



Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

1. Introduction

The EIA Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended aims to determine the likely significant effects of a project on the environment. EIA Screening determines whether an EIA is required for a specified project. Projects requiring mandatory EIA are listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. In the case of development which is under these thresholds, planning authorities are required under Article 103 of the 2001 Regulations, (as amended) to request an EIS where it considers that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Screening involves appraisal of impacts from the proposed development according to three main criteria:-

1. Characteristics of the project
2. Location of proposed project
3. Characteristics of potential impacts.

Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), outlines the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed development. These are: human beings, flora and fauna, soil and geology, water, air & climate, landscape, material assets, cultural heritage and the inter-relationships between the range of environmental criteria.

The proposed project comprises a route to link Kilmeadan Village to the Waterford Greenway along part existing footpath and public road and a 1.24 km off-road route section through private Land. Access off the Greenway is via the Suir Valley Railway carpark on the R680 Kilmeaden –Portlaw Road and the route includes crossing under the N25 underpass.

2. Screening Assessment

Table 1. Characteristics of proposed development

Is the size and design of the proposed works significant ?	The proposed link route is approximately 2km long and 4m wide.
Potential for impacts from project in cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects	This is a link extension of the Waterford Greenway to facilitate access to Kilmeaden Village.
Use of natural resources in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity ?	Proposed route along part existing footpath and public road and a 1.24 km off-road route section through private Land.
Will the works produce waste ?	Materials used in the construction of the trail such as fencing posts, wire, and building materials may produce a small amount of waste which will be removed from site on completion of works.
Will the works create a significant amount of pollution or nuisance ?	Best construction practice as guided by an Environmental Method Statement will ensure avoidance of any risk of pollution. The scale of the work is such that no nuisance will be created.
Risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the project including those caused by Climate Change in accordance with scientific knowledge?	The scale of the work is such that there is negligible risk of a major accident and /or disaster including those caused by climate change.
Risks to human health (water contamination , air pollution)	Best construction practice as guided by an Environmental Method Statement will ensure avoidance of any risk of pollution.
Potential for cumulative impacts with other existing and/or approved projects?	This is a link extension of the Waterford Greenway to facilitate access to Kilmeaden Village. The trail will extend the Waterford Greenway and will likely increase level of visitor use to the area.

Table 2. Location of Proposed Development

Environmental Sensitivity of project in relation to existing and approved land use.	The link extension involves part existing footpath and public road and a 1.24 km off-road route section through private land used for agriculture. It is near to but outside a floodrisk zone. It is not within any site designated for nature conservation. The northern section of the route encroaches on the Zone of notification for the Archaeological Site of old Kilmeaden Village WA 08-018.
Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources	The route of the link extension is in a robust area involving an existing footpath and

(including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	public road and a 1.24 km off-road route section through agricultural land.
Absorption capacity of the natural environment including wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths, coastal zones and the marine environment, mountain and forest area.	The route will not affect any sites designated for nature conservation in the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017.
Potential of works to impact directly or indirectly on sites designated for nature conservation (NHA/SAC/SPA)	The route is located 1.5km west of the Whelanbridge River and Lower Suir SAC. An AA Screening was carried out and concluded no potential for significant effects on the conservation objectives of the SAC.
Potential for impacts directly or indirectly on Habitats or Species listed on Annex I, II and IV of the Habitats Directive	No Annex I habitats occur on the trail route site. No Annexed species will be impacted by the trail route to the nature of the route – an existing footpath and public road and a 1.24 km off-road route section through agricultural land.
Potential for impacts on breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act ?	No disturbance anticipated to breeding places of any wildlife species.
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on any listed ACA in the County Development Plan ?	None
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structure or recorded monuments and places of Archaeological Interest	The northern section of the route encroaches on the Zone of notification for the Archaeological Site of old Kilmeaden Village WA 08-018.
Potential to impact directly or indirectly on Listed or scenic views or protected landscape in the County Development Plan ?	None
Potential to impact on areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.	None arising
Potential to impact on densely populated areas.	The route will connect Kilmeaden Village to the Waterford Greenway at WSV Railway facilitating access to the village for Greenway users (200,00 p/a). The population of Kilmeaden Village is approximately 300.

Table 3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Human Beings	The proposed trail will confer positive benefits on human beings extending the existing very popular Waterford Greenway
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	to Kilmeaden Village providing benefits for recreation and quality of life and access to the outdoors and village services.
Flora and Fauna	Some disturbance will be carried out to vegetation along the route involving cutting back of vegetation and encroachment on wetland vegetation and culverting. These are localised impacts.
Soils and Geology	No sites of geological heritage will be impacted.
Water	It is near to but outside a floodrisk zone.
Air & Climate	This is a recreational development in a rural area. No anticipated impacts on air and climate.
Noise & Vibration	Temporary disturbance during link route construction.
Landscape	The trail route does not affect an area designated in the Waterford Scenic Landscape Evaluation.
Material Assets	The proposed trail extension will confer positive benefits to the county's trail infrastructure providing an accessible route for all ages and abilities complementing existing recreational assets such as the Waterford Greenway and linking it to services in Kilmeaden Village.
Cultural Heritage	The northern section of the route encroaches on the Zone of notification for the Archaeological Site of old Kilmeaden Village WA 08-018. Part 8 application to be notified to the National Monuments Service.
Interaction of Foregoing	The proposed trail will confer positive benefits on human beings and benign effects on flora and fauna soils, geology and water. An Archaeological assessment will be required to assess impacts on old Kilmeaden Village Archaeological site.

