

SCREENING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Proposed Public Realm Enhancement Scheme, Cloonfad Village,
Co. Roscommon

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*Tait Business Centre,
Dominic Street,
Limerick City, Ireland
(061) 419477*

info@ecofact.ie
www.ecofact.ie



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecofact Environmental Consultants Ltd. have been commissioned to carry out a Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) of the proposed for a proposed public realm enhancement scheme in Cloonfad Village, Co. Roscommon. This Screening determines whether an EIA is required for the project. The proposed public realm enhancement development involves new footways including pedestrian access, pavement and cladding of existing blockwork. The installation of a canopy tree structure, landscaping, resurfacing of carpark including line marking and signage. In addition, ornamental lighting, seating, pedestrian railings and all associated site and ancillary works.

The report has assessed the potential impact of the proposed development on the environment. The proposed development does not fall under any category within Schedule 5 (10) of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001) for Mandatory EIAR. The EIA Screening Assessment has determined that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the proposed development. The proposed development is not considered significant due to the relatively small scale and nature of the development and its footprint in the context of its environment. There are no significant impacts envisaged to arise. The characteristics and sensitivities of the site itself are not considered vulnerable to significant impact from this project which is considered to be compatible with the surrounding and proposed infrastructure. Additionally, it is acknowledged that the potential impacts that may occur can be even further reduced with appropriate, best-practice mitigation measures being implemented in the construction and operational phases of the development.

The proposed scheme involves the provision of new footpaths, pedestrian access points, paved hard surfaces and the cladding of existing blockwork wall with stone. A Tensile Canopy Tree Structure will also be installed. Additional seating will be provided along with additional lighting, pedestrian railings and hanging flower baskets. The existing carpark on the site will be resurfaced. Line marking will also be carried out and additional signage will be installed. Landscaping is also proposed. The site is an existing hardstand area including a road, pavement and carpark. The site itself is of little ecological significance. However, the site is located partially within the Lough Corrib SAC. The River Cloonfad is located adjacent to the proposed development site and works will take place on the road crossing this river. The impacts on this are dealt with in the separate Screening for Appropriate Assessment. There is the potential for some disturbance water quality and invasive species impacts during the construction phase of the proposed development. These impacts will be localised and temporary.

A Screening for Appropriate Assessment was carried out for the proposed development which concluded that a Natura Impact Statement was not required. This is due to the works only involving re-paving of existing paved surfaces and no new paving is proposed. The other works are considered minor and do not trigger a Natura Impact Statement. It is noted that a consultation letter has been sent to the Development Applications Unit regarding the Screening for Appropriate Assessment. Once this consultation has taken place the Screening for AA and EIAR will both be updated.

The Screening for EIAR has determined that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the proposed public realm enhancement works in Cloonfad Village, Co. Roscommon. There are no protected habitats within the footprint of the site. There are no potential pathways for significant effects to arise. Potential minor impacts have been identified in the form of disturbance, invasive species and water quality. However these are minor and will be reduced by following best practice.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Ecofact Environmental Consultants Ltd. have been commissioned to carry out a Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) of the proposed for a proposed public realm enhancement scheme in Cloonfad Village, Co. Roscommon. This Screening determines whether an EIA is required for the project. A Screening for Appropriate Assessment was carried out for the proposed development which concluded that a Natura Impact Statement was not required (Ecofact, 2022).

1.1 Legislation

The EIA Directive, Council Directive 85/337/EEC 1985 on the '*Assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment*' is designated to ensure that projects likely to have a significant effect on the environment are subject to an assessment of environmental effects prior to consent being given. The most recent amendment of this Directive is by Directive 2014/52/EU of 2014. The 2014 EIA Directive was transposed into National law by the *European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018)* and the *European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (No. 2) Regulations 2018*.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (2011/92/EU) as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU aims to determine the likely significant effects of a project on the environment. Schedule 5 (Part 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) outlines development thresholds, and where a development meets or exceeds these thresholds, EIA is required. Where a development is below these thresholds, the development shall be subject to a preliminary examination, and if required, a screening to determine if the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The first step of screening is to determine if the project is a class set out in Schedule 5 (Part 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. If it is, then the project must be subject to a mandatory EIA. If not, the development may still have a significant effect on the environment and thus must be screened for a sub-threshold development, as per criteria set out in Annex III of the Directive.

