

Blessington eGreenway

Report to Inform the Environmental Impact Assessment
Screening

Wicklow County Council

Project number: PR-447455

December 2021

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Noelle O Leary & Elaine Keenan Environmental Consultants	Shauna Woods Associate Director Planning	Niamh O'Connell Principal Environmental Consultant	Eoin O'Mahony Regional Director

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
05	Nov 2021	Planning	EOM	Eoin O Mahony	Regional Director

Distribution List

# Hard Copies	PDF Required	Association / Company Name

Prepared for:

Wicklow County Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Ireland Limited
1st floor, Montrose House
Carrigaline Road
Douglas, Cork T12 P088
Ireland

T: +353 21 436 5006

F: +353 21 436 5156

aecom.com

© 2021 AECOM Ireland Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Ireland Limited ("AECOM") for sole use of our client (the "Client") in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	1
1.1	Background.....	1
2.	Description of the Proposed Development.....	2
2.1	Location.....	2
2.2	Project Description	3
3.	EIA Screening Process	4
3.1	Introduction	4
3.2	Legislation.....	4
3.3	Methodology	5
3.4	Characteristics of the Proposed Development	8
3.5	Location of the Project	14
3.6	Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts.....	19
4.	Summary and Recommendations	27
4.1	Mandatory Thresholds	27
4.2	Sub Threshold Assessment.....	27
5.	References.....	29
	Appendix A Screening Checklist	30
	Appendix B Planning Application Search (2014 – 23/02/2021)	34

Figures

Figure 2-1 Routing of Blessington eGreenway	2
Figure 3-1 Past Flood Events (Source: OPW CFRAM Mapping)	13

Tables

Table 3-1 Summary of the Mandatory Legislative Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment Impact Screening under the Roads Act (as amended).....	6
Table 3-2 Summary of the Sub-threshold Legislative Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment Screening.....	7
Table 3-3 Relevant Planning Application Search	9
Table 3-4. Active Quarries Located within 10 km of Poulaphuca Reservoir	11
Table 3-5 Active Quarries Located within 10 km of Blessington Reservoir	14
Table 3-6 Designated sites within 15 km of the Proposed Development Site	16
Table 3-7:Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA Conservation Objectives.....	17
Table 3-8 Typical Allowable Vibration during Road Construction in Order to Minimise the Risk of Building Damage	21

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report has been prepared on behalf of Wicklow County Council (WCC) for a greenway (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development') in Blessington, Co. Wicklow (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development site'). The Applicant is proposing to construct a new 33 km greenway around the lakes of Blessington and includes upgrades to the existing greenway in the area.

This report sets out:

- The Proposed Development site location and description;
- Characteristics of the Proposed Development;
- The EIA screening process; and
- A conclusion and recommendation on the Proposed Development's potential to interact with the environment during the construction and/or operational phases.

The report also provides recommendations on further assessments that may be required.

The Proposed Development will link the historic town of Blessington to the Palladian mansion of Russborough House and provide connectivity with local villages including Valleymount, Ballyknockan and Lacken, in a 'loop' around the lakes of Blessington.

The objectives of the Proposed Development are as follows:

- To provide a greenway as a sustainable transport route around the lakes of Blessington;
- To provide a safe cycle and walking facility for visitors and for the communities of the towns and villages along the route;
- To make connections to Ireland's Ancient East and other national, regional, and local tourism sites across the county and the region;
- To assess and detail the economic & social benefits of the Proposed Development;
- To encompass the local heritage, history, and culture of the area into the Proposed Development; and
- To provide a recreational amenity that promotes and encourages healthy living and wellness through walking and cycling; and
- The Proposed Development will be designed, constructed, and operated with Excellence, Exercise, Energy, Environment, Ecology, Exploration and Ease of Access considerations to the fore at all times.

2. Description of the Proposed Development

2.1 Location

The Proposed Development is located on a predominantly greenfield site in Blessington, Co. Wicklow. The Proposed Development is located adjacent to Blessington Lake/Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA.

The route will take walkers and cyclists along the shoreline of the reservoir and will pass through the townlands of Blessington, Haylands, Knockieran Lower, Knockieran Upper, Carrig, Sroughan, Lacken, Ballynastockan, Ballyknockan, Carrigacurra, Annacarney, Vallemount, Monamuck, Humphrystown, Baltyboys Upper, Baltyboys Lower, Burgage Moyle, Russellstown, Russborough, Rathballylong, Tulfarris, Glebe East, and Burgage More and passing adjacent to the villages of Vallemount, Vallyknockan and Lacken before returning to Blessington at Knockiernan Bridge. The indicative route of the greenway is presented in Figure 2-1 below.

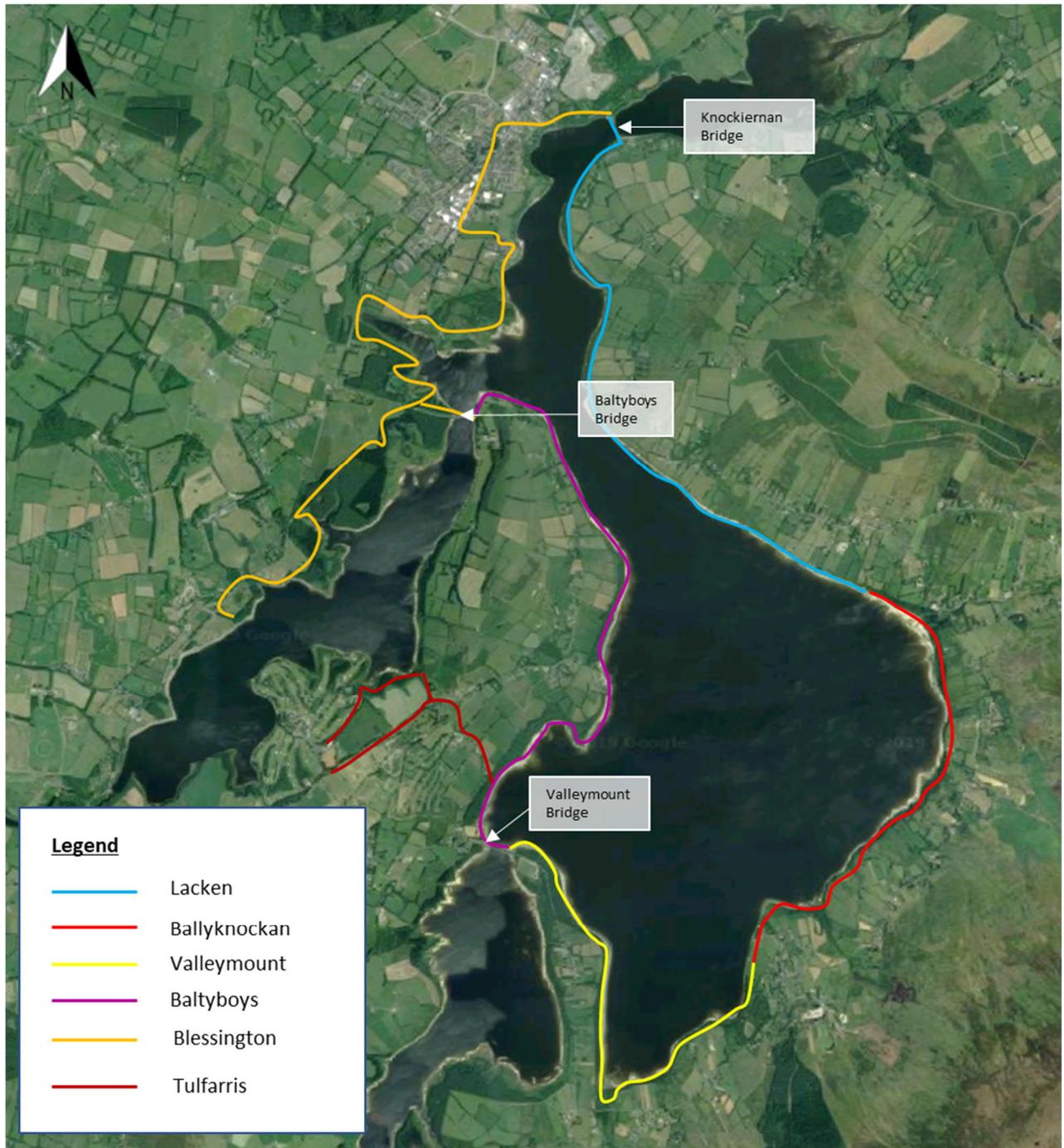


Figure 2-1 Routing of Blessington eGreenway

2.2 Project Description

The Proposed Development is proposed to provide a predominately off-road shared use path for pedestrians and cyclists. The Proposed Development will cover approximately 33 km and involve the provision and upgrading of a greenway mostly through forest and woodlands adjacent to the shoreline of the Blessington Lake/Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA.

Traffic lights are proposed at three existing bridge crossings (Knockiernan Bridge, Baltyboys Bridge and Valleymount Bridge) to manage a new shuttle system for vehicular traffic. This will create space within the existing bridge cross section for the provision of a shared use path to accommodate users of the eGreenway.

The greenway surface construction is proposed to consist of a machine laid, bound pavement. A 20 mm surface course is proposed to be laid on a 40 mm to 55 mm base course on 150 mm Clause 804 subbase on a geotextile layer as required. Construction works will require shallow excavation (maximum depth of 200 mm - 300 mm), tree removal and replacement, placement of culverts, single span bridges over larger streams, fencing and minor landscaping.

The project description involves the following as shown in Figure 2-1:

1. Blessington – The Blessington section of the Proposed Development extends from the Wicklow County Council boundary at Russellstown to Blessington. The section comprises 9.2 km in length. This section is proposed to consist of new greenway and the upgrade of existing sections along the route with a connection to Russborough House via an existing underpass of the N81. It is proposed to extend the capacity of the Russellstown car park with an additional 50 car spaces. Works to both the Russellstown car park and the Blessington eGreenway Hub and car park will provide electric vehicle charging points, bicycle parking, bins, seating areas, drinking water stations and CCTV. There is 1 no. new watercourse crossing included in this section while several existing crossings are to be retained.
2. Baltyboys – The Baltyboys section of the Proposed Development extends from the Blessington section to the Valleymount section. This section comprises 5.3 km in length. Works to the Valleymount West car park and Baltyboys car park will provide electric vehicle charging points, bike parking, bins, seating, drinking water stations and CCTV. Precast box culverts and gabion retaining walls will be required within this section to construct the Proposed Development. There are approximately 5 no. small watercourses/ditches crossings along this section.
3. Tulfarris – The Tulfarris section of the Proposed Development connects the Baltyboys section to Tulfarris via the R758. This section comprises 3.7 km in length. This section is proposed to consist of new greenway and share the existing road to connect with the Tulfarris Hotel & Golf Resort. There are approximately 2 no. new small watercourse/ditch crossings along its length.
4. Valleymount – The Valleymount section of the Proposed Development extends from Baltyboys to Ballyknockan. This section comprises 5.2 km in length commencing at the Valleymount carpark, which is located adjacent to Valleymount GAA Club. Works to the two carparks in Valleymount East and West will provide electric vehicle charging points, bicycle parking, bins, seating areas, drinking water stations, and CCTV. Precast box culverts and gabion retaining walls will be required within this section. There are approximately 3 no. small watercourses/ditches crossed by the Proposed Development in this section as well as a crossing of the Annacarney Stream.
5. Ballyknockan – The Ballyknockan section of the Proposed Development extends from Ballyknockan to Lacken. This section comprises 4.3 km in length. Gabion retaining walls will be required within this section. Due to the high ground to the east there are a few small tributaries on this section with approximately 13 no. small watercourses/ditches requiring to be accommodated by the Proposed Development.
6. Lacken – The Lacken section of the Proposed Development extends from Lacken to Knockiernan Bridge. This section comprises 5.6 km in length. The section involves new greenway construction. Precast box culverts, concrete underpasses, and gabion retaining walls will be required within this section. It is proposed to extend the capacity of the Knockiernan car park with an additional 50 car spaces. Works to both Knockiernan and Lacken car park will provide electric vehicle charging points, bicycle parking, bins, seating areas, drinking water stations, and CCTV. The eastern side of the lake has many small tributaries which will require the Proposed Development to accommodate approximately 7 no. small watercourses/ditches.

Signage will be provided to incorporate visitor information, way-finding information, heritage information and advisory/regulatory information in proximity to road crossings. All signage will be subject to full specification at detailed design stage of the project in accordance with national technical standards and guidance.

3. EIA Screening Process

3.1 Introduction

This section of the report outlines the legislative basis for EIA 'Screening' in order to decide whether a road (in this instance a cycleway which is defined in section 68 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) as a public road or proposed public road reserved for the exclusive use of pedal cyclists or pedal cyclists and pedestrians) development requires the preparation of an EIA.

3.2 Legislation

3.2.1 Environmental Impact Assessment

EIA requirements derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, amends Directive 2011/92/EU (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Directive'). The EIA Directive requires an environmental assessment to be carried out prior to development consent being granted for projects considered likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The EIA Directive improves the level of environmental protection for the environment and pays greater attention to emerging threats and challenges such as resource efficiency, climate change and disaster prevention.

The EIA Directive lists those projects that require a mandatory EIA (Annex I) such as motorways or roads with 4 or more lanes wide over 10 km in length (Annex 17(b)¹), and those projects for which an assessment must be undertaken to determine if they are probable to result in likely significant effects (Annex II). For Annex II projects, individual Member States can choose to institute specific thresholds or project specific considerations, or a combination of both approaches to arrive at a decision regarding the requirement to undertake an EIA.

Annex II developments that do not exceed the thresholds for the mandatory requirement to prepare an EIA are categorised as sub-threshold and must be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether or not they are likely to have significant effects on the existing environment. The likelihood of a significant environmental effect is the principle matter around which consideration of the requirement for an EIA is based.

Annex III, of the EIA Directive, sets out the criteria to be examined when carrying out EIA screening. These criteria include the characteristics of projects, location of projects, and type and characteristics of the potential impact.

In Ireland, generally the process of ascertaining whether a development requires an EIA is determined by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) which takes into consideration the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), and the Roads Act 1993 (as amended). The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) has been amended by the European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 to take account of the requirements of the EIA Directive. Annex III of the EIA Directive is specifically referenced in Section 50(1)(e) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) to be considered when carrying out EIA screening.

3.2.2 Appropriate Assessment

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, which is more commonly known as 'the Habitats Directive', requires Member States of the European Union (EU) to take measures to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and wild species of fauna and flora of Community interest. The provisions of the Habitats Directive require that Member States designate Special Areas of Conservation for habitats listed on Annex I and for species listed on Annex II. Similarly, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (more commonly known as 'the Birds Directive') provides a framework for the conservation and management of wild birds. It also requires Member States to identify and classify SPAs for rare or vulnerable species listed on Annex I of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species. The complete network of European sites is referred to as 'Natura 2000'.

