

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 construction of a Municipal Multi-Sport Astro Pitch to include associated drainage, lighting, fencing and civil works. The proposal includes hard and soft landscaping works, surface paving, planting, boundary treatments and all other associated site development works and services.

The facility will cater for wide range of local sports clubs. The proposed Astro pitch will be located on the footprint of an existing grass-based pitch.

Table 1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Is the size and design of the proposed development works significant?	No. The proposed local authority development is confined to a 0.5-hectare site where access to existing infrastructure, dressing rooms and parking is already in place. The project is converting an existing grass-based sports pitch into an all-weather astro pitch
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 in accumulative effects.
Use of natural resources in particular land, soil water and biodiversity?	Limited excavations (< 300mm) will be required to achieve formation level for the pitch drainage. Where possible construction materials (such as drainage stone) will be sourced from local suppliers. The all-weather surface compound (monofilament synthetic surface underpinned with a 20mm Shock Pad) will be sourced from a specialist contractor.
Will wastes be produced during construction and operation?	Yes. Very limited amounts of construction waste will be generated as part of the works. Quantities of drainage stone and finishing compound for the surface of the pitch can be accurately calculated in advance to prevent waste. 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 sub-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 sporting facilities with ample parking and changing facilities.
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	The proposed project will confer positive benefits by providing additional sporting facilities which can be used throughout the year. Being within the town boundary, a short distance from the town centre, will allow ready access to those without transport.
Flora and Fauna	<p>Localised impacts on flora and fauna are expected to occur due to conversion of amenity grasslands within the footprint of the development into an artificial surface.</p> <p>The loss of amenity grassland may reduce the foraging opportunities for some estuarine birds notably Oystercatchers. The long sward found there due to lack of maintenance has rendered it unsuitable for foraging. Two other grass pitches to the north provide more suitable foraging habitat for this species.</p> <p>Floodlighting may have cause slight disturbance to avian fauna but this will be for relatively short duration while the pitch is in use. Lighting will be designed to reduce light spillage thereby mitigating effects on insect activity and other wildlife.</p>
Soils and Geology	The project will result in the 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	It is proposed that there shall be no net change in flood storage volume in the proposed development. Where necessary, surface water run-off from the proposed development shall be attenuated on-site if required. All site drainage shall be designed in accordance with Sustainable Drainage. The site is outside the low probability coastal flooding zone (1-in-a-1000 chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year).
Air and Climate	As stated, this developments in a sub urban setting with slight temporary negative effects during construction activity. There are no anticipated long-term impacts on air and climate. The lighting scheme proposed will be a highly efficient LED floodlighting scheme. The lighting heads will be fitted with specialist filters to reduce the impact on insect activity.
Noise and Vibration	Temporary increase in noise levels expected during daytime hours due to construction of astro pitch. 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 astro pitch development will provide a positive impact on County Mayo's social and leisure assets providing the opportunity to continue team sporting pursuits into the winter months.
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 and Material Assets. Slight negative impacts are predicted on flora and fauna, soils and geology, air & climate, noise and vibration. 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.
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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 0.5-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 west and southwest , 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 4 2021 and be complete in Q 1 2022. The completed astro pitches 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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