the proposed works, when viewed individually and cumulatively, is small in the context of both the EIA threshold criteria and types of projects listed in the regulations which require EIA.

The proposed works will involve the provision of a burial ground and all associated infrastructure plots. The works will be undertaken according to the construction methodologies designed to reduce or eliminate the potential for environmental impacts as summarised in Section 2.3 above and within all survey reports and assessment which accompany the application. The works will comprise the installation of internal access roads, parking areas, welfare facilities and the ground preparation of burial plots and will involve the site excavation and the installation of roads and the foundation for the welfare facilities. The construction works areas will be reinstated where possible with landscaped areas provided where proposed. The proposed works will be restricted to existing 1 hectare site.

Any waste arising on site will be taken from the site for reuse or disposal, subject to normal statutory controls. Any noise and nuisance associated with the proposed works will be short term and subject to appropriate best practice procedures.

3.6.2

Location of the Proposed Development

Table 3-2 Location of the Proposed Development Matrix

Location of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
<p>Have the proposed works the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any site designated for conservation interest (e.g. SAC, SPA, pNHA)?</p>	<p>A detailed Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening report has been carried out on the proposed works. The conclusions of this report find that</p> <p><i>“that there will be no likelihood of significant effects on any European sites during the construction or operation of the proposed development, in combination with other plans or projects”.</i></p> <p>The nearest European Site to the proposed development works is the Lower River Shannon SAC (4.4km west).</p> <p>There will be no impacts on this SAC due to the distance between the proposed development site and the River Shannon SAC and considering that the works will be confined to the area of the proposed site. Furthermore, the works will be completed in accordance with the best practice measures set out in this EIA Screening Report and within all survey reports and assessments which accompany the application without impacting on any European or nationally designated site in the vicinity of the proposed works.</p>
<p>Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?</p>	<p>No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific habitat assessment and confirms that sensitive habitats will not be affected.</p>

Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific habitat assessment and confirms that sensitive habitats will not be affected.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex II in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex II species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex IV in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex IV species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex I of the EU Birds Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex I bird species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex I bird species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on existing land use?	No. The proposed works will be restricted to the road corridor and will remain in this use.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structures or Recorded Monuments and Places of Archaeological Interest?	No. The Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) that accompanies the application concluded that no archaeological features were noted on the subject site. The AIA also concluded that the proposed development on the subject site may have a potential negative impact on the potential subsurface archaeology of the site. Appropriate mitigation has been recommended. Therefore, the likelihood of impacts are considered to be negligible.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on listed or scenic views or protected landscapes as outlined in the County Development Plan?	No. The proposed development will comprise the provision of a burial ground and associated infrastructure. The site is not located in an area which is listed as a scenic view in the North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010 (December 2017 Edition). The nearest scenic views are located north and west and of the proposed site which include the west and sections of the road to the east of the R494 road from Ballina to Portroe

Conclusion

It can be concluded that there will be no significant direct or indirect impacts by virtue of the location of the proposed development on the receiving environment.

Reasoning

The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 requires that an Article 6(3) assessment be carried out where it is considered that a development is likely to have a significant effect

on Natura 2000 sites (SAC/SPA). In this regard an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) has been completed for the proposed works. This report concludes there will be no possibility of significant effects on the reasons for designation of this European site in view of the relevant conservation objectives. There will be no impacts on any other designated sites as a result of the proposed development.

Indirect impacts, which may potentially affect any other designated sites have been discounted provided the proposed construction methodologies are employed during the proposed works. The risk of any significant negative impacts on any Natura 2000 site can be excluded.

The AASR shows that no sensitive habitats considered to qualify as Annex I habitats under the EU Habitats Directive will be affected by the proposed development. No EU Habitats Directive Annex II species will be affected by the proposed development. In terms of land use, the proposed development will be confined to the 1 hectare site on which it is proposed. There will be no significant impact on land use.

The natural environment within the proposed site can accommodate the development without significant impact.

3.6.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

A further screening exercise was completed to assess the most significant potential impacts, as outlined in Table 3-3 below. These are the sections that would be covered in any EIA as specified in the EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC).

