
Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Bawn Street and Church Street, Strokestown Public Realm Enhancement

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1. Introduction

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening report has been prepared for the proposed Strokestown Public Realm Enhancement Project, Co. Roscommon by BDP. The purpose of this report is to undertake a screening of the proposed development to establish whether or not it requires an EIA and as a result, if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it.

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.

This screening report includes:

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular;
 - a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works.
2. A description of the location of the proposed development;
 - with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
3. The legislative basis for EIA;
4. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development;
5. Screening rationale - including 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;
 - the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
 - the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

Where relevant, items 1 to 5 above take account of the criteria set out in Schedule 7. Schedule 7 sets out the criteria for determining whether 'sub-threshold' developments should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment; and
6. Conclusion.

2. Proposed Development

The Bawn St and Church St Public Realm enhancement project will provide the following opportunities for Strokestown:

- Creation of a reimagined public realm scheme developed for Bawn St and Church St which will provide a visual and physical link to Strokestown Park House recognising the traditional/period character of the house and sympathetic to this in terms of lighting, street furniture, materiality and style.
- Space for events, festivals, markets, and outdoor dining.
- Shared surface arrangements including redesigned formal off-street parking areas, recognising the need for safer vehicular and pedestrian movements.
- Clear and appropriately sited public information and way-finding signage.
- Landscaping and street furniture.
- Upgrading of all associated services and utilities.
- Address the function and form of the existing roundabout, associated crossing points, infrastructure, and signage.
- Creation of a "transition" between the new public realm on Bawn St and the existing Church St area.

2.1. Details of proposal

The proposal aims to enhance the existing streetscape of Bawn St and Church St and its connectivity to Bridge St and Elphin St. The proposals include (Figure 2.3.2):

- Alternation to existing road carriageway widths & roundabout dimensions
- Provision of footpaths, along with shared pedestrian & cycle routes
- Provision of controlled & uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities
- Relocation of Bus Stops Provision from Bridge Street to Church Street
- Alteration to existing parking provision to include the provision of disabled parking spaces.
- Soft Landscaping work to include provision of trees, shrubs & green space through the scheme.
- Provision of street furniture throughout the scheme to include, benches, seating, picnic tables, bollards, cycle stands, etc
- Provision of new road & wayfinding signage, road marking & public lighting
- All other ancillary site works.



Figure 2.3.1. Site Plan



Figure 2.3.2. Proposed plan

3. The location of the proposed development

Strokestown is a small settlement in an agricultural landscape. The town of Strokestown is located at the convergence of a number of regional and local roads – N5 National Primary Route, the R368 regional road and Bawn Street (local road). The main street is Church Street (the N5) which turns into Bawn St at the roundabout, which is the second widest road in Ireland. Bawn St is bound by the Strokestown Park House and Gardens which is a preserved Georgian mansion with landscaped grounds which has become home to The National Famine Museum. The town centre remains the primary residential and retail area in Strokestown along with providing a range of services including a medical centre and school.

The proposed public realm scheme site comprises Bawn St, Church St and the R368 where these roads meet. The site is characterised by hard paved surfaces and surface level car parking with limited ecological value, aside from the street trees which line either side of Bawn St and Church St.

In line with the emerging Town Centre First Plan, the vision for Strokestown is to rejuvenate the town as a unique cultural, tourism and heritage destination through the further development of its physical, economic and social infrastructure.

Within the plan boundary area, the majority of the site comprises of buildings and artificial surfaces with very few trees present in the town. The parkland is outside of the redline boundary. The area within the redline boundary has negligible ecological value as it is so intensively built up.