The current EIAR screening report follows this guidance as relevant:

- European Commission (2017a) *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening*
- European Commission (2017b) *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report*
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2018) *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*
- EPA (2017) *Draft Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR)*
- European Commission (2001) *Guidance on EIA Screening*.



3. SCREENING

3.1 Mandatory Thresholds

Site Location	Cloonfad Village, Co. Roscommon
Proposed Development	New footways including pedestrian access, pavement and cladding of existing blockwork. Canopy tree structure, landscaping, resurfacing of carpark including line marking and signage, lighting, seating, pedestrian railings and all associated site and ancillary works
Does the Proposed Development meet or exceed the thresholds for Mandatory EIA as set out in Schedule 5 (Part 1 and 2) of the Regulations? (Yes/No)	No
If Yes – The development requires EIA No Sub-threshold Screening Required	
If No – The development is a 'sub-threshold' development which must be screened for potential significant effects on the environment	
Conclusion	
Is the class of development listed in Part 1 or Part 2, but does not have a threshold listed? (Yes/No)	No
If Yes – The development requires a Sub-threshold Screening	
If No – The development is not listed in part 1 or Part 2 and no thresholds have been set. Therefore no screening is required unless requested by the CA.	

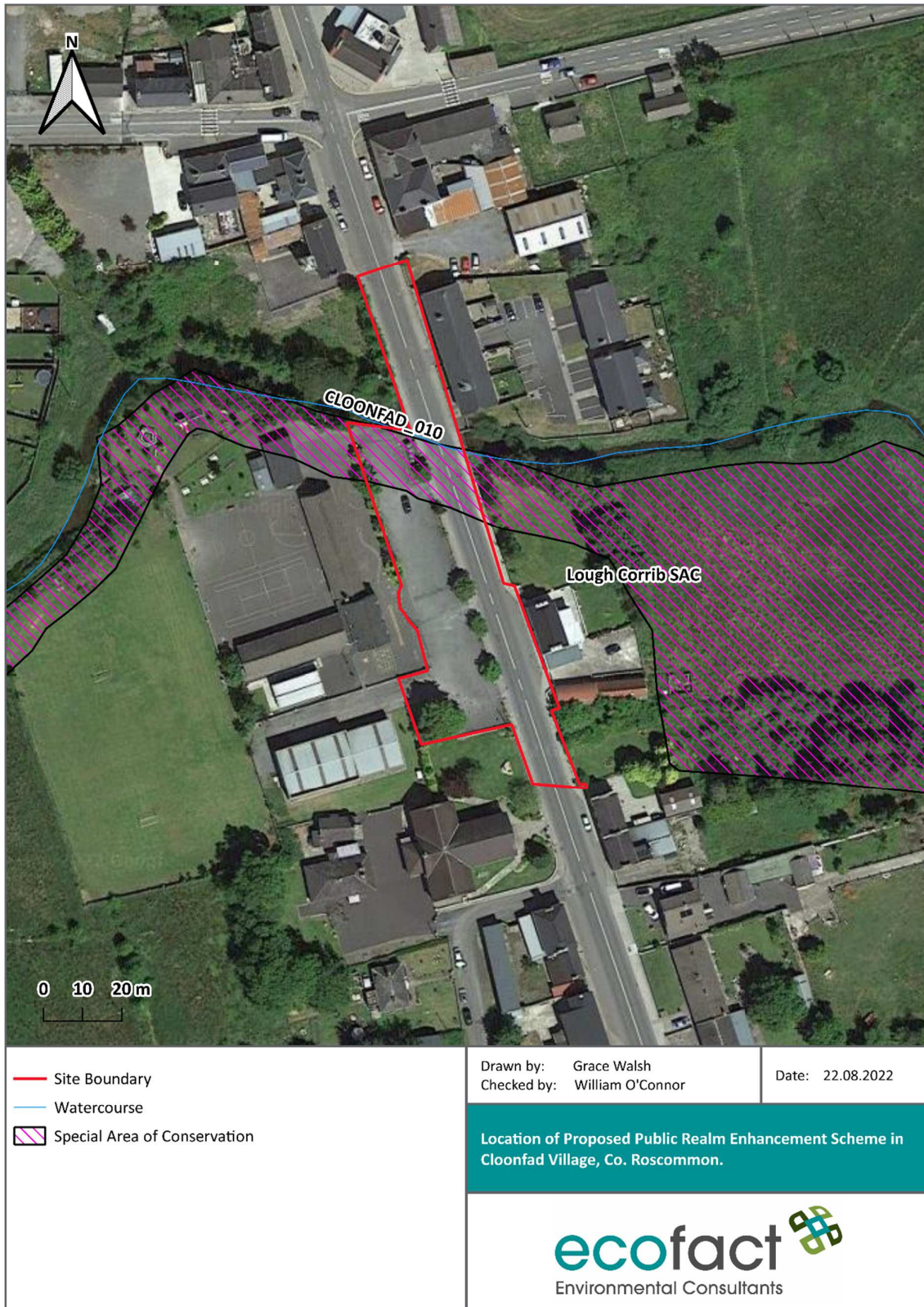


Figure 1 Location of Proposed Public Realm Enhancement Scheme in Cloonfad Village, Co. Roscommon.



3.2 Sub-threshold Development

As the development does not meet or exceed thresholds for mandatory EIA, a sub-threshold screening will be carried out. To determine whether the project will be subject to EIA, the following screening will be completed based on Criteria in Schedule 7 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001*. The development will be screened for potential significant effects on the environment. According to the Directive "The screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment". A significant effect is "an effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment" (EPA, 2017). This will be carried out utilising an adaptation of the Screening Checklist in European Commission guidance (2017). These criteria are as follows:

