

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000
(as amended)**

**PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001
(as amended)**

PROPOSAL TO CARRY OUT A DEVELOPMENT REFERRED TO AS –

PART 8 – NO. 126

**THE UPGRADE/CONSTRUCTION OF A WALKING/CYCLE
PATH WITH A COMBINED LENGTH OF 4,200 METRES AND
VARYING IN WIDTH FROM 2.5 METRES TO 3.0 METRES
WITH A LIMESTONE DUST FINISH AND ALL ANCILLARY SITE
WORKS AT LISSARD, RINVANNY AND CRANALAGH MORE
TOWNLANDS, EDGEWORTHSTOWN, CO. LONGFORD.**

**REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)**

AND

**PART 8 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED)**

To: The Cathaoirleach and Members of Ballymahon Municipal District.

Being satisfied that the requirements of subsections (1) and (2) of Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, and Articles 79 to 85 inclusive of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) have been fully complied with in relation to the above proposed development, I have prepared the attached report in accordance with the

requirements of subsection (3) of Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and formally submit same to the Cathaoirleach and members of Ballymahon Municipal District for consideration.

1. Site location and description of the proposed development.
2. The nature and extent of the proposed development and the principal features thereof are as set out in Section 2 of the Report.
3. Section 8 of the report evaluates the consistency of the development with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates, having regard to the provisions of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

I am satisfied that all issues have been fully considered in the evaluation and that the proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates, having regard to the provisions of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, for the reasons set out in the report.

4. The persons and bodies who made submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development in accordance with the provisions of the above Act and Regulations are listed at Section 6 & 7.
5. Section 8.2 sets out details in relation to Archaeology.
6. Section 8.3 sets out details in relation to Appropriate Assessment.
7. Section 8.4 sets out the EIA Screening Determination.
8. Section 9 sets out the recommendation of the Planning Authority in relation to the proposed development regarding the planning considerations and referral submission received.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 179(3)(b)(v) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) I recommend that the proposed development should be proceeded with subject to the modifications/amendments listed in Section 7 of the attached report.

Dated this the: 24 March 2025



**Barbara Heslin,
Director of Services.**

Note:

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) – Subsection 4 of Section 179.

- (4) (a) The members of the local authority shall, as soon as may be, consider the proposed development and the report of the Chief Executive under subsection (3).
- (b) Following consideration of the Chief Executive's Report under paragraph (a), the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, unless the local authority, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development, otherwise than as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, or decides not to proceed with the development.
- (c) A resolution under paragraph (b) must be passed not later than 6 weeks after receipt of the Chief Executive's Report.



**Longford County Council
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

PART VIII – NO. 126

The upgrade/construction of a walking/cycle path with a combined length of 4,200 metres and varying in width from 2.5 metres to 3.0 metres with a Limestone dust finish and all ancillary site works at Lissard, Rinvanny and Cranalagh More Townlands, Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford.

Report in Accordance with

Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000
(as amended)

and;

Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001
(as Amended)

