

Cootehall Park

EIA Screening Report

February 2024

Project number: 2024s0145

Roscommon County Council

Draft

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Contract

This report describes work commissioned by Roscommon County Council, by an email dated 29/01/2024. Justin Nangle and Conor O'Neill of JBA Consulting carried out this work.

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Purpose

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose of this Report	1
2	Description of Proposed Works	2
2.1	Site Location	2
2.2	Proposed Development.....	2
3	Purpose of Screening	3
3.1	Legislative Context for EIAR in Ireland.....	3
3.2	The Planning and Development Act 2000 - Mandatory EIAR	3
3.3	Sub-threshold EIAR	4
4	Overview of Environmental Impacts	5
4.1	Population and Human Health	5
4.2	Biodiversity.....	5
4.3	Soils and Geology	5
4.4	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	6
4.5	Cultural Heritage	6
4.6	Air and Climate.....	7
4.7	Noise and Vibration.....	7
4.8	Landscape and Visual.....	7
4.9	Material Assets including Traffic, Utilities, and Waste	7
4.10	Cumulative Impacts.....	7
5	Screening Assessment	9
5.1	Characteristics of the Proposed Development	9
5.2	Location of the Proposed Development	11
5.3	Characteristics of Potential Impacts	13
6	Conclusions and Recommendations	15

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Site Location 2

List of Tables

Table 5.1: Characteristics of the proposed development 9

Table 5.2: Location of the proposed development 11

Table 5.3: Characteristics of potential impacts 13

Abbreviations

- AA - Appropriate Assessment
- CEMP - Construction Environmental Management Plan
- RCC - Roscommon County Council
- EIAR - Environmental Impact Assessment Report
- LAP - Local Area Plan
- NIAH - National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
- NMS - National Monuments Service
- SFRA - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- WFD - Water Framework Directive

1 Introduction

JBA Consulting Engineers and Scientists Ltd. (hereafter JBA) has been commissioned by Roscommon County Council to prepare an EIA Screening Report for proposed works to be implemented at Cootehall Park, Cootehall, County Roscommon (the 'proposed development'). The proposed development, which will be submitted under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Act (2000) as amended, will upgrades and landscaping works at Cootehall Park.

1.1 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to identify whether there is a need under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for an EIAR for the proposed development.

Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Act lists the groups of development projects which are subject to EIA screening under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. Part 1 lists those projects which are automatically subject to an EIAR due to the scale and nature of the project. Part 2 lists projects which are also likely to have significant environmental effects based on the nature and size of the development set out by threshold criteria.

An additional group of projects, which are considered sub-threshold developments under Part 2, may fall below the thresholds set but may, under further analysis, be deemed to have significant effects due to their location within a catchment, size, or proximity to sensitive areas.

This report documents the methodology employed to determine whether the proposed development falls under any of these groups, and therefore will have significant environmental impacts. Rationale has been given for the decision made in reference to the relevant legislation, and additional documents have been referenced where required.

This report is intended for the project as described below. Any significant changes to the project description or location would require preparation of a new EIA screening report.

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been prepared by JBA Consulting and has identified any potential impacts to Natura 2000 sites. This EIA Screening document, along with the AA Screening Report, will be submitted as part of the Part 8 planning process for the proposed development.

2 Description of Proposed Works

2.1 Site Location

The site is located in the centre of Cootehall village, off the L1015 Cootehall Road, located between Boyle and Carrick-on-Shannon, and adjacent to Oakport Lough. The proposed site is situated on the bank of the Boyle River.

The site consists of a carpark, playground with a grassed area, and a path running around the park. The site is adjacent to residential areas to the east, the Boyle River to the west, and a small museum to the north.



Figure 2.1: Site Location

2.2 Proposed Development

The project consists of:

- Provision of outdoor gazebo/canopy structure,
- Hard and soft landscaping,
- Upgrade works to existing macadam footpath,
- Additional parking spaces to existing carpark,
- Extension to existing playground,
- 1 v 1 basketball area,
- Associated site & ancillary works.