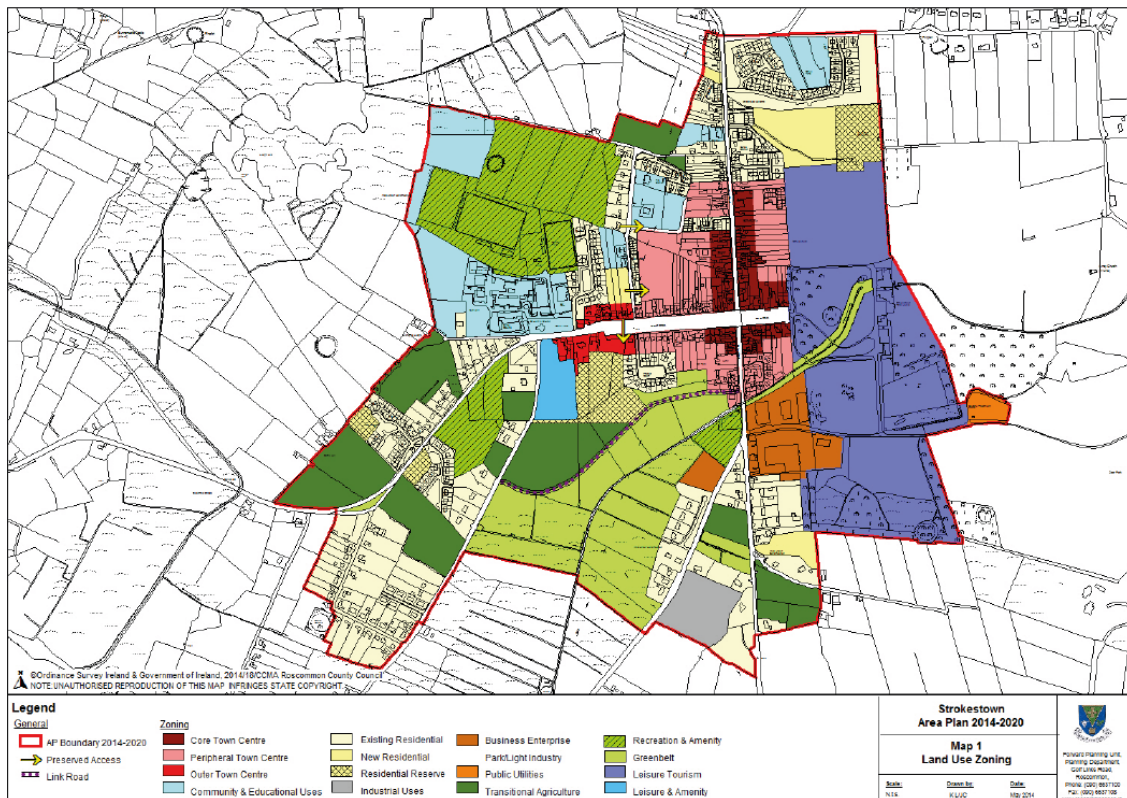


Figure 3.1. Strokestown Land Use Zoning, Strokestown Area Plan (Roscommon Council, 2014)