March 2025

1.0 Site Location & Description

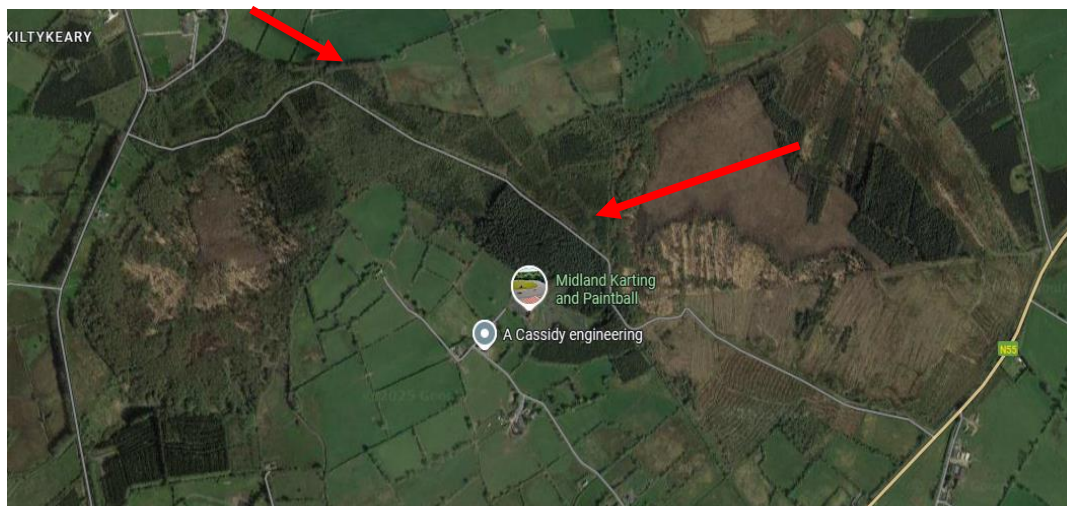
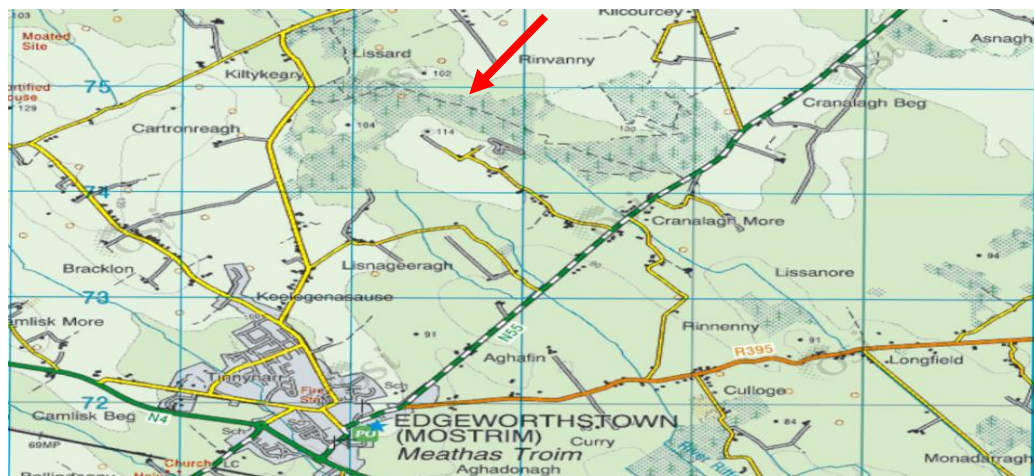
The application site is located in an unzoned rural area within the townlands of Lissard, Rinvanny and Cranalagh More, Co. Longford. The application site is located c. 2.8km to the north of Edgeworthstown urban centre.

The application site is located within a woodland area and is accessed off a local road L-1089-0 (main access). The application site can also be accessed via N55.

There are no dwellings located immediately adjacent to the existing and proposed walking/cycle path route.

The application site is not located within or in close proximity to any designated SAC, SPA, NHA or Broadzone area.

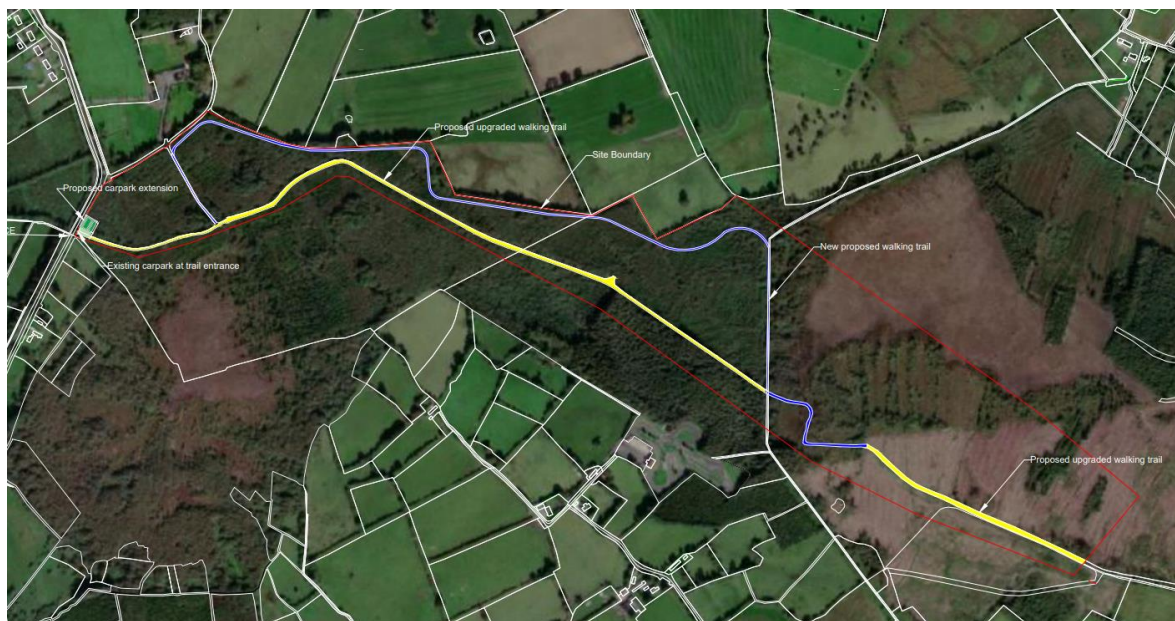
There are no protected structures or recorded sites or monuments within the route of the proposed works. There is however a recorded monument in close proximity to the walking/cycling route c. 75m to the south LF015-040 (ringfort-rath) and sites and monument zone R1670196.