New drainage is not required in the scope of the works to be carried out, and surface water will runoff to existing free-draining grassed sections of the park.

3 Purpose of Screening

3.1 Legislative Context for EIAR in Ireland

The EU has set out mandatory requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). The Directive identifies certain project types, described under Annex I, that will always have significant environmental effects due to their nature and size. These projects are required to undergo an EIAR in every Member State.

For projects listed under Annex II, the EIA Directive gives Member States discretion to decide the limits of projects requiring an EIAR. In Ireland, mandatory thresholds have been set for projects that would otherwise fall under Annex II, which are described in Schedule 5 of The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. These thresholds are based on project characteristics including size and location. Projects within these thresholds are always subject to an EIAR. In some circumstances, projects considered below the thresholds set under Schedule 5 Part 2 may still be considered by the Planning Authority to have significant effects on the environment, such as in cases where the projects are in a location of particular environmental sensitivity and may also be subject to an EIAR. These sub-threshold projects are reviewed by the Planning Authority on a case-by-case basis.

The principal piece of legislation under which an EIAR may be undertaken for various developments is The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Further regulations are explained in The Planning and Development (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2001-2018.

Legislation is examined below as to whether an EIAR will be required for this project.

3.2 The Planning and Development Act 2000 - Mandatory EIAR

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Section 172 sets out the types of projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR):

An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for proposed development where either:

a. the proposed development would be of a class specified in

- i. Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either-
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or
 - II. No quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or
- ii. Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either-
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or
 - II. No quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or

b.

- i. the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and
- ii. The planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

3.2.1 Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended

Projects which fall under Schedule 5, Part 1 are typically large infrastructure and energy projects and by their nature will always have significant environmental effects. The proposed development does not fall under Schedule 5, Part 1.

3.2.2 Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended

With regards to Part 2 projects, the categories and thresholds were examined for the following category:

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 proposed development does not fall under any of the categories above, nor any others in Schedule 5 of the Regulations. Therefore, an EIAR has not been automatically triggered for this proposed development.

However, it is necessary to consider if this development could result in significant environmental effects under the category of sub-threshold developments.

3.3 Sub-threshold EIAR

In accordance with the requirement to submit an EIAR with sub-threshold planning application (Article 103 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018), where a planning application for sub-threshold development is not accompanied by an EIAR, and the Planning Authority considers that the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall, by notice in writing, require the applicant to submit an EIAR. This process therefore occurs after submission of an application, if that application is not accompanied by an EIAR.

The decision as to whether a development is likely to have ‘significant effects’ on the environment must be taken with reference to the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018. Schedule 7A requires that the following information be provided for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIAR:

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—
 - a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
 - b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—
 - a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
 - b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
 - c) The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018 (DHPLG 2018).

In order to assist planning and other consenting authorities in deciding if significant effects on the environment are likely to arise in the case of development below the national mandatory EIAR thresholds, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published a Guidance document in August 2003, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development and the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (DHPLG 2018b)

The criteria, as transposed in Irish legislation, are grouped under three headings:

- i. Characteristics of Proposed Development
- ii. Location of Proposed Development
- iii. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

For the purposes of assessing if the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment in reference to these three parameters, the project is examined below in further detail.

4 Overview of Environmental Impacts

An overview of the potential environmental impacts of the development, according to theme presented in an EIAR, is provided below.

4.1 Population and Human Health

Once operational, the development will provide a positive impact to population and human health, by providing an attractive recreation facility. The proposed development will provide hard and soft landscaping, extensions and upgrades to the playground and macadam footpath, including an outdoor gazebo/canopy structure thereby providing quality amenity space for residents.

During construction, there is a risk to the health and safety of workers on the development, as with any construction project. This will be mitigated against by the operational plans devised by the contractor and will not be significant.