Under article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, any plan or project which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/cover_2015_en.pdf

or in combination with other plans or projects, must be subject to an ‘Appropriate Assessment’ (AA) of its implications for the SAC/SPA and its nature conservation objectives.

In Ireland, the requirements of Article 6(3) are transposed into national law by Part 5 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011)) (more commonly referred to as the ‘Habitats Regulations’) and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The Proposed Development is located adjacent to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (site code: 004063). Poulaphouca Reservoir (Blessington Lake) is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) and as a SPA (Site Code 004063) for waterbirds, specifically Greylag Goose and Lesser Black-backed Gull. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) was carried out for the Proposed Development to identify if the Proposed Development would be likely to have a significant effect on designated European sites. The AA Screening concluded that a full AA was required and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was therefore prepared (Flynn Furney 2021). The NIS concluded “*impacts of potentially moderate adverse significance on the qualifying interests of Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA have been predicted as unlikely arising from the Proposed Development. As these impacts may be described as significant effects, mitigation measures are required to address these*”. These mitigation measures are outlined within the NIS. The NIS further concluded “*with the correct implementation of these measures, there will be no significant effects on the Special Protection Area or its qualifying interests as a result of the proposed works*” (Flynn Furney 2021).

3.3 Methodology

This screening was undertaken in line with Section 3.2 of the EPA’s draft ‘Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Report’ (EPA, 2017). The assessment also takes into consideration ‘Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A Practical Guide’ (TII 2008) and the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government’s (DHPLG) ‘Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment’ (DHPLG, 2018).

Additionally, the screening process was aided using the checklists contained in the European Commission’s (EC)’s ‘Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening’ (EC, 2017), in particular the ‘Screening Checklist’ and the ‘Checklist of Criteria for Evaluating the Significance of Environmental Impacts’.

The screening checklist completed for the Proposed Development is contained in Appendix A to this report.

Ascertaining whether this Proposed Development requires an EIA is determined by reference to mandatory and discretionary provisions set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

A ‘road’ is defined under the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) to include;

- (a) *any street, lane, footpath, square, court, alley, or passage,*
- (b) *any bridge, viaduct, underpass, subway, tunnel, overpass, overbridge, flyover, carriageway (whether single or multiple), pavement or footway,*
- (c) *any weighbridge or other facility for the weighing or inspection of vehicles, toll plaza or other facility for the collection of tolls, service area, emergency telephone, first aid post, culvert, arch, gully, railing, fence, wall, barrier, guardrail, margin, kerb, lay-by, hard shoulder, island, pedestrian refuge, median, central reserve, channelliser, roundabout, gantry, pole, ramp, bollard, pipe, wire, cable, sign, signal or lighting forming part of the road, and*
- (d) *any other structure or thing forming part of the road and—*
 - (i) *necessary for the safety, convenience, or amenity of road users or for the construction, maintenance, operation, or management of the road or for the protection of the environment, or*
 - (ii) *prescribed by the Minister*

Furthermore, a ‘Cycleway’ is referred to in Section 68 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) as follows:

1. *In this section “cycleway” means a public road or proposed public road reserved for the exclusive use of pedal cyclists or pedal cyclists and pedestrians.*
 - a. *A road authority may construct (or otherwise provide) and maintain a cycleway.*
 - b. *Where a road authority constructs or otherwise provides a cycleway, it shall by order declare, either-*

- i. the cycleway is for the exclusive use of pedal cyclists, or
 - ii. that the cycleway is for the exclusive use of pedal cyclists and pedestrians.
- c. any person who uses a cycleway in contravention of an order under paragraph (b) shall be guilty of an offence.

In respect of the above definition under Section 68 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended). The Proposed Development is considered to be a public road; therefore, this EIA screening will be assessed under Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended).

3.3.1 Mandatory EIA- Section 50, Roads Act 1993 (as amended)

Table 3-1 outlines the mandatory criteria considered under legislation during this EIA screening assessment of the Proposed Development.

Table 3-1 Summary of the Mandatory Legislative Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment Impact Screening under the Roads Act (as amended)

Mandatory	Regulatory Reference	Mandatory Criteria Met?
Construction of a motorway	S. 50.- (1) (a)(i) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)	No
Construction of a busway	S. 50.- (1) (a)(ii) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)	No
Construction of a service area	S. 50.- (1) (a)(iii) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended)	No
Any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.	The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;	No
	The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.	No

Source: Roads Act 1993, as amended

It has been assessed that the Proposed Development did not trigger the mandatory criteria for a road development under Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended).

However, given the proximity of the Proposed Development to the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA and pNHA, as well as the potential for significant environmental effects during the construction of the Proposed Development it was determined a sub threshold assessment was required for the Proposed Development to identify if an EIA is required.

3.3.2 Sub-threshold Assessment

Where the Proposed Development does not meet, or exceed, the applicable threshold (Table 3-1), the likelihood of the Proposed Development having significant effects on the environment needs to be considered. The discretionary (or sub-threshold) requirements are based on an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development.

The Roads Act 1993 (as amended), outlines further requirements for EIA screening, this legislation is included in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2 Summary of the Sub-threshold Legislative Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Sub-threshold Requirements		Regulatory Reference
If An Bord Pleanála considers that any road development proposed (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall direct that the development be subject to an environmental impact assessment.		S. 50(1)(b) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)
Where a road authority or, as the case may be, the Authority considers that a road development that it proposes (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall inform An Bord Pleanála in writing prior to making any application to the Bord for an approval referred to in section 51(1) in respect of the development.		S. 50(1)(c) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)
In particular, where a proposed development (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be located on —	(i) a European Site within the meaning of Regulation 2 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011)	S. 50(1)(d)(i-vi) of the Roads 1993 (as amended)
	(ii) land established or recognised as a nature reserve within the meaning of section 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act 1976 (No. 39 of 1976)	
	(iii) land designated as a refuge for fauna or flora under section 17 of the Wildlife Act 1976 (No. 39 of 1976)	
	(iv) land designated a natural heritage area under section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000	
	(v) A Nature Reserve within the meaning of sections 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act, 1976. (vi) Refuge for Fauna	
	(vi) Refuge for Fauna under section 17 of the Wildlife Act, 1976.	
The road authority or the Authority, as the case may be, proposing the development shall decide whether or not the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.		
Where a decision is being made pursuant to this subsection on whether a road development that is proposed would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, An Bord Pleanála, or the road authority or the Authority concerned (as the case may be), shall take into account the relevant selection criteria specified in Annex III.		S. 50(1)(e) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)
Where a road authority or the Authority, as the case may be, makes a decision under paragraph (d) it shall —	(i) make the decision available for inspection by members of the public, and	S. 50(1)(f) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended)
	(ii) make an electronic version of the decision available on its website.	

Source: Roads Act 1993 (as amended)

As per Section 50(1)(d) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) given the proximity of the Proposed Development to the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA and pNHA, there is potential for significant effects on water quality and biodiversity. Therefore, in considering whether a project is likely to have significant environmental effects, and as stated in Section 50(1)(e) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) the criteria set out in Annex III of the Directive 2014/52/EU, must be assessed. The criteria are as follows:

- Characteristics of Proposed Development;
- Location of Proposed Development; and
- Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts.

Authorities must have regard to these criteria in forming an opinion as to whether or not a sub-threshold development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. As per the EPA's draft guidance, a significant effect can be defined as "An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment" (EPA, 2017).

3.4 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

3.4.1 The Size and Design of the Whole Project

The Proposed Development is a 3 m to 4 m wide pedestrian and cycle route around the lakes of Blessington. The 33 km length of the Proposed Development can be split as follows:

- Total length of new greenway: 25 km
- Existing to be upgraded: 4 km (additional parts of the existing greenway are being retained); and
- Urban cycle scheme/traffic calming: 4 km

The Proposed Development site covers an area of circa 15.86 ha, with an additional area of 3.34 ha for earthworks during construction phase. The urban cycle paths/footpath improvement involve an area of 10,957 m² (1.2 km). The new car parking areas involve an area of 1,690 m² while the refurbishment of existing car parking areas involves an area of 7,436 m².

The Proposed Development includes the construction of a new 21 m greenway crossing structure at the toe of the existing bridge embankment where the L4365 Lake Drive crosses Annacarne stream.

The Proposed Development also includes a widened shared use path incorporated onto the existing bridge locations along the Proposed Development route. This will occur within the existing footprint of the bridge. Each bridge design has a Toucan crossing setback approximately 30 m to link the Proposed Development route into the widened footpath across the bridges. The three bridge locations are:

- Knockieran Bridge;
- Baltyboys Bridge; and
- Valleymount Bridge.

On approach to and over these bridges the road surface will be milled, and new traffic islands, traffic lights and kerbs will be provided to create a one-way system for vehicular traffic. The area will be resurfaced to provide a shared use path for users of the greenway. The bridge parapet will be extended to the height required for cyclists.

It is anticipated the greenway would not be used at night as the car parks will close in advance of darkness and no public lighting will be provided as part of the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development surface construction is proposed to consist of a machine laid, bound pavement. A 20 mm surface course is proposed to be laid on a 40 mm to 55 mm base course on 150 mm Clause 804 subbase on a geotextile layer as required.

Existing public car parks will undergo refurbishments, to include the provision of bike parking stands, information boards, waste collection, seating areas, drinking water stations and electric vehicle charging points. In addition, the car parks at Knockieran and Russellstown will be extended with provision for 50 additional car parking spaces at each location.

Construction works will require shallow excavation (maximum depth of 200 mm - 300 mm), tree removal and replacement, placement of culverts, single span bridges over larger streams, fencing and minor landscaping.

Rainwater that falls onto the greenway will run over the edge towards the reservoir. The Proposed Development interacts with several drainage ditches. These drainage ditches collect surface water from the neighbouring fields and bring the water into the reservoir. Appropriately sized drainage pipes or culverts will be provided to allow for the water to flow into the reservoir as it currently does. Drainage pipes will also be used beneath the greenway in locations where fill earthworks have the potential of causing ponding for surface water runoff. The purpose of these drainage pipes will be to bring the surface water beneath the greenway so that it can continue to flow into the reservoir. For the sections the project between Avon Ri and Blessington Village where existing kerbs are to be relocated for footpath widening, and the cycle paths, new gullies and connections will be provided to maintain the existing drainage system.

3.4.2 The Cumulation with other Existing and/or Proposed Developments

A desktop search of proposed and existing planning applications was undertaken on the 23 February 2021. The search used publicly available data from MyPlan.ie 'National Planning Application' database, Wicklow County Council (WCC) and Kildare County Council (KCC) planning application portal and ABP online database.

The purpose of the search is to assess the cumulation with other existing and/or proposed developments. The scope of the search was based within a 10 km radius taken from the approximate centre point of the Blessington Poulaphouca Reservoir. The initial search flagged planning applications within a period dating back to 2014.

A specified criterion informed the search and omitted any refused, invalid, and withdrawn applications. The criteria then focused on foreseeable developments to be considered in line with the Proposed Development. In respect of this, any small-scale residential type developments, such as extensions and modifications, minor amendments to existing dwellings and changes of use developments were omitted from the search.

The detailed planning application search is included within Appendix B of this report. The findings show small, medium to large-scale developments within the 10 km radius scope that have been approved or on-going.

A list of some foreseeable developments (taken from the detailed search within Appendix B) are included in Table 3-3.

In addition, known Section 5 developments within the local environs consist of ESB erosion works and conservations works to foundations and stone walls at Burgage Tower.

Table 3-3 Relevant Planning Application Search

Planning Ref. No.	Development Address	Development Proposal	Status	Expiry	Appeal
20713	Santryhill, Newpaddocks & Dillonsdown Townlands, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	Use of an existing internal haul road at Doran's pit, Blessington for the importation of inert soil and stone waste for backfilling and restoration / recovery at a soil recovery facility to be established at Redbog Pit in Co. Kildare. The proposed haul road extends over 2.9 hectares, from an existing junction with the N81 National Secondary Road at Santryhill townland and through the townlands of Newpaddocks and Dillonsdown to the county boundary with Co. Kildare. Planning permission is sought for a period of 30 years. The proposed soil waste recovery facility at Redbog Pit requires a waste licence from the Environmental Protection Agency. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be submitted to the Planning Authority in connection with the application	Received 24/07/2020 Request for Further Information Application On-hold	n/a	n/a
SH202001	Kilmalum Road, Blessington, Co. Wicklow & Co. Kildare	Application to ABP for a Strategic Housing Development which consists of the following: 360 no. dwelling units in a mix of houses, duplexes and apartment units ranging from 2 to 3 storeys, including associated car parking spaces, internal roads, and paths, public and private open spaces, and a crèche. 1 no. vehicular access and 2 no. pedestrian access.	Live SHD Application Received 03/03/2020	n/a	n/a
219	Burgage More, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	Amendment to previously approved planning application (Planning Ref 19/693). The proposed amendment consists of the relocation of the ESB Substation, onto the northern site boundary of the development as required by ESB Networks; 1.8m high enclosure walls to substation in finishes to match approved dwellings as well as all associated and ancillary site and ground works	Approved subject to conditions on 23/02/2021	n/a	n/a
20108	The Rectory, Kilbride Road, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	Demolition of a 1.5 storey derelict outbuilding (within the curtilage of a protected structure) and for the construction of 45 no residential units, maintaining the existing Rectory building (protected structure) as a residential house as is, maintaining the existing Mass Path, a communal pedestrian footpath extending towards Main Street, a communal cycle lane and a communal pedestrian footpath beyond the south eastern boundary wall and adjacent to Kilbride Road, 81 no car parking spaces, renovation and relocation of the derelict eastern entrance pier and wall (within the curtilage of a protected structure), widening of existing gate / entrance plus new pedestrian	Approved subject to conditions on 31/07/2020	03/09/2025	n/a

Planning Ref. No.	Development Address	Development Proposal	Status	Expiry	Appeal
		gate and improved access to existing Mass Path, new front boundary wall and railing, drainage infrastructure, landscaping, services and all associated works			
19693	Burgage More, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	Demolition of existing agricultural shed (14 sqm) and the construction of 56 no residential units (2 no 4 bed houses, 49 no 3 bed houses, 3 no 2 bed houses and 2 no 2 bed apartments), 113 no ancillary car parking spaces, hard and soft landscaping, lighting, balconies facing northeast and southwest, solar panels, boundary treatments, ESB substation, changes in level, and all associated site development works above and below ground	Approved subject to conditions on 26/11/2019	11/05/2025	Approved by ABP subject to conditions on 12/05/2020
171215	Burgage Moyle, Off the R758, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	High performance training centre including the following:- (i) single storey boathouse (1598 sqm) with eleven bays for rowing boats (ii) two storey attached ancillary building (729 sqm), housing launch boat area, with 8 bays for safety boats, equipment store, boiler room and water storage on ground floor, with changing areas, gym, meeting rooms, and balcony / terrace at first floor level (iii) new vehicular access from R758 with vehicular and pedestrian access points, gates and pillars (iv) footpaths to boathouses, club house and lake edge (v) 78 car parking spaces and (vi) drainage including sealed steel effluent holding tank, oil and petrol interceptor holding tank, surface water attenuation, all site development works including fencing, hard and soft landscaping. A Natura Impact Statement has been submitted as part of the application.	Approved subject to conditions on 27/08/2018	11/06/2024	Approved by ABP subject to conditions on 26/09/2018
17908	Threecastles, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	Solar PV panel array comprising photovoltaic panels on ground mounted frames within a site area of 21.04 ha, 8 no single storey MV substations, 1 no single storey DSO substation, 1 no single storey customer substation with 1 no communications pole attached, 1 no single storey spares building, boundary securing fencing and access gates, CCTV, associated electrical cabling and ducting, upgraded and new access tracks and all associated ancillary development and landscaping works. The planning application includes a Natura Impact Statement	Approved subject to conditions on 11/05/2018	20/06/2023	n/a
211237	Threecastles, Blessington, Co. Wicklow	Amend the design of the approved development (Planning Reference 17/908) which comprises consent for a Solar PV Energy Development. Proposed amendments include (1) Project lifetime proposed to be extended from 30 years to 35 years (2) Substation to increase in size (3)Change in height and angle of solar panels (4) Transformer containers to increase in size (5) Removal of the customer substation (6) Deer fencing to increase in size (7) MW output to be increased from 10.8 to 15MW to align with existing grid connection offer (8) Slight alteration to the access tracks and (9) Number of CCTV cameras to reduce.	Received 14/10/2021	n/a	n/a

The foreseeable developments listed in Table 3-3, and the detailed planning search included in Appendix B, have highlighted the potential for these developments to produce transient impacts, specifically; from noise, traffic and dust associated with construction of the Proposed Development in combination. However, these effects would be considered not significant and temporary. Should the development of a number of large developments, as identified within the planning search, occur at the same time, then there is potential for negative effects of slight to moderate significance. Although these would be temporary in duration, occurring primarily during the construction phase only.