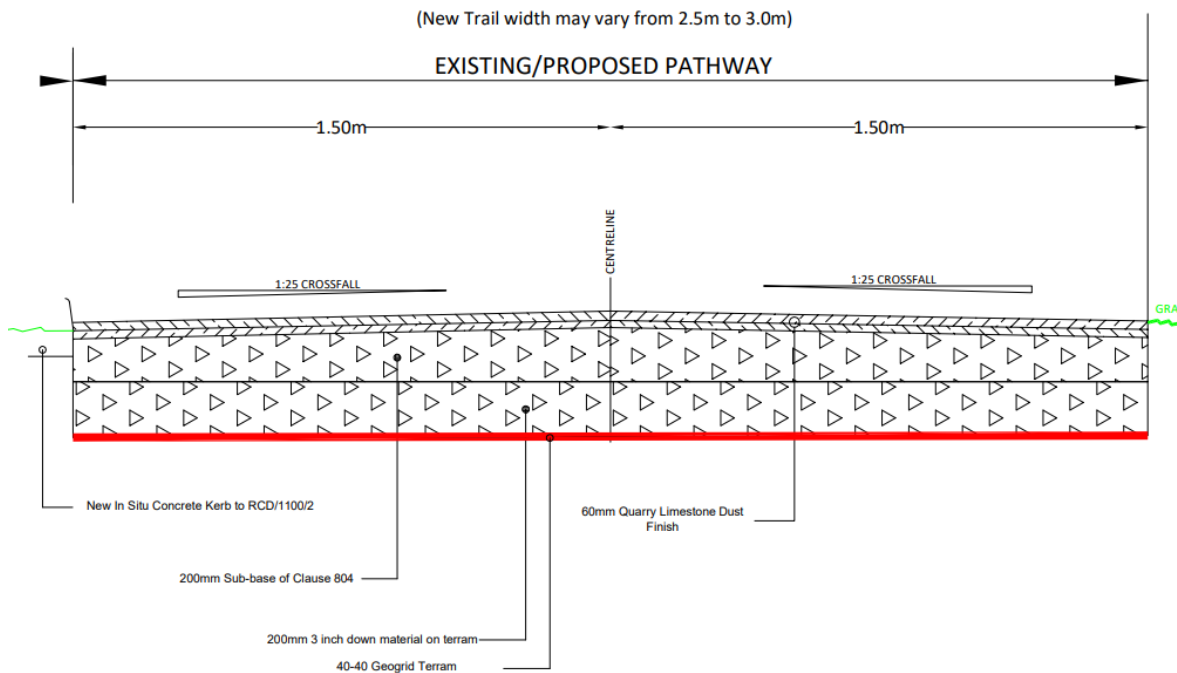


2.0 Proposed development

Longford County Council is proposing to carry out the following works;

The upgrade of approximately 1850 metres of existing 3.0 metre wide walkway/cycle path with a Limestone dust finish and the construction of approximately 2350 metres of a walking/cycle path with a Limestone dust finish and varying in width from 2.5 metres to 3.0 metres, upgrade and extend existing car park and all associated drainage and fencing works. The proposed walkway/cycle path works will commence at the existing entrance at Lissard Townland and finish in the townland of Cranalagh More to the east. Works will include the extension of the existing car park and associated safety works and all drainage and fencing works including some minor accommodation works.





3.0 Relevant Planning History

None

Adjacent to the south

ABP Ref: 14.206562 Permission was granted to Tom Mc Loughlin for continuance of use as a karting track and change of use from forestry to outdoor pursuit area following appeal of **pl. ref: 03/419** which was permitted by Longford County Council.