Residences in the vicinity of the proposed development will experience some negative impacts during the construction phase of the development. These will be slight and temporary, and will be mitigated against by the operational plans devised by the contractor and adherence to standard best practice regarding control of noise and vibration, dust, and limitations on working hours.

4.2 Biodiversity

Ecological receptors that must be examined include protected Natura 2000 sites under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), as well as species protected under the Wildlife Act (1976), and any ecological receptors which may be negatively impacted by the proposed development, both directly and indirectly.

4.2.1 Proximity to Protected Sites

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been completed by JBA Consulting for this project to determine whether there is a potential for impacts on nearby Natura 2000 sites.

Within the Zol, there are no Natura 2000 sites with potential pathways from the project site.

The AA Screening determined that there are no likely significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the proposed development.

4.2.2 Other Ecological Receptors

The site currently contains stone walls and other stonework, buildings and artificial surfaces, scattered trees and parkland, hedgerows and ornamental/non-native shrubs. A site visit was carried out which confirmed no protected or vulnerable species were found on site. There will be no trees removed from the proposed development with additional planting of Birch, Alder, Sweetgum, Hornbeam tree and shrub species. Slight impacts to on-site ecology are likely during construction due to disturbance, however these will be temporary.

Lough Drumharlow proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) is immediately downstream from the Coothall Bridge. Impacts are not likely on the pNHA due to the nature of the proposed works. In addition, the contractor will adhere to best practice guidance and will put in place measures to ensure that no impact occurs on the Boyle River, which are outlined in Section 4.4.1 below. These will further help to ensure no negative impacts result on the pNHA.

4.3 Soils and Geology

The underlying bedrock of the site is composed of pale grey massive limestone formation.

The subsoils underlying the site are primarily Karstified limestone bedrock at surface, with Sandstone till (Devonian) along the eastern edge of the site.

Deep excavations are not expected, with most of the development above ground. Limited shallow excavations will be required for laying of foundations to a depth of approximately 350mm. Excavated material will be reused as fill where appropriate. Material not required for fill will be exported from the site and disposed of at appropriate licensed facilities. The expected amount of material to be excavated is not significant.

4.4 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

4.4.1 Surface Water

The Boyle River lies 4m west of the site boundary. The WFD waterbody is classed as 'poor' status and 'at risk.' The site lies within the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Upper Shannon catchment and Boyle_SC_020 sub-catchment, and BOYLE_040 river sub-basin (WFD waterbody).

The Boyle_SC_030 sub-catchment and BOYLE_050 river sub-basin are immediately downstream from the site. The BOYLE_050 is at good status, and its risk status is under review. Lough Eidin is approx. 1.8km downstream of Cootehall Bridge, and is poor status and under review.

During construction, impacts on surface waterbodies could occur due to accidental spills or poor management of surface water runoff. This is considered unlikely due to the nature of the proposed works, lack of deep excavations, and position of the site in the existing park. In addition to this, mitigation measures can be put in place by the appointed contractor which will further reduce potential for impacts. These will include the following:

- General construction stage mitigation, such as the preparation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), adherence to best practice environmental guidance, and preparation of construction method statements to be submitted to Roscommon County Council prior to site works commencing;
- Measures pertaining to the location and setup of the site compound. The site compound is to be situated in the existing car park at the eastern edge of the site. All potentially polluting materials and chemicals will be stored in the compound in sealed bunded containers;
- Water quality measures for the prevention of watercourse pollution, spill prevention, and safe concrete management. A silt fence may also be set up on the western side of the site, along the boundary closest to the Boyle River.

4.4.2 Groundwater

The site is underlain by the Carrick on Shannon (IE_SH_G_048) groundwater body, which is at Good status and not at Risk.

Groundwater vulnerability, a measure of the likelihood of groundwater contamination occurring, is High to Extreme to Karst or Rock at surface across the site. The site is therefore at a high risk of groundwater contamination.