Consequently, there is likely to be a positive, long term, slight to moderate cumulative effect from the Proposed Development with other cycleway and pedestrian routes in the area.

3.4.3 The Nature of Any Associated Demolition Works

Demolition of buildings will not be required as part of the Proposed Development; however, there may be some small areas of surface regrading to tie into existing footpaths along the Proposed Development.

3.4.4 The Use of Natural Resources, in Particular Land, Soil, Water and Biodiversity

Materials such as macadam for the road/cycle surfacing, clause 804 stone for the sub-base layer will be imported to the Proposed Development site and used during the construction phase.

It is assumed that some cut may be required along the Proposed Development to facilitate level tie ins with existing paths and car parks along the Proposed Development. In addition, there may be some cut required to maintain recommended sight distances and geometric alignment. It is anticipated that circa 36,191 m³ of ground will be excavated. All excavation works would be undertaken where possible with minimum disruption to the site and avoided completely where there is a risk of damage to existing tree roots. Excavated material would be used for the reinstatement of the edges of the new trail to reduce material importation as well as minimise the risk of the introduction of invasive species. It is not envisaged that there would be a need to remove large quantities of excavated material from within the Proposed Development site boundary. Total fill including rock armour is anticipated to be approximately 55,652 m³ for the Proposed Development.

It is proposed that construction material would be sourced locally from licensed suppliers, where possible, and where possible cut/fill would be balanced so the effect is not likely to be significant.

It is assumed a water supply will be required during the construction phase. Should the water mains be utilised, all relevant permissions should be sought prior to construction, such as written agreement from Irish Water and/or relevant stakeholders. At no point will water be abstracted from rivers or streams.

A search of the Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resource was carried out on the 3rd of December 2020 to identify active stone quarries. A number of stone quarries within 10 km of Poulaphuca Reservoir are outlined in Table 3-4.

Table 3-4. Active Quarries Located within 10 km of Poulaphuca Reservoir

Quarry Name	Quarry Location	Approximate Distance from Blessington Reservoir	Geological Survey Ireland Quarry Number	Products	Yearly Output (tonnes)
New Paddocks	Hudson Brothers Ltd., New Paddocks, Blessington, Wicklow	Circa 1.3 km west	WW 001	Fine sand, coarse sand, pebble, natural gravel, crushed gravel, graded aggregate, uniform aggregate	Not known
Dillonsdown	Dermot Carrngie, Dillonsdown, Blessington, Wicklow	Circa 2 km west	WW 003	Washed pebbles for drainage, washed sands for construction and concrete	200,000
Corrigan's Quarry	Peter Corrigan, Rathattin, Hollywood, Wicklow	Circa 4.7 km south west	WW 002	Not known – operation type is sand and gravel	Not known
Badgers Rock Quarry	Paul Ryan, Togher, Granabeg, Vallemount, Wicklow	Circa 2.6 km south	WW 004	Dimension stone and rubble	500
Granabeg Quarry	Oliver Morgan, Granabeg, Vallemount, Wicklow	Circa 2.8 km south	WW 005	Dimensional granite block, random rubble wall stone	1000
Shillelagh Quarries	Shillelagh Quarries Ltd., Aghfarrell, Brittas Dublin	Circa 6.9 km north	D 002	Crushed rock	150000
Ballinascorney Quarry	Kilsaran Build, Ballinascorney, Brittas, Dublin	Circa 7.9 km north	D 001	Aggregates, asphalt and macadam, hardcore and fill materials	300,000-600,000

Quarry Name	Quarry Location	Approximate Distance from Blessington Reservoir	Geological Survey Ireland Quarry Number	Products	Yearly Output (tonnes)
Brownstown Pit	Kilsaran Build, Brownstown, Kilcullen, Kildare	Circa 10 km west	KE 004	Aggregates, bulk silo mortar, large range of bagged pre-mixed dry products, (patio bedding mix; sand and cement mix; jointing sands; post 10 rapid setting, etc.)	Not known

Source: < Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources

<https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aac3c228>>

3.4.5 The Production of Waste

There will be waste produced during the construction phase of the Proposed Development; however, exact quantities are unknown at this stage.

3.4.6 Pollution and Nuisances

Potential pollution pathways and nuisances for consideration include increases in exhaust emissions to air as a result of construction machinery; noise and vibration from equipment use; social effects as a result of temporary traffic diversions; leaks and spills of hydrocarbon containing materials used, and runoff of material to nearby watercourses.

The likelihood and severity of these effects will be minimised through compliance with best practice construction management practices as defined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

While there have been no reports of potential contamination, it should be considered when removing any material offsite.

3.4.7 The Risk of Accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change in accordance with scientific knowledge

An accident, in the context of the Proposed Development, means an unplanned event caused by a man-made activity or asset resulting in death, injury, or immediate or delayed serious damage to the environment. A disaster in the context of the Proposed Development, is a naturally occurring phenomenon such as an extreme weather event (e.g. storm, flood, extreme temperatures) or ground-related hazard events (e.g. subsidence, landslide, earthquake) with the potential to cause an event or situation that leads to immediate or delayed serious damage to human health, welfare and/or the environment and requires the use of resources beyond those of the developer or its contractors to manage.

Important considerations are the potential risks of the Proposed Development causing an accident and/or disaster during the construction and operational phases, and the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to potential man-made and natural disasters. Potential accidents and/or disasters include, flood events and road accidents.

The size of the Proposed Development is not of a sufficient size or scale to cause a major accident or disaster during the construction phase as normal construction mitigation measures (such as the contractors Health and Safety plan, an approved Contractor's CEMP and approved methods of work) will be adhered to on the Proposed Development site. As mentioned in Section 3.5.6 above, the implementation of appropriate control measures (including an emergency spill response plan) and best management practices will reduce the risk of accidents from polluting substances entering soil and groundwater.

There may be minor emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere from truck movements and the operation of site construction equipment; however, the risks are considered low given the type and scale of the development. During the operational phase, there will be no emissions to air as the Proposed Development is non-vehicular.

In terms of flood risk, the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) maps² indicates lands to the north of the site encroaches on the existing 10% annual exceedance probability (AEP) fluvial flood extents. Sections of the lake have been known to flood and there are previous flood events recorded in the western and eastern boundaries of the lake. The townland of Ballynastockan was flooded in October 2011 where the source of the flood waters was a tributary of the River Liffey and the cause was extremely heavy rainfall. As a result of the flooding, the Lacken Falls Bridge had to be replaced (ID-11652). There are also recurring flood events recorded at the Vallemount Bridge where high lake levels have flooded parts of the adjacent car park (ID-3644).

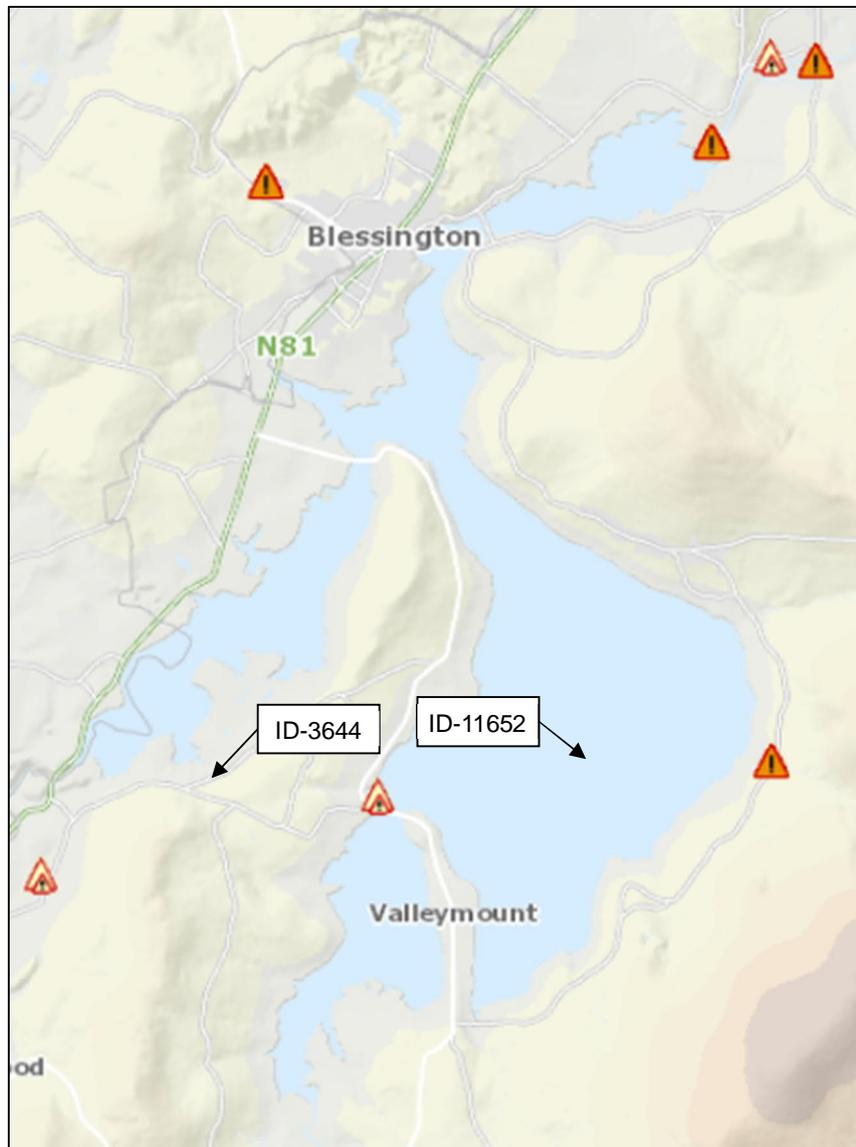


Figure 3-1 Past Flood Events (Source: OPW CFRAM Mapping)

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was undertaken for the Proposed Development. The conclusion of 'Stage 1 – Flood Risk Identification' shows that there is a flooding risk to the proposed greenway route from Poulaphouca Reservoir and at watercourse crossing points. There is also a risk from overland flow generated on steep land, particularly to the east of the reservoir. The Proposed Development will require a number of watercourse crossings. A hydrological study will be undertaken as part of the culvert and structure design process to establish the extents of any floodplain and also to adequately size the structure. Suitable interception measures and, if necessary, additional overland flow culverts, will be included as part of the design to prevent flooding from overland flows.

² <https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/> accessed 28 August 2020

3.4.8 The Risks to Human Health

With the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures during the construction phase (including an emergency spill response plan), the risks to human health; for example, due to water contamination or air pollution is considered low.

In addition to this, there will be no emissions to air during the operational phase as the Proposed Development is non-vehicular; therefore, no risks to human health are anticipated.

3.5 Location of the Project

3.5.1 The Existing and Approved Land Use

There are areas of established conifer plantations, with minor sections of agricultural lands, primarily in ESB ownership, which are directly affected by the Proposed Development. Visitor access (pedestrian only) is allowed for much of these for recreation such as walking and angling. The route is adjacent to the European designated ecological sites; Poulaphuca Reservoir pNHA and SPA (Site Code 004063). The Proposed Development follows the lakeshore edge predominantly in commercial planted conifer plantation around the lakeshore and for large parts there is an existing trail where walkers have worn a path through the forestry, which where appropriate will be upgraded and widened as part of the Proposed Development works.

The Proposed Development also passes through Blessington town and passes by smaller villages including Vallemount, Ballyknockan and Lacken.

3.5.2 The Relative Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources in the Area (Land/Soil/Water and Biodiversity)

As outlined in Section 3.5.4, construction materials, including macadam and concrete will be imported from outside the area during the construction phase. All imported materials will be sourced from licensed suppliers. It was not known at the time of writing where the material required for the Proposed Development would be sourced however several quarries are located within 10 km of the Proposed Development. It is anticipated these quarries or other local suppliers would be able to supply the material required for the Proposed Development. Quarries identified in the local area are listed in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5 Active Quarries Located within 10 km of Blessington Reservoir

Quarry Name	Quarry Location	Approximate Distance from Blessington Reservoir	Geological Survey Ireland Quarry Number	Products	Yearly Output (tonnes)
New Paddocks	Hudson Brothers Ltd., New Paddocks, Blessington, Wicklow	Circa 1.3 km west	WW 001	Fine sand, coarse sand, pebble, natural gravel, crushed gravel, graded aggregate, uniform aggregate	Not known
Dillonsdown	Dermot Carnegie, Dillonsdown, Blessington, Wicklow	Circa 2 km west	WW 003	Washed pebbles for drainage, washed sands for construction and concrete	200,000
Corrigan's Quarry	Peter Corrigan, Rathattin, Hollywood, Wicklow	Circa 4.7 km south west	WW 002	Not known – operation type is sand and gravel	Not known
Badgers Rock Quarry	Paul Ryan, Togher, Granabeg, Vallemount, Wicklow	Circa 2.6 km south	WW 004	Dimension stone and rubble	500
Granabeg Quarry	Oliver Morgan, Granabeg, Vallemount, Wicklow	Circa 2.8 km south	WW 005	Dimensional granite block, random rubble wall stone	1000
Shillelagh Quarries	Shillelagh Quarries Ltd., Aghfarrell, Brittas Dublin	Circa 6.9 km north	D 002	Crushed rock	150000

Quarry Name	Quarry Location	Approximate Distance from Blessington Reservoir	Geological Survey Ireland Quarry Number	Products	Yearly Output (tonnes)
Ballinascorney Quarry	Kilsaran Build, Ballinascorney, Brittas, Dublin	Circa 7.9 km north	D 001	Aggregates, asphalt and macadam, hardcore and fill materials	300,000-600,000
Brownstown Pit	Kilsaran Build, Brownstown, Kilcullen, Kildare	Circa 10 km west	KE 004	Aggregates, bulk silo mortar, large range of bagged pre-mixed dry products, (patio bedding mix; sand and cement mix; jointing sands; post 10 rapid setting, etc.)	Not known

Source: < Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources

<https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228>>

Water supply will be required during the construction phase. Should the water mains be utilised, all relevant permissions should be sought prior to construction, such as written agreement from Irish Water and relevant stakeholders. At no point will water be abstracted from rivers or streams.

