

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

1. Introduction

The EIA Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended aims to determine the likely significant effects of a project on the environment. EIA Screening determines whether an EIA is required for a specified project. Projects requiring mandatory EIA are listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. In the case of development, which is under these thresholds, planning authorities are required under Article 103 of the 2001 Regulations, (as amended) to request an EIS where it considers that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Screening involves appraisal of impacts from the proposed development according to three main criteria: -

- Characteristics of the project
- Location of proposed project
- Characteristics of potential impacts.

Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), outlines the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed development. These are: human beings, flora and fauna, soil and geology, water, air & climate, landscape, material assets, cultural heritage and the inter-relationships between the range of environmental criteria.

The proposed project aims to construct a Sensory Park comprising of flower beds, gravel pathways, sensory equipment, and a water feature Tom Ruane Park, Sligo Road, Ballina Co. Mayo.

Table 1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Is the size and design of the proposed development works significant?	No. The proposed development is confined to a 0.43 hectare site where access to existing infrastructure, and parking is already in place.
Is there potential for impacts from project in cumulation with other existing and/or approved project?	No. While there are a number of projects within the town boundary it is not expected that there are to be any cumulative effects.
Use of natural resources in particular land, soil water and biodiversity?	Limited excavations (< 300mm) will be required to achieve formation level for the retaining walls.
Will wastes be produced during construction and operation?	Yes. Very limited amounts of construction waste will be generated as part of the works. Any waste materials will be minimised and disposed of via licensed or permitted waste sites.
Will the works and operation create and significant amount of pollution or nuisance?	No. It is considered that the construction phase of the development will result in a temporary increase in air and noise pollution due to increased vehicle movements associated with delivery of materials, excavations and construction activity. Given the urban setting, the disturbance effects will not be significantly above background levels, confined to daytime and temporary in nature. Operational effects are not considered to be significant given that the co-location with existing parking.
Risk of major accidents and or disasters relevant to the project including those caused by climate change in accordance with scientific knowledge?	None
Risks to human health (Water contamination, air pollution)	No risk to human health. Surface water or groundwater contamination is unlikely as a result of the development. The open nature of the site will ensure that any emissions to air will be rapidly assimilated.

Table 2 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Human Beings	Construction activity will result in shorter term slight negative effect on Human Beings due to increased levels of disturbance and potential increase in air pollution. The proposed project will confer positive long term benefits by providing a place to relax and enjoy the sights, smells and sounds of nature. Being within the town boundary, a short distance from the town centre, will allow ready access to those without transport.
Flora and Fauna	Localised impacts on flora and fauna are not expected to occur as the project is converting amenity grasslands within the footprint of the development into a sensory park. It is intended

	<p>to incorporate a pollinator friendly planting scheme, which will be beneficial.</p> <p>The project is not intended to require any artificial lighting.</p>
Soils and Geology	The project will result in limited disturbance to the current geological resources (soil & subsoil). Most of the excavated geological materials will be reused on other municipal projects in the locality.
Water	There is no expected negative impacts predicted on water quality as a result of this project. The site is partially within the CFRAM low probability coastal flooding zone (1-in-a-1000 chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year). The project has been designed to be permeable in nature and will not be represent a significant risk to water quality in the event of a flood event.
Air and Climate	As stated, this developments in an urban setting with slight temporary negative effects during construction activity. There are no anticipated long-term impacts on air and climate.
Noise and Vibration	Temporary increase in noise levels expected during daytime hours due to construction of the sensory park. No impact anticipated during operational phase of the development.
Landscape	Due to the nature and scale of the development is not predicted to impact any scenic areas designated by Mayo County Council
Material Assets	The sensory park will have a positive effect on County Mayo's social and leisure assets.
Cultural Heritage	Preliminary investigations of the site indicate no significant archaeology present. However, it is proposed to have an archaeologist present during all excavations.
Interaction of the Foregoing	The proposed project will confer a positive impact on Human Beings, Flora and Fauna and Material Assets. Slight negative impacts are predicted on soils and geology, air & climate, noise and vibration during construction. Neutral effects are anticipated for Water and Landscape. The development does not alter significantly the use of the site and as a result does not affect the cultural heritage of the area.

Table 3 Discussion of Potential Impacts

Will a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed works	No. Works will be restricted to a 0.40 hectare site
Will a large population be impacted as a result of the proposed works	No. Any disturbance experienced during the construction works will be short in duration and limited to residents to the north of the River Moy , who overlook the site.
Are there any trans frontier impacts likely to arise from the proposed works	None expected
Is the intensity and the complexity of the impacts associate with the proposed works considered to be significant	No

Is there a high probability that the impact will occur?	No significant impacts expected to occur
What is the expected onset, duration frequency and reversibility of the impact	The progress of the project is subject to funding, however it is anticipated that the works will commence in Q 1 2022 and be complete in Q 2 2022. The completed sensory park will be present for the foreseeable future.
Cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects	Not expected to be any other major projects in the general area likely to give rise to cumulative impacts.
Will it be difficult to avoid or reduce or repair or compensate for the effects	No significant impacts expected to occur



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