There are no Groundwater Zone of Contribution sites listed by the EPA nor Public Supply Source Protection Areas listed by the GSI within 2km of the development site, nor any drinking water sites with groundwater abstraction on the EPA Groundwater Abstractions Register. The closest site is a Source Protection Area for Boyle-Rockingham Public Water Supply, approximately 3.3km away at the closest point, the abstraction location is at Boyle Quarry 6.2km away.

The risk of groundwater contamination will only be present during the construction phase of the development, and with limited shallow excavations as outlined in Section 4.3, the potential impact is not significant; once operational, the development is unlikely to result in groundwater impacts.

4.4.3 Flood Risk

Part of the site is at risk of fluvial flooding, given its proximity to the Boyle River. However, most of the site is in Flood Zone C, with only a small portion of its western edge in Flood Zone B. The proposal is not a vulnerable type of development and the risk of flooding is not significant.

4.5 Cultural Heritage

The Cootehall Bridge is a National Inventory of Archaeology Heritage site (NIAH) (Reg No: 31907002), a recorded archaeological site within the National Monuments Service (NMS No: RO007-017), and a Protected Structure (RPS No: 00700543).

Additionally, immediately northeast there is a second NIAH site (Reg No: 31907001), a pedimented triple-arch stone entrance gate, erected c.1780, affording access to Cootehall House. The entrance arch is also on the RPS (No: 00700181).

Direct impacts are not expected to either structure. Indirect visual impacts are likely during construction, however these will be temporary and not significant. The Zone of Notification for the

Cootehall Bridge is partially within the site boundary. Notification will therefore need to be given to the National Monuments Service prior to development taking place, the Bridge is approximately 30m from the site.

4.6 Air and Climate

There is potential for slight impacts to air quality through emissions during the construction phase of the development, due to the operation of machinery on site and transport of materials to and from the site. These impacts will be mitigated against with measures outlined in the contractor's operating plans.

4.7 Noise and Vibration

There is potential for localised slight noise and vibration impacts in the vicinity of the proposed development during the construction phase due to operation of machinery on site. These impacts would be temporary and only during the construction phase. Mitigation measures against such impacts will be outlined in the operating plans to be devised by the contractor.

The proposed development will not lead to any significant noise or vibration impacts during operational period.

4.8 Landscape and Visual

The proposed development will give rise to temporary landscape or visual impacts to residents living in proximity to the development during the construction phase. Impacts during construction will be temporary and not significant.

There are no protected views in proximity to the site.

When constructed, the proposed development will be low in landscape and visual impact for surrounding visual receptors. Additional tree planting is included in the proposed layout, which will enhance the landscape and visual amenity of the park once operational.

4.9 Material Assets including Traffic, Utilities, and Waste

4.9.1 Traffic

During construction, there will be temporary disruptions on local roads during deliveries or due to machinery operating. The proposed development is not likely to have a significant impact on traffic. Alternative routes are available in the area, and it is expected that such disruptions will be temporary and limited, with construction lasting for approximately 3 months.

The site is served by an existing 10 space car park which will increase to 14 on operation and is free to use.

4.9.2 Utilities

Depth for excavation works for the park will be no more than 350mm. Impacts to utilities are not anticipated due to the nature of works and lack of deep excavations needed for the proposed development.

4.9.3 Waste

Waste generated from site clearance will be inert and/or organic material and is expected to be redistributed or re-used within the site extents. Significant amounts of construction waste are not anticipated.

Once operational, the proposed development will not generate waste.

4.10 Cumulative Impacts

4.10.1 Plans

Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028

The proposed development is in line with Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028. The development supports the following objectives:

- Policy Objective SCCD 11.3: Maximise opportunities for play facilities for children both within the natural and built environment, by working in collaboration with local communities and local development Committees.
- 7 Policy Objective SCCD 11.6: Support the provision of facilities for in the county including sports and recreation facilities, youth clubs and supervised places.

This project supports these objectives through enhancement and extension to the existing playground and upgrade works to existing footpath.

4.10.2 Projects

Recent developments or planning applications in the vicinity can have a cumulative impact with the proposed development. Larger development planning applications in the near vicinity from the last three years that have been granted permission were searched for. Applications for home extensions, internal alterations and retention are not considered.

Planning Application Reference	23201
Development address	Cootehall, Boyle, Co. Roscommon
Description: the development that consists of: Permission for development consisting of the construction of two number two storey four bedroom dwelling houses with connections to public utilities, provision of new vehicle access into each site from the public road and ancillary site works.	
Final Decision on Application	Grant permission
Decision Date	31/5/2023

The potential for cumulative impact of the plans and projects identified above are assessed in the Screening section below in combination with the currently proposed project.

5 Screening Assessment

5.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

To determine whether the characteristics of the proposed development are likely to have significant impacts on the environment, the following questions are answered in Table 5.1, following guidelines set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN02, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (OPR, June 2021).

Table 5.1: Characteristics of the proposed development

Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Screening Questions	Comment
Could the scale (size or design) of the proposed development be considered significant (including any demolition works)?	The proposed development is contained to the existing park boundaries. The height of the gazebo/canopy will be similar to the level of the adjacent John McGahern Barracks, and will not constrain views of the building and the surrounding countryside. The development will use an existing access road at Cuilmore Cove. No demolition is required.
Considered cumulatively with other adjacent existing or permitted projects, could the effects of the proposed development be considered significant?	The existing car park will be used as the site compound during construction and will remain in use in the operational phase. There is one proposed development close to the site, approx. 50m away on Oakport Road. The size of the proposed development and the nearby development are such that cumulative impacts are not likely to occur.
Will the proposed development utilise a significant quantity of natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	In terms of land area, the proposed development is small, with much of the area already in use as a car park and a playground, the remainder is used as recreational parkland. Excavated material will be reused as fill where appropriate, and the overall amount to be excavated is small. No water is required for the development and no vegetation is to be removed. Therefore, there will not be a significant quantity of natural resources used.
Will the proposed development produce a significant quantity of waste?	No. Significant excavations are not required. Debris or rubbish generated during construction will be disposed of at appropriately licenced agents.
Will the proposed development create a significant amount or type of pollution?	No. Temporary air and noise pollution may occur during the construction phase, but the amount will not be significant and will be mitigated against by operational plans devised by the contractor.
Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance?	No. During construction, some noise and vibration will be created, however this will be temporary and short-term. Construction works will be limited to certain times of day. Once operational, the proposed development will be used by people for recreation activities. There will be 4 no. additional parking spaces to the carpark. However, it is not anticipated that the new facility will result in a significant uplift in visitor numbers.

Will there be a risk of major accidents having regard to substances or technologies used?	<p>No. The risks of this development will be those typically associated with normal construction practices.</p> <p>Construction machinery will be used during the construction phase and will be operated by licensed contractors, and following best practice guidance.</p>
Will there be a risk of natural disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?	<p>No. Part of the western edge of the proposed development is in Flood Zone B, with the majority of the site in Flood Zone C. The proposed development is not vulnerable to flooding given its use and proposed features.</p>
Will there be a risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)?	<p>No. Any potential risk to human health will be as a result of the construction phase of this project. All contractors will be subject to best practice methodologies and risk assessments in order to minimize any risk to human health.</p>
Would any combination of the above factors be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment?	<p>No. The development is relatively small scale. The environmental impacts are predictable and easily mitigated through the use of best practice guidelines during the construction phase. As such, significant impacts on the environment are not expected as a result of the proposed development.</p>

Conclusion: The characteristics of the proposed development are not considered likely to result in a significant impact on the environment by virtue of its size, nature or operational activities.

Reasoning: The proposed development is relatively small in extent, and will use a small grassy area to construct a covered space, playpark and carpark extension. Any environmental or noise impacts will be during the construction phase and not during operation of the development. Construction will not require significant use of natural resources, nor will it generate significant amounts of waste.