Much of the route will be within coniferous plantation. This is an extremely common land use in County Wicklow. A significant proportion of the route will be on built (e.g. existing road/laneway) or modified (e.g. rock armour) habitat. Some broadleaved woodland and grassland habitat will be also utilised. However, the design of the project will allow for the retention of the greater majority of these habitat types. Protection measures will be put in place to ensure soils are protected during works. Soil salvage (e.g. of wetland/woodland areas) will be undertaken where appropriate.

3.5.3 The Adsorption Capacity of the Natural Environment

This section describes the adsorption capacity of the natural environment, specifically:

- a. *Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;*
- b. *Coastal zones and the marine environment;*
- c. *Mountain and forest areas;*
- d. *Nature reserves and parks;*
- e. *Areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive;*
- f. *Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;*
- g. *Densely populated areas; and*
- h. *Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.*

3.5.3.1 Overview

The Proposed Development is located within a predominantly greenfield site. The Proposed Development site is surrounded by woodlands, rising hills, and dominated by the backdrop of the Wicklow Mountains to the east.

3.5.3.2 Wetlands, Riparian Areas, and River Mouths

The Proposed Development encircles the Poulaphuca reservoir, which is the most extensive inland water body in Wicklow.

The reservoir receives water from two main sources, the River Liffey at the northern end, and the Kings River at the southern end. The exit is into the River Liffey gorge at the western end.

A number of mitigation measures have been identified within the EclA prepared for the Proposed Development. These will be implemented during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

3.5.3.3 Costal Zones and the Marine Environment

The Proposed Development is located inland and is not located close to any coastal zone or marine environment.

3.5.3.4 Mountain and Forest Parks

There are no mountain parks close to or within the Proposed Development site. The Wicklow mountains are located to the east of the Proposed Development site.

Glen Ding forest is located circa 6 km north west from the Proposed Development site.

3.5.3.5 Nature Reserves and Parks

There are no Nature Reserves or National Parks located within the Proposed Development site. Wicklow National Park is located to the east of the Proposed Development site.

3.5.3.6 Areas classified or Protected under Legislation, including Natura 2000 Areas Designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive

The Proposed Development is located adjacent to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (site code: 004063). Blessington Lake or Poulaphouca Reservoir is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) and as a SPA (Site Code 004063) for waterbirds, specifically Greylag Goose and Lesser Black-backed Gull. Part of this reservoir is also designated as a Wildfowl Sanctuary.

All sites designated for the conservation of nature within 15 km of the proposed works are detailed in Table 3-6 and Table 3-7.

Table 3-6 Designated sites within 15 km of the Proposed Development Site

Site Code	Site Name	Designation	Distance from the Site
SAC			
2122	Wicklow Mountains	SAC	440 m
397	Red Bog, Kildare	SAC	2.7 km
781	Slaney River Valley	SAC	8.1 km
1209	Glenasmole Valley	SAC	10.3 km
SPA			
4063	Poulaphouca Reservoir	SPA	<10 m
4040	Wicklow Mountains	SPA	440 m
pNHA			
731	Poulaphouca Reservoir	pNHA	<10 m
393	Liffey Valley Meander Belt	pNHA	2.7 km
1759	Newtown Marshes	pNHA	3.6 km
2053	Hollywood Glen	pNHA	3.8 km
1750	Ballinagee Wood	pNHA	5.4 km
1394	Kilteel Wood	pNHA	6.2 km
211	Slade Of Saggart And Crooksling Glen	pNHA	6.4 km
1209	Glenasmole Valley	pNHA	10.2 km
2104	Grand Canal	pNHA	10.6 km
1212	Lugmore Glen	pNHA	10.8 km
1772	Dunlavin Marshes	pNHA	11.1 km
1755	Glenree Valley	pNHA	13.8 km
1396	Liffey Bank Above Athgarvan	pNHA	14.2 km
1395	Liffey At Osberstown	pNHA	14.5 km

A total of 6 sites designated as SAC or SPA were recorded within 15 km of the Proposed Development. Of these only the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA was considered to have any potential for impacts from the Proposed Development. Further information on this is discussed in the EclA carried out for the Proposed Development by Flynn Furney (Flynn Furney, 2020). As mentioned in Section 3.3.2 an AA Screening and NIS were also produced for the Proposed Development to consider potential likely significant effects to European site caused by the Proposed Development and should be read in conjunction with this report.

A total of 13 NHAs were also recorded within 15 km of the Proposed Development. Again, only the Poulaphouca Reservoir pNHA was considered to have any potential for impacts from the Proposed Development.

Table 3-7:Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA Conservation Objectives

Site	Code	Distance to Designated Site	Screening Criteria
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA*	002162	Less than 10 m	Potential pathways for impacts identified
Habitat Types (*Denotes A Priority Habitat)			Habitat (Natura)
Not designated for any habitats			-
Annex II Species: Common name (<i>Latin Name</i>)		Species (Natura) Code No.	
Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>)		A043	
Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)		A183	

*The Poulaphouca Reservoirs designation as a SPA supersedes the pNHA designation.

3.5.3.7 Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure

The EPA has classified the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Status (2013-2018) of the River Liffey and Kings River as 'Moderate', and 'At Risk' of failing to meet their WFD objectives³.

The EPA has classified the lake waterbody WFD status 2013-2018 of the Poulaphouca Reservoir as 'Good' and WFD chemical status for 2010-2015 as 'Moderate'. The lake waterbody risk of the Poulaphouca Reservoir is classified as 'Not at Risk' by the EPA. The Proposed Development is located in the Kilcullen WFD Groundwater body. The groundwater risk for the proposed route is mapped as 'At Risk'. The WFD status (2013-2018) of the groundwater body is 'Good'.

The implementation of appropriate control measures (in accordance with a CEMP) and best management practices will reduce the risk of accidents from polluting substances entering surface water.

The Air Quality Index for Health (AQIH) recorded at the closed monitoring stations in Naas, Friary Road, Co. Kildare (circa 13 km north west) and Bray Town Council, Schools Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow (circa 29 km to the north east) was reported as '2- Good' at the time of writing this screening report. While Bray is closest to the Proposed Development the monitoring station at Carlow Town was also considered as it would be more rural in comparison to Bray. The AQIH was reported as '1-Good' at the time of writing.

3.5.3.8 Densely populated areas

The Proposed Development is located in a rural setting. Blessington Town is the largest settlement in the area and is located to the north west of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development also passes through smaller villages which include Vallemount, Ballyknockan and Lacken.

³ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water> Accessed 12/10/2020

3.5.3.9 Landscapes and Sites of Historical, Cultural or Archaeological Significance

Landscape and Visual

The Proposed Development is located within the Poulaphuca Reservoir Landscape Area. Russborough House, an 18th century Palladian mansion with largely intact designed landscape, is located to the immediate west of Blessington lake area.

The Blessington Lakes area has a rich cultural history, an important part of which is the long-standing granite stone cutting and quarrying tradition. Evidence of this history is visible in the local architecture with a fine array of granite cutstone decorative and functional features to be found in the village of Ballyknockan as well as in the surrounding area and in Blessington, Lacken, Valleymount and Manor Kilbride.

Architectural Conservation Areas

One proposed Architectural Conservation Area is located partially within the Proposed Development. This is associated with the historic core of the town of Blessington as proposed within the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022. Blessington was constructed as an estate village to reflect the significance of Blessington House and Demesne which were constructed during the 17th century and also to house the estate workers and tenants.

The large house and associated Demesne that generated the impetus for the development of this town, was demolished over two centuries ago. However, the town itself has since become an important focal point for the surrounding countryside. This is evident in the surviving 19th century fabric with many of the buildings noted as Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage assets including the Church of Ireland church (RPS ref 05-06), the Ulster Bank building (RPS ref 05-03), the Market House (RPS ref 05-05), the former hotel of the Downshire Arms (RPS ref 05-04) and the features in the town's square including the stone obelisk Structure (NIAH 16303004). The Proposed Development will pass through the southeast extent of the Conservation Area.

Cultural Heritage Sites within the Proposed Development

There are five recorded Cultural Heritage sites within the boundaries of the Proposed Development. These are the remains of five planned landscapes as recorded on the NIAH Gardens Survey comprising Russborough House (NIAH 4256), Baltyboys House, (NIAH 4265), Russeltown (NIAH 4258), Knockieran Cottage (NIAH 4266) and Burgage Moyle Cottage (NIAH 4261). The majority of these have been greatly denuded by the construction of the reservoir with the result that they are no longer recognisable as planned landscapes. The exception to this is Russborough House (NIAH 4256) which is largely extant and located to the north of the Proposed Development across the N81.

Cultural Heritage Assets within the 100 m Study Area

There are 74 Cultural Heritage assets within, or just outside, the 100 m Study Area extending from the boundaries of the Proposed Development site including one National Monument, 44 assets recorded on the RMP, eight Protected Structures, 18 assets noted on the NIAH Buildings Survey and three recorded from the Gardens Survey. Details of these are included in the gazetteers in Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) Appendix B (AECOM, 2020).

The Proposed Development is set around Blessington Lake which is a reservoir created during the 1940s. Preparation works for the creation of the reservoir included the excavation of known archaeological sites such as 15 that were associated with the deserted medieval borough of Burgage More (WI010-007001-WI010-007015). The majority of these archaeological sites consist of grave slabs and two High Crosses which were removed to the new graveyard at Blessington prior to the area being flooded. These have been assigned new RMP numbers at their new locations while the RMP numbers within the Proposed Development mark their former locations. It should be noted that one asset moved to the new graveyard, High Cross (WI005-070007); it is a National Monument (NM 230). The only upstanding asset to remain in situ is the tower house (WI005-07004) which is recorded as RPS ref 05-09 on the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022 Record of Protected Structures.

Other assets recorded on the RMP within the immediate vicinity of the red line boundary include a ringwork (WI005-048) at Burgage More, a wedge tomb (WI010-062) at Carrigacurra and a moated site (WI005-078) at Carrig and the cross-inscribed stones (WI010-048) at Valleymount. Four assets are now submerged under the reservoir. These include the Neolithic house (WI010-058) at Boystown/Baltyboys Upper, the Ringfort (WI010-018) and enclosure (WI010-019) at Ballyknockan, and the Mill (WI005-078) at Burgage More (east side of lake). The remaining two

sites consist of an ecclesiastical site (WI010-011-) at Templeboodin and a children's burial ground (WI010-024) at Ballyknockan which was excavated prior to the reservoir being created.

The majority of the architectural assets (16) are located within the proposed Architectural Conservation Area at Blessington. The remaining Protected Structures comprise Bidy Mulvey's ruined House (RPS ref 10-05) at Ballyknockan and The Rectory (RPS ref 05-02) located on the Kilbride Road outside of Blessington. The NIAH buildings located outside the proposed Architectural Conservation Area at Blessington are Saint Joseph's Hall (NIAH 16303028) located on Troopersfield and Blessington Bridge (NIAH 16303027) providing access over the Poulaphouca Reservoir). The planned landscapes are Willmount House (NIAH 4259) and Stormount (NIAH 4262) which are located adjacent to the Proposed Development at Tulfarris but are now greatly denuded with their main houses no longer extant.

Two further assets of Cultural Heritage interest were noted in the forestry at Vallemount during the site visit. These comprise former landscape features consisting of a path and steps flanked by low stone walls which appear to predate the creation of the reservoir and a modern plaque attached to a tree which forms a memorial to Rachel Amy Doran who died in February 2018

3.6 Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

3.6.1 Magnitude and Spatial Extent of the Impact

The potential impacts will be limited to the Proposed Development site and sensitive receptors, including watercourses and properties surrounding the Proposed Development site.

3.6.2 The Nature of the Impact

3.6.2.1 Population and Human Health

It is not anticipated that there will be any significant, negative effects from the Proposed Development to human health during the construction phase, due to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures which will be outlined in the Contractor's CEMP.

During operation, the Proposed Development will provide a new greenway which will likely encourage walking and cycling. These facilities will provide sustainable travel links to surrounding residential areas and existing leisure routes, which in turn promotes active and healthy lifestyles. This will likely result in a positive effect on population and human health by encouraging more people to access the area by foot or by bicycle which potentially resulting in increased physical activity of the local population.

In addition, the proposed design includes the provision of additional carparking spaces. This will be achieved by extending two existing carparks. There is potential for this to facilitate accessibility and connectivity to the amenity during the operational stage.

3.6.2.2 Water

Development works by their nature have the potential to impact watercourses and groundwater by way of pollution. There is a potential for discharges associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development that may impact the receiving watercourses – in this case Poulaphuca Reservoir, surrounding rivers including the River Liffey, Cockbrook and King's River. During the construction phase it is anticipated the implementation of industry best practice pollution prevention measures (for example, CIRIA 'Guideline Document C532 Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites' and 'C648 Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects'), the production of a CEMP and an Emergency Spill Response Plan, would reduce the potential for a pollution incident in the area and reduce the risk of accidents from polluting substances entering surface water and groundwater. It is expected all of the above will be implemented during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Consultation between the appointed contractor and WCC shall be undertaken to ensure pollution prevention measures for the construction phase for the Proposed Development are agreed upon and included within the CEMP prior to construction works. It is considered the implementation of the above best practice pollution prevention measures during the construction stage will reduce the potential for a pollution incident in the area.

The Proposed Development will require a number of watercourse crossings. A hydrological study will be undertaken as part of the culvert and structure design process to establish the extents of any floodplain and also to adequately size the structure, consequently, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in a significant effect on the existing hydrological regime.

