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ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE &
PLANNING

KERRY PIKE PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

EIA Screening Report

Prepared for:
Cork City Council



Cork
City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí

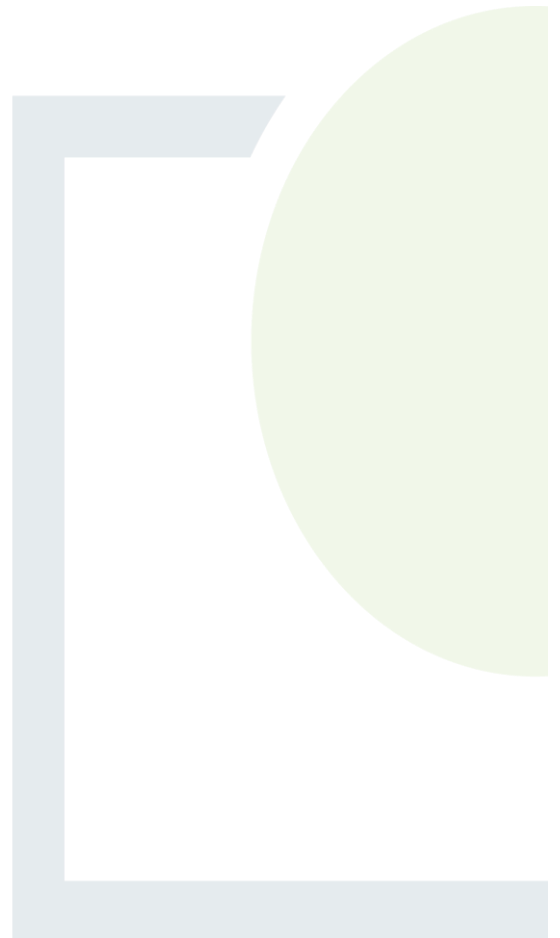
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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this EIA Screening Report having been prepared in consideration of the proposed Kerry Pike Pedestrian Improvement Scheme.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Fehily Timoney and Company have been commissioned by Cork City Council (CCC) to provide consultancy services - including the preparation of this EIA Screening report - for the design of improved pedestrian facilities in Kerry Pike, County Cork (proposed pedestrian improvement scheme).

This report presents an assessment of whether or not the proposed pedestrian improvement scheme should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This assessment is based upon the EPA (2022) Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR) - as well as the other guidance documents set out in Section 1.3 - and considers the characteristics of the proposed pedestrian improvement scheme and the likelihood significant effects on the environment.

The proposed Kerry Pike Pedestrian Improvement Scheme (KPPIS) commences approx. 300m to the east of the L6848 (Monument Cross Road) and extends northwest to finish approx. 500m west of the L2780 (Bawnnafinny Road), a distance of approximately 2.0km. See Figure 1-1 below showing the scheme extents and the key landmarks in Kerry Pike.



Figure 1-1: Site Location Plan



1.2 EIA Legislative Background

The requirement for EIA derives from Directive 2014/52/EU in 2014. In determining the requirement for EIA, the Directive differentiates between the projects that always require EIA and those for which an EIA may be required. These projects are listed in Annex I and Annex II of the Directive, as transposed into Irish law by the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.

Annex I Projects

These are projects which are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require a mandatory EIA. Project types requiring mandatory EIA are listed in the following legislation:

- First Schedule of European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (S.I. No. 349 of 1989) as amended;
- Schedule 5 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations (S.I. No. 25 of 1990) as amended;
- Section 50 (1) of the Roads Act 1993 as amended; and
- Article 8 of the Roads Regulations 1994.

The regulations identify the following road-related developments as requiring mandatory EIA:

- Construction of motorways and express roads;
- Construction of a motorway, busway or service area;
- The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;
- Infrastructure projects including car parks with 400 or more spaces;
- Urban development projects which would involve greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 Hectares in the case of other built-up areas and 20 hectares elsewhere; The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length; and
- Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011, where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares.

Further details on the proposed pedestrian improvement scheme are provided in Section 2 of this report. The scheme does not include bridge or car parking infrastructure of 400 or more spaces, is not a motorway, express road, busway or service area, and is not of type equating to four lanes.

The proposed pedestrian improvement scheme is located in a suburban area. The project footprint will be approximately 0.37 hectares. . There will be some land take adjacent to the L2779 resulting in the permanent removal of areas of hedgerow. However, the lengths of hedgerow to be removed are far less than the 4 km threshold for EIA and will not result in re-contouring above 5 hectares nor will the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries above 50 hectares.