4.0 National and Local Planning Policy

Project Ireland 2040, The National Planning Framework (NPF)

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) 2019-2031

Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

Chapter 5 – Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Communications

Section 5.2.7 Cycling and Walking

CPO 5.65 Work with the relevant statutory bodies and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling.

CPO 5.66 Identify and implement a strategic, coherent and high-quality cycling and walking network across the County that is integrated with public transport and interconnected with cultural, recreational, retail, educational and employment destinations and attractions.

CPO 5.68 Promote walking through the development and expansion of a network of safe walking trails within towns and villages and their environs. Such routes can link with existing walking trails, Sli na Slainte and the Green Infrastructure Network and existing or new public rights of way.

CPO 5.69 Adopt and implement the provisions of the Draft Longford Walking and Cycling Strategy and, where necessary and appropriate, reserve lands for the provision of off-road cycling tracks and cycling/pedestrian infrastructure as identified as part of any such cycling strategy prepared.

CPO 5.74 Ensure that the upgrading of roads will not impact negatively on the safety and perceived safety of cyclists. Support the development of safe cycle routes and enhance and maintain these routes with quality signposting, lighting and road surfaces separated from vehicular traffic following the standards set out in 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response and the NTA's National Cycle Manual and any further review and iteration of the same. Encourage the development of off-road cycling. Ensure that the upgrading of roads will not impact negatively on the safety and perceived safety of cyclists. Ensure that any dedicated cycle routes which are developed away from the main public carriageway are well lit. Routes should, where possible, follow off-road tracks and quiet country roads.

CPO 5.76 Improve the attractiveness and usability of the pedestrian environment of the County, particularly in residential areas, designated settlements and in areas of high amenity.

Chapter 10 – Tourism

CPO 10.42 Support sustainable initiatives and projects that enable visitors to enjoy and connect with our natural heritage, including walking or cycling trails, glamping, viewing points, facilities for bird-watching and angling, tours and events, subject to the requirements for protecting this valuable and sensitive heritage.

CPO 10.62 Support increased opportunities for off-road walking, including looped walks and longer distance trails, taking account of

‘positive control points’ in trail design, such as areas of natural beauty, lakeshores or rivers, bogs, built heritage and archaeological features and with links to towns and villages. In designing walking trails, the Sport Ireland Guide to Planning and Developing Recreational Trails will be consulted.

Chapter 13 – Green Infrastructure

A13.5 Work with the National Trails Office, Coillte, the Department of Planning Housing and Local Government, the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling.

All other relevant Section 28 Planning Guidelines have been considered in this assessment of this application.

5.0 Submissions

None

6.0 Public & Statutory Bodies Consultation

The proposed works were duly and properly notified as required by Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The plans and particulars for the upgrade/construction of a walking/cycle path with a combined length of 4200 metres and varying in width from 2.5 metres to 3.0 metres with a Limestone dust finish and all ancillary site works at Lissard, Rinvanny and Cranalagh More Townlands, Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford were made available were made available for public inspection at the offices of Longford County Council, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford and during official public opening hours, excluding weekends and bank holidays, and online from Friday 24th of January 2025 up to and including Monday 24th of February 2025.

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the

development would be situated, were invited to be made in writing to the Planning Section, Longford County Council, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford, Co. Longford to arrive not later than 4pm on Wednesday the 12th of March 2025.

The following statutory bodies were consulted:

Dept. of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media – no comments received.

Dept. of Housing, Local Government & Heritage – comment received details outlined below in this report under ‘Archaeology’.

An Taisce, no comment received.

Faite Ireland, no comment received.

The Heritage Council, no comment received.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland, no comment received.

7.0 Internal Referrals

NRA Liaison Officer, no comment received.

Roads Design Office, no comment received.

Environment, no comment received.

Heritage Officer, no comment received.

Roads Area Engineer, no comment received.

Active Travel, no comment received.

8.0 Planning Assessment

The main planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

8.1 Design & Layout

It is proposed to upgrade and construct a walking/cycle path at Lissard, Rinvanny and Cranalagh More townlands measuring 4200 metres. The path will vary in width from 2.5m to 3m and is to be constructed of the following material:

- 60mm quarry limestone dust (finish)
- 200mm sub – base of clause 804
- 200mm 3 inch down material on terram
- 40-40 geogrid terram

It is also proposed to extend the existing car park accessed off the L-1089-0.