The proposed pathway will ensure that surface water drains quickly from the pathway via over-the-edge drainage. The Proposed Development will also ensure that flooding of the pathway by water from adjoining properties/lands is prevented by intercepting it with suitable land drains to avoid localised flooding or ponding on the roads surface as required. The additional volume of runoff will be relatively low and with the exception of occasional operational and maintenance vehicles and emergency vehicle access, there will be no vehicular traffic on the proposed greenway. Consequently, pollutants such as hydrocarbons normally associated with road traffic are therefore not a risk factor. It is not anticipated to cause any appreciable degradation in water quality and is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in significant effect on receiving watercourses. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in a significant effect on receiving watercourses.

3.6.2.3 Land and Soils

There may be some potential impacts to areas which are required for land take (as a result of excavation) such as the proposed tie in locations with existing routes; however, these are not anticipated to be significant.

Some materials such as macadam for the Proposed Development surfacing and a sub-base layer are likely to be used during the construction phase. In addition, there may be some cut required to maintain recommended sight distances and geometric alignment. Excavation will be kept to a minimum to ensure minimum disruption to the site. Excavated material will be used for the reinstatement of the edges of the new trail to reduce material importation as well as minimise the risk of the introduction of invasive species. It is anticipated that 36,191 m³ of ground will be excavated and it is envisaged that there will be a need to remove large quantities of excavated material from within the site boundary.

It is proposed that construction material is sourced locally from licensed suppliers, where possible, and where possible cut/fill will be balanced.

It is assumed a water supply will be required during the construction phase. Should the water mains be utilised, all relevant permissions should be sought prior to construction, such as written agreement from Irish Water and relevant stakeholders. At no point will water be abstracted from rivers, streams, lakes, or reservoirs.

The risk of potential negative effects occurring during the construction phases of the Proposed Development (in the absence of adequate management and mitigation measures) can arise from several activities; for example, weathering and erosion of the surface soils, increased silt levels or pollutants from the construction processes, accidental spills and impacted runoff.

Best practice standards, environmental guidelines and mitigation measures will be defined in the CEMP and adhered to in order to avoid impacts on soil quality.

During the operational phase some vehicular/plant access may be required to facilitate occasional maintenance activities. Should this occur the Applicant should ensure any required mitigation is put in place prior to works, such as ensuring sufficient spill kits are in place or the implementation of matting in areas of soft ground to protect soils.

No significant negative effects on land and soils are predicted during the construction and operational phase of the Proposed Development.

3.6.2.4 Air Quality and Climate

The main air quality impacts will be associated with dust generation during site preparation and construction works. In addition to this, fugitive emissions of airborne particulate matter are readily produced through the action of abrasive forces on materials and therefore a wide range of site preparation and construction activities have the potential to generate this type of emission, including:

- Earthworks, including the handling, working and storage of materials;
- Construction activities; and
- The transfer of dust-making materials from the site onto the local road network.

The implementation of appropriate mitigation measures and best management practices, however, will minimise the generation of dust during the construction phase. With the adoption of these measures, it is anticipated that the dust produced would not cause a significant effect on the environment. However, due to proximity to potentially sensitive receptors in the area and a number of residential properties surrounding the Proposed Development site, further consultation should be undertaken prior to any construction works to identify whether additional mitigation measures are required.

Climatic impacts are expected to be minor emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere from truck movements and the operation of site construction equipment; however, a significant effect is not considered likely given the scale and size of the Proposed Development.

During the operational phase, the Proposed Development will be predominately non-vehicular with the exception of occasional maintenance activities requiring plant access. As the Proposed Development will be predominately non-vehicular a significant impact from emissions is not anticipated for the Proposed Development.

3.6.2.5 Noise and Vibration

The construction phase of the Proposed Development has the potential to increase noise levels at noise sensitive locations surrounding the Proposed Development site. Impact from the construction phase will depend on the number and type of equipment employed during the works. There is potential for ground vibration due to the construction phase works which will mainly be derived from groundworks associated with the creation of the cycleway.

In Ireland, noise limits for construction activities are generally controlled by local authorities and commonly refer to limiting working hours to prevent a noise nuisance. With the enforcement of relevant best practice guidance documents, including the National Roads Authority's (NRAs) 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Noise and Vibration in National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2004) and the World Health Organisation's (WHOs) 'Community Noise Guidelines' (Berglund et al., 2003), construction phase impacts are predicted to be not significant.

It is assumed noise limits will be outlined within the noise and vibration management section of the CEMP that will be produced by the contractor for the Proposed Development and agreed with WCC prior to the commencement of construction. These limits will be adhered to at all times during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

In order to prevent vibration damage during construction works, the NRA recommends that vibration from road construction activities be limited to the values set out in Table 3-8. These values have been derived through consideration of the various international standards; compliance with this guidance is predicted to result in little to no risk of even cosmetic damage to buildings. These limits will be outlined within the CEMP and as a result will be adhered to at all times during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Table 3-8 Typical Allowable Vibration during Road Construction in Order to Minimise the Risk of Building Damage

Frequency:	Less than 10 Hz	10 to 50 Hz	50 to 100 Hz and above
Allowable vibration velocity (Peak Particle Velocity) at the closest part of any sensitive property to the source of vibration:	8 mm/s	12.5 mm/s	20 mm/s

It is likely that noise and vibration mitigation measures; for example, adhering to limits set out in the CEMP, are required to reduce the effects of the likely temporary and negative effects on sensitive receptors during the construction phase. With these measures in place, no significant effects on sensitive receptors are anticipated.

All mitigation measure outlined by the CEMP, the EclA and any planning conditions (if applicable) will be implemented on site.

During the operations phase, there will be no significant noise and vibration effects from the Proposed Development as it is non-vehicular.

3.6.2.6 Cultural Heritage

The study area was originally a marshy river valley with low gravel ridges showing evidence of a rich, multi period archaeological past ranging from the prehistoric through to the 18th century. Much of this has been impacted by the creation of the reservoir with many of the recorded archaeological sites within the study area subject to archaeological excavation.

Most of the Proposed Development is located in a margin of forestry between the shore of the lake and adjoining farmland. The forested section has seen some disturbance from planting, harvesting and drainage works while there has been erosion along the eastern shore of the lake. This will have impacted upon the local archaeological resource. Two existing car parks at Knockieran and Russborough will also be extended with capacity for 50

additional cars created at each location and a tunnel associated with Russborough House will be converted into an access from the Proposed Development.

The potential impacts on the local archaeological resource (consisting of recorded and as yet previously undiscovered archaeological sites and features) would be relatively slight and would consist of potential destruction of sites, features or deposits during construction or impacts upon sites, features or deposits to gain site access through construction accesses or works compounds. The planting of trees in the off-site areas would also create ground disturbance which could impact previously unrecorded sub-surface archaeological remains.

The Proposed Development also passes through the remains of several planned landscapes, in particular, Russellstown (NIAH 4258), Knockieran Cottage (NIAH 4266) and Burgage Moyle Cottage (NIAH 4261). These have been greatly denuded by the construction of the reservoir with the result that they are no longer recognisable as planned landscapes.

The proposed works within the loop located along existing roads and lanes will consist of the erection of signage with associated minor ground disturbance. These areas have already undergone significant disturbance associated with the construction of the roads and adjacent buildings and it is unlikely that the works associated with the Proposed Development will have an archaeological impact.

There are Protected Structures located within the proposed Architectural Conservation Area at Blessington. The modification of the road layouts proposed for the Proposed Development will not alter the setting of the area as the infrastructure is already in place. The siting of Proposed Development related signage could impact upon the settings of the Protected Structures and assets recorded on the NIAH. The Proposed Development design takes this into account and signage will not be placed adjacent to these assets.

Given the potential impact to archaeological remains adjacent to known assets within the forested strip, it is recommended an appropriate mitigation strategy be applied during the Construction Phase. This mitigation should be agreed with the statutory heritage advisers/authorities prior to construction work commencing. Reference should be made to the Blessington Greenway County Wicklow, Archaeological Impact Assessment (AECOM 2020) for a detailed AIA and associated conclusions, recommendations, and mitigation measures.

3.6.2.7 Biodiversity

An EclA has been carried out for the Proposed Development by Flynn Furney (Flynn Furney, 2020) and should be read in conjunction with this report. The EclA concluded that there will be no direct impacts on the designated site. Loss of habitat was of minor adverse significance. Negative effects of minor negative significance were also predicted on some species groups. However, with the application of mitigation measures the significance of these effects will be reduced. Positive effects such as removal of non-native (plantation) trees and invasive species are also predicted. Further information can be found in the EclA.

A number of invasive species occur within or close to the route. Invasive alien plant species recorded included Japanese Knotweed, Giant Knotweed, Cherry Laurel and Snowberry. Knotweed produce a dense canopy and prolific root system. If left untreated it can outcompete many native species and come to dominate habitats. Rhizomes and seeds can easily become stuck to shoes or in the hair of animal, allowing the species to easily spread. Moving soil material containing plant material and partially rhizomes is the most likely strategy for the spread of the stand. The proposed clearance works, and any ongoing maintenance and management of the Proposed Development could lead to the spread of these invasive species owing to their highly competitive nature. An Invasive Species Management Plan will be drawn up to control or eradicate these species from the route corridor. Further information can be found in the EclA.

An Arboriculture Survey and Assessment was also carried out for the Proposed Development by Flynn Furney. This concluded that although approximately 7,265 trees will be required to be removed to facilitate the Proposed Development. The survey identified over 100 trees that should be retained for both ecological and cultural reasons that will be managed and protected during construction of the development.

Tree management activities undertaken on behalf of the ESB typically involve the clear felling of between 1,750 and 2,500 trees every 2/3 years. ESB also conducts thinning activities which typically involves the removal of 75 to 225 trees every 2/3 years. Thus, tree felling occurs in this area as part of routine tree management activities.

The project will replace the approximately 7,265 trees that will be required to be felled to facilitate the scheme. This will involve planting new native species tree along the route in ESB lands (approximately 2,300 trees at 10 m centres over approx. 23 km), and new planting in lands adjacent to the Proposed Development owned by Wicklow County Council (at Knockieran car park, Burgage area and the Avon area) which will accommodate 4,965 trees.

Site operatives and site managers involved in clearance works should be made familiar with the location of specimen trees within the vicinity of their works areas and be able to identify species even if no leaves are present at the time of clearance.

3.6.2.8 Landscape

The Proposed Development will comprise of the construction of a new macadam track following the edge of the Blessington Lakes together with the upgrading of some existing tracks commencing in the town of Blessington, following a route close to the existing shoreline. Existing bridges around the lake will be utilised as part of the development. Additional small bridges along the greenway will be required to cross streams and tributaries. It is anticipated that potential localised significant visual effects may result from the clearing of existing vegetation, the introduction of small structures such as bridges and upgrades to the existing road to include traffic islands, lights and associated signage. The most sensitive receptor are residential properties located around the periphery of the lake. Temporary landscape and visual effects will arise as a result of construction works which are likely to involve earthworks and moving machines and construction works related to the greenway surface. At the completion of construction works, the Proposed Development will integrate into its setting and vegetation along the edges of the greenway will either naturally revegetate and/or planting of native species matching the existing surrounding species will be added where required to ensure the integration of the Proposed Development into the visual amenity. While changes to the local environment will be clearly recognisable, the overall extent and scale of the Proposed Development may alter views locally but not in the wider amenity.

In terms of landscape designations, the Proposed Development site and surrounding environs is identified as 'Mountain Uplands - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' within the Landscape Category Map as contained within the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022. The vulnerability of this landscape categorisation is identified as Very High. While the sensitivity of this classification is also elevated, the Proposed Development is unlikely to adversely alter the established landscape character of this area.

As outlined in Section 3.6.3.9, Russborough House, an 18th century Palladian mansion is located to the immediate west of Blessington lake area. However, given the nature of the Proposed Development and the combined effect of intervening vegetation and topography, it is anticipated that there would be no significant landscape and visual effects associated with Russborough House.

At completion of construction works, residual visual effects are generally considered to be not significant during the operational phase. The existing landscape character will remain largely unaltered and the Proposed Development will fit into the existing setting resulting in no change to the landscape character.

No public lighting will be provided as part of the Proposed Development.

3.6.2.9 Material Assets

Utilities

A desktop study has been carried out to identify all utility constraints located within the study area.

A number of utility providers were contacted to obtain up-to-date information on the location and type of services that could be situated within the defined study area. The desktop study found that the following companies have identified apparatus within the study area that are likely to be affected by the project:

- ESB;
- Irish Water;
- Gas Networks Ireland;
- Eir; and
- Enet.

Aurora Telecom, BT, Vodafone, and Colt also provided information where it has been confirmed that they have no recorded infrastructure in the study area.

Prior to excavation works, the appointed Contractor will be supplied with accurate service drawings and site investigations will be carried out if necessary, to ensure services are not damaged during construction works. It is anticipated that affected services will be protected in-situ, where possible. When service suspensions are required during the construction phase, reasonable prior notice will be given to the residencies in the area. The disruption to services or outages will be carefully planned so the duration is minimised. The timing of local domestic connections will be addressed between the contractor and the local community at the detailed design stage.

It is recommended that a ground penetrating radar (GPR)/existing utility survey be undertaken in sections within the Blessington town area to confirm the locations of the existing utilities obtained from the service providers prior to the construction phase. A GPR/utility survey could also improve the accuracy of the records in relation to quantity, configuration, burial depth and material of pipes and ducts.

During the construction phase of the Proposed Development, some realignment, or replacement of services and utilities may be required in conjunction with or to accommodate the proposed works; these works could potentially result in suspension of services during the construction and diversion works, which could likely result in a temporary and negative effect on existing utilities networks.

No public lighting will be provided as part of the Proposed Development.

No significant effects on existing utilities network are therefore anticipated.

Land Use and Properties

No properties are located within the footprint of the Proposed Development; therefore, there will be no requirement for demolition of commercial or residential properties.

During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there may be potential negative vibration effects to residential and commercial properties and community facilities surrounding the Proposed Development; however, these effects will be temporary and therefore are not likely to cause significant effects to residential and commercial properties in the area.

The Proposed Development will result in the partial loss of commercial forestry; however, given the scale of the forest land being lost, when compared to the amount of forestry land available in the wider area, the reduction of land available is not considered significant. In addition to this, the route is planned for lands under the ownership of ESB and WCC. No productive lands will be lost; therefore, significant effects on existing land use are not anticipated.

It is anticipated that the Proposed Development would have a positive effect on material assets in this area, adding a significant improvement to local infrastructure. The design will consider existing land-usage and will provide access to the Greenway and to associated recreational areas while minimising impacts on adjacent agricultural lands. Existing infrastructure will also be improved with the provision of additional facilities such as improved parking.

3.6.2.10 Waste

The key phase with regard to resource and waste management is the construction phase. As the Proposed Development is largely at grade, there will be no requirement for any significant cut or fill. As outlined in Section 3.5.4, it is not envisaged that there will be a need to remove large quantities of excavated material from within the Proposed Development site boundary. It is therefore considered that there will not be a significant amount of waste generated from the construction of the Proposed Development.