Taking the above information into account, it is evident that the Kerry Pike Pedestrian Improvement Scheme is not of a type requiring mandatory EIA under the EIA Directive.

Annex II Projects

These are projects where Member States decide whether an EIA is needed. This is done by the screening procedure, which determines the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case by case examination. The projects listed in Annex II are in general those not included in Annex I which may be considered to have a lesser environmental impact.

Annex II lists the “Construction of roads, harbours and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I)” as projects to undergo the screening procedure to determine the need for EIA.

The criteria to be considered when determining whether an Annex II (or sub-threshold) project should be subject to EIA are set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and are addressed under three headings as follows:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed scheme;
2. Location of the Proposed scheme; and
3. Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts.

Schedule 7A of the Regulations lists information which must be provided by the Applicant or Developer in order to allow the Competent Authority to assess the project against the criteria prescribed in Schedule 7.

"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."

1.3 EIA Screening Guidelines

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

This assessment was undertaken having regard to the following guidance:



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



2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Description of Scheme

The proposed scheme aims to deliver improved pedestrian facilities, providing enhanced connectivity for pedestrians, safe passage for vulnerable road users to commute and access local amenities, and to encourage lower vehicle speeds within the 50km/h speed zone. The proposed scheme is required in order to provide a complete and connected pedestrian facility through the village linking residential properties, local businesses and amenities.

In addition to the proposed enhanced pedestrian facilities, improved access to public transport is also proposed through the inclusion of new bus stops within the village.

2.2 Existing Roadway Arrangement

The 2.0 km stretch of the L2779 under consideration is a two-lane, two-way carriageway with a posted speed limit of 50km/hr.

The existing L2779 cross section varies along the length of the scheme. There is an intermittent footpath generally along one side only of the L2779. In a number of areas there are gaps in the footpath provision, notably to the east of the L6848, either side of the L2777 junction, at the western extent of the scheme and along the L2780. Generally these gaps occur where there is reduced available width within the road corridor. A single controlled pedestrian crossing is located on the L2779 adjacent to the Clogheen Kerry Pike National School.



Figure 2-1: L2779 - Western Approach to Village



Figure 2-2: L2779 - Eastern Approach to Village



Figure 2-3: L2779 - West of the Community Hall



Figure 2-4: L2779 - Western Approach to L2777



Figure 2-5: L2779 Eastern Approach to L2777

The result of this inadequate footpath network is that the community is severed into two sections with no footpath provision for a total length of approximately 220m either side of the L2777 road to Healy's Bridge. Vulnerable road users on either side of the divide must walk or cycle on the trafficked lanes as there are no hard shoulders along this 220m length. This gap roughly splits the village area in half with commercial activity and amenity sites proving difficult to access for those without access to private vehicles.

As noted in the current Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, Kerry Pike has a population of 496 people with 177 households. Kerry Pike is serviced by a number of amenities within the village including the Ravenscourt Garden Centre and Café, located to the northwest of the L2777. A pub (Rest bar) and Indian restaurant are located adjacent to the junction of the L2777 and both of these premises are within the 220m road extent containing no footpath facilities. To the southeast of this location are a primary school, community hall and Ballycannon Park which includes a walking loop, tennis courts GAA grounds and a proposed outdoor gym.



Figure 2-7: L2779 - Ravenscourt Garden Centre/Café



Figure 2-6: L2779 - Eastern Approach to L2777

The existing road through the village, and side roads linking to the village, are generally narrow with lanes widths between 2.5m and 3.0m wide, no grass verges and sub-standard horizontal geometry.

The absence of a connected, continuous path through the village prevent pedestrians from walking safely and conveniently to amenities in Kerry Pike and increases the likelihood of such short duration trips being undertaken by car.



A number of new housing developments have been recently completed or are granted planning permission (conditional grant of permission to construct residential developments with planning refs. 2039116, 194557, 2039213, 2140189, 184591, 176275, 186729, 2240915, 194570, 2240976). New housing developments that have been completed are located at Clonlara (adjacent to the Clogheen Kerry Pike National School), Mitchells Court (to the east of the L2777) and Crenagh Hill (towards the western extent of the scheme). Planning permission has been sought/granted for three separate developments - the first on the southern side of the L2779 at the L2777 junction (31 units proposed), the second opposite Clonlara on the L6848 (94 unit proposed) and the third on the northern side of the L2779 opposite the Woodlands estate (60 units proposed). In addition, construction of 21 units has been completed on the Arlington housing development (approx. midway between the L2777 and L6848).

