



Leitrim County Council

**Environmental Impact Assessment Screening
Report**

**Proposed Shared Community Facilities project at
Acres Lake, Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim**

October 2020

1. Introduction

This is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening report for the Fáilte Ireland funded Shared Community Facilities project at Acres Lake, Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim. The purpose of the report is to screen the proposed development to establish whether it requires the undertaking of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and as a result if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required be prepared. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Statement has been prepared separately by CAAS Ltd.

The screening process includes an assessment of the details of the proposal with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, EU, 2015 and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening*, EU, 2017.

The EIA screening covers:

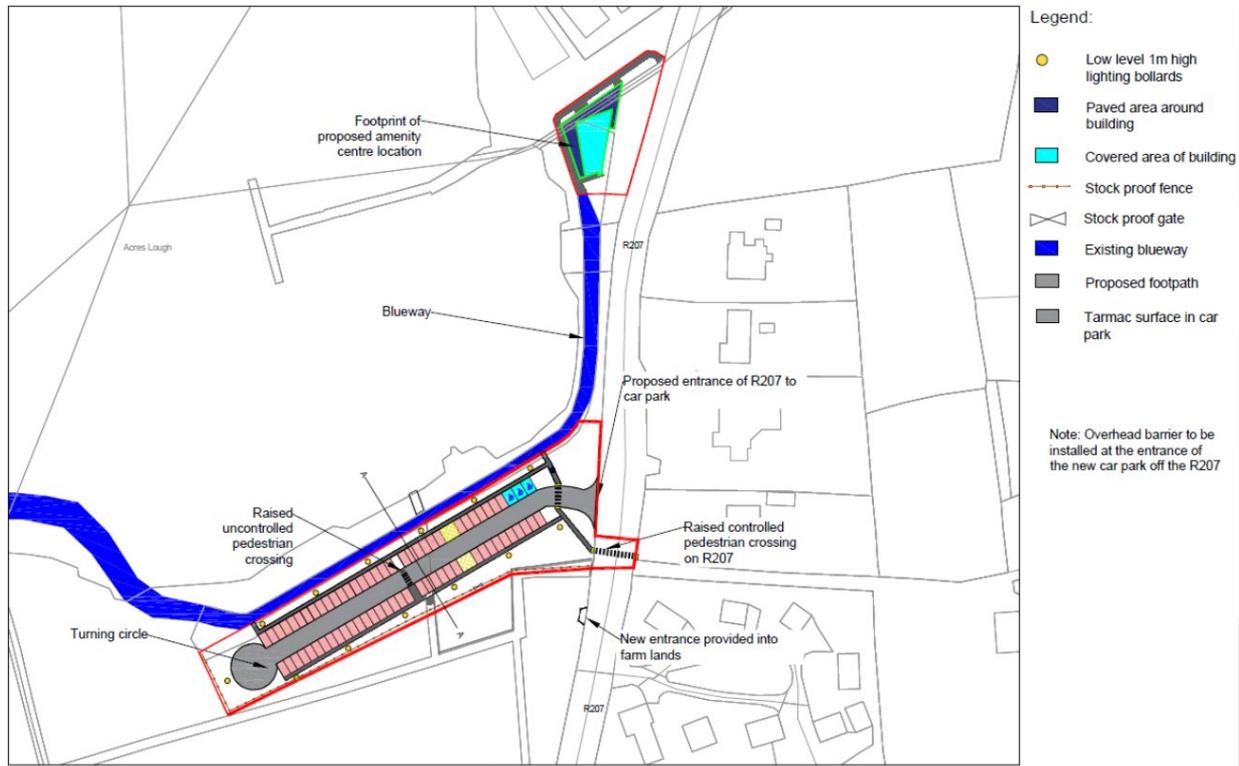
- i. Description of the proposed development
- ii. The legislative basis for EIA
- iii. Screening considerations
- iv. Conclusions

2. The Proposed Development

The proposed project is located adjacent the Acres Lake Boardwalk in the townlands of Acres and Drumduff North, Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim. The project comprises the following elements:

1. **Construct a Facility Centre for Water Sports Activities** which will include indoor and outdoor showers, toilets, external and internal seating, communication workspace which will be multifunctional, multimedia education and learning area. It will also include for the connection of all utility services to the building.
2. **Construction of a car park** to facilitate 70 car parking spaces, and a new entrance to the adjacent Regional Road R207.
3. **The installation of a Controlled raised pedestrian crossing** on the Regional Road R207.

