CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

R572 Castletownbere Gateway, Pedestrian Enhancement and Traffic Management Proposal

JULY 2019
Executive Summary

Introduction

Cork County Council has completed this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report to inform a Part VIII application for the proposed R-572 Castletownbere Gateway, Pedestrian Enhancement and Traffic Management Proposal. The purpose of this Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment is to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required as part of the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) for the approach road, hereafter referred to as the “project”. The findings of the EIA screening assessment are presented in this report.

Project

The project provides for the construction of shared use footpaths and cycle ways, footpaths, junction improvements and traffic calming between the Bridewell junction of the R-572-312 and L-4918-0 and a point 363 metres west of the Rodeen Cross junction of the R-572-312 and L-4920-0 for a distance of 2230 metres, including all ancillary works.

The project consists of the following:

- Installation of a surface water drainage network, including hydrocarbon interceptors;
- Installation of utility ducting as necessary;
- Relocation of an ESB sub-station
- Construction of road side retaining walls
- Construction of approximately 500m of road side walls
- Construction of approximately 3040m of 3m wide shared footpaths and cycleways
- Construction of approximately 670m of 2m wide footpaths
- Road crossings will be provided in accordance with standards and signage

Methodology

This screening has been undertaken having regard to the following documents:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development (EPA, 2003);
- Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A Practical Guide (Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), formerly NRA, 2008); and,

Screening Conclusions

The project does not meet the thresholds for which the preparation of an EIA is a mandatory requirement
The criteria under which the project must be considered are outlined within Article 27 of the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989, as amended. The screening criteria categories include:

1. Characteristics of the Project;
2. Location of the Project; and,

No significant impact is anticipated to air and climate as traffic levels are not predicted to increase significantly due to the project. An increase in noise and vibration levels is expected during the construction stage but the impact is likely to be temporary in nature.

A Stage One Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report was prepared for the project. The AA screening report states it is considered that the proposed works do not require progression to a second stage Appropriate Assessment.

It is anticipated that there will be no impact to hydrology or water quality during the operational phase.

A flood risk assessment was carried out on the project. The project cannot be defined as a ‘Water-Compatible Development’ in accordance with ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning’ but given that it is an existing road therefore its construction within Flood Zone ‘A’ is acceptable.

In terms of landscape, the nature of the project being principally on the footprint of the existing R-572 is unlikely to have any significant impact on the landscape of the area. The project will be largely within the R-572 road corridor and as such there are no direct impacts to any sites of archaeological value. The project and the provision of new cycling and pedestrian facilities will not impact on any known or unknown archaeological sites.

No significant environmental impacts are anticipated, once standard industry environmental management systems are in place.

The preparation of an EIA, is therefore not required for the proposed development under the Planning and development Act 2000, as amended and the Planning and development Regulations 2001, as amended, or the EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2018.
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1. INTRODUCTION
Cork County Council proposes to undertake a Part 8 planning application for works relating to the upgrading of the R-572 Castletownbere approach road to facilitate shared use footpaths and cycleways, traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossings. (Hereafter referred to as the ‘project’)

The prescribed classes of development and thresholds that trigger a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended. A review of the project types listed in the aforementioned Schedule 5, as amended has been carried out.

The project is a type set out in Part 2 Class 10(b)(iv) of Schedule 5 but it does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part.

Therefore, it is a sub-threshold development.

An examination has been made as to whether the project would or would not, individually and in combination with other developments, be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

This report has been prepared with regard to Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

This EIA Screening Report summarises the various aspects of the project and assesses whether there is likely to be significant negative effects on the environment.

2. Outline of Project

The project provides for the construction of shared use footpaths and cycle ways, footpaths, junction improvements and traffic calming between the Bridewell junction of the R-572-312 and L-4918-0 and a point 363 metres west of the Rodeen Cross junction of the R-572-312 and L-4920-0 for a distance of 2230 metres, including all ancillary works.

The project consists of the following:

- Installation of a surface water drainage network, including hydrocarbon interceptors;
- Installation of utility ducting as necessary;
- Relocation of an ESB sub-station
- Construction of road side retaining walls
- Construction of approximately 500m of road side walls
- Construction of approximately 3040m of 3m wide shared footpaths and cycleways
- Construction of approximately 670m of 2m wide footpaths
- Narrowing the carriageway to 6.5m
- Road crossings will be provided in accordance with standards and signage
3. Sub-Threshold Development EIA Screening Assessment

3.1 Study Area

For completeness the Sub-Threshold Assessment will be focused on a 500m study area (unless otherwise stated) Figure 1 encompassing the proposed road and footpath improvements. Receptors such as ecological, archaeological, landscape and noise are outlined in detail in this section of this Screening Report.