It is anticipated that industry best practice pollution prevention measures and the implementation of a Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan (CDWMP) will be produced and enforced during construction of the Proposed Development. Consultation with WCC should be undertaken to ensure pollution prevention measures are agreed upon and developed prior to construction works.

Any waste produced as part of the project will be dealt with in a sustainable manner and in accordance with Waste Management Act 1996 (S.I No. 10 of 1996) and Waste Management (Amendment) Act 2001 and the CDWMP.

During the operational phase it is estimated approximately 300,000 visitors will use the greenway per annum. It is assumed these visitors will create waste however a projection of waste quantities was not available at the time of writing the EIA Screening. Bins will be provided for the general public with carparking areas and the bins will be emptied as often as required by WCC. Waste removed from site will be transported to a licenced waste/recycling facility by a licenced haulier. It will be up to WCC to ensure the waste bins are emptied as required.

Given that bins will be placed within carparks it is recommended that information on "leave no trace" is provided to users to promote the responsible management of waste by visitors using the outdoors. As described above it is anticipated that a CDWMP will be produced for the Proposed Development. Considering this and provided best practice is followed by the Contractor the production of any waste associated with the development is not anticipated to cause likely significant or adverse effects.

As described above during operation there is potential for visitors to the site to create waste, however it is assumed that WCC will empty bins as required, that best practice will be followed. Considering these no likely significant waste impacts are anticipated.

3.6.2.11 Traffic and Transport

A transport assessment was carried out for the Proposed Development. This section provides a brief summary of the report and should be read in conjunction with the transport assessment.

The surrounding roads around the Blessington Lakes include N81, R758, L4365, Lake Drive and Kilbride Road. The N81 and the N7 are the two major national road that would support visitors driving to and from the Blessington eGreenway and neighbouring counties.

It is estimated the construction stage will take 18 months. The works contractor will be required to prepare a comprehensive traffic management plan for the construction phase. The purpose of such a plan is to outline measure to manage the expected construction traffic activity during the construction period.

The transport assessment examined the traffic and transportation system in the vicinity of the Proposed Development and examined and assessed potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development in relation to traffic. The assessment concluded that sufficient car parking is being proposed within the Proposed Development and the road network can satisfactorily accommodate the increase in traffic associated with both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

A Bridge Shuttle Study was also carried out for the Proposed Development to examine the feasibility of widened shared use paths being incorporated onto the existing bridge locations (Knockieran Bridge, Baltyboys Bridge, and Vallemount Bridge) along the Proposed Development route. Each bridge design has a Toucan crossing setback approximately 30 m to link the Proposed Development route into the widened footpath across the bridges. Modelling results testing the shuttle working designs of three existing bridges, in order to incorporate a shared pedestrian and cycle path, show that there is likely to be minimal traffic capacity constraints. Results, based on the designs developed, suggest that shuttle working on the three bridges can be satisfactorily accommodated without causing traffic congestion. Further information is available within the Bridge Shuttle Study contained as an Appendix to the Blessington eGreenway Design Statement.

3.6.3 The Transboundary Nature of the Impact

There are no transboundary impacts associated with the Proposed Development.

3.6.4 The Intensity and Complexity of the Impact

The majority of the impacts are associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development. However, with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, such as the implementation of a CEMP, it is not anticipated that Proposed Development will result in significant effects to the existing environment. Therefore, intense, and complex impacts are not anticipated.

3.6.5 The Probability of the Impact

Owing to the relatively straight forward nature of the Proposed Development, coupled with the potential impacts stated and the sensitive receptors present at the site, there is a high degree of certainty in the magnitude, intensity, duration or consequences of any impact associated with the Proposed Development; however, as discussed, the likelihood of significant negative effects on the receiving environment is extremely low due to the planned implementation of such best practice construction and maintenance methods. No long-term negative effects are predicted as likely.

3.6.6 The Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact

The majority of the impacts are associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development. With the appropriate mitigation measures potential impacts, including noise and dust impacts, will be temporary (18 months) and transient in nature during the construction phase and will be reversible over time.

It is anticipated the positive impact from the Proposed Development to population and human health during the operational phase would be long term and permanent.

3.6.7 The Possibility of effectively reducing the impact

The Proposed Development is not anticipated to result in any significant effects. However, where temporary and transient impacts are likely to occur, the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures will reduce the duration and intensity of the impact.

4. Summary and Recommendations

4.1 Mandatory Thresholds

As set out above the Proposed Development does not meet the criteria or minimum thresholds outlined in Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended), and therefore does not trigger the requirement for a mandatory EIA.

4.2 Sub Threshold Assessment

In accordance with Section 50(1)(e) of the Roads Act (as amended) a sub-threshold screening assessment was undertaken in accordance with selection criteria outlined in Annex III of the EIA Directive in order to determine whether or not the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The likely impacts that will arise from the Proposed Development have been evaluated in-line with relevant guidance and regulatory frameworks described above, with the following noted:

- It is recognised that during the construction phase of the Proposed Development there may be temporary and transient negative impacts;
- It is anticipated the Proposed Development will result in a positive and long-term effect on population and human health;
- Negative effects of minor negative significance are predicted on some species groups. However, with the application of mitigation measures the significance of these effects will be reduced. Positive effects such as removal of non-native (plantation) trees and invasive species are also predicted;
- The Proposed Development will likely result in slight effects on the local archaeological resource (consisting of recorded and as yet previously undiscovered archaeological sites and features) and would consist of potential destruction of sites, features or deposits during construction or impacts upon sites, features or deposits to gain site access; and
- It is anticipated that the Proposed Development would have a positive effect on material assets in this area, adding a significant improvement to local infrastructure. The design will consider existing land-usage and will provide access to the Greenway and to associated recreational areas without impacts on adjacent agricultural lands. Existing infrastructure will also be improved with the provision of additional facilities such as improved parking.

Given the potential impact to archaeological remains adjacent to known assets within the forested strip, it is recommended an appropriate mitigation strategy be applied during the construction phase. Specific recommendations with respect to Cultural Heritage are outlined below and, in the AIA, (AECOM, 2020). It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out (involving archaeological monitoring and recording) alongside groundworks adjacent to the recorded RMP sites within, and immediately adjacent to, the Proposed Development. These comprise:

- Assets associated with the medieval borough of Burgage More (WI005-07001-016);
- Wedge tomb (WI010-062) at Carrigacurra;
- Enclosure (WI010-019) at Ballyknockan;
- Ringfort (WI010-018) at Ballyknockan;
- Moated site (WI005-078) at Carrig;
- Mill site (WI005-078) at Burgage More; and
- Neolithic house (WI010-058) at Boystown/Baltyboys Upper.

The appointed archaeologist will also undertake a watching brief / testing of the sections of the Proposed Development at Vallemount, the off-site tree planting and the car parks at Knockieran and Russborough. This will relate to the following:

- Vallemount- The existing stone walls, steps and paths should be subject to record by photograph and written description prior to construction works within this area;
- Vallemount- The memorial erected post February 2018 should remain in situ with care taken to ensure no accidental impact during the works;

- The tunnel to Russborough House (4256) should be subject to record by photograph and written description prior to conversion to an access as part of the Proposed Development;
- Archaeological testing take place within the Knockieran car park area proposed for tree planting prior to construction works within this area;
- Archaeological testing take place within the Burgage Area proposed for tree planting prior to construction works within this area;
- Archaeological testing take place within the Avon Area proposed for tree planting prior to construction works within this area;
- The Cross Inscribed stone (WI010-048) and Ballyknockan Ruin/Biddy Mulvey's Cottage (RPS ref 10-5) should be noted to all contractor staff. Care should be taken to avoid accidental impact during adjacent works. The Cross Inscribed stone (WI010-048) should be demarcated with barrier tape if practical;
- Groundworks associated with construction accesses and works compounds within Greenfield be subject to constant archaeological monitoring;
- Groundworks associated with the extension of Knockieran car park be subject to constant archaeological monitoring; and
- Groundworks associated with the extension of Russborough car park be subject to constant archaeological monitoring.

It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out (involving archaeological monitoring and recording) alongside groundworks adjacent to the recorded RMP sites within, and immediately adjacent to, the Proposed Development such as construction access through Greenfield. The appointed archaeologist will also undertake a cursory watching brief of the remainder of the path works during the construction phase. A photographic and written record must be made of the existing stone walls, steps, and paths at Valleymount and the tunnel at Russborough. Care must be taken during works adjacent to the Cross Inscribed stone (WI010-048), Ballyknockan Ruin / Biddy Mulvey's Cottage (RPS ref 10-5) and the modern memorial erected post February 2018. Any archaeological mitigation must be agreed in consultation with the National Monuments Service and Wicklow County Council.

A number of mitigation measure have also been outlined within the EclA submitted for the Proposed Development as well as a number of enhancement measures. These include the limiting of works areas, protection of more mature trees and the timing of works. Enhancement measures include the planting of native trees to benefit birds and other species; the planting of food plants for Marsh Fritillary a protected butterfly species as suitable food plants for the species were identified along the proposed route; and the management of grassland areas for the benefit of pollinators. Detailed information on ecological mitigation measures and enhancement measures are contained the EclA submitted for the Proposed Development.

In addition to the above a number of mitigation measure have also been outlined within the Arboricultural Survey. These include the avoidance of damage to tree roots where practicable, dynamic/static cable bracing, staged veteranisation, cellular confinement systems, protective barriers, ground protection and the replacement of trees removed to facilitate the Proposed Development. It is recommended that a suitably qualified arborist be present on-site during all tree works to oversee installation and maintenance of protective measures as well as tree reduction/removal. Further information is contained within Flynn Furney (2021).

Based on the above, it is the view of AECOM that the Proposed Development will not result in likely significant effects on the environment provided the mitigation measures laid out herein and within the various reports accompanying this submission are adhered to and implemented during the construction and operational phases. It has been assumed any mitigation and monitoring measures outlined herein, within the various reports accompanying this submission or laid out within planning conditions should permission be granted would be included within the Contractors CEMP. Therefore, the preparation of an EIA is not recommended for the Proposed Development. It is noted that this is a recommendation to support the final determination by the competent authority.

5. References

- AECOM. (2020). Blessington Greenway County Wicklow, Archaeological Impact Assessment. AECOM.
- Flynn Furney (2021). Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS). prepared for Wicklow County Council
- AECOM (2021a). Blessington eGreenway Transport Assessment. prepared for Wicklow County Council
- AECOM (2021b). Blessington eGreenway, Bridge Shuttle Working Study, prepared for Wicklow County Council.
- Berglund, B., Lindwall, T., and Schwela, D.H. (2003). *Guidelines for Community Noise*, World Health Organisation (WHO).
- CIRIA. (2006). *C648 Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects*, Construction Industry Research and Information Association.
- CIRIA. (2001). *C532 Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites*, Construction Industry Research and Information Association.
- DHPLG. (2018). *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- EC. (2017). *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening*, European Commission
- EPA. (2017). *Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Report*, Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland.
- Flynn Furney, (2021). Blessington Greenway: Ecological Impact Assessment Report. Flynn, Furney Environmental Consultants.
- Flynn Furney, (2021). Blessington Greenway Scheme Arboricultural Survey and Assessment Report. Flynn, Furney Environmental Consultants.
- NRA. (2004). *Guidelines for the Treatment of Noise and Vibration in National Road Schemes*, National Roads Authority.
- TII. (2008). *Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A Practical Guide*. National Roads Authority.
- WCC. (2016). Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022, Wicklow County Council.

Appendix A Screening Checklist

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
1. Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	Yes- The Proposed Development will result in land use change. Areas of commercial forestry and agricultural land will be lost.	No- The route is planned for lands under the ownership of ESB and WCC. No productive lands will be lost. The route will generally be located within a highly modified landscape (an artificial reservoir with substantial coniferous plantations). The removal of any trees as a result of the Proposed Development will be offset with the planting of further trees.
2. Will construction or the operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	Yes – It is assumed that some cut may be required along the Proposed Development. It is also assumed a water supply will be required during the construction phase. Land take of agricultural land and commercial conifer plantation is required to facilitate the Proposed Development	No- All imported materials will be sourced from licensed suppliers and where possible cut/fill will be balanced so the impact is not likely to be significant. It is assumed a water supply will be required during the construction phase.
3. Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes- During construction only.	No – A Health and Safety Plan will be in place and all site staff will be briefed on the Health and Safety Plan prior to commencing works.
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes- During construction only.	No- Waste management (including CDWMP) shall form part of the overall CEMP for the construction phase and contain a number of control measures for the management of waste generated on the Proposed Development site.
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC)?	No- The construction phase will produce limited air pollutants.	NA
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes- During construction phase only.	No - With appropriate mitigation measures in place, no significant effects on sensitive rereports are anticipated.
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal wasters or the sea?	Yes- During construction phase only.	No - With appropriate mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are anticipated.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project that could affect human health or the environment?	Yes- During construction phase only.	No – Health and Safety Plan will be in place during the construction phase. It is anticipated this will be communicated to all site staff through communication pathways such as site inductions and toolbox talks.

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
9. Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes- It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will promote a healthier lifestyle.	No- Significant effects are not anticipated.
10. Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes- There will be temporary and transient impacts from noise, traffic and dust associated with construction of the Proposed Development in combination with the surrounding developments.	No- Potential effects are considered to be not significant and temporary. There is likely to be a positive, long term and moderate cumulative effect from the Proposed Development with other cycleway and pedestrian routes in the area.
11. Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The Proposed Development encircles Blessington Lake or Poulaphouca Reservoir, which is designated as a pNHA and as a SPA.	There are likely to be significant landscape and visual adverse short-term effects associated the construction phase. There are no long-term residual landscape and visual effects anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development with regard to the landscape character and visual amenity associated with the pNHA and SPA (Site Code 004063). The works are small in scale and associated with the resurfacing of existing and introduction of new asphalt paths to the periphery of the lake area.
12. 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, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the Project?	See above.	See above.
13. Are there any areas on or around the location that are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes - The Proposed Development encircles Blessington Lake or Poulaphouca Reservoir is designated as a pNHA and as a SPA.	No- There will be no direct impacts on the designated site. Loss of habitat was of minor adverse significance. Negative effects of minor negative significance were also predicted on some species groups. However, with the application of mitigation measures the significance of these impacts will be reduced. Positive effects such as removal of non-native (plantation) trees and invasive species are also predicted.
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The Proposed Development encircles Blessington Lake or Poulaphouca Reservoir.	No- Pollution prevention measures will be put in place to reduce the risk of contaminants polluting the ground waterbody underlying the Proposed Development site. A hydrological study will be undertaken as part of the culvert and structure design process to establish the extents of any floodplain and also to adequately size the structure, consequently, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in significant effect on the existing hydrological regime.