There are a number of existing facilities at Acres Lake including an outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts and a playground area. The Shared Facilities Structure will contain a number of further facilities including indoor and outdoor showers which are heated through solar power, serviced toilets as well as seating both external to the roofed structure and internal. The facilities also include a communal communication area which is intended to be used as a briefing area for the operators that use the facilities. In addition to these, there are additional amenities such as lockers for storage and washdown areas. The structure itself is small in scale and has a discrete footprint. The application at this site includes improvement works to these facilities as well as the construction of a new car parking area at the site and raised controlled pedestrian crossing on the R207 Regional Road. Overall, the full scope of the project is small in scale (see over for Site Layout Plan).



3. Legislative Basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). The amended Directive came into force on 16th May 2017 and regulations transposing it into national legislation have been enacted. No changes to the prescribed project types or thresholds are required under the amended Directive so the types and thresholds set out in the 2001-2010 Regulations remain in effect. EIA legislation as it relates to the planning process has been largely brought together in Part X of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) and Part 10 and Schedules 5, 6 and 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations lists project types included in Annex I of the Directive which automatically require EIA. Part 2 of the same Schedule lists project types included in Annex II. Corresponding developments automatically require EIA if no threshold is given or if they exceed a given threshold. Developments which correspond to Part 2 project types but are below the given threshold must be subject to screening to determine whether they require EIA or not. This is done by consideration of criteria set out in Schedule 7.

4. Screening Considerations

Class of Development

In the first instance, it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type (or 'class') that requires the preparation of an EIAR. This project does not correspond to any of the prescribed types listed in Annex I. However, it could be considered to correspond to the Infrastructure Projects type set out in Annex II, as discussed hereunder.

Infrastructure Projects

Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 includes this project type:

10. Infrastructure projects (b)

(ii) *Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.*

(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 land use is retail or commercial use.)

The EU Guidance on ‘Interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive’ (2015) interprets ‘urban development’ as taking ‘account of, inter alia, the following:

- I. Projects with similar characteristics to car parks and shopping centres could be considered to fall under Annex II (10)(b). This could be the case, for example, of bus garages or train depots, which are not explicitly mentioned in the EIA Directive, but have similar characteristics to car parks.*
- II. Construction projects such as housing developments, hospitals, universities, sports stadiums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls and other cultural centres could also be assumed to fall within this category. The underlying principle is that all these project categories are of an urban nature and that they may cause similar types of environmental impact.*
- III. Projects to which the terms ‘urban’ and ‘infrastructure’ can relate, such as the construction of sewerage and water supply networks, could also be included in this category.*

The proposed development includes the construction of a car park containing 70 car parking spaces. This equates to 17.5% of the stated threshold for car parks.

The overall area of the proposed development is 0.5075 hectares. The area of the proposed amenity building extends to 990m² and the area of the proposed car park extends to 4,085m². The proposed development is located outside but adjoining the development envelop of Drumshanbo as defined by the Drumshanbo Land Use Zoning Strategy as contained in the County development Plan 2015-2021. However, applying the precautionary principle, the site is considered to be located within the built up area of Drumshanbo but not in a Business District. The relevant threshold is therefore 10 hectares. The proposed development would therefore correspond to 5% of this threshold.

Therefore the proposal is a prescribed project type but is considered to be significantly below the applicable thresholds as outlined above.

Sub-threshold Development

As the proposed development corresponds to an Annex II project type but does not meet the prescribed thresholds above, it can be considered to be a 'sub-threshold' development.