Figure 1 500m Study zone

3.1.1 Nature Conservation Designations

There are no European sites located within the Project site, or within 2 km of the Project site. Figure 2.
The nearest European site is the Beara Peninsula SPA (site code 4155) located 2.2 km North and uphill of the Project.
The next nearest European site is Kenmare River SAC (site code 2158) which is located 5.7 km northwest along the coast from the development site.

The Glenmore Bog SAC (site code 1879) is located 5.7 km upstream from the Project site. Other European sites include Sheep’s Head to Toe Head SPA (site code 4156), and Sheep’s Head SAC (site code 0102). Both these European sites are located at closest approximately 11.8 km south from the Project site on the opposite side of Bantry Bay.
Beara Peninsula SPA

The Beara Peninsula SPA is a coastal site situated on the west coast of Co. Cork, south-west of the town of Kenmare. It encompasses the high coast and sea cliff sections of the western end of the peninsula from Reenmore Point/Cod’s Head in the north, around to the end of Dursey Island in the west, and as far east as Bear Island in the south. The site includes the sea cliffs, the land adjacent to the cliff edge and several upland areas further inland of the coast about Eagle Hill, Knockgour, Allihies and Firkeel. The high water mark forms the seaward boundary. Most of the site is underlain by Devonian sandstones and siltstones, though Carboniferous rocks are found about Black Ball Head and on Bear Island; small areas of igneous rocks occur at Cod’s Head, Dursey Island, Black Ball Head and Bear Island.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Chough and Fulmar. Vegetated sea cliffs dominate the site; these occur along the length of the site and support a good variety of plant species typical of the habitat, including Thrift (Armeria maritima), Sea Campion (Silene vulgaris subsp. maritima), Sea Spleenwort (Asplenium marinum) and Rock Sea-spurry (Spergularia rupicola). The cliff-tops support heath or coastal grassland. Apart from the sea cliffs themselves, the site includes areas of dry heath, wet heath, blanket bog, freshwater marsh, upland acid grassland, dense Bracken (Pteridium aquilinum), scrub, semi-improved and improved pasture grassland, dune grassland, exposed rock, streams, shingle, bedrock shores and islets.

Kenmare River SAC

Kenmare River SAC in Co. Kerry, is a long, narrow, south-west facing bay. It is a deep, drowned glacial valley and the bedrock is mainly Old Red Sandstone which forms reefs along the middle of the bay throughout its length. Exposure to prevailing winds and swells at the mouth diminishes towards the head of the bay. Numerous islands and inlets along the length of the bay provide further areas of additional shelter in which a variety of habitats and unusual communities occur. The site is a Special

Figure 2  Location of European Sites
Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Large Shallow Inlets and Bays, Reefs, Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks Vegetated Sea Cliffs, Atlantic Salt Meadows, Mediterranean Salt Meadows, Marram Dunes (White Dunes) Fixed Dunes (Grey Dunes), Dry Heath, Juniper Scrub, Calaminarian Grassland, Sea Caves Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (*Vertigo angustior*), Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Common (Harbour) Seal (*Phoca vitulina*).

**Glanmore Bog SAC**
Glanmore Bog is situated 3 km north-west of Hungry Hill, Co. Cork and 8 km southwest of the village of Lauragh, Co. Kerry. The site is underlain by Old Red Sandstone and rises in altitude from sea level near Cappul Bridge to 602 m at Eskatarriff at the north of the site. The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Oligotrophic Waters containing very few minerals, Floating River Vegetation, Wet Heath, Species-rich Nardus Grassland, Blanket Bogs (Active), Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*).

**Sheep’s Head to Toe Head SPA**
The Sheep’s Head to Toe Head SPA is large site situated on the south-west coast of Co. Cork. It encompasses the high coast and sea cliffs from Sheep’s Head to Mizen Head, Brow Head and Crookhaven in the west and from Baltimore to Tragumna Bay, Gokane Point and the Toe Head peninsula in the east. The site includes the sea cliffs, the land adjacent to the cliff edge, an area further inland to the east of Dunlough Bay, and also areas of sand dunes at Barley Cove and Crookhaven. The high water mark forms the seaward boundary. Most of the site is underlain by Devonian sandstones and mudstones, though Carboniferous rocks are also found on the Sheep’s Head and Toe Head peninsulas. The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Chough and Peregrine.