Table 3-3 Significance of Impact According to Theme (as in EIA)

EIA Section	Brief Assessment of Impacts
Human Beings	The potential impacts are not considered to be significant. During construction there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience, dust and noise. The active works area will be limited so potential impacts will be restricted in their geographic extent as well as their duration.
Flora & Fauna	No flora and fauna of ecological significance or sensitivity were recorded on the site. Designated sites in the vicinity will not be impacted upon as set out in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared.
Soils & Geology	Imperceptible impact, the development will be carried out in accordance with the environmentally sensitive construction methods and environmental management systems. Excavated soils and subsoils will be reused as part of site reinstatement and landscaping or dealt with in an appropriate manner.
Water	The construction phase will be carried out in accordance with detailed methodologies and mitigation proposals to ensure that potential impacts on water are either eliminated or reduced to low levels. There are no watercourses or drains on the site of the proposed development however measures to protect the Roran stream which is closest watercourse to the site will be implemented during the construction works to prevent any potential impact on this stream. Potential impacts on water quality are considered to be imperceptible.
Air & Climate	Potential short-term low probability impact on air quality in particular dust emissions during construction activities however this will be managed through best practice measures. The proposed development is not a recognised emitter of greenhouse gases with the potential to effect climate change. Plant and equipment utilised during construction and as part of the operational phase will use fossil fuels, but the potential impact associated with this is immaterial due to the short-term scale of the works.

	No significant impact anticipated.
Noise & Vibration	Potential short-term noise impact during construction activities however this will be managed through best practice measures. No significant impact anticipated.
Landscape	Long Term, Slight Neutral landscape and visual Impact. The subject works relate to the provision of a burial ground and associated infrastructure in a rural landscape.
Material Assets	Potential short-term low probability impact. During construction there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience.
Cultural Heritage	No impact on protected structures or archaeological features.
Interaction of Foregoing	No impact.

Table 3-4 Characteristics of the Potential Impacts Matrix

Characteristics of Potential Impacts – Screening Questions	Responses
Would a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed development?	No. The geographic extent of the proposed works are largely confined to the immediate area of the proposed 1 hectare site. Accordingly, there is no significant impact associated with the operational phase.
Would a large population of people be affected as a result of the proposed development?	No. The proposed development is not located in a heavily or densely populated area.
Are any transboundary impacts likely to arise as a result of the proposed development?	No. The proposed development will be confined to the area of the proposed site.
Would the magnitude of impacts associated with the proposed development be considered significant?	No. All impacts on areas of ecological sensitivity will be minimised to insignificance. Full details of the ecology of the site is presented in the Appropriate Assessment Screening document that has been prepared. The proposed works will be carried out in line with environmentally sensitive construction methodologies therefore no significant impacts will arise.
In considering the various aspects of the environment, would the impacts of the proposed development be considered complex?	No. All impacts on areas of general environmental sensitivity and any interactions between sensitive receptors such as water quality, aquatic ecology, noise or air pollution through the implementation of best practice measures will be minimised to insignificance.
Is there a high probability that the effects will occur?	Whilst temporary impacts relating to construction activities are likely to occur, best practice measures will result in any impacts being insignificant
Will the effects continue for a long time?	No. Any effects are only associated with the temporary construction period which will be temporary and short term. Any potential effects associated with the operational phase of the development will be short-term and are not considered significant.
Will the effects be permanent rather than temporary?	The potential effects during construction are considered temporary, with no long-term effects anticipated.
Will the impacts be irreversible?	No. The proposed development will remain a permanent part of the local community infrastructure



Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effects?	The construction process will avoid any significant effects
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Conclusion

It is concluded that, the characteristics of the potential impacts are not considered significant. There are no long-term negative impacts which can be associated with the project. Whilst temporary noise levels and disturbance are typical of any construction phase, the proposed works are generally remote from sensitive receptors and any potential impact will be short term and effectively managed through best practice measures. No impact interactions have been identified. No likely significant long-term or permanent negative environmental impacts have been identified in the course of the screening process.

Reasoning

All works will be confined to the proposed 1 hectare site. The potential for any direct or indirect impact on habitats is low and the likelihood of any significant effects occurring as a result of the works can be excluded.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of conclusions is presented below:

The proposed works are not a development for which EIA is mandatory. It is also considered that the proposed development is not a sub-threshold development that requires an EIA however it was assessed against the relevant criteria and is considered unlikely to have '*significant effects on the environment*'.

The relevant legislation requires EIA for a number of classes of project that could potentially relate to the proposed development however non a specific to a project such as is proposed.

An EIA Screening exercise was however carried out to determine the potential for the proposed development to have significant environmental effects or not. This exercise has been informed by an Environmental Report and Appropriate Assessment Screening Report completed for the proposed development.

The **nature** or **characteristics of the proposed development** are not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. The geographic extent of the final upgraded road is small and there will be no long-term impacts.

All works will be confined to the 1 hectare site on which it is proposed. There are no water courses within the site of the proposed development

The proposed works have been reviewed in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report which has concluded that that there will be no likelihood of significant effects on any European sites during the construction or operation of the proposed development.

The **characteristics** of the potential impacts are not considered significant, as standard best practice will be adopted.

The overall conclusion of this screening exercise is that there is no specific requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed works.