Table 4. Discussion of Potential Impacts

Will a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed works ?	The proposed route link is approximately 2km long and 4m wide.
Will a large population be impacted as a result of the proposed works ?	The route will connect Kilmeaden Village to the Waterford Greenway at WSV Railway facilitating access to the village for Greenway users (200,00 p/a). The population of Kilmeaden Village is approximately 300.
Are any trans-frontier impacts likely to arise	No

from proposed works?	
Is the intensity and complexity of impacts associated with the proposed works considered significant ?	No
Is there a high probability that the impacts will occur ?	No significant impacts anticipated.
What is the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact ?	Construction of route link will be completed in 3-4 months.
Cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects ?	The proposed extension link will complement the amenity offering to walkers and cyclists who use the Waterford Greenway by facilitating access to village services in Kilmeaden.
Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effects ?	No significant impacts anticipated. Potential impacts on archaeology can be appraised through preparation of an Archaeological Impact Assessment and liaison with National Monuments Service.

3..Conclusion

The DoEHLG Guidance Document “Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development” notes that *“The greater the number of different aspects of the environment which are likely to be affected and the greater the links between the effects, the more likely it is that an EIS should be carried out. Where complexity of impacts is deemed to apply in the case of a specific sub-threshold development proposal, there should be a predisposition towards the preparation of an EIS”*.

In consideration of the above involving appraisal of characteristics and location of proposed development and characteristics of potential impacts it is noted that the key environmental receptor to be affected is Archaeology which can be appraised through preparation of an Archaeological Impact Assessment and liaison with National Monuments Service. As only one environmental receptor has been identified it is concluded that an EIAR is not required for the proposed development.

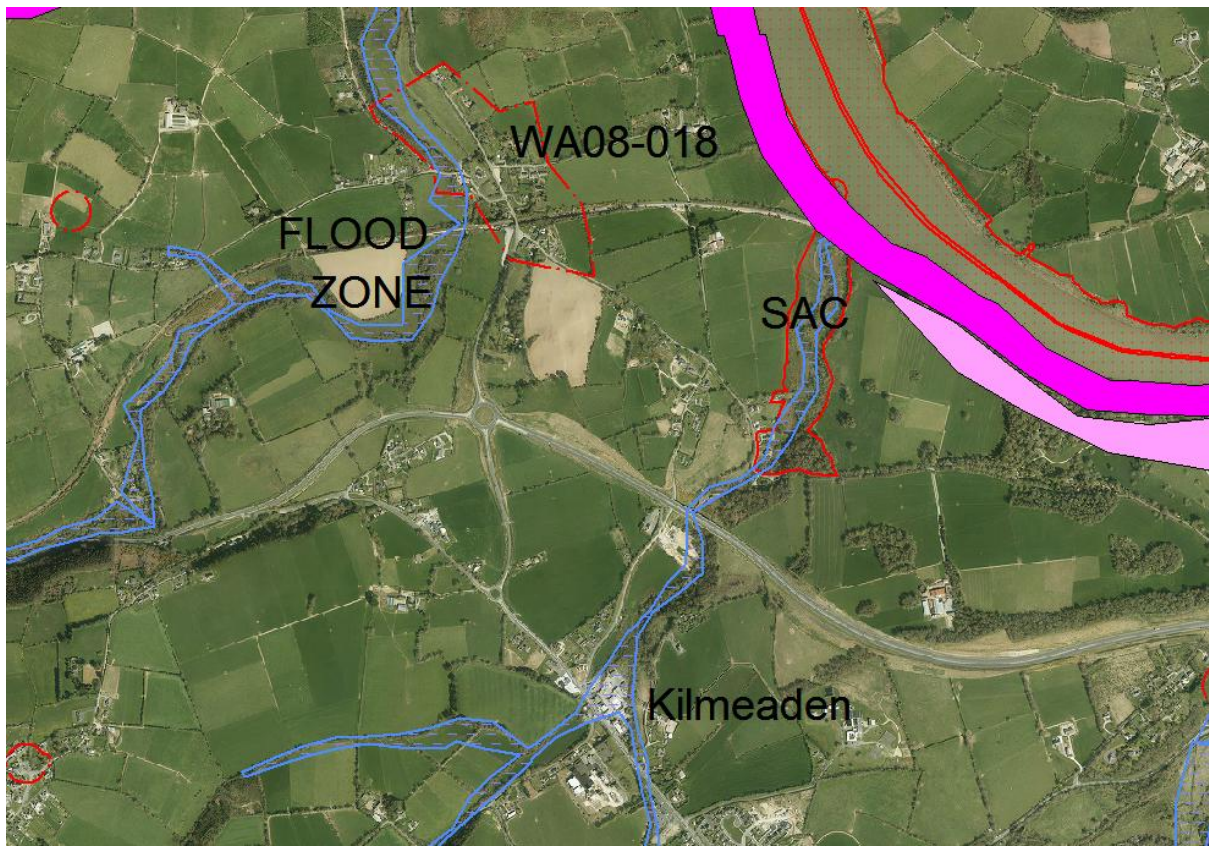


Figure 1. Flood risk zone, SAC and Archaeological Zone.