**Sheep’s Head SAC**
Sheep’s Head in Co. Cork is a narrow peninsula with a north-east to south-west orientation, bounded on the northern side by Bantry Bay and on the southern side by Dunmanus Bay. The site extends from near Ahakista in the east, to the Sheep’s Head lighthouse in the west. A rocky ridge of sandstone, supporting heath vegetation, runs the entire length of the peninsula. The heath vegetation extends from the summits of the ridge to the seashore on the more exposed northern side, but grades into enclosed farmland in the south. The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Wet Heath, Dry Heath, Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*).
3.1.2 Cultural Heritage

There are 34 combined heritage sites within 500m of the project listed under the National Monuments Service (NMS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) and Cork County Council Record of Protected Structures. Figure 3. –one of which is slightly impacted by the project.

![Figure 3](image1.png)

**Figure 3**  NMS, NIAH & RPS in Castletownbere

According to the National monuments Service Wreck viewer no shipwrecks are within 500m of the project. Figure 4

![Figure 4](image2.png)

**Figure 4**  Shipwrecks in Castletownbere Harbour Area
3.1.3 Landscape

The project lies within a high value landscape classed as Rigged Ridge Peninsula. Approximately 50% of the project is within the development boundary, while the remainder is inside the greenbelt settlement zone. Essentially the project is within an area of urban and road side ribbon development.

3.1.4 Key Community and other Facilities

The key community and other facilities located within 500m of the project are outlined below:
- Co-Action Beara – 65m
- Castletownbere Rowing Club – 349m
- Irish Coast Guard – 391m
- Irish Lights – 0-10m
- St. Josephs’ Community Hospital – 0-50m
- Harbour Master’s Control Building – 290m
- Scoil an Croi Ro Naofa Primary School – 292m
- Church of the Sacred Heart – 245m
- RNLI – 215m
- Doctor’s surgery – 70m

3.2 Characteristics of the Project

3.2.1 Size of the Project

The project travels from the outskirts of Castletownbere towards the commercial centre of the town and is approximately 2230m in length. In general the project shall consist of a 6.5m wide carriageway with 3m wide shared use footpath/cycleway on both sides of road. The total area of the projects is approximately 3.23 hectares. Typical cross section shown in Figure 5.

![Figure 5 Typical Cross Section](image)
2.2.2 Cumulation with Other Projects

An initial review of plans and projects that may have the potential to result in cumulative impacts has been undertaken. This section considers plans and projects in County Cork that were considered. Data sources included the following:

- Cork County Council website;
- An Bord Pleanála (ABP) website (planning searches);
- Web search for major infrastructure projects in County Cork;
- Cork County Council Development Plan 2014; and,

The following planned infrastructure projects have been found within 500m of the project.

Major Road Schemes

Other than normal road resurfacing projects there are no road schemes funded, in design stage, in the planning stage or approved at any location on the Beara Peninsula, and more particularly in Castletownbere or environs.

It is worth noting that during 2016 Cork County Council commissioned the Castletownbere Transportation Study, with the Final Report and recommendations approved by the elected members of the West Cork Municipal District in October 2018. The Final Report and recommendations therein was not considered, accepted or adopted by full council and is therefore non–statutory and cannot be considered as a project or plan that may or may not have any cumulative effects. At best the recommendations of the Castletownbere Transportation Study are a guide to future transport development in Castletownbere. This proposal is considered to be a discrete and stand alone project which does not affect traffic management in Castletownbere and is designed to enhance road safety and pedestrian and cycling facilities.

Other Infrastructure Projects.