2.3 Proposed Scheme

The proposed scheme consists of a number of pedestrian improvement features along the L2779 through Kerry Pike, including footpath upgrades, additional lengths of new footpath and associated infrastructure as detailed in the list below. The route will incorporate the existing footpath where possible with additional paths constructed where no existing path is present and targeted improvements to the existing pedestrian infrastructure in areas where the path is currently substantially narrower than 1.8m in width. The proposed scheme will also comprise:

- Pedestrian crossings;
- New bus stops;
- Traffic calming along the L2779;
- Boundary treatments; and
- Solutions for collection of stormwater drainage.

The existing carriageway width will be maintained using the existing line of kerb where present. A carriageway width of 6.0m will be provided where possible, however, the road will be narrowed at isolated pinch points to a minimum carriageway width of 5.5m.

A planning application for a housing development between the L2780 Bawnafinny Road and the Woodlands estate has been granted by An Bord Pleanála. The proposed works include a footpath and verge along the northern side of the L2779 for approx. 50m and these elements have been incorporated into the design of the proposed scheme. This section of path will be constructed by the developers associated with the application.

A planning application for a housing development between the L2777 to Healy's Bridge and the Mitchell's Court estate has also been granted by An Bord Pleanála. The proposed works include a footpath and verge along the southern side of the L2779 for approx. 140m and these elements have been incorporated into the design of the proposed scheme. This section of path will be constructed by the developers associated with the application.

A third planning application for a housing development at the southeast corner of the L2779 / L6848 Monument Cross Road junction has been granted by An Bord Pleanála. The pedestrian infrastructure along the L2779 and L6848 Monument Cross Road included in the proposed works is shown on the preliminary design drawings. The works include a footpath, indented bus stop and controlled pedestrian crossing of the L2779. These works are additional to the proposed scheme and will be constructed by the developers of the proposed estate.



Land acquisition will be necessary to construct this scheme. A total of 4 properties will require extensive works, both of which are residential properties with approx. 0.011 acres of land required. The extent of the impact to these properties will affect front gardens, driveways and garden walls only. An additional 30 property boundaries extend onto the existing road. Purchasing of the land on the existing road will be required. The properties affected may require minor works to their boundary.

Hedgerow, garden hedge and/or tree removal will be necessary during construction. Removal of approx. 48m of vegetation along the L2779 will be required.

Existing traffic signs, public lighting columns, utilities and drainage manholes may need to be relocated or removed as part of the works and new public lighting columns and drainage infrastructure may be required to supplement existing infrastructure.

2.4 Compliance with Design Standards

The width of the footpaths was determined by reference to DMURS Section 4.3.1. A minimum footpath width of 1.8m has been applied throughout the scheme where new footpaths are being constructed or existing footpaths are being widened, however, there are a small number of isolated pinch points where space is unavailable to meet minimum footpath width.

2.5 Proposed Typical Cross Sections

The available width along the L2779 corridor varies with a minimum lane width of 3.0m provided where possible. The typical sections show reduced lane widths of 3.0m east of Woodlands and 3.25m west of Mitchells Court which act to slow traffic and provides additional width for pedestrian infrastructure and verges where the space is available. There is existing pedestrian infrastructure typically along one side of the corridor, and new pedestrian infrastructure is proposed where existing footpath is disconnected or does not meet a minimum 1.8m in width. On street parking is proposed on the western side of the L2779 on approach to the Woodlands junction.

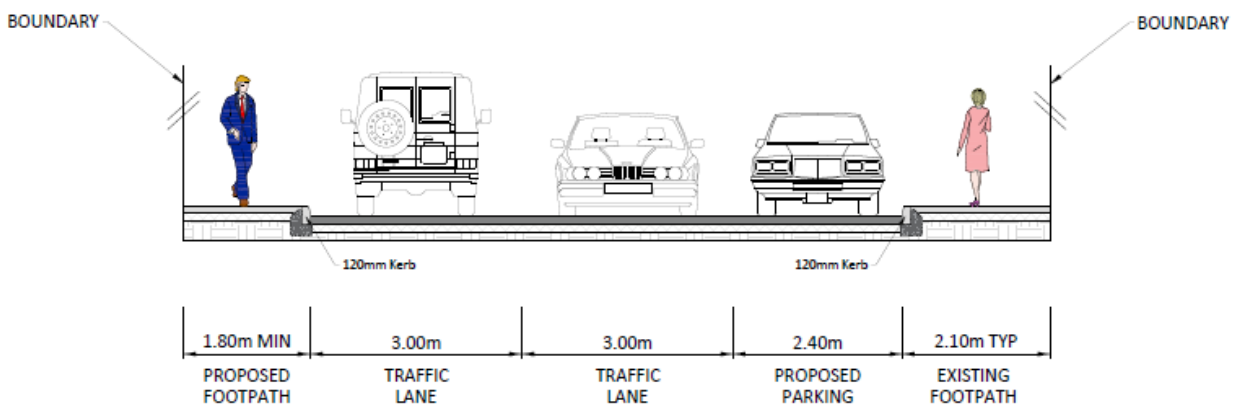


Figure 2-8: East of Woodlands - Typical Cross Section

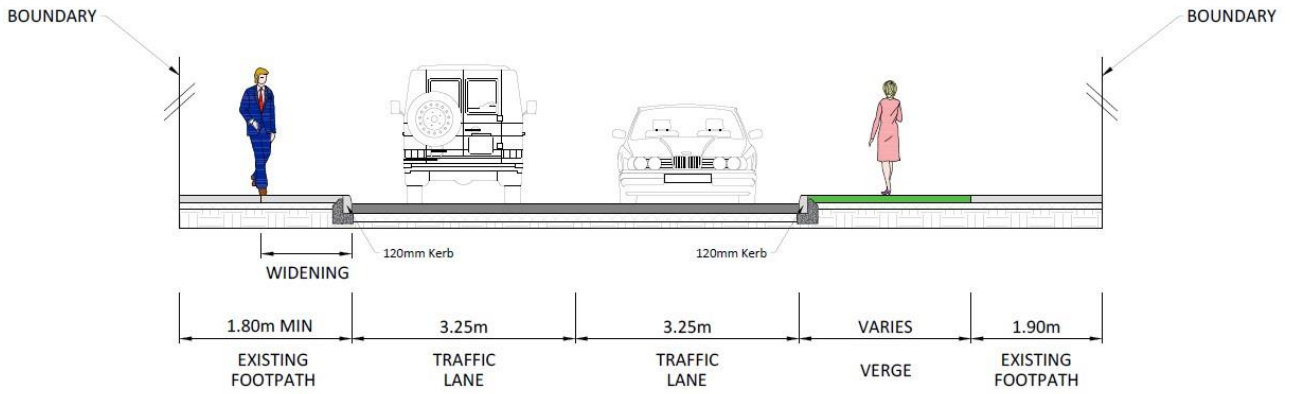


Figure 2-9: West of Mitchells Court - Typical Cross Section

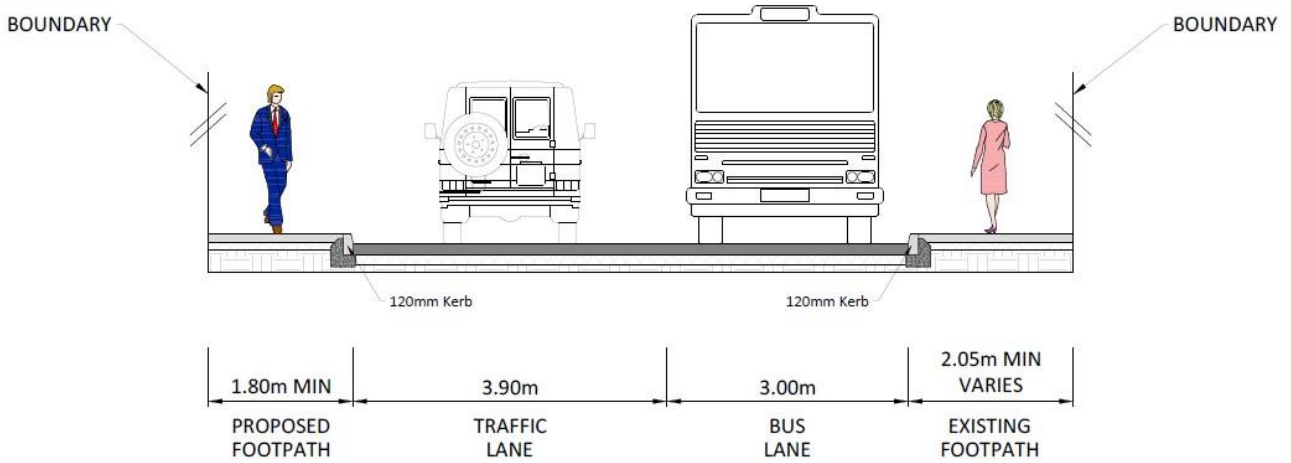


Figure 2-10: West of Monument Cross Road - Typical Cross Section

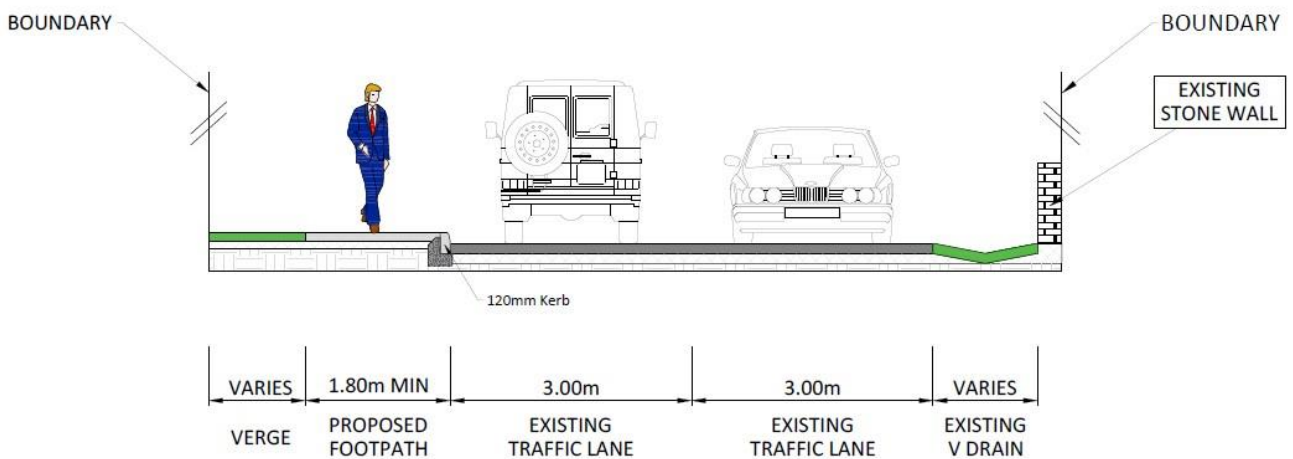


Figure 2-11: East of Monument Cross Road



2.6 Receiving Environment

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

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

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

2.6.1 Population and Human Health

The proposed scheme will be located within the urban/semi-urban fabric of the existing L2779 road which is dominated by residential housing. There is a small number of commercial premises, three proposed housing developments, with areas zoned for future residential development, a national school and a park with tennis courts and a walking trail.

Kerry Pike is located in the suburban area to the west of Cork City Centre, which is now part of Cork City since the city boundary was extended in 2019.

2.6.2 Biodiversity and Land

The proposed scheme lands comprise 2.0 km of the existing L2779 road. The scheme is not located within the boundary of or adjacent to any sites of national or European importance designated for the protection of habitats or species. The Shournagh Valley is located approximately 300m to the south / south-west of the proposed scheme and comprises areas of wet woodland, scrub, scrub woodland and old estate mixed woodland. The Lee Valley pNHA is located approximately 600m to the south and is of regional conservation importance for the diverse range of semi-natural habitats that occur. The site supports wet broadleaved woodland, wet grassland, dry broadleaved woodland, unimproved dry grassland, freshwater marsh. There are historic records for Red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), using these areas (ref NBDC grid square W67B accessed 17/11/2023), with recent records (2022) of sightings of live animals close to the Lee road, near the Woodlands Estate. Red squirrel, their breeding and resting places are protected under the Wildlife Act, 1976 (as amended). It is noted that the road boundary comprises managed hedgerows, property boundary walls and landscape planting which are of low ecological value and do not support red squirrel.

The wider environment comprises areas of urban fabric, commercial units and agricultural pastureland. There are records of badger, bat species, otter and stoat in the wider environment. The lands made available for the scheme do not support these species given their artificial nature. The existing landscape planting is disjointed and heavily managed. This combined with the urban nature of the area and the high level of artificial lighting, makes the roadside vegetation of low potential to support bats.



