



## **Cavan County Council**

# **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

**for**

**Proposed new Community, Cultural,  
Tourism and Enterprise Hub, including  
café and sleeping accommodation**

**at**

**The former Percy French Hotel**

**on**

**Dublin St. & Stradone St., Ballyjamesduff,  
Co Cavan**

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## **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

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## Introduction

This is an EIA screening report for the proposed new Community, Cultural, Tourism and Enterprise Hub, including café and sleeping accommodation, Co. Cavan. The purpose of the report is to screen the proposed development to establish whether it requires Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and as a result if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Statement has also been prepared as a separate document.

The screening process includes an assessment of the details of the proposal with reference to the relevant EIA legislation, including the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended by Planning and Development Regulations 2015), the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and relevant EU Guidance including Interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EU Directive, EU, 2015 and Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening, EU, 2017.

The EIA Screening covers

1. Description of the proposed development
2. The legislative basis for EIA
3. Screening consideration
4. Conclusions

## The Proposed Development

The proposed development of new Community, Cultural, Tourism and Enterprise Hub, including café and sleeping accommodation comprises of the following elements

The works include retention and refurbishment works to the existing building, internal alterations, demolitions and new extensions over 3no. levels of XXX sq.m to the existing Percy French Hotel.

The accommodation includes:

Ground floor: café including kitchen, reception and associated public, conference/enterprise area, ancillary accommodation including toilets, storage, new stairs and a disabled lift

First floor: visitor's rooms/sleeping accommodation and multi-purpose rooms, ancillary accommodation including toilets, circulation and storage;

Second floor: visitor's rooms/sleeping accommodation, ancillary accommodation including toilets, circulation and storage;

All vertical and horizontal circulation, stairs, lifts etc. Ancillary service areas to provide storage, plant, toilets and staff areas. New internal and external illuminated signage

Site development works, including external hard and soft landscaping, external lighting, bin storage, common and communal open areas, and all associated site services above and below ground. On street bike parking spaces

## **Legislative Basis for EIA**

EIA requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). As the amended Directive came into force on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and regulations transposing it into national legislation have been enacted. No changes to the prescribed project types or thresholds are required under the amended Directive so the types and thresholds set out in the 2001-2010 Regulations remain in effect.

EIA legislation as it relates to the planning process has been largely brought together in Part X of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018. Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulation lists project types, included in Annex I of the Directive which automatically require EIA. Part 2 of the same Schedule lists projects types included in Annex II. Corresponding developments automatically require EIA if no threshold is given or if they are exceeding a given threshold. Developments which correspond to Part 2 project types but are below the given threshold must be screened to determine whether they require EIA or not. This is done by consideration of criteria set out in Schedule 7.

## **Screening Considerations.**

### **Class of Development**

In the first instance it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type (or 'class') that require an EIAR. This project does not correspond to any of the prescribed types listed in Annex I. However, it could be considered to correspond to the Infrastructure Projects types set out in Annex II, as discussed below.

### **Infrastructure Projects**

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

#### 10. Infrastructure Projects

(b)(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 2- hectares elsewhere.

(in this paragraph, 'business district means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use)

The EU guidance on '*Interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive*' (2015) interprets 'urban development' as taking 'account of, inter alia the following

- i. Projects with similar characteristics to car parks and shopping centres could be considered to fall under Annex II (10)(b). This could be the case for example, of bus garages or train depots, which are not explicitly mentioned in the EIA Directive, but have similar characteristics to car parks.
- ii. construction projects such as housing developments, hospitals universities, sports stadiums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls and other cultural centres could also be assumed to fall within this category. The underlying principle is that all these project categories are of an urban nature and that they may cause similar types of environmental impact.
- iii. Projects to which the terms 'urban' and 'infrastructure' can relate, such as the construction of sewerage and water supply networks, could also be included in this category.

The overall area of the proposed development is c.0.412 hectares, all is located within the business district of Virginia town. Therefore, the proposal is a prescribed project type but is considered significantly below threshold.

### Sub-threshold Development

As the proposed development corresponds to an Annex II project type but does not meet the prescribed thresholds above, it can be considered to be a 'sub-threshold' development.

Having regard to the 'wide scope and broad purpose' of the Directive, it is appropriate to consider if it is likely to cause significant environmental impacts by reference to the relevant criteria for determining same, as set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Developments Regulations.