Irish Water intends to construct a new Wastewater Treatment Plant and network infrastructure for Castletownbere to ensure that wastewater discharging to Bantry Bay meets appropriate discharge standards. The project includes developing the sewer network and constructing five pumping stations throughout the Castletownbere area that will bring untreated wastewater to the new WWTP and treated wastewater to the existing outfall pipe. A pumped rising sewer shall be installed within the footprint of the R-572 and two pumping stations shall be installed on adjacent lands – one at St. Joseph’s Hospital and the second near Brandy Hall Bridge. It is understood that Irish Water intends to proceed to Planning Stage in late 2019/early 2020 with the intention to have construction completed by the end of 2021. The project shall not interact with the Irish Water Plan excepting paving the carriageway after Irish Water works are complete. The shared use footpaths and cycleways shall be constructed prior to Irish Water commencing sewer or other works.
Proposed Planning Developments

Given that the project is within a built up area there have been numerous planning applications over the recent past. The following existing and proposed planning developments (since January 2016) have been identified within 500m (unless otherwise stated) of the project and are included in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Distance to Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16/208</td>
<td>Demolition and removal of link connection between private dwelling and doctor’s surgery, Replacement of existing flat roofs to rear of dwelling with pitched slatted roof, Installation of 5no. rooflights and all associated site works</td>
<td>63m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/232</td>
<td>Construction of an extension including alterations and renovations to the existing supermarket retail unit on ground floor with a lift and stair core to a proposed extension to the existing car park to the rear and associated site works</td>
<td>193m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/580</td>
<td>Demolition of existing side garage/store annex and demolition of front sunroom annex to dwelling house, construction of new first floor extension including raising of roof level, fenestration changes and installation of balcony to front, construction of attached granny-flat extension, installation of new wastewater treatment system</td>
<td>26m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/597</td>
<td>Construction of single storey extension to existing day centre including changing room and sensory room.</td>
<td>68m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/769</td>
<td>Construction of extension to dwelling house, enlargement of site boundaries and all associated site works</td>
<td>476m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/76</td>
<td>Alterations to existing entrance and construction of new entrance with roadway to access the commercial stores</td>
<td>20m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/92</td>
<td>250KW of solar PV panels mounted on the roof of existing fish processing building</td>
<td>582m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/234</td>
<td>Demolish the existing two storey Harbour Administration Building and adjacent Auction Hall building as well as to remove two prefabricated buildings, and to construct a new three storey Harbour Administration Building to include offices, meeting rooms, changing facilities, toilets and disabled WC, storage rooms, plant room, lift and stairs, complete with all associated and ancillary works including two car parks accommodating 49 cars and three flag poles</td>
<td>285m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/376</td>
<td>Extensions to existing industrial unit to contain</td>
<td>550m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Number</td>
<td>Date Finalised</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/494</td>
<td>Finalised 24/10/2017</td>
<td>Construction of a Primary Health Care Centre which will consist of the following (1) a split-level building ranging from two storeys to single storey. The building will contain HSE Primary Care Facilities at Ground Floor, GP Clinic along with main entrance foyer. The first floor will contain HSE Primary Care facilities (2) 55 car parking spaces, (3) Fire Water Pump House, (4) the demolition of existing domestic house and garage, (5) signage, (6) landscaping and (7) all associates site development works and site services to facilitate the development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/548</td>
<td>Finalised 21/11/2017</td>
<td>Construction of additional warehouse for extension to existing Calcareaous Marine Algae facility to provide additional ground floor product storage and ancillary site works and alterations to roof line of existing production building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/581</td>
<td>Finalised 29/11/2017</td>
<td>Permission for Retention of three storey dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/637</td>
<td>Finalised 26/03/2018</td>
<td>A wharf extension and associated ancillary development at Dinish Island. Dredging of a berthing pocket for the new quay to -8.0m Chart Datum; dredging of adjacent navigation channel to a depth of -6.5m Chart Datum; construction of 2 no. new breakwaters at the entrance to the channel; use of dredged material as reclamation material for construction of part of quay and breakwaters; provision of a new access point to wharf extension from internal access road; provision of additional 59 no. car parking spaces at existing carpark; relocation of existing pontoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/65</td>
<td>Finalised 03/07/2018</td>
<td>Construct 3 no. single storey new extensions located to the south west and north west sides of the existing building, internal refurbishment works, external water storage tank and associated site development works. The total gross floor area of the new extensions will be 196m², the building extensions use will be residential healthcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/352</td>
<td>Finalised 14/09/2018</td>
<td>Retention of construction of detached Compressor House and of alterations to elevations of Calcareaous Marine Algae facility and Permission for additions to same to include lean-to canopy to east, lean-to pallet store to north and loading dock to south</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/601</td>
<td>Finalised 04/02/2019</td>
<td>Change of Use of existing basement of dwelling from storage and garage for use as self contained guest accommodation, ancillary to main dwelling and for all associated site works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/741</td>
<td>Finalised 13/03/2019</td>
<td>Amendments to previously granted planning permission Ref No. 09/2113 and extension of duration planning Ref. No. 15/54 for revised planning boundaries, for a reduction in density from two dwellings to one number dwelling, revised location within said site of proposed dwelling with minor alterations to the design of same and for all associated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
site works. Permission also sought for Retention of access road as constructed, and for permission for revised boundary treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Date Finalised</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18/767</td>
<td>17/04/2019</td>
<td>To construct a dwelling house and domestic garage and undertake all associated site works</td>
<td>62m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/768</td>
<td>17/04/2019</td>
<td>Permission to retain construction of erosion preventing rock deposits along a section of land at the shoreline of property</td>
<td>55m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/786</td>
<td>20/02/2019</td>
<td>Demolition of existing warehouse stores (2 no. to the east and west of principal retail unit) and construction of new warehouse store, together with associated site services</td>
<td>20m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having considered the likely cumulative effect of these developments in combination with the proposed transport network upgrades, it is anticipated the cumulative effect is likely to result in long term positive effects road safety and on future planning and land use patterns in the area, local populations and in particular local tourism.