2.6.3 Soil and Water

The majority of the development lands comprise made ground over till derived from Devonian sandstones which are underlain by Continental redbed facies; Sandstone, conglomerate & siltstone. There are small areas of bedrock outcrop or subcrop mapped by the GSI in the western portion and the central part of the site which are now likely covered by made ground materials, as well as some alluvium in the central portion of the site. Groundwater vulnerability at the site is 'high' to 'extreme'. Groundwater vulnerability describes how vulnerable the groundwater below a site is to any potential pollution that may occur at the surface. At such sites, the groundwater would likely be impacted if some pollution event occurred at the surface.

There are no surface water features on or adjacent to the site. Drainage at the site is across the existing public road, into the municipal stormwater network, with gullies located either side of the carriageway. Groundwater will in turn be at low risk of being impacted.

2.6.4 Air and Climate

The EPA host an air quality monitoring station in Bishopstown, on the Munster Technical University campus (Station 30) monitoring PM10 and PM2.5, sulphur dioxide and ozone. The station has been in operation since 2016. Recent data from the station is available up to 14th July 2023 and this data indicates Good Air Quality Index for Health. The second nearest station, at University College Cork, does have current data available and also indicates Good Air Quality Index for Health in the area.

2.6.5 Material Assets

The proposed scheme will involve works on the L2779 road. The existing road will contain the following underground services: gas, eir, electricity, sewer and water supply..

A 110 kV overhead line traverses the central portion of the site while a 38 kV overhead line traverses the northern portion of the site.

2.6.6 Cultural Heritage

There are three NIAH features documented to be of regional importance within the red line boundary.

There is a monument (reg. no. 20907339) at the junction of the L2779 and the Upper Leemount road. Built in c. 1945, this limestone monument stands on a rectangular-profile stepped plinth. The monument is a cross with decorative carved inscriptions. Erected in memory of local men who were killed in 1921 during the War of Independence.

There is a pair of semi-detached houses on the Upper Leemount road, built c. 1950 (reg. no. 20907341). These houses would have been built by the local authority to a set design. This housing type is rarely found intact with much of their historic form and fabric. This pair of houses represent a rare example of this design which retain most of the original features.

The NIAH records a freestanding, post mounted, cast-iron road sign at the eastern extent of the red line boundary (reg. no. 20907340) which displays the Irish language and English language versions of "Kerry Pike", welcoming oncoming traffic to the village. The sign was erected c. 1930. However, a review of this area using Google Street View appears to show that the sign has since been replaced with a more modern sign.



Figure 2-12: NIAH recorded road sign (left); new sign which appears on Google Street View (right)

According to the Cork County Development Plan map viewer (available at: <https://corkcoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer>) Kerry Pike is located within a landscape character type identified as 'Broad fertile lowland valleys' with an associated 'High' landscape sensitivity classification.

According to the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the site of the proposed scheme forms part of a scenic route. The scenic route is described as the "Road between Clogheen, Tower and Blarney and the road to Blarney Lake" and has a reference HVP3.



3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA

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

1. Characteristics of the Proposed scheme - Table 3-1
2. Location of the Proposed scheme - Table 3-2
3. Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact - Table 3-3

Table 3-1: Characteristics of the Proposed Scheme

Criterion	Commentary
The size and design of the whole of the proposed scheme	<p>The proposed scheme entails upgrade works to a 2.0 km stretch of the L2779 road, through the settlement of Kerry Pike, to provide for improved pedestrian facilities. The proposed scheme is predominantly confined to the alignment of the existing L2779 road.</p> <p>The proposed scheme will have a slight effect on land in terms of design and size; thus not significant.</p>
Cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed scheme	<p>There are three landbanks adjacent to the L2779 which have been proposed for new residential development. There is also the park with tennis courts and amenity walking loop where there are proposed GAA and gym developments. These are all illustrated on Figure 1.1.</p> <p>The proposed pedestrian improvement scheme will allow for the users of these new developments to navigate safely throughout Kerry Pike.</p> <p>It is important to note that while the proposed scheme will benefit the proposed residential developments, they are separate developments and not part of the same consenting process. The residential developments will be subject to their own consenting process and will be assessed for environmental issues under those processes.</p> <p>As the proposed scheme involves upgrading an existing carriageway, land take will be minimal and therefore will not act cumulatively with the residential developments.</p> <p>In terms of temporary impacts, there is the potential for cumulative impacts if construction programmes of the various developments are overlapping.</p>
The nature of any associated demolition works	<p>The proposed scheme will involve augmentation of the existing L2779 road and associated footpath. This will involve breaking out existing pavement and road surfaces at places. These are minor works which will be imperceptible in terms of their environmental impact; thus not significant.</p>
The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	<p>Natural resources will be used in terms of fill material and surfacing material for the footpaths, and any reinstatement of road surfacing. Construction material will be sourced locally, where possible, and where possible cut/fill will be balanced so the impact will not be significant.</p> <p>There will be some land take adjacent to the L2779 resulting in the permanent removal of areas of hedgerow. However, the lengths of hedgerow to be</p>