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	Yes - The Proposed Development site and surrounding environs is identified as <i>'Mountain Uplands - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'</i> within the Landscape Category Map as contained within the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022.	No- The vulnerability of this landscape categorisation is identified as Very High. While the sensitivity of this classification is also elevated, the Proposed Development is unlikely to adversely alter the established landscape character of this area upon completion. There are likely to be significant adverse short-term effects associated the construction phase that will impact on this designated area.
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	No- The Proposed Development will consist of upgrading the existing paths around the lakes, therefore, improve connectivity for recreational users in the area.	NA
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	No	NA
18. Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes- It is anticipated that potential localised significant visual effects may result from the clearing of existing vegetation. The most sensitive receptor are residential properties located around the periphery of the lake. Temporary landscape and visual effects will arise as a result of construction works which are likely to involve earthworks and moving machines and construction works related to the greenway surface.	No - At completion of construction works, residual visual effects are generally considered to be not significant during the operational phase. The existing landscape character will remain largely unaltered and the Proposed Development will fit into the existing setting resulting in no change to the landscape character.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The potential impacts on the local archaeological resource (consisting of recorded and as yet previously undiscovered archaeological sites and features) would be relatively slight and would consist of potential destruction of sites, features or deposits during construction or impacts upon sites, features or deposits to gain site access.	No – Significant effects on cultural heritage assets are not anticipated.
20. Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes- The Proposed Development is located within a predominantly greenfield site. The Proposed Development site is surrounded by woodlands, rising hills and dominated by the backdrop of the Wicklow Mountains to the east.	No- As previously outlined, given the scale of the forest and agricultural land being lost, when compared to the amount of forestry and agricultural land available in the wider area, the reduction of land available is not considered significant.
21. Are there existing land uses within or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The Proposed Development will result in the loss of agricultural land conifer plantation will be lost.	See above.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	No- The planning applications within proximity to the Proposed Development	NA

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
	are predominantly small-scale residential extensions.	
23. Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the Project?	No- The Proposed Development is located in a rural setting. Blessington village is the largest settlement in the area and is located to the north west of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development also passes through smaller villages including, Valleymount, Ballyknockan and Lacken. The Proposed Development site is surrounded by woodlands, rising hills and dominated by the backdrop of the Wicklow Mountains to the east.	No- During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there may be potential noise, vibration and traffic impacts; however, effects will be temporary and of short duration and therefore are not likely to cause significant effects to sensitive receptors in the area. During the operation, it is anticipated that the Proposed Development will likely result in a positive and long-term effect to communities in the area
24. Are there any areas within or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, that could be affected by the Project?	No- there are no areas occupied with sensitive land uses that could be affected by the Proposed Development. During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there may be potential noise, vibration and traffic impacts to sensitive receptors in the area; however, these impacts will be temporary and of short duration. It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will likely result in a positive and long-term impact to communities in the area.	No- The Proposed Development is not likely to cause significant effects to sensitive receptors in the area.
25. Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The Proposed Development is located adjacent to the Poulaphuca Reservoir, which is the most extensive inland water body in Wicklow and is an active reservoir (for both water supply and electricity generation; this could be impacted during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.	No- Significant effects are not anticipated due to the implementation of appropriate control measures (e.g. CEMP).
26. Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, that could be affected by the Project?	No- No areas, including waterbodies located close to the Proposed Development site and existing air quality conditions, have exceeded existing legal environmental standards.	NA
27. Is the Project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the Project to present environmental problems?	Yes - Sections of the lake have been known to flood and there are previous flood events recorded in the western and eastern boundaries of the lake. An FRA was undertaken to understand the risks in more detail.	No- Significant effects are not anticipated. A hydrological study will be undertaken as part of the culvert and structure design process to establish the extents of any floodplain and also to adequately size the structure, consequently. Suitable interception measures and, if necessary, additional overland flow culverts, will be included as part of the design to prevent flooding from overland flows.
28. Summary of features of Project and of its location indicating the need for EIA:	N/A	

Source: *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening (EC, 2017)*

Appendix B Planning Application Search (2014 – 23/02/2021)

Relevant Planning Application Search (2014 – 23/02/2021) (*Distance from approximate centre point of the Blessington Poulaphouca Reservoir)

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
211237	amend the design of the approved development (Planning Reference 17/908) which comprises consent for a Solar PV Energy Development. Proposed amendments include (1) Project lifetime proposed to be extended from 30 years to 35 years (2) Substation to increase in size (3) Change in height and angle of solar panels (4) Transformer containers to increase in size (5) Removal of the customer substation (6) Deer fencing to increase in size (7) MW output to be increased from 10.8 to 15MW to align with existing grid connection offer (8) Slight alteration to the access tracks and (9) Number of CCTV cameras to reduce.	Received 14/10/2021	n/a	c.6km northeast
20713	use of an existing internal haul road at Doran's pit, Blessington for the importation of inert soil and stone waste for backfilling and restoration / recovery at a soil recovery facility to be established at Redbog Pit in Co. Kildare. The proposed haul road extends over 2.9 hectares, from an existing junction with the N81 National Secondary Road at Santryhill townland and through the townlands of Newpaddocks and Dillonsdown to the county boundary with Co. Kildare. Planning permission is sought for a period of 30 years. The proposed soil waste recovery facility at Redbog Pit requires a waste licence from the Environmental Protection Agency. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be submitted to the Planning Authority in connection with the application	Received 24/07/2020 Request for Further Information Application On-hold	n/a	c.5km north
SH202001	application to ABP for a Strategic Housing Development which consists of the following: 360 no. dwelling units in a mix of houses, duplexes and apartment units ranging from 2 to 3 storeys, including associated car parking spaces, internal roads and paths, public and private open spaces and a crèche. Out of the 360 residential units, 36 no. units are dedicated to met the applicant's obligations under Part V of the Planning & Development Act. Each unit has associated private open space, as well as public open spaces accessible to all units with hard and soft landscaping treatment. Balconies are to be provided in the apartment blocks T1, T2, I1, U2 and U3 and terraces are provided at first and second floor of duplex types P, R and S. The proposed development includes for measures to upgrade the Blessington Orchard/Kilmalum Road and Culvert over the Deerpark Watercourse, from the Roundabout junction of Kilmalum Road with Kilmalum Crescent to the culver over the Deerpark Watercourse and these works are to comprise replacement of existing dished curb and crossing, with a new ramp pelican pedestrian crossing, a cycle track adjacent to Kilmalum Road to improve pedestrian and cycle connections into the subject site to and from Blessington connecting into an existing footpath at Kilmalum Road, underground connection to the existing watermain, upgrade to the existing pipe culvert within the proposed open space of the subject site and proposed culvert beneath Blessington Orchard Road/Kilmalum Road. 490 car parking space, 130 shared spaces , with 7 disables car parking spaces and 45 visitor spaces, giving an overall 675 car parking spaces. Residential bicycle spaces with a further 114 bicycle spaces provided throughout the development for apartment, duplexes and visitor spaces. A two storey crèche (approx. 476.5sqm) with approx. 730 sqm of outdoor play area with a capacity for 80 no. children. associated car parking for the crèche. 1 no. vehicular access and 2 no. pedestrian access. Pedestrian connections to the adjoining residential development at Blessington Manor via per every 2 units. Associated site and infrastructural works including ESB substations, foul and surface water drainage, attenuation tanks, landscaping, boundary walls and fences, internal road, cyclepaths and footpaths. All on lands measuring C. 11.83 hectares. A NIS has been prepared in respect of the proposed development.	Live SHD Application	n/a	c.4km northwest
219	amendment to previously approved planning application (Planning Ref 19/693). The proposed amendment consists of the relocation of the ESB Substation, onto the northern site boundary of the development as required by ESB Networks; 1.8m high enclosure walls to substation in finishes to match approved dwellings as well as all associated and ancillary site and ground works	23/02/2021	n/a	c.4km northwest
20471	constructing a single storey dwelling to the rear of an existing cottage which fronts onto Barrack Street, restoration of existing cottage for use as a home office/store, new vehicular entrance and all ancillary site works	12/10/2020	15/11/2025	c.6.9km west

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
20562	the construction of a detached single storey bungalow, modifications to existing recessed entrance secondary effluent treatment system and all associated site works	09/10/2020	11/11/2025	c.8km west
20834	detached single storey domestic garage incorporating a home office & garden shed and for all associated site works	07/10/2020	10/11/2025	c.5km west
20649	the construction of a 4 bedroom bungalow dwelling, modification of existing vehicular access to form new dual vehicular access, construction of new driveway to serve the dwelling, construction of a new packaged wastewater treatment system and tertiary fi	17/08/2020	20/09/2025	c.7km west
20108	demolition of a 1.5 storey derelict outbuilding (within the curtilage of a protected structure) and for the construction of 45 no residential units consisting of 24 no two storey 3 bed (5 person) terraced houses (101.6 sqm), 7 no two storey 3 bed (5 person) terraced houses (105.5 sqm) and 2 no two storey semi detached houses (101.6 sqm), 3 no 2 storey apartment blocks consisting of 12 no apartments consisting 6 no ground floor apartments, 2 bed (4 persons) (88 sqm) and 6 no 1st floor apartments 2 bed (4 persons) (75 sqm), maintaining the existing Rectory building (protected structure) as a residential house as is, maintaining the existing Mass Path, a communal pedestrian footpath extending towards Main Street, a communal cycle lane and a communal pedestrian footpath beyond the south eastern boundary wall and adjacent to Kilbride Road, 81 no car parking spaces, renovation and relocation of the derelict eastern entrance pier and wall (within the curtilage of a protected structure), widening of existing gate / entrance plus new pedestrian gate and improved access to existing Mass Path, new front boundary wall and railing, drainage infrastructure, landscaping, services and all associated works	31/07/2020	03/09/2025	c.4km north
2059	(a) the demolition of the existing pub & restaurant building; (b) the erection of a part single, part two storey building providing retail space, a restaurant, an orangery structure, commercial kitchen & ancillary staff & W.C. areas at ground floor level	14/07/2020	24/08/2025	c.7km west
191416	the building of 2 no. detached dormer type dwellings each with a small detached domestic garage, to install individual on-site wastewater treatment systems to current EPA guidelines for each dwelling to provide new shared recessed entrance & common drive	24/06/2020	09/08/2025	c.5km west
191415	construction of a single storey two bedroom traditional style cottage with new vehicular entrance from Barrack Street, connections to mains water and mains sewage and all associated works and services	18/06/2020	06/08/2025	c.6.9km west
2063	demolition of existing cottage and construction of a new single storey dwelling and upgrading of existing septic tank to an Oakstown treatment plant with soil polishing filter and all associated site works	27/04/2020	29/06/2025	c.5km north
19847	the erection of a 2 storey dwelling & attached single storey out building, a stable yard containing 14 stables, tack room & equine store, a platform for the placing of containers for storing equestrian waste; a domestic proprietary waste water treatment	08/04/2020	13/07/2025	c.7km west
19750	91 no. 2 storey residential dwellings comprised of 6 no. 4 bedroom detached houses, 6 no. 4 bedroom terraced houses, 6 no. 3 bed detached houses, 71 no. 3 bedroom semi-detached & terraced houses and 2 no. 2 bedroom semi-detached houses on a site measuring approximately 5 hectares. Access to the proposed development will be via 2 no. new vehicular access points, from the R411 road to the west of the proposed site & from Truce Road to the east of the proposed site. The development also includes for all associated site development works, drainage, landscaping, open spaces etc.	27/03/2020	29/06/2025	c.7km west
191150	Major renovations of the Mill building complex to house a Craft Micro-Distillery (gfa 453.8sqm) including refurbishment, conversion and consolidation/stabilisation of existing structures (four, three, two and single storey buildings) around existing upper and lower courtyard (Blocks 2, 3 and 4). The craft micro-distillery will include a brew-house, still house, 2 No. warehouses for storing 1,000 No.	17/02/2020	14/04/2025	c.7km west

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
	whiskey casks, empty cask storage space, plant room and cooperage. A minor increase in floor area is proposed in Blocks 3 and 4 in order to provide for new mezzanines and stairs (74.2sqm). It is also proposed to undertake refurbishment and consolidation/stabilisation of structures in upper courtyard (Block 5, gfa 213sqm) with no associated new use. The development includes landscaping, boundary treatment, drainage, parking and all ancillary associated site works (including alterations to existing mill pond to facilitate a detention basin, bunding and spill containment; fire water retention basin). The existing road and pedestrian access to and through the site will remain unchanged			
19313	single storey dwelling, serviced with small on site wastewater treatment system to current EPA guidelines, access via existing entrance and all associated site works	19/12/2019	29/01/2025	c.4km south
191186	importation and deposition of up to 16,606m3 of inert subsoil and topsoil arising from the N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment project only, for land re-profiling and re-contouring purposes at existing agricultural lands of 1.4 hectares and all ancillary site works	19/12/2019	29/01/2025	c.8km southwest
19354	a single storey and storey and a half dwelling house, effluent treatment plant, landscaping and all associated site development works	12/12/2019	26/01/2025	c.5km northwest
19693	demolition of existing agricultural shed (14 sqm) and the construction of 56 no residential units (2 no 4 bed houses, 49 no 3 bed houses, 3 no 2 bed houses and 2 no 2 bed apartments), 113 no ancillary car parking spaces, hard and soft landscaping, lighting, balconies facing northeast and southwest, solar panels, boundary treatments, ESB substation, changes in level, and all associated site development works above and below ground	26/11/2019	11/05/2025	c.4km northwest
19301	single storey dwelling, septic tank and percolation area to current EPA guidelines, recessed entrance shared with existing agricultural entrance and all associated site works	20/11/2019	14/01/2025	c.2km southwest
191053	(1) the demolition of an existing two storey 20th century wing which contains an en-suite bathroom, powder room & guest accommodation; (2) the demolition of internal partition walls and forming new opens in the existing kitchen, family room & lobby area (15/11/2019	02/01/2025	c.7km west
19112	(a) Proposed new dormer dwelling; (b) New vehicle entrance; (c) New retaining wall structure to northern and eastern boundaries; (d) Connection to existing public sewer along with all associated site development and facilitating works	30/09/2019	04/11/2024	c.7km west
181347	84 No. dwellings in total (consisting of 10 No. Type A, four bedroom, two storey detached houses of 175sqm, 5 No. Type A1, four bedroom two storey detached houses of 175sqm, 2 No. Type B, four bedroom two storey detached houses of 140sqm, 7 No. Type B1, four bedroom, two storey detached houses of 140sqm, 12 No. Type B1s, four bedroom, two storey semi-detached houses of 140sqm, 3 No. Type B2, four bedroom, two storey detached houses of 149sqm, 3 No. Type B4s four bedroom, two storey semi-detached houses of 149sqm, 1 No. Type C, three bedroom, two storey, detached house of 112sqm, 5 No. Type Cs, three bedroom, two storey, semi-detached house of 112sqm, 15 No. Type C1s three bedroom, two storey semi-detached house of 112sqm, 5 No. Type D, two bedroom, single storey detached houses of 87sqm, 11 No. Type D1s, two bedroom single storey semi-detached houses of 87sqm, 1 No. Type DD, two bedroom, single storey detached house of 92sqm, 2 No. Type E1, two bedroom apartment of 77sqm, 2 No. Type E2, one bedroom apartment of 50sqm), a single storey crèche (210sqm), single storey residents' gym (90sqm), a medical clinic with 4 No. consultants' suites (180sqm), a retail unit (76sqm) and Design Centre/office (360sqm), public parkland and associated road works, parking, footpaths and cycle facilities, drainage, hard and soft landscaping including 2 No. pedestrian bridges over the stream and associated engineering works necessary to serve the development on lands to the south of Coughlanstown Road and the Naas Road in the townland	22/07/2019	26/08/2024	c.6km west