The proposed upgrade and new construction works' to the walking cycle path and car park extension is considered to be compliant with the current Longford County Development Plan. The proposed works are therefore considered to be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

8.2 Archaeology

The following report has been received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;

“Archaeology It is noted that the proposed development is located in proximity to Recorded Monument LF015-040---- : Ringfort - rath, which is subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. Given the scale, extent and location of the proposed development it could impact on subsurface archaeological remains.

In line with national policy, see Section 3.6 of the Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage 1999, the Department recommends that an Archaeological Impact Assessment, as outlined below, should be prepared to assess any impact on archaeological remains within the proposed development site. This assessment should be submitted as Further Information. This will enable the Planning Authority and this office to prepare an appropriate archaeological recommendation before a planning decision is taken.

Archaeological Investigations

1. The applicant is required to engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to carry out an archaeological impact assessment of the development site. No sub-surface developmental work, including geotechnical test pits, should be undertaken until the archaeological assessment has been completed and commented on by this office. The assessment should include the development of a buffer area of 20m to be implemented around the Recorded Monuments LF015-040----: Ringfort - rath. No ground works shall be carried out within the buffer area, including boundary works, landscaping or ground reduction. The buffer area shall be fenced off and protected during construction and shall not be used for storage or vehicular access.

2. The archaeologist should carry out any relevant documentary research and inspect the development site. The ground impacts of the development on the Recorded Monument shall be assessed and described in detail.

3. Having completed the work, the archaeologist should submit a written report stating their recommendations to the Department. Where archaeological material/features are shown to be present, preservation in situ, preservation by record (excavation) or monitoring may be required.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.”

The above report has noted. It is considered that archaeological investigations are carried out prior to the commencement of the development.

8.3 Appropriate Assessment

The document, Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities, states that where from the nature, size and location of the development it is unclear if the proposal, will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site (s) a Natura Impact Statement will be required. The subject site is not

located in close proximity to any designated Natura 2000 site. The nearest Natura 2000 sites are as follows:

- Ardagullion Bog SAC (002341) located c.3km to the north-east of the application site.
- Glen Lough SPA (0047045) located c. 7km to the south of the application site.

An Appropriate Assessment screening was carried out by Whitehill Environmental. This report concluded as follows:

“It is of the opinion of the author that an AA of the proposed development is not required as it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information provided in this report, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European sites.”

The Planning Authority has considered the nature, scale and location of the proposed development and other plans and projects (where there could be potential for cumulative or in-combination effects), the conservation objectives/ qualifying interests of European Sites within the vicinity of the site and the distance to European Sites, any protected habitats or species, the WFD catchment location, the underlying aquifer type and vulnerability and the excavation works, emissions, transportation requirements and duration of construction and operation and cumulative impacts associated with the proposal.

The Planning Authority's Screening for Appropriate Assessment has considered the potential effects including direct, indirect and in-combination effects of the proposed development, individually or in combination with the permitted developments and cumulatively with other plans or projects on European Sites. The Planning Authority concludes that the proposed development (entire project), by itself or in combination with other plans and developments in the vicinity, would not be likely to have a significant effect on European Site(s). In light of this, it is considered that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) is not required in this instance.

8.4 EIA Screening

It is considered that the proposed development is not a development type listed under Part 1 or 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations (PDR) 2001 (as amended) nor is it considered a sub-threshold development for the purposes of Schedule 7 PDR and will not on its own or cumulatively with other projects result in significant effects on the environment and as such an EIAR is not required.

9.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Having regard to the above-mentioned planning considerations and to the observations received, it is considered that the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and that the proposals align with the policy objectives and the development management standards of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. It is therefore recommended that the proposed development now be proceeded with, subject to all additional requirements indicated in the Archaeology submission being included in the proposed development.

Any layout alterations as a result of these additional requirements shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for file purposes.