Criterion	Commentary
	removed are far less than the 4 km threshold for EIA and will not result in re-contouring above 5 hectares nor will the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries above 50 hectares.
The production of waste	<p>During construction, solid waste will be generated, however volumes requiring off-site management will not be significant given the objective to balance cut/fill.</p> <p>Any wastes from the construction process will either be reused within the scheme, or recycled/disposed of at an authorised waste facility.</p>
Pollution and nuisances	<p>Temporary, localised nuisance is likely during the construction of the proposed scheme, which can be reduced and managed through standard environmental and construction best practice methods and controls such as dust dampening/ road sweeping, use of silt fences, use of noise mufflers/barriers, control over times of operation etc.</p> <p>While groundwater vulnerability is 'High' to 'Extreme' across the site, given that the works are being carried out on the existing carriageway rather than on natural soils, the works are unlikely to interact with natural soils and groundwater. The risk to groundwater from pollution can be reduced and managed through standard environmental and construction best practice methods and controls such as the CIRIA series on 'Control of Water Pollution'. Drainage at the site will connect into the existing piped drainage network.</p> <p>In terms of surface waters, due to the scale and type of the works proposed and the distance to the nearest surface water feature, there is no potential for interaction between surface waters and the works. There will be potential run-off from the site into the local municipal drainage network. Again , risks of pollution will be reduced and managed through standard environmental and construction best practice methods and controls such as the CIRIA series on 'Control of Water Pollution'.</p> <p>During operation no significant pollution / nuisance is envisaged. The L2779 is an established walking route. While the construction works would likely produce a short term negative impact due to dust and noise nuisance for pedestrian users, the completed development would result in a long term positive impact through improvement of safety.</p>
The risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge	<p>There is significant industry experience in Ireland in the construction of roads schemes such that it is not considered likely that the construction or operational phases of the proposed scheme could be considered as presenting a significant accident risk.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is not located within lands identified as being at flood risk. Risks associated with climate change are not envisaged.</p>
The risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	<p>No risk to human health due to pollution is likely considering adoption of best practice construction methods.</p> <p>The operational scheme will allow for safer pedestrian navigation for Kerry Pike. The operational scheme should also encourage a modal shift towards more pedestrian use of the L2779, reducing vehicular use and thereby improving air quality.</p> <p>New bus stops are proposed. Increased bus traffic will bring associated vehicular emissions however the availability of buses should reduce the number of private car trips, thereby having a net positive impact on air quality.</p>



Table 3-2: Location of the Proposed Scheme

Criterion	Commentary
<p>The existing and approved land use</p>	<p>The proposed scheme is associated with the existing L2779 road and will not result in a change in land use.</p> <p>Surrounding land use is primarily residential with a number of commercial units and a school. The surrounding land includes three landbanks with proposed future residential development. The proposed pedestrian improvement scheme will support the future development of residential lands.</p>
<p>The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.</p>	<p>The proposed scheme is small scale, it will not take a significant area of land, will not impact natural soils or surface water. Potential impacts to groundwater will be controlled by best practice methods and controls such as the CIRIA series on 'Control of Water Pollution'.</p> <p>The development will result in permanent removal of short sections of hedgerow which are of low ecological value. Opportunities for reinstatement of vegetation and landscape planting can be adopted as feasible.</p>
<p>The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</p> <p>(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment; (iii) mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and; (vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; (vii) densely populated areas; (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.</p>	<p>The project has very limited potential to interact with the natural environment given its location being predominantly within the suburban fabric associated with the L2779.</p> <p>There are no areas designated for the protection of important habitats or species in proximity to the proposed scheme. The nearest designated areas is the Shournagh Valley proposed NHA, located 500 m to the southwest. Noise and dust emissions could potentially impact on the pNHA but standard environmental and construction best practice methods and controls such as dust dampening/ road sweeping, use of noise mufflers/barriers etc. will minimise impacts on the pNHA.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is located within an area surrounded by residential development. It is expected that the development will have a beneficial effect of providing improved amenity value and increased safety to the road users of this section of the L2779.</p> <p>The development is not located within an area of landscape sensitivity.</p> <p>Three NIAH features are located in close proximity to the proposed scheme, but will not be directly impacted by the works. Short term, indirect impacts may occur due to the NIAH features being less accessible to the public during construction. Additionally, there may be noise and dust nuisances which will represent a short term negative impact. However, long term the proposed scheme will enhance pedestrian access to the NIAH features and therefore will be a long term positive impact.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is located along a scenic route. The development of the proposed scheme will benefit the local community by enhancing the pedestrian access along a section of the scenic route, allowing the people to enjoy the amenity of the scenic route on foot.</p>



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

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),

(b) the nature of the impact,

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact,

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,

(e) the probability of the impact,

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,

(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

Table 3-3: Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact

Criterion	Commentary
Human Health	<p>Potential for localised nuisance to local residents and business community during the construction works through increase in noise and dust. Additionally there will be restrictions on access to existing footpaths / road lanes during the works which will cause traffic disturbance.</p> <p>Significance of effect: Likely Slight temporary negative effect</p> <p>On completion of the proposed scheme there will be increased safety and accessibility for pedestrians. Significance of effect: Likely positive long term effect.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>The proposed scheme will result in the removal of short sections of managed hedgerow, considered to be of low ecological value.</p> <p>There are no records for invasive species along the alignment.</p> <p>Significance of effect: Negligible</p>
Land, soil, water	<p>The Improvement works are to the existing L2779 road and its associated boundary features. As such the proposed scheme will not result in a significant change in land use.</p> <p>Significant amounts of cut and fill are not anticipated. The development will aim to achieve a cut fill balance.</p> <p>Groundwater vulnerability across the site is classified as 'High' to 'Extreme'. Likely effects of pollution to groundwater can be mitigated through best practice construction methodologies and environmental controls. Given the scale and type of the proposed scheme there will be no significant impact to groundwater. There are no surface water</p>



Criterion	Commentary
	<p>features on or adjacent to the site. Drainage at the site is across the existing public road, into the municipal stormwater network, with gullies located either side of the carriageway.</p> <p>Significance of effect: A slight, short term effect on local groundwater may occur but is considered unlikely, and will be controlled by best practice methods and controls such as the CIRIA series on 'Control of Water Pollution'.</p>
Air and climate	<p>Localised impacts arising from machinery operation and earthworks during construction resulting in a temporary increase in dust and exhaust emissions. These emissions during the works phase can be minimized through best practice. Traffic emissions are not considered likely to be significantly increased due to the proposed scheme and the objective to create a modal shift towards walking. The addition of bus stops is also expected to encourage this shift away from using personal cars and thereby reducing vehicular emissions.</p> <p>Significance of effect: Overall slight long-term positive effects.</p>
Material assets	<p>If there is any requirement to temporarily isolate the 110 kV or 38 kV overhead lines, this will be agreed and properly managed with ESB and EirGrid. There may be temporary localised interruption to power.</p> <p>Temporary localised interruption to other services might occur if, for example, a service buried in the existing road/footpath was struck by an excavator during works. This will be controlled by subsurface surveys prior to breaking ground and hand-digging where excavations are being progressed in close proximity to existing services.</p> <p>Significance of effect: Temporary effects deemed not significant.</p>
Cultural heritage and the landscape	<p>The proposed scheme does not directly interact with the NIAH features identified at the site. No effects are anticipated.</p> <p>While the landscape sensitivity is classed as 'High' in this part of Cork, no significant alteration of landscape character will result due to the proposed development. The site is situated along a section of a scenic route. It is envisaged that the proposed scheme will enhance pedestrian access and thereby enhance the opportunity to enjoy the amenity.</p> <p>Significance of effect: No significant (i.e. neutral) effect.</p>



4. CONCLUSION

The proposed scheme consists of footpath improvement works within the existing road alignment. No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the proposed scheme. The works associated are minor in character and relate to upgrading the existing road to provide for improved pedestrian facilities.

No significant effects likely to arise associated with the location of the proposed scheme. The ecological, cultural and landscape resources within the area are not particularly sensitive to the proposed scheme.

The Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts associated with the proposed scheme will not result in significance environmental effects. Potential impacts relate primarily to temporary impacts at construction stage and the implementation of the Best Practice Construction measures will provide safeguards to avoid significant impacts at this stage; particularly in relation to the protection of groundwater and reduction of noise and dust nuisance.

Overall Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise from the proposed improved pedestrian facilities in Kerry Pike.

This information will assist the competent authority, Cork City Council to undertake the EIA Screening and to make an EIA Screening determination.



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