5.2 Location of the Proposed Development

The following questions are answered below in Table 5.2 to determine whether the geographical location of the proposed development can be considered ecologically or environmentally sensitive, following guidelines set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN02, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (OPR, June 2021).

Table 5.2: Location of the proposed development

Location of the Proposed Development - Screening Questions	Comment
<p>Is the proposed development located within, close to, or has it the potential to impact on any site specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European Site (SAC or SPA) - NHA/pNHA - Designated Nature Reserve - Designated refuge for flora or fauna - Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation, protection of which is an objective of a development plan or local area plan. 	<p>No. The AA Screening for the site concluded that there are no Natura 2000 sites likely to be directly or indirectly impacted by the development.</p> <p>The AA Screening for the site concluded that the possibility of any significant effect on any European sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded beyond a reasonable scientific doubt on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available.</p> <p>If any changes occur in the design of these works, a new Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required.</p> <p>One pNHA is downstream of the site, but no impacts are likely to occur given the nature of the proposed works.</p>
<p>Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g., wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies (including riparian areas and river mouths), the coastal zone and the marine environment, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>No. Impacts to other areas are unlikely to occur.</p>
<p>Is the proposal likely to be highly visible to many people? Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location, or are there any routes or facilities that are used by the public for recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the proposal?</p>	<p>No. The proposal will be similar in appearance to the existing park, and will be in keeping with the existing environment. The design is low impact and will not significantly impact views of the surrounding area.</p>
<p>Has the proposed development the potential to significantly impact any locations which contain important, high quality, or scarce resources, e.g., groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, or minerals?</p>	<p>No. The proposed development will not impact the relative abundance, availability, or regenerative capacity of natural resources.</p>
<p>Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any features of historic or cultural importance, including protected structures or Recorded</p>	<p>No. There is one archaeological feature whose Zone of Notification is partially within the site boundary (Cootehall Bridge, RO00611). Notification will be given to the National Monuments Service prior to works commencing, and an archaeologist may be required on site</p>

Monuments and Places of Archaeological Interest?	during works. However, impacts are not likely given the nature of the works and lack of deep excavations.
Is the site located in an area susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, or flooding which could cause the proposal to present environmental problems?	No. Part of the site is at risk of fluvial flooding, given its proximity to the Boyle River. However, most of the site is in Flood Zone C, with only a small portion of its western edge in Flood Zone B. Given the location of the site the proposal is not a vulnerable type of development and the risk of flooding is not significant.
Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, and where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal e.g., the status of water bodies under the Water Framework Directive?	Yes. Boyle_040 river subbasin is at poor status. However, the proposed development will not impact the waterbody.
Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, or occupied by sensitive land uses e.g., hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the proposal?	No. The proposed development is adjacent to the River Boyle on the left and green space across the Coothall Road L1015. Existing land use in the area is primarily low density residential.
Are there any additional considerations that are specific to this location?	No.

Conclusion: The location of the proposed development is not considered likely to result in a significant impact on the environment.

Reasoning: The proposed development is situated adjacent to the River Boyle on amenity land beside an existing car park. There are no Natura 2000 sites or designated ecological sites which will be impacted by the proposed development. The proposed development lies in flood zones B and C, however the land use is considered a water-compatible development and no further flood measures are required.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The following questions were answered in Table 5.3, following guidelines set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN02, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (OPR, June 2021)), to determine whether the environmental impacts of the development can be considered significant.