### 3.2.3 The nature of any associated Demolition Works

The propose works include the upgrading and improvement of the existing streetscape i.e. footpaths, cycleways, carriageway, etc. Minor demolition works are required for the relocation of roadside boundary walls. Any demolition material that is not reused will be disposed of in line with best environmental practice.

### 3.2.4 Use of Natural Resources

The construction of the project will involve the use of raw materials. It is proposed that construction material is sourced locally, where possible, and where possible excavated materials will be re-used as backfill elsewhere in the project.

### 3.2.5 Production of Waste

There will be waste produced during the construction phase of the project. Production of any construction waste is expected to be mitigated for within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) – therefore impacts would be insignificant.

### 3.2.6 Pollution and Nuisances

The closest nature conservation designation to the project is the Beara Peninsula SPA located 2.2 km North and uphill and 3.6 km South of the project. The next nearest site is the Kenmare River SAC which is located 5.7 km northwest along the coast from the development site. During construction, polluting material has the potential to cause environmental effects, however the likelihood and severity of these effects will be minimised through compliance with the TII Environmental and Construction Guidelines, and the employment of construction management best practice.

### 3.2.7 Risk of Accidents

Providing best construction practices are followed, the risk of accidents which are significant in scale is considered low. The risk of accidents associated with the construction and operational phases of the project is considered to be not significant. No novel or potentially significantly
hazardous substance technologies will be utilised during the scheme.

3.3 Location of Project

The Location of the proposed developed is within the built up area of Castletownbere, Co. Cork

Figure 6
3.3.1 Existing Land Use

Land use in the Castletownbere area is defined in the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan. Figure 7

3.3.2 Abundance, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources

Construction material will be required for the construction of the project, some of which will be sourced from excavated materials on the site; however other materials, including: steel reinforcement for retaining walls and heavily trafficked areas, plastic pipes and ducting for drainage and utilities, concrete, concrete kerbing and paving slabs for the footpaths and cycleways, and stone and bitumen for the roadway will be required to be imported to complete the development.

3.3.3 The Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment Wetlands and Watercourses

The Beara Peninsula SPA, Kenmare River SAC, Glenmore Bog SAC, Sheep’s Head to Toe Head SPA, Sheep’s Head SAC are European protected sites and require appropriate ecological mitigation. Watercourses can be sensitive to pollution, particularly to the potential increased levels of suspended solids during the construction stage. Suspended solids (silt) affect aquatic life particularly larger animals such as fish, most critically when it settles in spawning areas. Other impacts include:

- Physical obstructions to upstream and downstream migration both during and after construction;
- Disturbance of spawning beds during construction - timing of works is critical; and,
- Point source pollution incidents during construction.
The project is located within the South West River Basin District. The groundwater classification for this region i.e. Beara Sneem IE_SW_G_019 is classified as ‘Not at Risk’ by the Water Framework Directive (EPA Map Viewer, 2018).