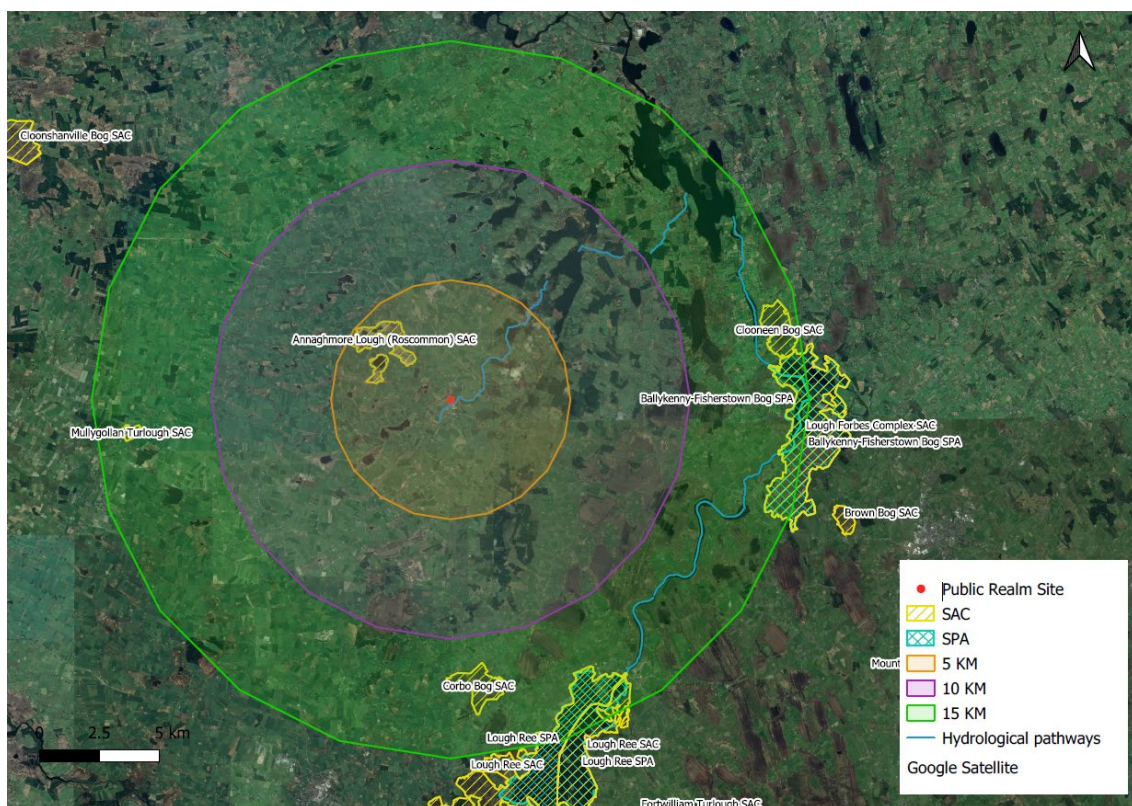


Figure 3.3. European sites within 15km of the proposed public realm scheme

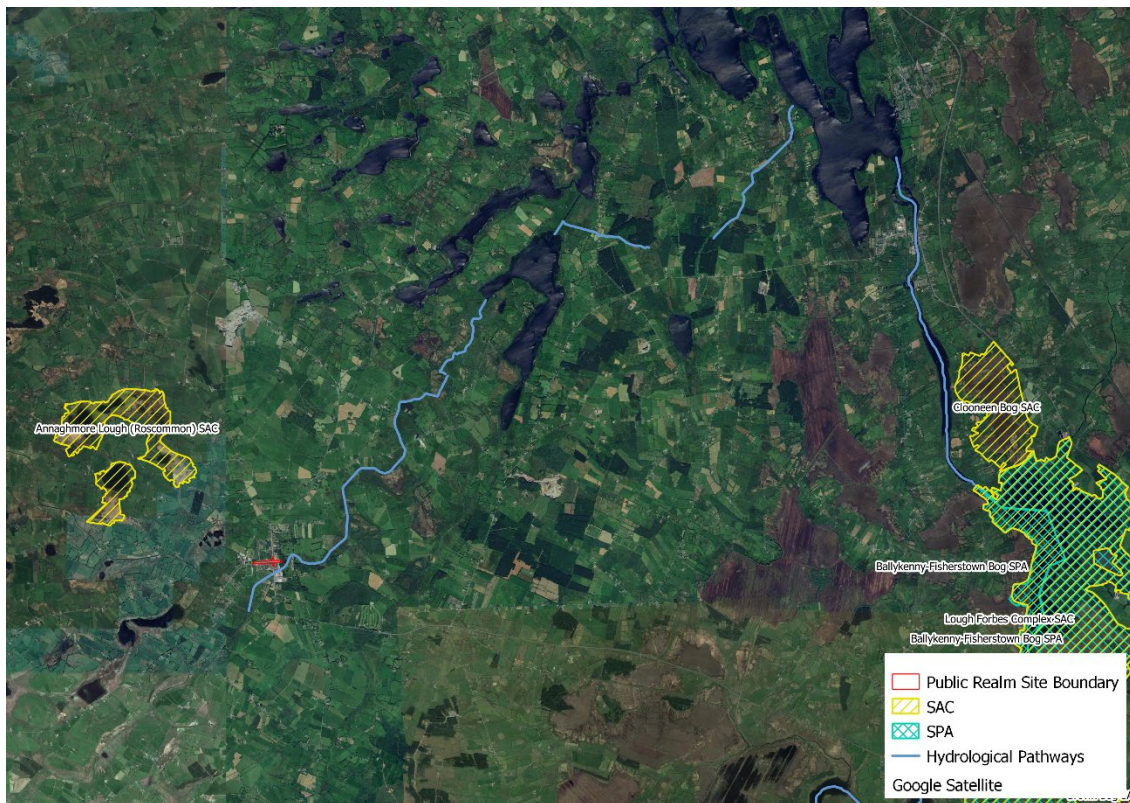


Figure 3.3. Hydrological connectivity to the European sites



Figure 3.3. Hydrological connectivity to the European sites

4. Legislative basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended)). These requirements have been transposed into domestic planning legislation in Part X of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2019 and Part 10 and Schedules 5, 6 and 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended⁶. Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations lists project types included in the Directive which require EIA. Schedule 5 contains two parts. Projects listed in Part 1 are the same as included in Annex I of the Directive and these automatically require EIA. Part 2 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 are termed sub-threshold and must be screened to determine whether they require EIA or not. This is done by consideration of criteria set out in Schedule 7.

5. Aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development

This screening has considered the environmental factors set out in Schedule 6 and the criteria for determining whether a proposed development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment set out in Schedule 7 (see Tables (a) to (h) below). It finds that no aspects of the environment are likely to be significantly affected.

6. Screening rationale

6.1. Class of Development (Schedule 5)

In the first instance it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type (or 'class') that requires an EIAR. The project does not align with any of the descriptions found in Schedule 5. A specific focus was placed on Schedule 5 Part 2 under sub section 7 'infrastructure projects' due to the nature of the proposed works.

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

10. Infrastructure projects

(b) (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 (IO)(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.*

In relation to the other elements of the project there are no direct project comparisons present in schedule 5. Given that the project in its entirety does not correspond to any prescribed project type, and is sub threshold where the corresponding descriptions match, and considering its scale and the site location, it is reasonable to consider that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment and that EIA is not required. However, in order to provide a comprehensive assessment, this screening proceeds to consider it against the Schedule 5 criteria, nonetheless.

6.2. Criteria for determining whether the development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment (Schedule 7)

Out of an abundance of caution this screening nonetheless includes a review of the proposal against the Schedule 7 'Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment'. This review is documented in Tables (a) to (h) below.

The schedule 7 criteria are set out under three headings:

1. Characteristics of proposed development.

Eight characteristics are specified, (a) to (h).

2. Location of proposed development

Three different sensitivity categories are specified, (a) to (c).

3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts

Eight impact significance considerations are provided, (a) to (h)

A separate table is provided below for each characteristic, (a) to (h).

The location sensitivity categories are set out across the top rows of each table.

The impact significance rating provided in the bottom rows of each table take account of the considerations set out in part 3 of the Schedule. Impacts are rated as:

0 – No impact / insignificant impact

1 – Impact(s) of low significance

2 – Significant impact(s)

? – Unknown

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

7. Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal does not come within the scope of any class of project prescribed in Schedule 5 of the Regulations (SI 600 of 2001 as amended).

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 concluded that there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried out for the proposed Strokestown Town Public Realm Enhancement Project. Therefore, there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be prepared.