Given the scale of the proposed development it is unlikely to cause sufficiently significant effects to warrant a sub-threshold EIA. However, in order to provide a comprehensive screening, this screening proceeds to consider it against the Schedule 7 criteria, nonetheless. Schedule 7 specifies 'Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment' under these three headings.

1. Characteristics of Proposed Development
2. Location of Proposed development
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The tables below and overleaf set out these considerations using both the main and sub criteria which are specified in Schedule 7.

SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA		Relevance	Commentary
1.Characterises of Proposed Development	The size of the proposed development	No	The proposed development is located on a site with an area of c.0.412 ha.
The characteristics of proposed development in particular	The cumulation with the proposed development	No	There are no developments under construction on the Main Street of Virginia in the vicinity of the site in question at present. Cavan County Council are aware of works proposed by Transport Infrastructure Ireland in the town of Virginia. These works will comprise of traffic calming measures and increasing in footpath width. In combination with proposed works it is not considered that significant environmental effects arise.
	The use of natural resources	Potential	The proposed development does include the use of natural resources.
	The production of waste	No	Waste will be produced during the construction of the proposed development, however, this is considered to be insufficient to cause significant effects. Waste materials

			will be brought to a construction and demolition recycling centre for reuse.
	Pollution and Nuisances	No	The impacts including noise and dust within acceptable standards are anticipated to be negligible.
	The risk of accidents having regard to substances or technologies		Given the nature of the proposed development, the potential impacts are anticipated to be negligible.

SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA		Relevance	Commentary
<p>2. Location of Proposed Development</p> <p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, having regard in particular to</p>	The existing landuse	No	<p>The proposed development will take place within Town Core zoning of Virginia town. Some of the development will take place to the rear of the existing properties within the town core area.</p> <p>It is presently unused backland and the development will significantly enhance the vitality and viability of the town.</p>
	The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	No	The impacts are anticipated to be negligible given the scale of the proposed development.
	The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas		
	Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	No	There is no loss of habitat arising from the proposed development. The proposal has been assessed in the Protected Species and Habitat Survey and a Bat Survey has been completed. These reports have concluded that no rare, threatened or protected species were found during survey and that no bats were found during the survey.
	Coastal Zones	No	N/A
	Mountain and forest areas	No	N/A

	Nature reserves and parks	No	N/A
	Areas classified or protected under legislation, including special protection areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	No	The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report submitted as part of the Part VIII application concludes that the proposed development is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on designated European sites.
	Areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the EU have already been exceeded	No	
	Densely populated areas	No	
	Landscapes of historical, cultural, archaeological significance	No	The impacts particularly those of historical, and cultural significance are anticipated to be negligible. An Archaeological Impact Assessment as part of the works has concluded that it is not considered likely that any finds of significance will be encountered. The Bat Survey carried out on the site has concluded that there is no findings on the site. The Architectural Impact Assessment has concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of impact to existing protected structures. The development will provide and enhance existing uses in important buildings in the streetscape.

SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA		Relevance	Commentary
3.Characteristics of Proposed Development  The potential significant effects of proposed	The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (geographical areas and size of the affected population)	No	The impacts are anticipated to be insufficient given the scale of the proposed development.

development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 above and having particular regard to:			
	The nature of the impact	No	The impact of the proposal will be negative during construction stage but will be positive once completed.
	The transboundary nature of the impact.	No	Not considered relevant
	The magnitude and complexity of the impact.	No	The impacts are anticipated to be insufficient given the scale of the proposed development.
	The probability of the impact	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.
	The expected onset, duration frequency and reversibility of the impact.	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.
	The cumulation of the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental	No	There are no significant effects anticipated.



	Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment.		
	The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.

**Conclusion**

The proposed development falls within the scope of the Infrastructure project type prescribed in the Directive or Regulations. However, it is considered to be sub-threshold in nature.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the proposal, having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development, and having regard to the characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that the project is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental impacts.

It is noted that a separate Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has concluded that there will be no negative impacts on the qualifying interests or species of any NATURA 2000 site within a 15KM radius of the proposed development.

It is concluded that there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried out for the proposed new Community, Cultural, Tourism and Enterprise Hub, including café and sleeping accommodation. In addition, there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be prepared.