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
19554	a new detached single storey dwelling with a detached garage, new vehicular access, new driveway and associated site works	10/07/2019	18/08/2024	c.5km west
19341	removal of 2 no single storey, detached temporary classroom structures (75 sqm and 46 sqm) and relocation of 1 no single storey, detached 'portacabin' (18 sqm) store, plus dismantling of stone piers and adjustments to adjacent stone walls plus removal of existing gates and reconstruction of stone piers and interface with walls in new set back location to provide a minimum 3.6m wide clear access gateway with new wrought metalwork gates, plus demolition of contemporary construction single storey toilet block (18 sqm) and removal of existing tile grid suspended ceilings and partition wall, door frame and tank store over, plus construction of new single storey toilet block extension (52 sqm) and rear access with roof lights, plus tank housing and sedum covered flat roof over, plus new main entrance disabled access ramp, stone steps and planter, plus new safety handrail to side entrance, plus conservation of slate roof, rainwater goods, stonework and windows, plus installation and draft proofing of floors, walls and roof plus new openings in internal walls and provision of new doors, plus renewal and improvements to the water, electrical, plumbing, heating and hot water systems including location of external module air to water heating plant plus new drainage systems including proprietary effluent treatment system with percolation area as previously permitted under Planning Permission 17/122, plus associated site development works and soft landscaping all in accordance with conservation principles as apply	17/06/2019	29/07/2024	c.1.6km northeast
181355	a dwelling, garage, on-site treatment unit and all associated site works including widening of existing farm entrance. All above works on my land	22/05/2019	25/06/2024	c.9.7km southwest
181550	new two-storey, dormer roof house with slate roof and render finished exterior walls, new site entrance driveway, waste water treatment system and ancillary site works	18/04/2019	28/05/2024	c.5km west
181198	(a) Proposed two storey dwelling, (b) Use of existing entrance, (c) Domestic garage, (d) Treatment system and percolation area along with all associated site development and facilitating works	22/03/2019	13/05/2024	c.7km west
18653	dormer storey detached dwelling, wastewater treatment plant, new entrance and associated works	22/11/2018	10/01/2024	c.8km southwest
18802	part storey and half part single storey dwelling, serviced with small on site wastewater treatment and disposal system to current EPA guidelines, recessed entrance and all associated site works	25/10/2018	05/12/2023	c.2km west
18106	reinstate existing sand / gravel pit for agricultural purposes which includes raising existing levels / landscaping and associated works	19/10/2018	28/11/2023	c.8km southwest
18191	construction of five detached dwellings, comprising of four no. part two storey, part single storey dwellings, one no. single storey dwelling with double garage, new site entrance and boundary walls, access driveways to service all individual houses, new boundary treatments to existing dwelling and adjoining childcare facility, five new individual waste water treatment systems with percolation areas, relocation of the existing on-site treatment system and percolation area, landscaping and all associated site development works	20/08/2018	22/10/2023	c.10km northwest
18680	single storey dwelling with a wastewater treatment system and ancillary site works	08/08/2018	11/09/2023	c.1.5km west
18375	2 x 40 ft and 1 x 30 ft storage containers to provide storage for rowing boats and related rowing training equipment required for the purposes of leisure, training and competitive racing	30/05/2018	10/07/2023	c.1km west

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
17908	solar PV panel array comprising photovoltaic panels on ground mounted frames within a site area of 21.04 ha, 8 no single storey MV substations, 1 no single storey DSO substation, 1 no single storey customer substation with 1 no communications pole attached, 1 no single storey spares building, boundary securing fencing and access gates, CCTV, associated electrical cabling and ducting, upgraded and new access tracks and all associated ancillary development and landscaping works. The planning application includes a Natura Impact Statement	11/05/2018	20/06/2023	c.6km northeast
1881	constructing a split level part single storey/ part 2 storey dwelling, new low-level concrete retaining wall on site, new vehicular entrance and all ancillary site works	22/03/2018	17/05/2023	c.7km west
171193	single storey dwelling with a Oakstown treatment plant and sand polishing filter along with upgrading of existing entrance and all associated site works	12/03/2018	17/04/2023	c.3km south
171452	a single storey dwelling, effluent treatment system and percolation area, upgrade of existing site entrance and all associated site development works	21/02/2018	25/04/2023	c.7.5km west
171443	single storey private dwelling in side garden of existing private dwelling using side existing entrance to side garden as entrance to proposed development	20/02/2018	03/04/2023	c.7km west
17505	the construction of single storey dwelling with on-site sewage treatment system and double garage with all site development works	31/01/2018	13/03/2023	c.9km west
171159	4 bedroom bungalow with detached garage along with sewerage system to comply with EPA 2009 together with new entrance and all associated site works	09/01/2018	18/02/2023	c.2.8km southwest
171138	dormer bungalow, entrance, on-site sewage treatment system and relocation and replacement of existing septic tank and all associated site works	08/01/2018	08/02/2023	c.2.8km southwest
17827	bungalow, on site treatment unit, entrance and all associated site works	29/12/2017	08/02/2023	c.2km southwest
17938	single storey dwelling, vehicle entrance, domestic double garage, treatment system and percolation area along with all associated site development and facilitating works	18/12/2017	31/01/2023	c.8km southwest
17858	to construct an equine breeding centre and farm yard buildings. The development will consist of 4 no. Blocks arranged around a central courtyard. Block 1 will consist of a covered horse walker and lunge ring. Block 2 will consist of 14 no. Stables with wash bay, vet room, tack room and hay/feed store at ground floor and an office space over one half section at first floor. Block 3 will consist of 6 no. stables to one side with cattle shed to the other with overhang roof. Block 4 will consist of a hay store and machinery storage barn. Permission also sought for:- (a) to construct a covered muck heap storage area. (b) to construct an underground soiled water holding tank. (c) a secondary effluent treatment system with a sand filter percolation area to serve the proposed facility. (d) to relocate and upgrade the existing farm entrance approx. 12m to the north of its existing location for the purpose of improving sight lines. (e) lay an access roadway from the public road to the farm yard which is located immediately after the existing stream which traverses the land. (f) to carry out land drainage work on the field adjacent to the roadway by the laying of a 225 pipe diameter from the proposed new entrance to the stream with herring bone minor drains feeding into main drain	23/10/2017	29/11/2022	c.9km west
161091	single storey, 3 bedroom dwelling with a new vehicular entrance, a new wastewater treatment system and ancillary site works	14/09/2017	17/10/2022	c.1.5km west

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
17895	2 storage containers, to be used for the storage of lifesaving and water safety training equipment	05/09/2017	05/10/2022	c.1.6km northwest
16776	bungalow, effluent treatment system and ancillary works	12/06/2017	20/07/2022	c.3km south
161009	201 sqm dormer storey house, wastewater treatment system, new entrance, 44.2 sqm detached garage and associated works	18/05/2017	22/06/2022	c.2.8km southwest
17270	2 storey house with proprietary wastewater treatment system and ancillary works	05/05/2017	12/06/2022	c.7km west
17251	single storey dwelling, serviced with septic tank and percolation area to current EPA guidelines, recessed entrance and all associated site works	28/04/2017	08/06/2022	c.2.8km south
17172	clubhouse building (1952 sqm) incorporating multi purpose sports hall, dressing rooms, showers, toilet facilities, office, tea rooms, medical room, storage at ground floor level & meeting room at first floor level together with ancillary site development	10/04/2017	23/05/2022	c.4.8km north
1758	The demolition of existing old external stand; The construction of a new three storey trackside stand with ground floor Reserved Bar, Champagne Bar, toilets and ancillary accommodation; Ground floor link building to existing trackside unit; First floor Owners and Trainers restaurant, kitchen facilities, toilets and ancillary accommodation; Third floor private viewing suite, plant rooms and ancillary accommodation; New integrated external viewing grandstand terracing and associated external landscaping works to the reserved enclosure and trackside areas. Also, the construction of new separate catering facility unit with kitchens, stores and ancillary accommodation linked to existing trackside building; also, the connection of proposed new buildings to the existing storm drainage and waste water treatment plant	20/03/2017	26/04/2022	c.10km northwest
16679	single storey bungalow, septic tank, percolation area and domestic garage and all associated site development works	01/03/2017	06/04/2022	c.7km west
16661	single storey dwelling, wastewater treatment system, new entrance and new driveway together with all ancillary works	29/11/2016	15/01/2022	c.5m southwest
151079	The construction of 5 No. 2 storey 4 bedroom terraced houses including associated siteworks, landscaping and car parking	28/11/2016	31/01/2022	c.7km west
16682	dormer style bungalow, double garage, on site treatment system, polishing filter shared entrance and all associated site works	21/10/2016	30/11/2021	c.2km south
16685	single storey dwelling, serviced with small on-site wastewater treatment system to current EPA guidelines, recessed entrance and all associated site works	17/10/2016	21/11/2021	c.2km west
16811	a signalised pedestrian crossing on the Blessington inner relief road at Blessington demesne, Blessington, co. Wicklow. the proposed crossing is approximately 25m from the existing roundabout (northern arm) which is located approximately 165m west of the town centre & will consist of traffic lights on both sides of the road, dropped kerbs & associated road markings. a courtesy crossing point is also proposed on the eastern arm of the existing roundabout which includes dropped kerbs. the application also seeks permission to alter condition 3 & 18 of reg. ref: 00/3687 (extended through reg. ref: 12/6585) which restrict the construction & occupation of homes.	12/10/2016	15/11/2021	c.5km northwest

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
16687	single storey cottage type dwelling, small domestic shed, on site wastewater treatment and disposal system to current EPA guidelines, shared entrance with existing field gate and all associated site works	28/09/2016	09/11/2021	c.1.7km northeast
16697	construct a one and a half storey house. Install a domestic waste water secondary treatment unit with sand polishing filter. Use shared recessed entrance. All ancillary groundworks on this site	26/08/2016	23/10/2021	c.6km west
151189	a single storey dwelling with on-site treatment plant a soil polishing filter along with a garage & all associated site works	15/06/2016	20/07/2021	c.4km south
16643	development consisting of new dormer storey house, wastewater treatment system, new entrance, 36.5sqm detached garage & associated works	12/10/2016	21/11/2021	c.2.8km southwest
15943	demolition of existing cottage and construction of a new single storey dwelling and upgrading of existing septic tank and percolation area to a treatment system and soil polishing filter and all associated site works	29/04/2016	08/06/2021	c.3km south
15906	construction of bungalow, domestic garage, new entrance and on-site effluent treatment system and associated site works	18/04/2016	29/05/2021	c.2km southwest
1696	The demolition of the existing sludge filter press house, 2 no. existing thickened sludge holding tanks and a cable duct chamber	01/04/2016	22/08/2021	c.6km west
15362	Demolition of existing bungalow dwelling to entrance of Barrack Street Close, reduction of raised mound to front of estate in line with existing roadway level, the construction of 4 number 3 storey, 3 bedroom dwellings to include the following site works	06/11/2015	16/12/2020	c.6.9km west
15293	To construct 1 set of semi-detached houses (2 houses total) with separate vehicular entrances (combined as per Kildare Co. Co. Roads Department Standards) and all ancillary site works on the most northerly of 3 number sites (previously granted under Ref.	02/10/2015	11/11/2020	c.7km west
15397	Single storey dwelling, serviced with on-site wastewater treatment system to current EPA guidelines, domestic shed, recessed entrance and all associated siteworks in side garden of existing dwelling and to re-locate and replace existing septic tank and p	21/09/2015	01/11/2020	c.7km west
15371	Construction of a two storey dwelling, along with detached garage outbuilding, a separate stable block with 3 loose boxes, tack room and storage, a dungstead, a waste water treatment unit and all ancillary works. All for domestic use. The site is within the historic curtilage of Ardenode House which is a Protected Structure {RPS (B29-11)}	26/06/2015	04/08/2020	c.7km west
15295	demolition of existing cottage and construction of new dwelling and all associated site works	18/06/2015	20/07/2020	c.7km southwest
15210	construction of a one and a half storey house, vehicular entrance and associated site works on the centre site of 3 number sites (previously granted under Ref. No. 08/1301)	15/05/2015	14/06/2020	c.7km west
14956	(a) The construction of a new storey and a half dwelling house, flat roofed single storey garage and all associated site and landscaping work. (b) New foul water connection to be made to the public foul water main drainage system. (c) Proposed dwelling to be accessed through the existing vehicular entrance on the public roadway associated with the neighbouring dwelling. New driveway, entrance piers and associated gates to be formed within the boundaries of the site	13/03/2015	11/04/2025	c.7km west
138885	4 bedroom bungalow (190sqm), new entrance, waste water treatment system with percolation area and all ancillary site works	09/01/2015	10/02/2020	c.9.9km south

App. Ref. No.	Summary of Development	Decision Date	Expiry Date	*Distance
141994	the construction of new visitor car parking facilities to provide for a max additional 211 car parking spaces (in addition to the existing 43) to include new free draining consolidated hardcore parking surface (Clause 804 type finish) with rolled surface	22/12/2014	08/02/2020	c.4km west
14957	(a) Demolition and removal of the existing south facing conservatory, the two south facing gabled bay roof sections, the flat roofed garage / storage areas, the removal of existing roof tiles and chimney stack to the existing dwelling. (b) Construction of a new part single storey / part two storey extension to the northern side of the existing dwelling along with refurbishment works associated with the existing dwelling including the construction of a new west facing gabled bay roofed section, new velux roof lights and new roof finishes. (c) Existing foul water septic tank located to the northern side of the existing dwelling to be removed in its entirety and a new Foul Water connection to be made to the public foul water mains system. (d) Two metre high concrete post and timber panel fencing to be formed to the southern and eastern boundary of the site with a timber post and rail fence to be formed to the northern and western boundaries of the site. (e) Existing vehicular entrance onto the public roadway to be retained with a new driveway, entrance piers and associated gates to be formed within the boundaries of the site along with all associated site and landscaping works	19/12/2014	26/01/2025	c.7km west
14824	A single storey dwelling with domestic garage, landscaping and effluent treatment system and all ancillary works	17/12/2014	26/01/2020	c.9km west