Table 5.3: Characteristics of potential impacts

Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts - Screening Questions	
If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics and magnitude of the potential impacts under the headings below.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment, with mitigation measures in place if applicable?
Population and Human Health:	
<p>During construction, temporary impacts to public access at Cootehall Park and disruption to the local area with additional construction traffic are likely. These will be slight temporary.</p> <p>Positive impacts are likely in the operational phase, with improved recreational facilities and additional parking spaces available.</p>	No. Construction stage impacts to population and human health are typical of such developments, and easily mitigated against by operational plans put in place by the appointed contractor.
Biodiversity:	
<p>The AA screening found there were no habitats or flora of conservation interest (i.e. qualifying interests (QI)) related to nearby Natura 2000 sites, found on site, nor any pathways to Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>A pNHA site lies immediately downstream, however this will not be negatively affected by the proposed development.</p>	No. Impacts to biodiversity will not be significant. Mature trees and vegetation will remain, with extra trees and shrubs to be planted.
Land and Soil:	
The area of land to be taken for the development is not significant, and it is restricted to the existing park area. Construction will be at or near the surface, with excavation only needed for laying of services.	No. Where possible, excavated material will be used as fill elsewhere in the project. Material not required on site will be exported as a waste to an appropriate facility. The amount is not expected to be significant.
Water:	
<p>During construction, there could be emissions of pollutants or sediment to surface waterbodies. Interactions with groundwater are not expected to be significant.</p> <p>The main potential source of flooding is fluvial, during moderate to low flooding events. The site lies in Flood Zone B and C, with the majority in C.</p>	No. Mitigation measures outlined and summarised in Section 4.4.1 above will ensure that impacts to surface water and groundwater are not significant.

Air and Climate:	
There will be temporary slight impacts to air and climate during construction due to the operation of machinery and transport of materials. Once operational, the impact on air and climate will be neutral.	No. Impacts to air and climate during construction and operation are not considered significant.
Material Assets:	
During construction, impacts to material assets are not expected to occur. Once operational, the development is not expected to create a significant amount of additional visitors. The site is served by a 10 space car park, with 4 additional spaces to be created on operation.	No significant impacts on material assets are likely to occur.
Cultural Heritage:	
The proposed development is within the Zone of Notification of one archaeological feature. However, due to the lack of deep excavations and the location of the site and distance from the Coothall Bridge, direct impacts are not expected.	No. Impacts to cultural heritage are not expected, due to the nature and location of the works.
Landscape and Visual Amenity:	
No protected landscapes or protected views are near the development. The proposed development will not intrude on views of the surrounding countryside once operational. Typical construction stage impacts to visual amenity will occur, but will be temporary.	No. Impacts to landscape and visual amenity during construction will be temporary and partially mitigated by the contractor's operating plans, and will not be significant. Once operational, no impacts to landscape or visual amenity are expected.
Cumulative Effects:	
The RCC CDP 2022-2028 contains objectives to support and improve children's play areas and amenity sites.	No. The proposed development contributes to the objectives of the RCC CDP 2022-2028.
Transboundary Effects:	
Transboundary effects are not expected.	No.

Conclusions: The characteristics of the potential impacts as a result of the proposed development are unlikely to be significant and are easily mitigated.

Reasoning: The potential impacts from this development would be primarily during the construction phase. It is easy to predict these impacts and mitigate them through the use of standard environmental procedures.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this report was to identify whether there is a need under The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for an EIAR for the proposed Cootehall Park development.

It was determined that the proposed development does not fall under Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Act. As such, an EIAR has not been automatically triggered. To determine whether the development may fall under the category of Sub-threshold development, with the potential to give rise to significant environmental effects, a screening exercise was undertaken.

During construction, typical impacts such as noise, dust, traffic disruption, and the generation of small amounts of waste are to be expected. These are typical construction phase impacts, and will be mitigated against by environmental operating plans devised by the on-site contractor, following best practice guidance.

An AA Screening Report completed by JBA for the proposed development determined that no likely significant impacts are expected as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the small size of the development and the distance and lack of pathways to Natura 2000 sites.

Once operational, the proposed development will be low in environmental impact. The proposed development will provide positive impacts with improved recreational facilities and additional parking spaces available. A long-term positive impact will likely result from the proposed development in terms of population and human health.

It has been concluded that the proposed development does not fall under the category of sub-threshold development, and thus an EIAR is not required.

The overall conclusion is based on the details of the scheme available at the time of preparation of this report. If the extent of the scheme or the construction methods for the scheme are changed then the EIA Screening assessment should be reviewed.



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