- Characteristics of the Proposed Development
- Location of the Proposed Development and
- Characteristics of Potential Impacts.

Table 1 Screening for sub-threshold EIAR for the proposed public realm enhancement scheme, Cloonfad, Co. Roscommon.

Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold development – Screening Questions	Yes / No	Screening	Residual Issues
Characteristics of Proposed Development			
Is the scale of the project considered to be significant?	No	The proposed development site is c. 0.003km ² (0.3ha) in size. This is not a large-scale development and it is taking place in an already built up area within Cloonfad Village. The proposed development site is located within Lough Corrib SAC. However due to the scale of the works and existing environment the sensitivity is considered medium. The magnitude of the impacts are moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered moderate also.	Some moderate and temporary impacts during construction and slight permanent impacts during the operational phase – No significant negative impacts.
Is the scale of the project considered to be significant when considered cumulatively with other existing and / or proposed developments?	No	When compared with other developments in the area the proposed development is not considered significant. There are no proposed developments currently in the surrounding area. When considered cumulatively with other developments it is not considered significant.	Slight effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.
Will the project utilise a significant quantity of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water or biodiversity?	No	Energy, including electricity and fuels, will be required during the construction phase. The construction process will include the use of various raw materials. No out of the ordinary use of	Some slight adverse impacts during construction



		natural resources is likely during the construction process. There will also be no out of the ordinary use of these resources expected during the operational phase. The site is currently a hardstand area with low biodiversity. Ornamental lighting is proposed but this is unlikely to impact on bats and any other nocturnal wildlife if operational at night. This lighting is described as ornamental and will be minor. Impacts on the Lough Corrib SAC are covered in the Screening for Appropriate Assessment report for the development which concluded that there was no potential for significant impacts (Ecofact, 2022). The use of the proposed area of land is not considered to have a significant impact in terms of direct loss of biodiversity. In addition, landscaping is included in the proposal.	and operational phase – No significant negative impacts.
Will the project produce a significant quantity of waste?	No	Some waste will be generated but this amount is unlikely to be significant due to the small size of the project. Waste is likely to comprise debris from vegetation removal, hardstand material and some spoil.	None
Will the project produce a significant amount of pollution or nuisance?	No	Typical nuisance impacts can be expected from the construction phase, relating to the production of dust, noise and vibrations, invasive species, water quality and potential increase in construction traffic in the locality of the proposed development site. Due to the size of the project these impacts are considered minor.	Slight effects of construction - No significant negative impacts
Does the project have a risk of major accidents, or natural disasters, including those caused by climate change?	No	Strict compliance with building regulations and environmental controls is expected to be exercised as standard. No major accidents are foreseen.	None
Will the project present a risk to human health?	No	No significant risks to human health are expected. Some noise, dust or pollution may arise during construction but this is likely to be minor.	None
Is any combination of the above factors likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	No	Given the small scale of the proposed project no combination of the above factors is expected to give rise to any significant effects on the environment. Best practise will also be followed as standard.	None



		A Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been completed which identified no potential for cumulative impacts on the Natura 2000 network (Ecofact, 2022)	
Location of Proposed Development			
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any designated site (SAC, SPA, pNHA, NHA)?	No	A Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been completed which stated that due to the minor scale of the project and the existing hardstand natura of the site there is no potential for significant impacts on the Natura 2000 Network (Ecofact, 2022).	
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any habitats listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive?	No	There are no protected habitats at the site of the proposed development and no significant impacts are likely to arise. This is detailed also in the Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Ecofact, 2022).	None
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive?	No	<p>Otter, White-clawed Crayfish, Sea and Brook Lamprey and Salmon may occur in the River Cloonfad adjacent to the site. These are covered in the Screening for Appropriate Assessment and there is no potential for impacts (Ecofact, 2022).</p> <p>There are three Annex II species which have been recorded in the 2km grid square M75A. These are White-clawed Crayfish, Marsh Fritillary and European Otter. White-clawed Crayfish and Otter are covered in the Screening for AA (Ecofact, 2022). There is no Marsh Fritillary habitat at the site.</p> <p>No significant impacts are likely to arise.</p>	See Screening for AA (Ecofact, 2022).
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any species listed on Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive?	No	It is not considered likely that bat species will be affected by the minor ornamental lighting proposed. This is already a built-up area and the lightning proposed is minor.	Minor impacts during construction and operational phases
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive?	No	Birds listed under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive are unlikely to occur at the site. None have been recorded in the 2km grid square M75A where the proposed development site is located.	None



Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	No	Records of species under the Wildlife Act include several bird species, White-clawed Crayfish, Common Lizard, Badger and Otter. Due to the small scale of the project, location and nature of the existing site, impacts are unlikely to be significant. Minor impacts such as disturbance may arise locally however.	Potential minor disturbance impacts
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on the existing or approved land use?	No	The existing landuse will remain largely the same. There is an existing footpath, road and carpark here. Landscaping will be added, with seating and a covered area. this will be a very minor and non-significant change in landuse.	None
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on the relative abundance, availability, quality or regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground?	No	Energy, including electricity and fuels, will be required during the construction phase. The construction process will include the use of various raw materials. No out of the ordinary use of natural resources is likely during the construction process. The site is not considered to be of any importance in terms of biodiversity. The site is currently a hardstand area and is not considered to be of ecological importance. Some moderate impacts on local biodiversity relating to temporary disturbance in the immediate vicinity during works will result from the proposed development, but no significant impacts in terms of biodiversity is envisaged. This is considered a suitable land resource for the proposed development. The future use of the site, which is very similar to the current is considered suitable for the site location and compatible with the surrounding infrastructure.	Moderate effects of construction – No significant negative impacts.
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on any protected structures or recorded monuments or places or archaeological interest?	No	There is a Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) from 65m south southeast of the proposed development site. There are no national historic monuments or features of special architectural interest within the proposed site or in the immediate vicinity and no impacts on such are expected.	None
Does the project have the potential to significantly impact on listed or scenic views or protected landscapes as outlined in the County Development Plan?	No	The proposed development site is not located within any scenic views or protected landscapes as outlined in the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028.	None



Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
Could a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the project?	No	The proposed development site is c. 0.003km ² in size and very small in scale.	None
Could a large population of people be affected as a result of the project?	No	The proposed development is minor and is unlikely to affect any large population of people.	None
Are any transboundary impacts likely to arise as a result of the project?	No	No potential pathways for transboundary effects. Construction and operational phase impacts are considered to be very localised. There is some potential for impacts to reach the River Cloonfad but this is unlikely and are not considered significant in the context of Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Ecofact, 2022) or EIAR. Best practice mitigation will be carried out regarding local wildlife to reduce impacts.	Moderate effects – no significant impacts.
Would the magnitude of impacts associated with the project be considered significant?	No	The magnitude of such projects is not considered significant. The project is small scale. There is no significant change in land use and the proposed development is considered compatible with the wider environment. Impacts regarding the magnitude of the development are not considered to be significant.	None
Would potential impacts on the environment be considered complex?	No	The proposed development is not considered overly complex and will be typical of project of this scale and character. Regarding complexity it is not considered that there is the potential for significant impacts.	None
Is there a high probability that the effects will occur?	No	No significant impacts are envisaged. There is some potential for minor impacts. It is likely that some level of construction impacts will occur in relation to nuisance impacts. There will be some increases in noise, traffic, domestic waste, potential pollutant run-off / leaching etc. The impacts that will occur are not considered significant and will be easily absorbed in the context of the existing environment.	Some minor impacts – no significant impacts
Will the effects last for a long time?	Yes	Any minor impacts during construction will be short-term due to the size of the project. However, no significant impacts are envisaged.	None
Will the effects be permanent?	Yes	Some minor impacts will be permanent. However, there will be no significant loss of habitat and this project is small in scale.	None



Will the impacts be reversible?	Yes	Given the small scale of the proposal and low ecological value of the site the impacts are considered reversible.	None
Will there be significant cumulative impacts with other existing and approved projects?	No	No significant cumulative impacts are expected.	None
Will it be difficult to reduce the impacts?	No	No – standard best practise mitigation will reduce any minor impacts to imperceptible.	None



4. CONCLUSION

This report has been prepared to allow the Competent Authority (CA) to prepare an EIAR Screening Conclusion Statement. The report has assessed the potential impact of the proposed development on the environment. The proposed development does not meet or exceed any of the thresholds set out in Schedule 5 (10) (Part 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001) for Mandatory EIAR. Therefore, a sub-threshold screening was carried out for the proposed development to determine if any significant impacts on the environment are likely, and if so, whether an EIA is required.

The lighting proposed is minor and will not result in light spill onto the River Cloonfad. The ornamental lighting proposed follows recommendations in Bat Conservation Ireland's *Bats & Lighting: Guidance Notes for Planners, Engineers, Architects and Developers* (2010).

The Screening for EIAR has determined that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the proposed public realm enhancement works in Cloonfad Village, Co. Roscommon. There are no protected habitats within the footprint of the site. There are no potential pathways for significant effects to arise. Potential minor impacts have been identified in the form of disturbance and invasive species. Due to this, some recommended specialist reports should be prepared in advance.



REFERENCES

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment. https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/guidelines_for_planning_authorities_and_an_bord_pleanala_on_carrying_out_eia_-_august_2018.pdf

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European Commission (2001) Guidance on EIA Screening. <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/eia-guidelines/g-screening-full-text.pdf>

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