The project is situated in Flood Zone A defined as ‘Where the probability of flooding from watercourses is the highest’ (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 year for watercourse flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding). The project cannot be defined as a ‘Water-Compatible Development’ in accordance with ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning’ however it is an existing road and therefore its upgrading within Flood Zone ‘A’ is acceptable. During the construction phase due to potential pollution incidences measures must be put in place to protect affected water bodies and to maintain or improve the water quality status.
Coastal Zones

Much of the project is in close proximity of the coast and is at its closest is approximately 280m distant from the Castletownbereg Designated Shellfish Area. Figure 8.

The Coastal water bodies classification for this region i.e. Berehaven IE_SW_180_0000 is classified as ‘Not at Risk’ by the Water Framework Directive (EPA Map Viewer, 2018). During the construction phase due to potential pollution incidences, measures must be put in place to protect all coastal water areas.
Mountain and Forest Areas
There are no mountain ranges within 500m. There are minor clusters of native trees near Dinish Bridge.

Nature Reserves and Parks
There are no nature reserves within the study area which are affected by the project.

Nationally Designated Sites
There are no nationally designated sites in proximity to the project.

European Sites
The following are a list of European designated sites in proximity to the project.
Distance is from the nearest point of project:
Within 15km:

- Beara Peninsula SPA: 2.2 km north and upstream and 3.6 km South
- Kenmare River SAC: 5.7 km North West
- Glenmore Bog SAC: 5.7 km North and upstream
- Sheep’s Head to Toe Head SPA: 11.8 km South
- Sheep’s Head SAC: 11.8 km South

Environmental Quality Standards
From the information available at this stage of the process there are no known areas in which the environmental quality standards have already been exceeded. However the Irish Water plan to treat wastewater will have a beneficial effect on water quality in the harbour.

Densely Populated Areas
The project is within the urban environment of Castletownbere, which would not be considered a densely populated area.

Landscapes of Historical, Cultural or Archaeological Significance
The following heritage assets of significance were identified within a 500m buffer of the proposed network improvements, through the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and the Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht Historic Environment Viewer. The search shows there are 32 individual records listed on the Heritage Council’s Sites and Monuments Records database (Archaeological and Architectural combined) within 500m.

The records are listed below. Distance is from the edge of the project to the respective features as measured on the Historic Environment Viewer. Record of Protected Structures are denoted with RPS.

Archaeological

- C0115-019: Burial Ground 443m
- C0015-020: Stone Row 395m
- C0115-021: Castle 81m
In addition, the Cork County Council Development Plan 2014 lists two Records of Protected Structures within 500m. These include Union Workhouse Wall - RPS 01299 and Brandy Hall Bridge - RPS 01189.

The qualities of archaeological and architectural interest are not mutually exclusive and certain Structures can have both qualities and be protected by both the National Monuments Act and the Planning Acts.

One site is directly impacted by the project i.e.

20835012        Terrace of three two-bay two-storey former lighthouse keepers' houses (RPS 01164)

The works involved are the relocation of the road side boundary to a position approximately 1.2m inside the line of the existing boundary. The works would reuse the existing stone work to replicate the gated entrance and pillars. These and any other boundary works would be in agreement with the
Designated Focal Points/ Views

The following Scenic Routes have been identified within the Cork County Council Development Plan 2014 within the study area:

- Scenic Route S113 R-572 Regional road between Glengarriff, Trafrask, Adrigole and Castletownbere.

There is not expected to be any disruption to Scenic Route S113 during construction.

3.4 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

3.4.1 Extent of the Impact

The project will involve shared footpaths and cycleways and footpaths from the outskirts of Castletownbere towards the town centre for a distance of approximately 2230m in County Cork. The development will largely be on the footprint of the R-572 with minor additional land take required for the junction improvements at Dinish Bridge as shown on the Part 8 Planning Drawings.

3.4.2 Transfrontier Nature of the Impact

There are no transfrontier impacts associated with the project.

3.4.3 Magnitude and Complexity of the Project

Air and Climate

No significant impact is anticipated to air and climate as traffic levels are not predicted to increase significantly due to the project.

There are no known existing issues with the air quality of this area and the expected levels of traffic are not expected to be significant. Therefore the new project will not result in any likely significant effects.

The objective of the project is to provide an upgraded and improved transportation route including pedestrian and cyclist routes thus having no significant operational impact on air quality and climate. During construction, polluting material has the potential to cause environmental effects, however the likelihood and severity of these effects will be minimised through compliance with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Environmental and Construction Guidelines and the employment of construction management best practice.

