



Chapter 6 Population

Table of Contents

6.	POPULATION.....	1
6.1	Introduction.....	1
6.2	Legislation, Policy and Guidance.....	1
6.2.1	Legislation	1
6.2.2	Policy Context.....	1
6.2.3	Guidelines.....	1
6.3	Methodology.....	2
6.3.1	Study Area.....	2
6.3.2	Survey Methodology	4
6.3.3	Consultation.....	4
6.3.4	Assessment criteria	4
6.3.5	Sensitivity of the Existing Environment	6
6.3.6	Magnitude of Impacts.....	9
6.3.7	Significance of Effects.....	12
6.3.8	Difficulties encountered.....	14
6.4	Receiving Environment.....	14
6.4.1	Introduction.....	14
6.4.2	Land Use	14
6.4.2.1	<i>Kilkee</i>	15
6.4.2.2	<i>Moyasta</i>	15
6.4.2.3	<i>Kilrush</i>	16
6.4.3	Population Baseline	17
6.4.3.1	<i>Population and Housing</i>	17
6.4.3.2	<i>Education</i>	18
6.4.3.3	<i>Socioeconomic Status</i>	18
6.4.3.4	<i>Travel to Work, School, or College</i>	19
6.4.3.5	<i>Collisions Statistics</i>	20
6.4.4	Private Property and Housing	21
6.4.5	Community Land and Assets	21
6.4.6	Socioeconomics, businesses and development land	23
6.4.6.1	<i>Tourism Amenities</i>	23
6.4.6.2	<i>Land and Marine Based Economic Activity</i>	24
6.4.7	Non-Motorised Users (NMUs).....	24
6.4.7.1	<i>Existing Pedestrian and Cyclist Infrastructure</i>	24
6.5	Description of Potential Impacts	25
6.5.1	Do-Nothing Scenario	25
6.5.2	Potential Construction Phase Impacts	25

6.5.2.1	<i>Private Property and Housing</i>	25
6.5.2.2	<i>Community Land and Assets</i>	25
6.5.2.3	<i>Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land</i>	26
6.5.2.4	<i>Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)</i>	27
6.5.3	Potential Operation Phase Impacts	27
6.5.3.1	<i>Private Property and Housing</i>	27
6.5.3.2	<i>Community Land and Assets</i>	28
6.5.3.3	<i>Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land</i>	29
6.5.3.4	<i>Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)</i>	30
6.6	Mitigation and Monitoring	31
6.6.1	Construction Phase	31
6.6.2	Operation Phase	32
6.7	Monitoring	32
6.8	Residual Effects	32
6.9	References	33

6. POPULATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) assesses the likely population impacts of the West Clare Railway Greenway Section 1 Kilrush to Kilkee ('the proposed development', hereafter). Impacts on population may arise from various aspects of the proposed development. Interactions may occur with effects described in a number of chapters of this EIAR, in particular the following:

- Chapter 5: Traffic & Transportation
- Chapter 8: Human Health
- Chapter 12: Air Quality
- Chapter 14: Noise & Vibration
- Chapter 15: Landscape & Visual
- Chapter 18: Material Assets & Land (Non-Agriculture)

This chapter sets out the methodology used for the population assessment (Section 6.3), describes the receiving environment (Section 6.4), assessed the potential impacts of the proposed development on population aspects (Section 6.5). Section 6.6 and 6.7 sets out mitigation measures to avoid / minimise impacts identified and monitoring measures if required, and details of any residual impacts are described in Section 6.8.

6.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

6.2.1 Legislation

This population assessment has been undertaken in accordance inter alia with EU Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ("the EIA Directive"), and the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended).

6.2.2 Policy Context

Relevant policy documents that have informed this chapter include:

- Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029;
- Clare Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2030;
- Clare Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

6.2.3 Guidelines

This chapter has been undertaken in accordance with the EIA guidance documents listed in Chapter 1 of this EIAR and other key guidance to include:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (May 2022) *Guidelines on information to be contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report*.
- EPA (2003) *Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statements*.
- National Roads Authority (NRA) / TII (November 2008) *Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A practical guide, revision 1 PE-ENV-01114*.
- TII (November 2024) *Environmental Impact Assessment of Rural Cycleways (Offline & Greenway) – A Practical Guide PE-ENV-01109*.
- TII (December 2025) *Population and Human Health Assessment of Proposed National Roads - Standard PE-ENV-01108*.

6.3 Methodology

6.3.1 Study Area

Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) Population and Human Health Assessment of Proposed National Roads - Standard PE-ENV-01108 (TII, 2025) recommends that a defined study area, referred to as the Zone of Influence (hereafter 'Zol'), is determined for the assessment of population impacts. The Zol should include the area within which receptors could be subject to impacts and effects. In accordance with PE-ENV-01108 (TII, 2025), a 500m distance from the proposed development boundary was used as a starting point to determine the Zol for the population assessment. It is recognised that transport infrastructure can influence activities across a wide area. For this reason, a wider Zol of 1km from the proposed development is also included to fully inform the population assessment. In addition, the socio-economic element of this assessment considers wider economic impacts of the proposed development.

In accordance with TII 2025 Guidelines, baseline data has been assessed across the Electoral Divisions (EDs) that are wholly and / or partially contained within the Zol, as presented in Table 6-1 and shown in Plate 6-1 (Figure 6.1 in Volume 3 of this EIAR). It is worth noting that both the primary (500m) and wider (1km) Zols are located in the same EDs, no additional EDs are captured in the wider Zol. As such, a single Zol of 1km is applied to this project.

Table 6-1 Electoral Divisions (EDs) Wholly and / or Partially Contained in the Zone of Influence (Zol)

Area	EDs
Zol	Kilkee
	Kilfearagh
	Einagh
	St. Martin's
	Kilrush Rural
	Kilrush Urban

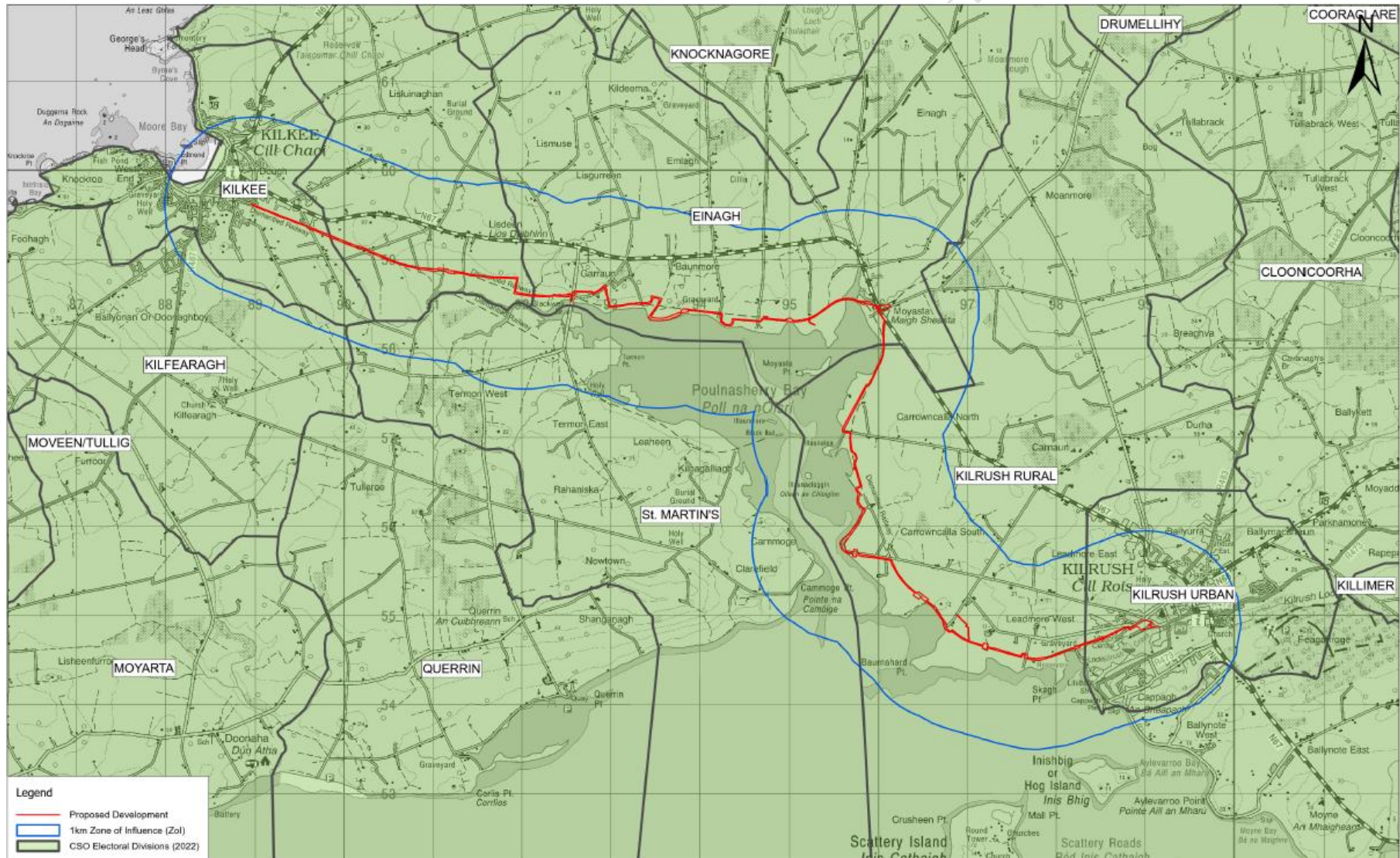


Plate 6-1 Electoral Divisions (EDs) wholly and/or partially contained in the Zone of Influence (Zol)

6.3.2 Survey Methodology

6.3.2.1 Desktop

A desk-based exercise informed the existing receiving environment, in relation to the current settlement patterns and community infrastructure, population and census data, economic activity, employment data, tourism, and recreation amenities. Topographical maps and Google maps have also been used to inform the baseline assessment.

6.3.2.2 Data Sources

The population assessment requires that an understanding of the community and characteristics of the area be established. This is informed by relevant planning policy, demographic data (including census), consultation feedback from the public, stakeholders, and community representatives.

Data sources consulted include:

- Population, demographic and health data from Census 2022 and 2016 by the Central Statistics Office (CSO);
- Other relevant environmental data considered during the various environmental assessments contained in this EIAR particularly traffic and transport, hydrology, and material assets and land.
- Review of aerial photography including Google Earth to inform observations of settlement / development patterns, and transportation routes,
- Consideration of the issues and/or concerns raised during public consultation as part of the design and EIA process.
- Range of policy documents that may affect existing and future land use and populations were also reviewed. These are listed in Section 6.2.3 of this Chapter.

6.3.2.3 Site Visit

A site visit and walkover survey of the site of the proposed development was carried out on the 3rd of February 2026.

6.3.3 Consultation

Relevant feedback received from statutory, non-statutory groups, the public, community groups, and private individuals on the preferred option has helped informed this assessment. The key consultation phases include:

- Public Consultation 1 (September 2021)
- Public Consultation 2 (September 2022)
- Public Consultation 3 (March 2024)
- Non-statutory EIA Scoping Report (January 2026)

The feedback received during public consultation is summarised in Section 1.5 of Chapter 1 Introduction of this EIAR which has informed this chapter.

6.3.4 Assessment criteria

In accordance with the TII (2025) Guidelines titled '*Population and Human Health Assessment of Proposed National Roads – Standard*', the population assessment will focus on the following areas:

- Private property and housing.
- Community land and assets.
- Socioeconomics, businesses and development land.

- Non-Motorised Users (NMUs).

These topics are discussed below in terms of their relevance to the assessment.

6.3.4.1 Private Property and Housing

An assessment of existing private residential property and land zoned for housing has been carried out as part of this assessment at a local scale rather than assessing individual properties. Where temporary or permanent land take affecting private property and housing is required, a Residential Impact Assessment will be carried out in accordance with the TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025). The assessment of land take impacts is covered separately in Chapter 18 of this EIAR, Material Assets (non-Agricultural).

6.3.4.2 Community Land and Assets

Community infrastructure is important for providing general amenities to a population. This type of infrastructure can be far reaching and can include community infrastructure that is physical, social, and economic in nature that adds to the community or general amenity value of a population. Community infrastructure can also be valuable to certain populations, these can include places of worship, healthcare facilities, or places where people can relax and enjoy public spaces such as parks, playing pitches, sports grounds, community centres, libraries. Where community and open spaces are identified within the Zol, a condition survey shall be carried out in accordance with the TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025).

The level of existing accessibility restrictions or severance to community land and assets is also assessed. The definition of severance is not precise. It often occurs as an impact of transport infrastructure development such as roads or bridges. Its effect is to discourage community interaction, and it occurs where access to community facilities or between neighbourhoods is impeded by a lengthening of journey time or by physical barrier(s). On the other hand, relief from existing severance may be provided by a new transport infrastructure where traffic volumes or speed are moderated, by the inclusion of crossing facilities in the design or through the presence of over-bridges and/or underpasses.

6.3.4.3 Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land

Economic and employment impacts can occur at the regional and local scale and can be either positive, negative or neutral. Changes in access or connectivity as a result of a development, can have significant effects on existing businesses or investment opportunities. Strategic transport infrastructure is normally proposed with the intention of improving national/regional and/or local competitiveness and economic/social linkages - for instance, in relation to improving access to/from areas, reducing journey time, and improving journey time reliability for the commuting workforce, commercial goods, or for tourists. There can also be negative effects in relation to indirect effects such as loss of passing trade to businesses, effects to car parks and those who cannot use public transport and/or rely on vehicular access to facilities which may be affected by the proposed transport infrastructure.

In general, the socioeconomic impacts as well as impacts on businesses and development land are assessed at a community level, however the proposed development may affect identifiable local business which will be reported on in this chapter. Other economic impacts could affect the wider community, for example where a number of existing businesses are affected, tourism, where the retail or business environment of a city / town is impacted, or on development land allocated for employment by the local authority or other statutory organisations. In addition, the potential employment generated as a result of the proposed development is also assessed.

6.3.4.4 Non-Motorised Users (NMU)

The assessment of potential impacts to NMUs will be informed by reviewing the existing provisions for NMUs within the Zol e.g., presence of footpaths, cycleways, greenway etc.

Journey length refers to the distance associated with a particular journey, whilst duration is the time taken to make the journey. Positive impacts on NMUs result from a decrease in journey length or duration and negative impacts result from an increase in journey length or duration. In addition, the potential of the proposed development to improve accessibility or connectivity through the combined effect of reduced journey time and reduced severance is considered as part of this assessment.

The level of traffic on a road, the proximity and separation of footpaths and cycle-paths, the nature of any crossings / junctions to be negotiated, the legibility of a journey (including signage), visual intrusion (including sightlines) and safety for pedestrians, are amongst the factors relevant to the assessment of journey amenity, as are the number and types of people affected. The principal concern is with pedestrians and cyclists, but journey amenity impacts also apply to drivers; for example, due to safety and anxiety associated with the crossings of major roads.

6.3.5 Sensitivity of the Existing Environment

Once the population receptors have been identified in accordance with the categories outlined above, sensitivity of these are determined in accordance with the criteria listed in the TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025), as replicated in Table 6-2 below.

Table 6-2 Population Receptor Sensitivity Guidance (adapted from TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025))

Receptor Sensitivity	Receptor Category and Description			
	Private Property and Housing	Community land and assets	Socio-economics, businesses and development land	NMUs
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing private property or land allocated for housing located in a town or city where the existing population is expected to increase significantly by 2040 relative to the target outlined in the Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework; Existing housing and land allocated for housing (e.g., strategic housing sites) covering a large area of land in comparison to other land uses within the Zol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternatives are only available outside the Local Authority area. The level of use is very frequent (e.g. daily). The land and assets are used by the majority of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing employment sites (excluding agriculture) and land allocated for employment (e.g., strategic employment sites) covering a large area of land in comparison to other land uses within the Zol. Specialist businesses, workforces or economies that are at risk and have no capacity to experience the impact without incurring a significant socio-economic loss (or gain) of an economic resource, or employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National trails and routes likely to be used for commuting, recreation and social use that record frequent (daily) use. Such routes connect communities with employment land uses and other services with a direct and convenient NMU route. Little / no potential for substitution. Regional trails and routes (e.g., promoted circular walks) likely to be used for recreation and social use or to a lesser extent commuting, that record frequent (daily) use. limited potential for substitution. Routes regularly used by vulnerable users such as the elderly, school children and people with disabilities, who could be disproportionately affected by small changes in the baseline due to potentially different needs. The population practitioner should take into account the location, crossing facilities and amenity value when establishing sensitivity of NMU provisions. This applies to all sensitivity categories.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing private property or land allocated for housing located in a town or city where the existing population is expected increase moderately by 2040 relative to the target outlined in the Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative facilities are only available in the wider Local Authority area. The level of use is frequent (e.g. weekly). The land and assets are used by most of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing employment sites (excluding agriculture) and land allocated for employment (e.g., strategic employment sites) covering a moderate area of land in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public rights of way and other routes close to communities which are used for recreation and social purposes (e.g., dog walking), but for which alternative routes can be taken. These routes are likely to link to a wider network of routes to

Receptor Sensitivity	Receptor Category and Description			
	Private Property and Housing	Community land and assets	Socio-economics, businesses and development land	NMUs
	<p>Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing housing and land allocated for housing (e.g., strategic housing sites) covering a moderate area of land in comparison to other land uses within the Zol. 		<p>comparison to other land uses within the Zol.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses, workforces or economies that are at risk and that have little or no capacity to experience the impact without incurring a significant socio-economic loss (or gain) of an economic resource, or employment. 	<p>provide options for longer, recreational / social journeys</p>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed development on unallocated sites providing housing with planning permission / in the planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative facilities are readily available and accessible at a local level within the wider community. The level of use is infrequent (monthly or less frequent). The land and assets are used by the minority of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing employment sites (excluding agriculture) and land allocated for employment (e.g., strategic employment sites) covering a small area of land in comparison to other land uses within the Zol. Businesses, workforces or economies that have an adequate capacity to experience the impact without incurring a significant socio-economic loss (or gain) of an economic resource, or employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routes which have fallen into disuse through past severance, or which are scarcely used because they do not currently offer a meaningful route for either utility or recreational / social purposes.
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No or limited severance or accessibility issues. Alternative facilities are available within the same community. The level of use is very infrequent (a few occasions yearly). The land and assets are used by the minority of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

6.3.6 Magnitude of Impacts

The magnitude of the impact which considers the size and scale of the effect (e.g., complete loss of a landscape element or a minor change); the geographical extent of the area which will be influenced by the change; and the duration of the effect and its reversibility. As per the TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025), Table 6-3 below provides criteria used to assess the magnitude of impacts on population receptors at construction and operation phase of the proposed development.

Table 6-3 Population Assessment Magnitude of Impact Criteria (adapted from TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025))

Magnitude of Impact	Environmental Impact Criteria for Construction or Operation				
	Private Property and Housing	Community land and assets	Development land and businesses	Socio-economics (as a subset of socio-economics, development land and businesses)	NMUs
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The permanent loss of a resource, or loss of key characteristics that makes it unviable. Introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severe severance giving rise to a permanent, material change in accessibility. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A material change in net economic output relative to the economic output of the geographical area in and around the Zol. A material contribution to employment levels relative to the available employment within the geographical area in and around the Zol. For example, where the Zol incorporates parts of an urban conurbation this could be more than 500 jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The complete stopping up of a route (unless there are mitigating circumstances e.g., in agreement with the Local Authority due to existing safety concerns). An increase or decrease in the length of the journey which has the potential to encourage or deter the use of the NMU provision for a substantial proportion of users. Judgements should consider relevant factors such as the local setting, how the NMU provision is used (e.g. primarily recreational or to access community resources and services), the scale of increase/decrease relative to the total length of the route and the availability of alternatives. Changes to the quality of the route which are likely to encourage or deter its use for a substantial proportion of users. For example, the provision or removal of crossing points and/or substantial changes to perceived safety or amenity value, taking into account the findings of interrelated topics such as landscape, air quality and noise.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial loss of/damage to key characteristics, features or elements, e.g. partial removal or substantial amendment to access or area of land, compromising viability of the asset. Introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severe severance giving rise to a limited / moderate change in accessibility which may be permanent or temporary. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A noticeable change in net economic output relative to the economic output of the geographical area in and around the Zol. A noticeable contribution to local employment levels relative to the available employment within the geographical area in and around the Zol. For example, where the Zol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase or decrease in the length of the journey which has the potential to encourage or deter the use of the NMU provision by a small proportion of users. Judgements should consider relevant factors such as the local setting, how the NMU provision is used, the scale of increase/decrease relative to the total

Magnitude of Impact	Environmental Impact Criteria for Construction or Operation				
	Private Property and Housing	Community land and assets	Development land and businesses	Socio-economics (as a subset of socio-economics, development land and businesses)	NMUs
	During construction this would be for a substantial period, for example at least two years.			incorporates parts of an urban conurbation this could be between 100 and 500 jobs.	length of the route and the availability of alternatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the quality of the route which are likely to encourage or deter its use by a small proportion of users. For example, changes to crossing points and/or amenity value, taking into account the findings of interrelated topics such as landscape, air quality and noise.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A discernible change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one or more key characteristics, features or elements. For example, amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in minor changes to operating conditions. Introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severance, whilst retaining adequate accessibility provision. During construction this would be for a notable period, for example at least one year. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A discernible change in net economic output relative to the economic output of the geographical area in and around the ZoI. A discernible change in net employment relative to the available employment within the geographical area in and around the ZoI. For example, where the ZoI incorporates parts of an urban conurbation this could be less than 100 jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A discernible increase or decrease in the length of the journey, which is not likely to encourage or discourage its use or change the way in which it is used. A discernible change to the quality of the NMU provision, which is not likely to encourage or discourage its use or change the way in which it is used. 	
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very minor loss of or alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements. For example, acquisition of non-operational land or buildings not directly affecting the viability of the asset. Very minor introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severance whilst retaining ample accessibility provision. No noticeable difference in the provision of private property, local facilities or services. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No measurable wider socio-economic effects within the local area. No measurable change in net number of jobs at the local level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No noticeable increase or decrease in the length or quality of NMU provision. 	

6.3.7 Significance of Effects

The significance of effects is informed by the EPA *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022)* as shown in Plate 6-2 below. The significance is largely determined by the relationship between the sensitivity of the existing environment and the magnitude of the potential impact.

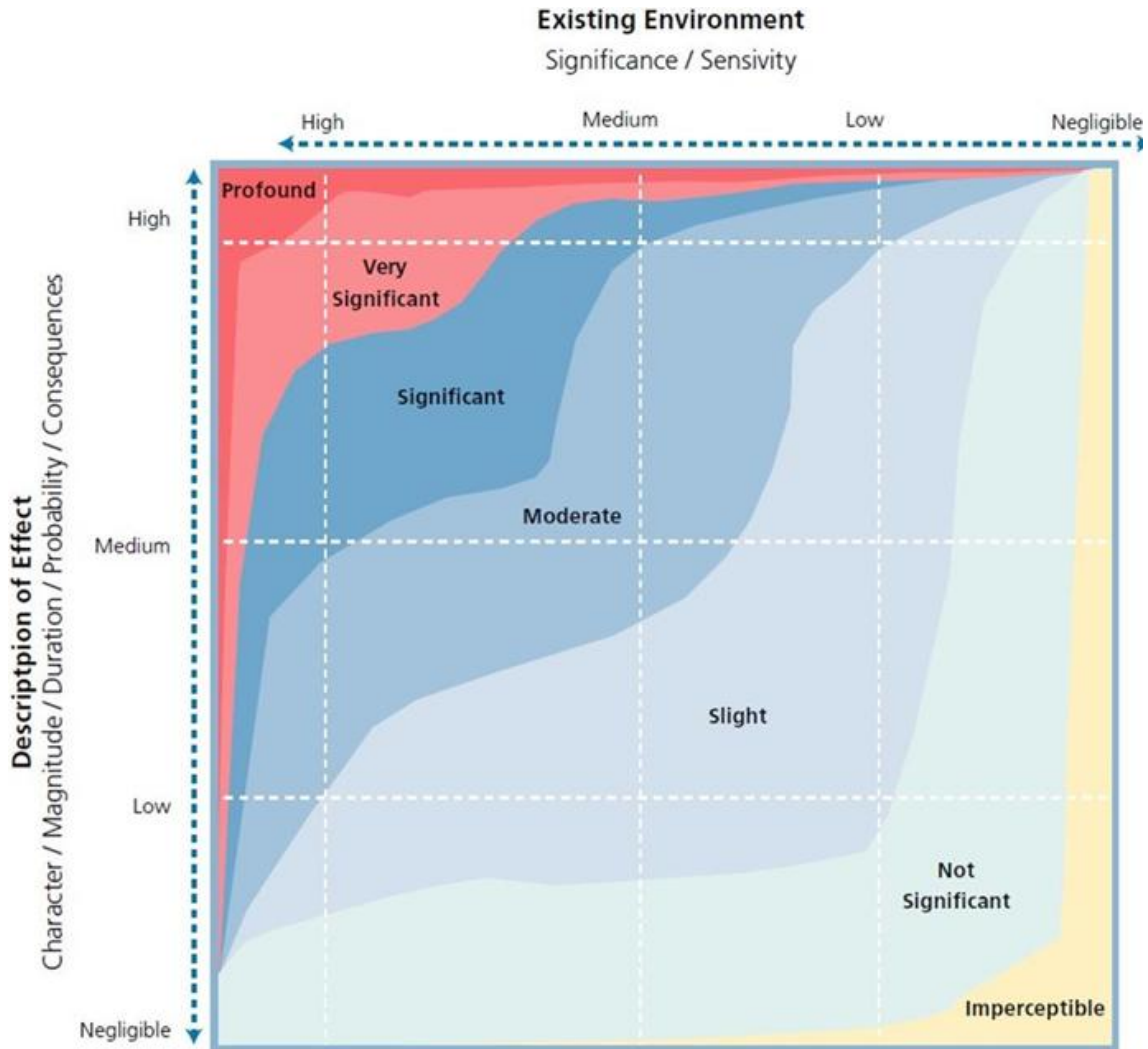


Plate 6-2 Significance of Effect Matrix (Source: EPA 2022 Guidelines)

The criteria used to describe the potential population effects are outlined in Table 6-4 which has been adapted in accordance with the EPA Guidelines, (EPA, 2022).

Table 6-4 Criteria used to assess and describe population effects (adapted from the EPA, 2022)

Quality of effects:	
Positive	A change which improves the quality of the environment.
Neutral	No effects, or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
Negative	A change which reduces the quality of the environment.

Describing significance of effect:	
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences on population.
Not Significant	An effect which causes noticeable (<i>Note 1</i>) changes in the character of the population environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Slight effects	A small effect which causes noticeable changes in the population and character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate effects	An effect that alters the character of the population environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Significant Effects	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters a sensitive aspect of the population environment.
Very significant Effects	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the population environment.
Profound Effects	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.
Describing the extent and context of effects:	
Extent	Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.
Context	Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)
Describing the probability of the effects:	
Likely Effects	The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
Unlikely Effects	The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measure are properly implemented.
Describing the duration and frequency of effects:	
Momentary Effects	Effects lasting from seconds to minutes.
Brief Effects	Effects last less than a day.
Temporary Effects	Effects lasting less than a year.
Short-term Effects	Effects lasting one to seven years.
Medium-term Effects	Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
Long-term Effects	Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
Permanent Effects	Effects lasting over sixty years.
Reversible effects	Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration.
Frequency of Effects	Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hour, daily, weekly, monthly, annually).
<i>Note 1: For the purposes of planning consent procedures</i>	

6.3.8 Difficulties encountered

The first non-statutory public consultation held for Section 1 of the West Clare Railway Greenway was held from the 13th of September to the 4th of October 2021. This consultation period was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and was held online in the interest of public health. This consultation therefore had to be wholly online and in-person information sessions were not possible. Feedback forms therefore had to be submitted by post, online, via email or via telephone. The absence of an in-person event for this initial public consultation may have resulted in lower response rates which could have skewed the record of the demographic impacted by the proposed development. The two subsequent further public consultations on the route options and the emerging preferred route were not impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, allowing in-person information sessions to go ahead as well as the online elements of the consultation.

6.4 Receiving Environment

6.4.1 Introduction

The proposed development is located in West Clare, connecting the settlements of Kilkee, Kilrush and Moyasta. The settlement hierarchy within the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 defines Kilkee as a Small Town, Moyasta as a Small Village and Kilrush as a Service Town. Both Kilrush and Kilkee are established tourist destinations (Kilkee more so), with associated local businesses servicing the towns and surrounding areas. The proposed development generally follows the route of the former West Clare Railway where feasible, or adjacent agricultural land.

The following provides a detailed description of the receiving environment relevant to the criteria being assessed.

6.4.2 Land Use

The predominant land use across the Zol between the settlements is agriculture. Land use across the settlements is summarised below, as per the zoning in the West Clare Municipal District Settlement Plans, contained in Volume 3d of the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029.

The Clare County Tourism Strategy 2030 supports the development of the West Clare Railway Greenway. This is reflected in The Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 and associated settlement plans for Kilkee, Moyasta and Kilrush. These plans recognise the multiple benefits to the wider community associated with the potential development of the West Clare Railway Greenway including:

- *'The benefits of linking Kilkee and Kilrush are two-fold; to enhance the existing linkages between the towns in terms of settlement, tourist facilities, expansion of the tourist base for both towns, and the creation of new green infrastructure linkages between the towns.'*
- *'The enhancement of and provision for green infrastructure such as walking and cycling routes would promote active recreation and sustainable travel in the town [Moyasta] and its environs. Improved facilities for pedestrians, such as footpath linkages between key elements of the village, would encourage pedestrian movement and improve amenities in the area. The development of the West Clare Railway Greenway along the line of the old West Clare Railway as a proposed recreational route is supported in this Plan and in particular the provision of enhanced connections to the village centre and community facilities such as the local school.'*

6.4.2.1 Kilkee

Kilkee is a popular, well-established seaside town on the Wild Atlantic Way, recognised as an important service centre and tourism resort for the region. The town consists of a variety of land use zoning designations including existing and proposed residential, commercial, agriculture, recreation, utilities, open space, tourism, community and mixed-use zones. The centre of the town of Kilkee has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) associated with its Victorian heritage. The proposed development is located on the outskirts of the town southeast of the town centre, within a linear stretch of land zoned for open space associated with the former West Clare Railway.

The Development Plan supports the development of the West Clare Railway Greenway as a recreational walking and cycling infrastructure for the County. Specifically, the Settlement Plan for Kilkee supports 'the development of the West Clare Railway Greenway along the line of the old West Clare Railway'. This land is bounded to the south by an area of existing residential and land zoned Residential (R2 and R3) which is described as 'bounded to the north by the line of the former West Clare Railway'. This area is bound to the north by land zoned 'Tourism' and 'Enterprise' land to the north. Refer to Plate 6-2.

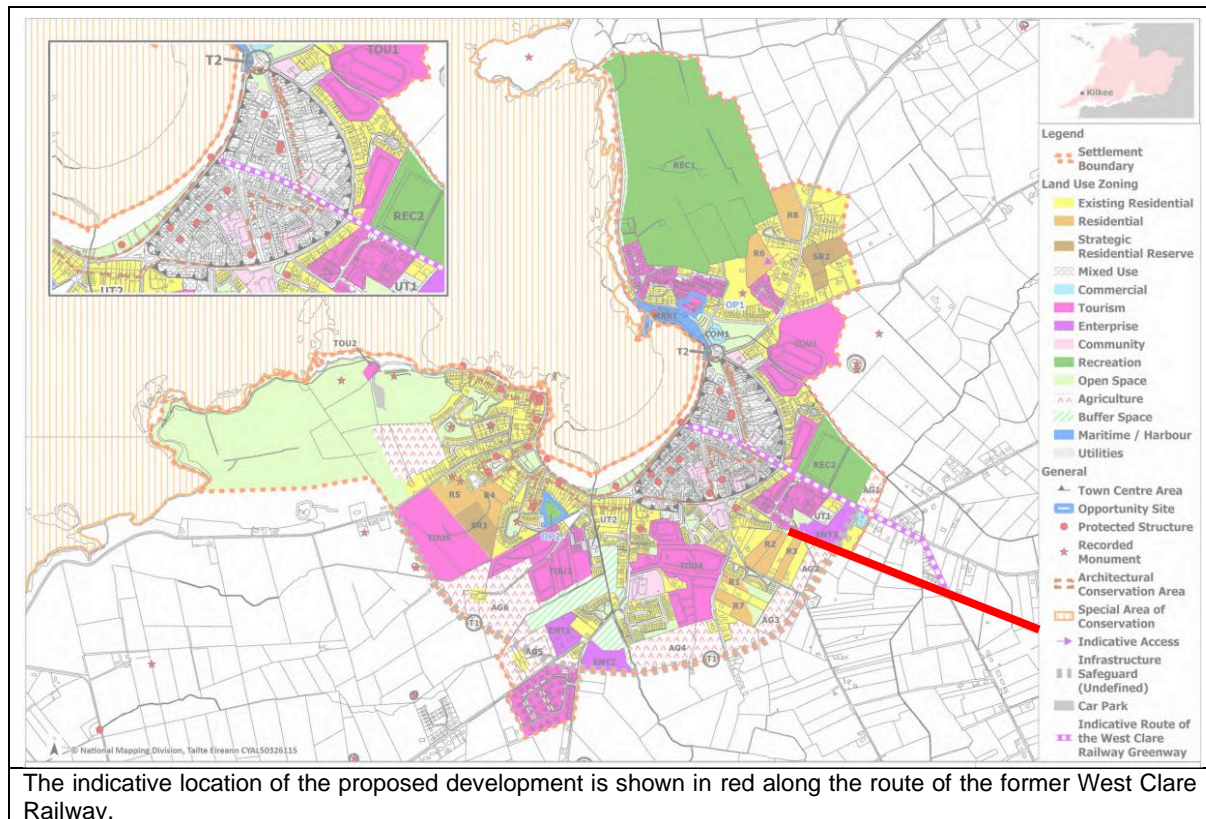


Plate 6-3 Land Use Zoning in Kilkee (West Clare Municipal District Settlement Plan 2023-2029). Adapted with Proposed Development indicated with a red line

6.4.2.2 Moyasta

Moyasta village is situated on the N67 and centred on the old railway station of the former West Clare Railway. The village consists of a variety of land use designations including existing residential, agriculture, tourism, conservation, open space, education, village growth and mixed use. The proposed development including the proposed trailhead at Moyasta is located on land designated for tourism 'solely to accommodate development associated with the West Clare Railway line'. Refer to Plate 6-4.

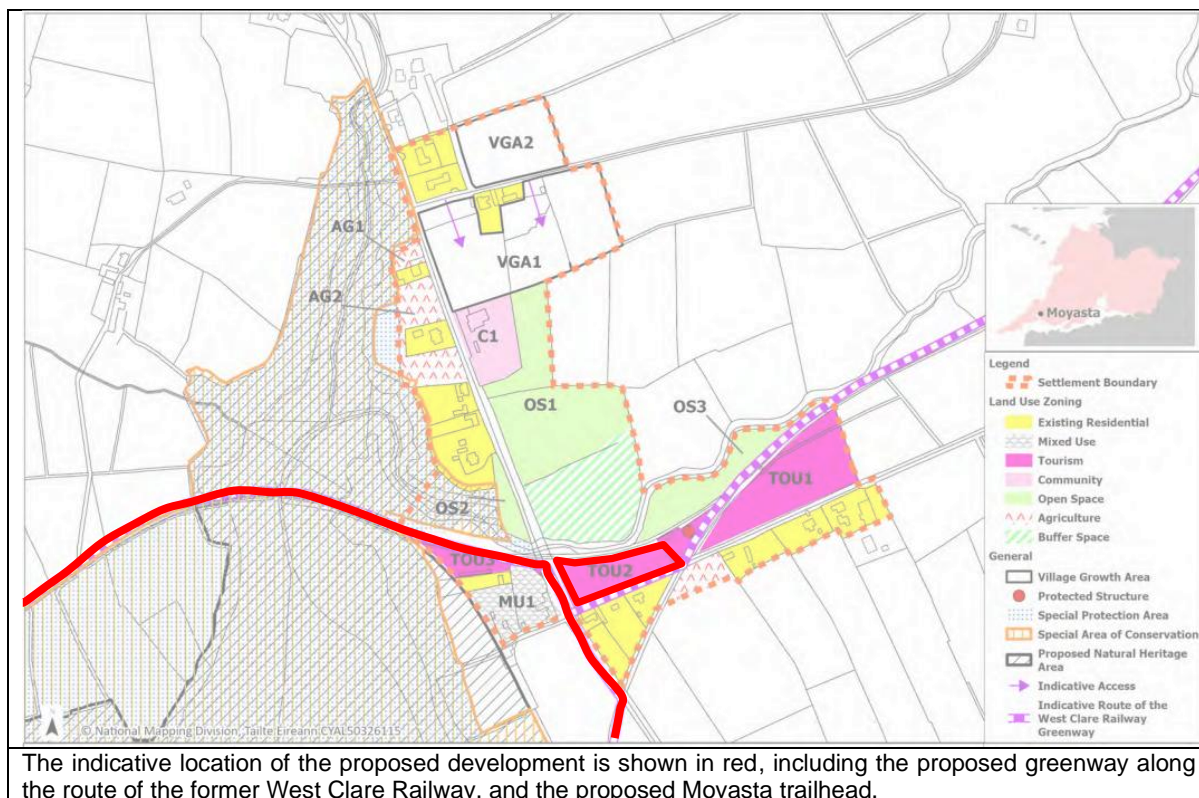
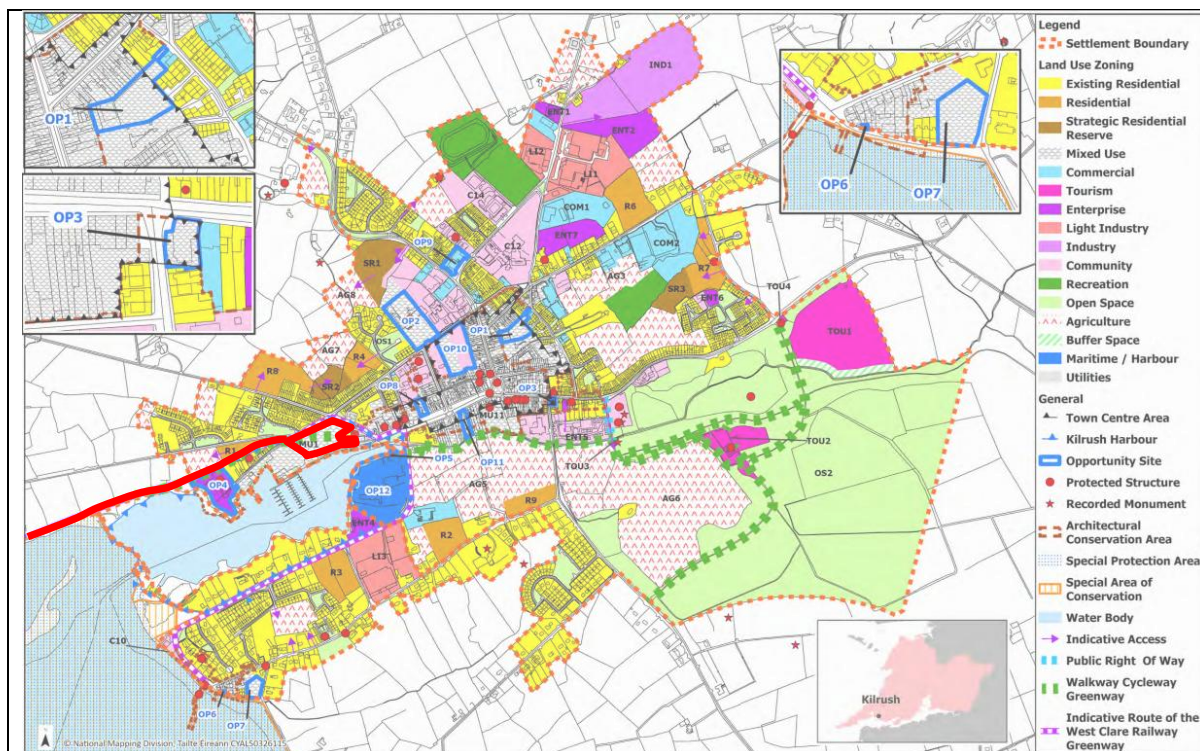


Plate 6-4 Land Use Zoning in Moyasta (West Clare Municipal District Settlement Plan 2023-2029). Adapted with Proposed Development indicated with a red line

6.4.2.3 Kilrush

Kilrush town is situated on the Wild Atlantic Way and on the Shannon Estuary, identified as an important service centre and driver of growth in West Clare. Kilrush harbour and marina area is located within walking distance of the town centre. Kilrush is a designated heritage town associated with its built heritage. Much of the town centre and harbour is designated as an ACA due to its historical importance. The town consists of a variety of land use designations, including existing and proposed residential, strategic residential reserve, mixed use, commercial, tourism, enterprise, industry, community, recreation, open space, maritime/harbour. The proposed development is partially located with the harbour area, with the proposed trailhead located on land zoned for mixed use. Adjacent to this a small portion of the proposed Greenway is located within the former railway corridor bound by existing residential property to the south and land to the north zoned for residential development. Refer to Plate 6-5.



The indicative location of the proposed development is shown in red, including the proposed greenway and the proposed trailhead at Kilrush marina.

Plate 6-5 Land Use Zoning in Kilrush (West Clare Municipal District Settlement Plan 2023-2029). Adapted with Proposed Development indicated with a red line

6.4.3 Population Baseline

6.4.3.1 Population and Housing

There are six electoral divisions (EDs) at least partially located within the Zol as identified in Table 6-1 and shown in Plate 6-1 above and in Volume 3 of this EIAR. The population for 2022 and 2016 for each ED is shown in Table 6-5 below.

Table 6-5 Population Change in the Zol by ED, Settlement and County (CSO 2022, CSO 2016, WDC 2022)

Zol	Population 2022	Population 2016	% change	Population Density (persons / km ²) (2022)
EDs within Zol				
Kilkee	1,214	917	32.39%	231.4
Einagh	312	324	-3.70%	18.6
Kilrush Rural	738	726	1.65%	12.9
Kilrush Urban	2,790	2,571	8.52%	502.3
St. Martin's	95	101	-5.94%	4.1
Kilfearagh	373	349	6.88%	19.1
Zol				
Zol (Total)	5,522	4,988	10.71%	N/A

Zol	Population 2022	Population 2016	% change	Population Density (persons / km ²) (2022)
Wider Area				
County Clare	127,938	118,817	7.68%	37.17
Republic of Ireland	5,149,139	4,761,865	8%	73

County Clare is a predominantly rural county with the 2022 Census indicating a population of 127,938 persons. The population of Clare is growing at a larger rate than Counties Limerick, Cork or Galway, with a 7.68 % increase reported on the 2016 population figure. This is slightly below the population growth rate of 8% experienced in the State overall (Table 6-5). The National Planning Framework Implementation Roadmap 2018, as referenced in the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, predicts the transitional Local Authority population for County Clare to grow to 134,000-137,000 by 2031.

With the exception of St. Martin's and Einagh, each ED in the Zol is experiencing population growth. A 32% increase in population occurred in Kilkee from 2016 to 2022. This significant increase is likely partially attributed to an increase in the availability of private households in the ED from 2016 to 2022, with 450 private households recorded in the 2016 census compared to 496 houses in 2022. The Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 outlines the conversion of holiday home units in Kilkee to permanent dwellings as an objective, facilitating further population growth.

The EDs of Kilkee and Kilrush Urban show population densities far larger than the Clare County average, as well as the national average. These urban areas offer high-density housing options which are not the predominant housing type in the remaining four EDs. In 2022, 41 and 120 apartments/flats were recorded in Kilkee and Kilrush Urban, respectively. In comparison, just 4 apartments/flats were recorded in Kilrush Rural and 1 in Kilfearagh. No apartments/flats were recorded in St. Martin's or Einagh.

6.4.3.2 **Education**

In County Clare, the 2022 Census reported that 76.3% of respondents were educated at least to upper secondary school level. Despite this, 5,942 individuals in Clare aged 15 years or older hold primary education as their highest level of education and a further 1,735 individuals had no formal education. In the 2024 Educational Attainment Thematic Report, 3% of the Irish population has either no formal education or primary education only. In Clare, this combined statistic rises to 9.6%. Nationally, 45% of the population holds a third level qualification. The statistic for Clare is marginally lower, at 44% (CSO, 2022).

6.4.3.3 **Socioeconomic Status**

According to the Central Statistics Office, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the Southern Region in 2023 was €177 Billion. County Clare is included within the Southern Region. In 2023, disposable income per person in County Clare was 11.5% below the national average. This is an increase in disparity on 2022, where disposable income was 10.7% below the national average. The 2023 average total income per person in County Clare was €34,720.50. The rate of labour force participation in Clare was recorded as 59.4% compared to 64.7% nationally in 2022, which may account for below average disposable income in the region (CSO, 2022).

The 2022 Census was used to determine and compare the economic status of the population residing in the 6 EDs which intersect the Zol. This was compared with State averages for economic status in Table 6-6 below. The percentage of individuals classed as 'At work' in Clare is slightly below the State average at 54.5%, while the study area itself has just 43.1% of individuals classed as 'At work'. This is likely due to a combination of low industrial

development in the area and a significantly higher than average proportion of retired individuals, which is tied to the fact this area has a greater population of over 65s than is typical of both County Clare and the State (CSO, 2022).

The percentage of student population within the Zol is low compared to both County and State figures (Table 6-6). Five out of six of the EDs comprising the Zol have below both State and County average rates of students. Einagh Ed has a marginally higher-than-average rate of students at 11.5%. Despite Kilrush Urban ED housing a third-level education facility, increased student rates in the area are not observed.

Table 6-6 Economic Status of Persons Aged 15 and Over (CSO, 2022)

Region	Economic Status							
	At work	Looking for first job	Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	Student	Looking after home/family	Retired	Unable to work due to sickness or disability	Other
State	56.1%	0.8%	4.3%	11.1%	6.6%	15.9%	4.6%	0.7%
County Clare	54.5%	0.8%	4%	11.4%	6.4%	17.8%	4.3%	0.7%
Study Area (Zol)	43.1%	1.4%	6.7%	7.4%	7.5%	24.4%	8.6%	1%

6.4.3.4 Travel to Work, School, or College

The travel patterns to work, school or college of the population within the six EDs (Zol) were compared with the travel patterns of the State and Clare County (Table 6-7). According to the Census 2022 data, the predominant mode of transport in the Zol is by private vehicle, accounting for 49.6% of commutes. The second most-popular mode of transport is by foot. The study area contains two urban EDs, Kilkee and Kilrush Urban. This likely accounts for the higher proportion of transport by foot than is typically experienced both in Clare and nationwide, as there is infrastructure better suited to pedestrians in these areas. In Kilrush Urban ED, 23% of individuals travel by foot, versus just 4% in Einagh ED.

Table 6-7 Travel to Work, School or College of Population aged 5 years and over (CSO 2022)

Region	Modes of Commuting					
	On Foot	Bicycle	Public Transport	Private Vehicle	No Commute (Mainly work at / from home)	Not Stated
State	16.6%	3.5%	14.9%	45.6%	9.7%	9.7%
County Clare	13.1%	1.5%	8.4%	57.3%	9.6%	10.1%
Study Area (Zol)	22.4%	1.4%	3.7%	49.6%	8%	15%

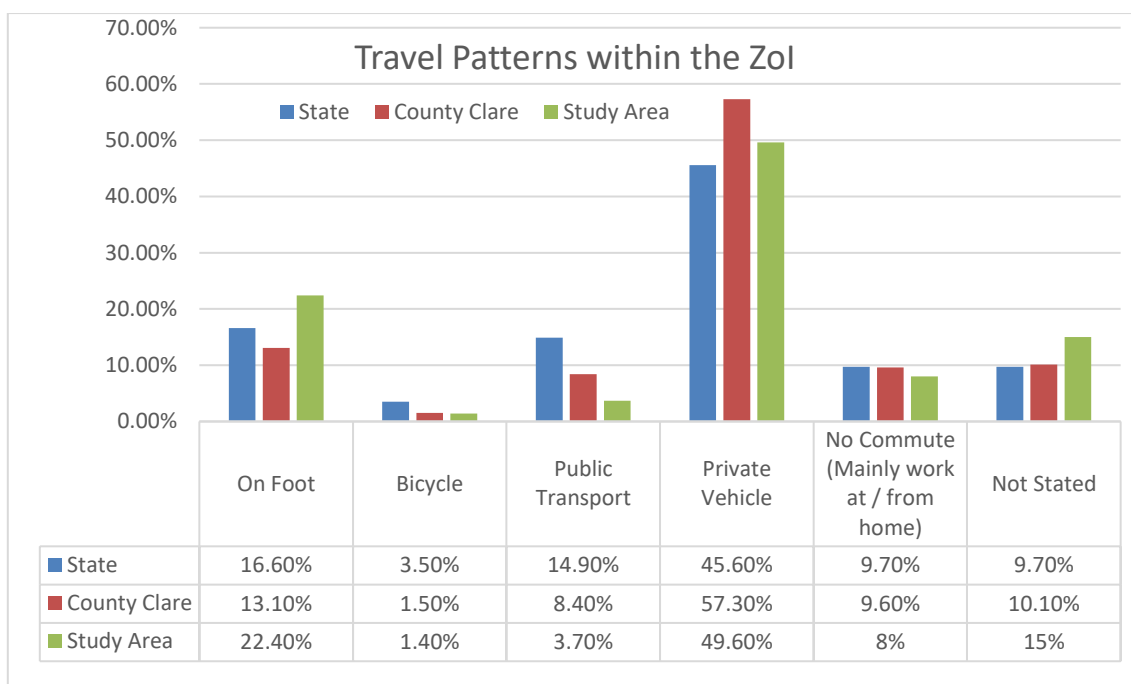


Plate 6-6 Travel Patterns within the Zol

Census 2022 also reports on the travel time and indicates that the highest percentage of people within the Zol (46%) travel less than 15 minutes to work, school or college, followed by 15% of people who spend between 15 and 30 minutes commuting to these destinations. Census 2022 data also indicates that most people leave home between the hours of 08:31-9:00 (31.02%), as presented in Table 6-8. This time corresponds with the proximity of work, school, or college to the place of residence.

Table 6-8 Population Aged 5+ by Time Leaving Home to Travel to Work, School or College Within the Zol (CSO, 2022)

Time leaving home	Persons within Zol	% of Total
Before 06:30	135	5.08%
06:30-07:00	205	7.72%
07:01-07:30	141	5.31%
07:31-08:00	301	11.33%
08:01-08:30	359	13.52%
08:31-09:00	824	31.02%
09:01-09:30	119	4.48%
After 09:30	178	6.70%
Not stated	394	14.83%
Total	2656	

6.4.3.5 Collisions Statistics

County Clare has experienced relatively consistent levels of road fatalities for a number of years, excluding years impacted by COVID-19 (Table 6-9).

Table 6-9 Collision Statistics by Year, Co. Clare (RSA, 2026)

Year	No. Fatalities
2024	4
2023	6
2022	7
2021	2
2020	3
2019	5
2018	6

Within the study area, a number of fatal collisions have occurred along the N67 between Kilrush and Kilkee. In 2024, a pedestrian was fatally hit by a vehicle while travelling along the N67 at Lisdeen (RTÉ 2024). Accident data received from TII on reported collisions along the N67 between Kilrush and Kilkee indicates there have been 2 recorded fatalities on the N67 outside of the towns, both of which involved NMUs. The NMu fatalities both occurred during the day, one of which was report during good visibility and the other with poor visibility. Accident data within the towns indicates other reported incidents in the past. These recent statistics fortify the need for a purpose-built pedestrian and cyclist facility in the area.

6.4.4 Private Property and Housing

The Zol incorporates the settlements of Kilkee, Kilrush and Moyasta with a range of housing provisions in each. Housing between each settlement is minimal, mainly occurring as light clustering along roadsides. Private dwellings across the EDs in the Zol are over 90% houses/bungalows according to the 2022 Census. This is likely due to the area being predominantly rural. The remaining dwelling types are apartments and caravans, with both Kilrush and Kilkee being established tourist destinations.

The proposed development generally follows the route of the abandoned West Clare Railway, or adjacent agricultural land following existing field boundaries where possible. Therefore, interactions with private property and housing are minimised.

In Kilkee, a small section of the proposed development is located adjacent to an area zoned as existing residential and proposed residential use. At Kilrush, the proposed development passes along the boundary of existing residential property and land zoned for new residential development. A small number of residential properties are located elsewhere along the alignment, between the settlements.

The sensitivity of impacted residential receivers has been assessed In Chapter 18 of this EIAR.

6.4.5 Community Land and Assets

There are a broad range of community land and assets within the Zol, generally centred around the towns of Kilkee and Kilrush. Community lands are described in PE-ENV-01108 (TII, 2025) to include land designated for community use such as open green space, parks, allotments, sports pitches, etc. Community assets include buildings or assets utilised for community use such as village halls, healthcare facilities, education facilities, places of worship, etc. (TII, 2025).

All community land and assets within the Zol are included in Table 6-10 below and shown in Figure 6.2 of Volume 3 of this EIAR.

Community land and assets within the Zol have generally been classified as *medium* sensitivity receptors as alternative facilities are generally only available in the wider Local Authority area.

6.4.5.1 Kilkee

Kilkee is located within the Kilkee ED and includes the townland of Dough in which the proposed development is located. A primary school, Scoil Réalt na Mara, and a secondary school, St. Joseph's Community College, are located within the Zol at Kilkee. Sweeney Memorial Library. Dún An Óir Communal Centre and Cultúrlann Sweeney serve as educational and cultural amenities. There is also a church, post office and two pharmacies within the Zol. Kilkee playground is located next to the primary school. There are a number of sports facilities within the Zol at Kilkee including those associated with St. Senan's GAA club. Kilkee Beach and adjacent area of green open space are also located within the Zol at Kilkee. Lisdeen Cemetery lies between Kilkee and Moyasta

6.4.5.2 Moyasta

The townland of Moyasta is located within Einagh ED. Moyasta National School is located within Moyasta village, approximately 225m from the proposed Moyasta trailhead.

6.4.5.3 Kilrush

Kilrush is located in Kilrush Urban ED. Primary schools in the area include St. Senan's Primary and Gaelscoil Uí Choimín. Cappa playground owned and managed by Clare County Council is located to the south of the harbour off Cappagh Road, Kilrush.

Table 6-10 Community Land and Assets within the Zol

Type	Name	Townland	ED
Education	Scoil Réalt na Mara	Dough	Kilkee
	St. Joseph's (Kilkee) Community College	Dough	Kilkee
	Moyasta National School	Moyasta	Einagh
	St. Senan's Primary	Drimna	Kilrush Urban
	Gaelscoil Uí Choimín	Drimna	Kilrush Urban
	St. Senan's National School Preschool	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Kilrush FETAC	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Cairde Beag Preschool	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Sweeney Memorial Library	Kilkee	Kilkee
	Kilrush Public Library	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
Churches	Church of the Immaculate Conception and St. Senan	Dough	Kilkee
	St. Flannan's Catholic Church	Garraun	Einagh
	St. Senan's Church	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Lisdeen Cemetery	Lisdeen	Kilfearagh
	New Shanakyle Graveyard	Leadmore West	Kilrush Rural
Post Offices	An Post Kilkee	Kilkee	Kilkee

Type	Name	Townland	ED
	An Post Kilrush	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
Health	Williams Pharmacy	Dough	Kilkee
	Hurst Pharmacy	Dough	Kilkee
	Kilrush Community Hospital Nursing Home	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Regina House Community Nursing Unit	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Duffy's Kilrush Pharmacy and Opticians	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Malone's Totalhealth Pharmacy	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	The Central Pharmacy	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
Community Centres	Kilrush Community Centre	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Dún An Óir Communal Centre	Kilkee	Dough
	Cultúrlann Sweeney	Kilkee	Dough
Playgrounds	Kilkee Playground	Dough	Kilkee
	Cappa Playground	Cappagh	Kilrush Urban
Sports Grounds / Facilities	Unnamed tarmac court with green space	Kilkee	Kilkee
	St. Senan's GAA	Dough	Kilkee
	Kilkee Subaqua Club	Dough	Kilkee
	Kilrush Astro Turf Complex	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
	Moneypoint AFC	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
Open Green Space	Unnamed open green strip facing out onto beach (Horseshoe Bay) with benches	Kilkee	Kilkee
	Unnamed open green strip facing bay with benches. Adjacent east end carpark	Dough	Kilkee
	Gallery Park, Kilrush	Kilrush	Kilrush Urban
Common Land	Kilkee Beach	Dough	Kilkee
	Brew's Bridge Beach	Carrowncalla South	Kilrush Rural

6.4.6 Socioeconomics, businesses and development land

6.4.6.1 Tourism Amenities

Tourism is a significant contributor to the Irish economy. In 2023, out-of-state (overseas and Northern Ireland) expenditure amounted to €7.3 billion, with a further €1.9 billion spent by overseas visitors on fares to Irish carriers (CSO, 2024b). In 2023, Ireland was visited by over 6.3 million overseas tourists, who spent over €7.3 billion, representing a significant contribution to the State's tourism industry. