



COAKLEY O'NEILL
town planning

EIA Screening Report

Large-Scale Residential Development
Ross Road, Killarney

Prepared in July 2025 on behalf of
Homeland Projects Ltd.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening report has been prepared to consider the impacts of the proposed development of 134no. dwellings at a site on Ross Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to identify the legal requirement, or otherwise, for an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed development. This screening exercise was undertaken in two stages. The first stage considered the requirement for a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), while the second stage considered the requirement, or case for, a sub-threshold EIAR.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The subject site is located in the southwest suburbs of Killarney, approximately 900m from the Town Centre. The site is approximately 3.8ha in area, with a net developable area of 3.35ha. The site is currently greenfield and under grass with existing agricultural sheds on the site. The site is bound to the west, east and south by existing residential dwellings and estates. The site is bound to the north by the Ross Road.
- 2.2 While the site is greenfield in nature, the immediate site context is characterised by residential developments such as the Castle Falls housing estate to the west and Kingspark to the east. The site is located to the south of the Killarney House and Gardens. The Ross Golf club is to the west. To the south is the River Flesk, which flows into Lough Leane, also to the west of the site.



Figure 1. Subject Site (Generally outlined in Red – Source Google Maps. Annotated Coakley O'Neill 2025)

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 The proposed Large Scale Residential Development is to consist of:

- a) 134no. residential dwellings as follows: 65no. houses consisting of 10no. 4-bed dwellings and 55no 3-bed dwellings; 51no. townhouses consisting of 32no. 3-bed units and 19no. 2-bed units; and 18no. apartments consisting of 12no. 2-bed units and 6no. 1-bed units;
- b) a crèche with capacity to accommodate 102no. children;
- c) the demolition of existing agricultural sheds;
- d) provision for car parking, including EV charging points and bicycle parking;
- e) the provision of private, communal, and public open spaces; internal roads and pathways;
- f) pedestrian and cyclist routes;
- g) hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments;
- h) waste storage;
- i) plant;
- j) signage;
- k) a new vehicular and pedestrian access with raised table and pedestrian crossing onto the Ross Road to serve the development;
- l) connection to the existing vehicular access serving the dwelling Blossom Gate to provide vehicular access to proposed unit G fronting onto the Ross Road;
- m) public lighting;
- n) 2no. substations;
- o) all associated site development works; and
- p) all drainage and foul sewer infrastructure and network works including connections to the existing networks and nature-based SuDS measures

3.2 A broad range of house typologies and unit sizes are proposed as part of the development, this is with a view to creating a balanced and inclusive residential development.

3.3 Having regard to the childcare needs of the future occupants of the proposed scheme and the wider Killarney environs, a childcare facility has been proposed as part of the development.

4.0 LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

- 4.1 The EIA Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended, aims to determine the likely significant effects of a project on the environment. Annex I of Directive 2014/52/EU defines mandatory projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Annex II lists projects which can be subject to a case-by-case subthreshold screening analysis or thresholds to be transposed by member states. 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) (hereafter "the Regulations").
- 4.2 The legislative context for screening is set out in the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Regulations. Schedule 5, Parts 1 and 2 of the Regulations set out the types of projects and thresholds that require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). For any such project an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) must be prepared and submitted as part of the planning application.
- 4.3 In the case of development, which is under the thresholds set out, planning authorities are required under Article 103 of the Regulations to request an EIAR where it is considered that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.
- 4.4 The proposed development does not give rise to mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment. This conclusion is based on the requirements under item 10 relating to urban development in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Regulations.

10. Infrastructure Projects

*" (b) (i) Construction of more than **500 dwellings**"*

*(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, **10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built up area** and 20 hectares elsewhere,*

(In this paragraph, business district means a district within a city or town in which the predominant use is retail or commercial use)" [emphasis added]

- 4.5 The application is for 134no. dwellings. The site is not located within a business district but is within the development boundary of the settlement of Killarney. With a red line boundary totalling 3.8ha in area the site is under the 10ha threshold.
- 4.6 Under Schedule 5 of the Regulations, the proposed development is therefore sub-threshold for EIA.
- 4.7 The competent authority, who in this instance is Kerry County Council, can also require an EIAR where a project is below the specified threshold and where there is a likelihood of significant effects on the environment by reference to the nature and location of the proposed project. The criteria for determining

whether a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment are set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations and in Annex IIA of the 2014 EIA Directive (EIA 2014/52/EU).

- 4.8 This EIA Screening Report provides the information necessary to assist Kerry County Council in making a determination as to whether this sub-threshold proposed development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. It presents the information in a manner that facilitates the competent authority in addressing the appropriate criteria in its screening assessment.
- 4.9 The proposal is thus being screened as per Schedule 7 of the Regulations to determine if there is likely to be significant effects on the environment.
- 4.10 Screening involves appraisal of impacts from the proposed works according to three main criteria:

1. Characteristics of the proposed development

The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:

- the size of the proposed development,
- the cumulative effects with other proposed development,
- the use of natural resources,
- the production of waste,
- pollution and nuisances,
- the risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used.

2. Location of proposed development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by proposed development, having regard in particular to:

- the existing land use,
- the relative abundance, availability, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area,
- the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths,
 - coastal zones and the marine environment,
 - mountain and forest areas,
 - nature reserves and parks,
 - areas classified or protected under legislation, including special protection areas and special areas of conservation (Natura 2000 sites) designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive,
 - areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the EU have already been exceeded,
 - densely populated areas,
 - landscapes of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.

3. Characteristics of potential impacts

The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 above and having particular regard to:

- the extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population),
- the nature of the impact,
- the transfrontier nature of the impact,
- the magnitude and complexity of the impact,
- the probability of the impact,
- the duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact,
- the cumulative impact with other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development to which an Environmental Impact Assessment applies,
- the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

4.11 The applicability of the Schedule 7 criteria to the proposed development is considered below.

4.12 Schedule 6 of the Regulations outlines the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed development.

4.13 These are human beings, flora and fauna, soil and geology, water, air and climate, landscape, material assets, cultural heritage, and the inter-relationships of the above environmental criteria. EIA screening involves assessment of these criteria to determine if the proposed works are likely to significantly affect the environment.

5.0 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

5.1 The potential of the proposal to significantly affect the environment is assessed below relative to the following environmental factors:

1. human beings;
2. biodiversity/fauna and flora;
3. geology (soil);
4. hydrology/hydrogeology (water);
5. air and climatic factors;
6. landscape;
7. material assets, and
8. cultural heritage including the architectural and archaeological heritage.

5.2 The inter-relationship between all these factors is also considered.

1. Characteristics of Development

Size

The red line boundary of the application site is 3.94Ha. The net developable area is 3.35ha. The proposed scheme involves the development of a residentially zoned site within County Kerry, for 134no. residential dwellings as follows: 65no. houses consisting of 10no. 4-bed dwellings and 55no 3-bed dwellings; 51no. townhouses consisting of 32no. 3-bed units and 19no. 2-bed units; and 18no. apartments consisting of 12no. 2-bed units and 6no. 1-bed units.

The proposed development also includes crèche (585sqm) with capacity to accommodate 102no. children. The proposed development will include the demolition of existing agricultural sheds; provision for car parking, including EV charging points and bicycle parking. The proposed development will also include the provision of private, communal, and public open spaces; internal roads and pathways; pedestrian and cyclist routes; hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments; waste storage; plant; signage; a new vehicular and pedestrian access with raised table and pedestrian crossing onto the Ross Road; an additional vehicular access at the Ross Road to serve 1no.dwelling; public lighting; 2no. substations; all associated site development works; and all drainage and foul sewer infrastructure and network works including connections to the existing networks and nature-based SuDS measures.

The above gives an indication of the scale of the works involved. Having regard to the size of the proposed project, there are not anticipated to be any significant effects on the environment.

Cumulative impacts

No other works are proposed as part of the project. In 2019 there was a permission granted for 16no. dwellings on the western boundary of the site. These have been constructed. In 2023, separate outline planning permissions were granted at the northern side of the site for a new vehicular access off the road and the construction of a 2 storey dwelling.

To the west of the site a glamping site with 15no. glamping units, office and car park was permitted under Appeal Case Reference ABP-315088-22.

It is understood that Kerry County Council intend to advance a Part 8 planning scheme for cycle infrastructure on the Ross Road in the near future.

There are no other planned or permitted developments of any significant scale in the immediate vicinity of the subject site.

There have been 2no. Large-Scale Residential Developments permitted in Killarney. Under Planning Application Ref. 23/967 permission was granted for the construction of 249no. dwellings at Upper Park Road, Killarney. Under Planning Application Ref. 24/60295 permission was granted for the development of 224no. dwellings at Port Road, Killarney.

Owing to the distance between the proposed development and the above identified applications it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any cumulative significant effects on the environment.

Use of natural resources

There will be no significant use of natural resources given the residential nature of the development proposed. Excavated soil/stone will be carefully stored in segregated piles on the site for subsequent re-use within the development where it is deemed acceptable by the site engineer to do so. Excess material will be removed from site to a suitable permitted Construction and Demolition disposal site. A Confirmation of Feasibility (Ref: CDS 2400821) has been received from Uisce Éireann in respect of connecting the proposed development with the existing public water mains and foul sewer network.

The production of wastes

The proposal will be subject to both Construction and Operational Waste Management Plans, which address the use of resources and the production of waste. The proposed development has been designed to comply with local, regional, and national waste legislation along with best practice. All waste generated from the operational phase of this development will be sent for reuse, recycling and/or disposal at appropriately licensed waste facilities.

Pollution and nuisances

These will be minor and temporary in nature during construction works. The application of best available techniques and provisions of a Waste Management and Construction Management Plan shall ensure minimum risk of pollution to the local environment (water, noise, and air). The development will be connected to the existing public sewer network to the north. It is proposed to use a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) approach to stormwater management throughout the site where possible. The overall strategy aims to provide an effective system to mitigate the adverse effects of urban stormwater runoff on the environment by reducing runoff rates, volumes and frequency, reducing pollutant concentrations in stormwater, contributing to amenity, aesthetics and biodiversity enhancement and allow for the maximum collection of rainwater for re-use where possible.

There are no envisaged air or noise emissions arising from the residential proposal at this site other than noises arising from traffic associated with the development.

The risk of accidents	The proposed works will be governed by health and safety regulations. Provided best practice is followed, the risk of accidents which are of any significant scale is considered extremely low.
Potential for combination of above factors to have significant effects.	Low risk of significant effects arising.

2. Location of Proposed Development

Existing land use	<p>Greenfield / Agricultural lands on the outskirts of the urban area of Killarney Town. The site is identified by the relevant statutory context as being capable of accommodating development of the form and quantum proposed. The immediate surrounding areas to the north, south, west and east can be characterised as a mostly suburban residential environment.</p> <p>The site was surveyed by Dixon Brosnan Environmental Consultants to determine if habitats or species of ecological value occur within the development site boundary. The site in question is predominantly composed of agricultural grassland. These habitats are of low ecological value.</p>
Relative abundance, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	<p>This proposal does not require the use of natural resources in the area. Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC is located 120m northwest (at closest point) and Killarney National Park SPA is 280m northeast (at closest point). There will be no significant loss of habitats. Having regard to the character of the receiving environment and the surrounding area of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposed development, individually or cumulatively, will not have any impact on the relative abundance, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area.</p>
Existing environment and absorption capacity of the natural environment, in the following areas:	<p>Ecological assessment and AA screening have been carried out in addition to a Natura Impact Statement which rules out any significant impact.</p>
o Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths	<p>Approximately 175m to the south of the site, the River Flesk flows westwards into Lough Leane.</p>
o Coastal zones	<p>None immediate.</p>

o Mountain and forest areas	None immediate.
o Nature reserves and parks	The Killarney National Park is nearby.
o Natura 2000 sites	<p>The Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC and the Killarney National Park SPA are within the zone of influence of the subject site.</p> <p>Killarney National Park and Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment Proposed Natural Heritage Area is also within the area.</p> <p>A Natura Impact Statement has been prepared for the proposed development. It concludes:</p> <p><i>'It has been objectively concluded following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of the predicted effects from the proposed development and with the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, that the construction and operation of the proposed development will not adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. There is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.'</i></p>
o Areas in which environmental quality standards laid down by the EU have already been exceeded	Not applicable in this location.
o Densely populated areas	The proposed site is located within the southwestern suburban area of the town of Killarney, Co. Kerry. The proposal is to have a positive impact on local housing need.
o Landscape of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance	No protected or listed views, Architectural Conservation Areas or Protected Structures will be impacted by this proposal. The immediate area is characteristic of an urban town location within a suburban location, developed in response to social influences such as increasing human population, a housing shortage, and the subsequent zoning of land for residential use. Archaeological testing and assessment have been carried out. No archaeological features or finds were identified in the trenches within the proposed development site.

3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Extent of the Impact (geographical area and size of affected population) No significant adverse impacts are identified. Impacts envisaged to occur will be localised in nature (noise, dust, traffic disruption, potential for surface water pollution) and mitigated through the project management including best practices in the environmental management of works and generally will be confined to the works phase. It is considered that the proposed development will have an overall positive impact on human beings, population, and human health.

Transfrontier nature of the Impact No cross-border implications.

Magnitude and complexity of the impact Main adverse impacts are short-term and temporary in nature. They include potential for:

- Disturbance, pollution, nuisance to people living/working in the area.
- Impacts on water quality / ecology in immediate area.

The proposed development will impact on habitats of low local value. There will also be a loss of common habitats which have limited use as foraging grounds for common bird and mammal species. Agricultural grassland, which covers most of the site, has low value. The treelines earmarked for removal are coniferous and non-native and are of low ecological value. However, it is noted that a small number of bats were recorded foraging along these habitats.

Broadleaved treeline, mature trees and hedgerows will be largely retained. However, some tree removal will be required. The trees earmarked for removal have low to negligible potential for roosting bats. Mitigation measures will be implemented during tree removal to ensure there is no direct injury/mortality impacts on bats. As the newly planted areas mature, they will provide alternative foraging and commuting habitat for bats, birds and other wildlife and increase connectivity with the wider landscape.

The increase in lighting within the proposed development may reduce the bat foraging value of these retained/newly planted habitats. However, operational lighting has been designed to reduce impacts on foraging bats (and other nocturnal wildlife). It is noted that the proposed development site is surrounded on all sides by existing residential development and there is no significant change in light levels is predicted to occur.

During construction, there will be increased noise and disturbance which could potentially impact on birds and non-volant mammals. Given the availability of alternative habitat in the vicinity, the impact on birds, non-volant mammals and other wildlife is likely to be slight to moderate and short-term. This impact will reduce to slight in the long-term as native planting matures. Mitigation measures have been proposed to protect local water quality. No difficulties in the effective implementation of the prescribed mitigation measures have been identified. No impact from the spread of invasive species will occur. With these measures, no significant impacts (SACs, SPAs or pNHAs) on designed sites will occur.

These impacts are not considered to be high in magnitude or complex in nature and are standard considerations with respect to works.

Probability of the impact

The probability of the impacts noted above is likely. However, as noted, none of the likely impacts are significant or adverse.

Negative short-term impacts associated with the construction phase associated with noise, traffic and possibly dust. Standard dust control measures, including water spraying and sweeping will be incorporated into the proposal. It is also noted that a Construction Management Plan has been prepared. Best practice during the construction works is sufficient to ensure that no significant risks are likely to occur in this instance. The potential for the development to significantly affect Natura 2000 sites is addressed in the Natura Impact Statement. No significant impacts are envisaged.

Duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

Risks arising during works will be temporary and short term in nature once best practice is employed during the project works. Any such impacts identified will be restricted to the works phase and working hours.

There will be a net loss of low value habitat. No Annex I terrestrial habitats or other high value terrestrial habitats will be directly or indirectly impacted.

More long-term impacts will be associated with the provision of road access which can facilitate and enable a sustainable development.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Potential impacts on human beings will be short-term and not significant and there will be mitigation measures in place to control traffic, noise, and dust. No significant impacts on cultural heritage will occur. No significant impact on landscape will occur as the context is that of an urban town suburban built up area. No significant impacts with respect to waste or discharges or wastewater were identified.
- 6.2 Most of the potential impacts will be mitigated by the preparation of Operational Waste Management and Construction Management Plans that should be agreed upon by all parties before the commencement of the works. No significant cumulative impact between this development and other elements within the surrounding landscape has been identified.
- 6.3 There will be net positive benefit resulting from the proposed project due to increased housing and the provision of quality open space and pedestrian linkages in the locality.
- 6.4 Overall, it is concluded that an EIAR (EIS) is not required as the risk of significant impacts is negligible.
- 6.5 **The Environmental Impact Assessment Screening concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.**
- 6.6 In conclusion, the proposed development has been screened to determine whether an **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** is required, and it has been concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required.