Kathryn Hosey

Date: 19/03/25

Kathryn Hosey
Executive Planner



Date: 19/03/2025

Rita Connaughton
Senior Planner

Appendix 1 AA and EIAR Screening

AA Screening Form

STEP 1. Description of the project/proposal and local site characteristics:	
(a) File Reference No:	Part 8 No.126
(b) Brief description of the project or plan:	Permission upgrade/construction of a walking/cycle path with a combined length of 4,200 metres and varying in width from 2.5 metres to 3.0 metres with a Limestone dust finish and all ancillary site works
(c) Brief description of site characteristics:	Lissard, Rinvanny and Cranalagh, Co. Longford
(d) Relevant prescribed bodies consulted: e.g. DHLGH (NPWS), EPA, OPW	None
(e) Response to consultation:	NA

STEP 2. Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information on Qualifying Interests and conservation objectives.				
European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest ¹	Distance from proposed development ² (km)	Connections (Source-Pathway-Receptor)	Considered further in screening Y/N
Ardagullion Bog SAC (002341)	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/(002341)	3km	None	N
Glen Lough SPA (0047045)	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sPA/(0047045)	7km	None	N

¹ Short paraphrasing and/or cross reference to NPWS is acceptable – it is not necessary to reproduce the full text on the QI/SCI.

² If the site or part thereof is within the European site or adjacent to the European site, state here.

STEP 3. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects	
(a) Identify all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project under the following headings:	
Impacts:	Possible Significance of Impacts: (duration/magnitude etc.)
Construction phase e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation clearance Demolition 	NA

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits) • Dust, noise, vibration • Lighting disturbance • Impact on groundwater/dewatering • Storage of excavated/construction materials • Access to site • Pests 	
Operational phase e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct emission to air and water • Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment • Lighting disturbance • Noise/vibration • Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction • Presence of people, vehicles and activities • Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks) • Potential for accidents or incidents 	NA
In-combination/Other	NA

(b) Describe any likely changes to the European site:

<p>Examples of the type of changes to give consideration to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction or fragmentation of habitat area • Disturbance to QI species • Habitat or species fragmentation • Reduction or fragmentation in species density • Changes in key indicators of conservation status value (water or air quality etc.) • Changes to areas of sensitivity or threats to QI • Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or ecological function of the site 	NA
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(c) Are ‘mitigation’ measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No
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Step 4. Screening Determination Statement

The assessment of significance of effects:

Describe how the proposed development (alone or in-combination) is/is **not likely** to have **significant** effects on European site(s) in view of its conservation objectives.

Given the nature and scale of the development proposed, and given that there is no direct hydrological link to a Natura 2000 site, it is considered that there is no potential for significant effects on the Natura 2000 network arising from the proposed works either alone or in combination with other plans and/or projects by way of a loss fragmentation, disruption, disturbance to habitats, species or habitats of species that are of conservation interest.

Conclusion:

	Tick as Appropriate:	Recommendation:
(i) It is clear that there is no likelihood of significant effects on a European site.	X	The proposal can be screened out: Appropriate assessment not required.
(ii) It is uncertain whether the proposal will have a significant effect on a European site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request further information to complete screening <input type="checkbox"/> Request NIS <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse planning permission
(iii) Significant effects are likely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request NIS <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse planning permission
Signature and Date of Recommending Officer:	Kathryn Hosey Executive Planner 19/03/25	

EIA Screening Form

Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening Establishing a development is a 'sub-threshold development':	
Planning Reference:	Part 8 No.126
Development Summary:	Permission upgrade/construction of a walking/cycle path with a combined length of 4,200 metres and varying in width from 2.5 metres to 3.0 metres with a Limestone dust finish and all ancillary site works.
Was a Screening Determination carried out under Section 176A-C?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, no further action required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, Proceed to Part A
A. Schedule 5 Part 1 - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 1 , of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)? (Tick as appropriate)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, specify class _____	EIA is mandatory No Screening required
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Proceed to Part B
B. Schedule 5 Part 2 - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 2 , of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it meet/exceed the thresholds? (Tick as appropriate)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 2	No Screening required
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes the project is listed in Schedule 5, Part 2 and meets/exceeds the threshold, specify class (including threshold): _____ [specify class & threshold here] _____	EIA is mandatory No Screening required
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes the project is of a type listed but is <i>sub-threshold</i> : _____ [insert here] _____	Proceed to Part C
C. If Yes , has Schedule 7A information/screening report been submitted?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Schedule 7A information/screening report has been submitted by the applicant	Screening Determination required
<input type="checkbox"/> No, Schedule 7A information/screening report has not been submitted by the applicant	Preliminary Examination required

APPENDIX 2 -Site Photographs

View from L- 1089-0 & Car Park Location