Noise and Vibration

An increase in noise and vibration levels is expected during the construction stage but the impact is likely to be temporary in nature.

The project will largely be active in daytime hours only. At operation, an increase in the number of cyclists or pedestrians will have negligible impact on noise or vibration in the local environment. It is also considered that the level of construction traffic and construction operations
required for a project of this scale will be short term and will not result in the creation of any significant levels of noise or vibration. Furthermore works will be carried out in compliance with BS5228: Part 1 and the European Communities (Noise Emission by Equipment for Use Outdoors) Regulations, 2001 which will ensure a controlled level of noise during construction phase. Appropriate consultation with the relevant local authority and statutory agencies should be carried out.

**Population and Human Health**

During construction, temporary negative impacts are predicted due to noise, dust and visual impacts along the project which is located within the settlement of Castletownbere. Adequate mitigation will be required to minimise noise and vibration impacts. These impacts are not considered significant. Community severance will be kept to a minimum and access to the existing key routes will generally be maintained during construction.

During the operational stage, the project should have no negligible adverse effects on human beings living along the route and will provide a high quality amenity for local residents, commuters and tourists. Any disruption from noise and vibration effects during construction will be mitigated through construction best practice guidelines. During operation, a positive impact is expected due to improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities being built in line with the Cork Area Plans and the Cork Network Cycle Plan 2017. Traffic speeds and movement will be improved, increasing road safety for all users. Additionally, tourism and transport objectives will be met through improving connectivity in the Castletownbere area.

**Ecology**

The project is not located within any Natura 2000 sites (SACs / SPAs). The project is accompanied by a Stage One AA Screening Report. The screening report for AA is based on the best available scientific information and demonstrates that the construction and operation of the proposed R-572 Castletownbere Approach Road, County Cork, poses no risk of likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

It is considered that the proposed works do not require progression to second stage Appropriate Assessment.

All mitigation recommendations proposed as part of the Appropriate Assessment should be fully implemented and outlined within a final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The TII Environmental Assessment and Construction Guidelines will be followed to avoid and minimise impacts where possible and specific mitigation measures will be adhered to during the development of the project in order to reduce the impacts on all ecological receptors. Appropriate consultation with the Cork County Council and National Parks and Wildlife Service will be carried out.

**Soils and Geology**

The project is largely within the footprint of the R-572. There will be some slight impacts to areas which are required for land take (as a result of excavation) for junction improvements at Dinish Bridge. Likely effects to the soils and geology are not expected to be significant. With the implementation of standard mitigation measures, there will no likely significant effects.
Water

The proposed one water channel at Brandy Hall Bridge, namely the Aghakista River. The river channel flows from north to south, draining the higher lands and discharging into the sea. The project bridges the aforementioned river but is mostly intersected by existing urban drains. The principal potential impacts to surface water are associated with discharges to receiving watercourses. There are to be no in stream works. Direct impacts to watercourses are not anticipated. It is proposed install a surface water drainage system with hydro carbon interceptors and utilise the existing network of drains.

It is anticipated that there will be no impact to hydrology or water quality during the operational phase. During construction there is the potential for pollution of existing drains and river from sediment loading and associated anthropogenic polluting substances as a result of surface water run-off or spills on site.

Best practice standards including SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems), environmental guidelines, the CEMP and mitigation measures will be adhered to in order to avoid impacts on water quality. It is considered that the enforcement of industry best practice pollution prevention measures will prevent the occurrence of a pollution event (for example CIRIA Guideline Document C532 Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites and C648 Control of water pollution from linear construction projects).

A flood risk assessment was carried out on the project. Minor sections of the project are within Flood Zone ‘A’.

The project cannot be defined as a ‘Water-Compatible Development’ in accordance with ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning’, however given that it is an existing road therefore its construction within Flood Zone ‘A’ is acceptable. Figure 9

![Figure 9 – Flood Zone ‘A’](image)
**Hydrogeology**

Hydro-geological assessment addresses the potential impact of the project on groundwater features and groundwater flow regime. As the project will largely be on the existing footprint of the R-572 there will be limited requirement for any significant cut or fill. It is considered that there will be no significant impact on the groundwater regime during either construction or operation with mitigation.

**Landscape**

The area at Castletownbere of the project is within a Very High Value Landscape. The project lies within Landscape Character Type 4 Rugged Ridge Peninsula. The nature of the project, being principally on the footprint of the R-572 is unlikely to have any significant impact on the landscape of the area. In addition at operation the project will not detract from existing views or views to or from any heritage features present. In fact the project has the potential to have a positive landscape and visual impact through the provision of additional views and interpretation of the area and its heritage. Impacts to views from Scenic Route S113 will not be significant. During construction the presence of plant and machinery will detract from certain views. However this is considered to be a slight impact which is short term in nature and which is easily offset by the benefits accrued at the operational stage.

**Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage**

There are 32 records listed on the Sites and Monuments database and two Records of Protected Structures which are located within 500m of the project.

The project will be largely within the R-572 Regional Road corridor and as such there are no direct impacts to any other sites of archaeological value. The project and the provision of new cycling and pedestrian facilities will not impact on any archaeological sites, nor significantly affect their setting. Views from and to any listed building sites will be maintained. There will be minor works required to the boundary of one listed building but this will have negligible effects. If deemed to be required, mitigation measures such as, archaeological monitoring of excavations along the project will be undertaken.

**Socio-economic**

The objective of any socio-economic assessment is to examine the potential impact of the construction and operation of the project on the local community and business activities in the local area. The project will have beneficial impacts for locals and tourists alike and the provision of new and improved cycling and pedestrian facilities will improve links with nearby residences and businesses. The project will enhance the visitor experience to the area providing uplift in the local economy for hotels, guesthouse, restaurants etc.
Resource and Waste Management

The key phase with regard to resource and waste management is the construction phase. As the project is largely on the footprint of the existing R-572, there will be no requirement for any significant cut or fill. Some land take will be required to accommodate the right hand turning lane at Dinish Bridge. Efforts will be made to reuse material on site where possible. Waste production is limited to the construction phase and will consist of general excavated material, inert in nature which will be disposed of using local licensed landfill facilities.

Interactions

Interaction may occur between the water environment and ecological receptors. However, the likely impacts on these environmental aspects are minimal and will not result in significant environmental effects with mitigation and adherence to the recommendations of the Appropriate Assessment and the CEMP.
4. CONCLUSION

Article 4(5): The competent authority shall make its determination, on the basis of information provided by the developer in accordance with paragraph 4 taking into account, where relevant, the results of preliminary verifications or assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive.

The determination shall be made available to the public and:
(a) where it is decided that an environmental impact assessment is required, state the main reasons for requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III; or
(b) where it is decided that an environmental impact assessment is not required, state the main reasons for not requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III, and, where proposed by the developer, state any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

The R-572 Castletownbere Gateway, Pedestrian Enhancement and Traffic Management Proposal has been assessed as a sub-threshold EIAR development. This EIA Screening Report has concluded that the characteristics of the project are considered potentially not significant due to the nature of the proposal and the existing land use.

The project does not meet the thresholds for which the preparation of an EIA is a mandatory requirement.

The criteria under which the project must be considered are outlined within Article 27 of the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989, as amended. The screening criteria categories include:

1. Characteristics of the Project;
2. Location of the Project; and,

No significant impact is anticipated to air and climate as traffic levels are not predicted to increase significantly due to the project. An increase in noise and vibration levels is expected during the construction stage but the impact is likely to be temporary in nature.

A Stage one Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report was prepared for this project. The AA states it is considered that the proposed works do not require progression to a second stage Appropriate Assessment.

It is anticipated that there will be no impact to hydrology or water quality during the operational phase.

A flood risk assessment was carried out on the project. The project cannot be defined as a ‘Water-Compatible Development’ in accordance with ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning’ but given that it is an existing road therefore its construction within Flood Zone ‘A’ is acceptable.

In terms of landscape, the nature of the project being principally on the footprint of the existing R-572 is unlikely to have any significant impact on the landscape of the area. The project will be largely within the R-572 road corridor and as such there are no direct impacts to any sites of archaeological value. The project and the provision of new cycling and pedestrian facilities will not impact on any known or unknown archaeological sites.
Having regard the contents of Article 120 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No.3) regulations 2011, Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and the EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2018 as it is considered that the project, by reason of its nature, scale and location would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Accordingly, it is considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

The overall conclusion for this EIA Screening Report is that for the R-572 Castletownbere Gateway, Pedestrian Enhancement and Traffic Management Proposal, a full Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.