Having regard to the 'wide scope and broad purpose' of the Directive, it is appropriate to consider if it is likely to cause significant environmental impacts by reference to the relevant criteria for determining same, as set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations.

Given the scale of the proposed development, it is unlikely to cause significant effects to warrant a sub-threshold EIA. However, in order to provide a comprehensive screening, this screening proceeds to consider it against the Schedule 7 criteria nonetheless. Schedule 7 specifies 'Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment' under these three headings:

1. Characteristics of Proposed Development
2. Location of Proposed Development
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The tables below set out these considerations using both the main and sub-criteria which are specified in Schedule 7.

Schedule 7 Criteria		Relevance	Commentary
1. Characteristics of Proposed Development	The size of the proposed development.	No	The proposed development is minor in scale.
	The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	No	The operational phase of the shared facilities will comprise of toilets, shower facilities (both indoors and outdoors), equipment washdown facilities, etc. The overall structure will consolidate existing tourism facilities to a communal hub to centralise the offerings for the area. This will act as a hub for the area which presents an opportunity to broaden awareness of the sensitive features of the landscape. The presence of the facility

			has the potential to increase the site use from tourist and local recreation.
	The use of natural resources.	No	The proposed development does not impact negatively upon natural resources other than the loss of habitat to accommodate the proposed development. Heating will be provided by use of solar power.
	The production of waste.	No	Waste produced during the construction process are anticipated to be minor and not likely to cause significant effects.
	Pollution and nuisances.	No	The impacts including noise and dust within acceptable standards are anticipated to be negligible.
	The risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used.	No	The potential impacts are anticipated to be negligible given the nature of the proposed development.

Schedule 7 Criteria		Relevance	Commentary
<p>2. Location of Proposed Development</p> <p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed</p>	The existing land use	No	There is minimal change in existing land use associated with this proposed development. The proposed car park is located on what is presently agricultural land although of

development, having regard in particular to:			marginal use arising from the wet nature of the lands.
	The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	No	The impacts are anticipated to be negligible given the scale of the proposed development.
	The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	No	Ecological considerations were built into the site selection process. Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the ecological considerations (constraints and opportunities assessments) can be seen in Appendix III of the AA Screening Report by CAAS Ltd.
	Coastal zones	No	N/A
	Mountain and forest areas	No	N/A
	Nature reserves and parks	No	N/A
	Areas classified or protected under legislation, including special protection areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	No	The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report submitted with the Part VIII application concludes that the proposed development is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on designated European sites.

	Areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the EU have already been exceeded	No	N/A
	Densely populated areas	No	N/A
	Landscapes of historical, cultural archaeological significance	No	The impacts particularly those of historical, cultural and archaeological significance are anticipated to be negligible. It is proposed to undertake an Archaeological Assessment as part of the works contract although it is not considered likely that any finds of significance will be encountered.

Schedule 7 Criteria		Relevance	Commentary
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 magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population)	No	The impacts are anticipated to be minor given the scale of the proposed development.
	The nature of the impact	No	The nature of impacts are considered to be localised and not to impact a wider area where environmental sensitives are present.
	The transboundary nature of the impact	No	N/A

	The magnitude and complexity of the impact.	No	The impacts are anticipated to be minor given the scale of the proposed development.
	The probability of the impact.	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated
	The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated
	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	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.
	The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.

5. Conclusion

The proposed development falls within the scope of the 'Infrastructure' project type prescribed in the Directive or Regulations. However it is considered to be sub-threshold in nature. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the proposal; having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and having regard to the characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that the project is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental impacts.

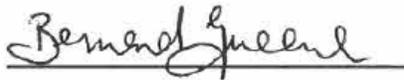
It is also noted that a separate Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has concluded that the proposed project is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on any designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This evaluation was made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated. Consequently, a Stage Two AA (NIS) is not required.

In addition, an Ecological Impact Assessment of the proposed development was undertaken separately by competent professionals and have all informed this assessment.

It is concluded that there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried out for the proposed project and there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be prepared.



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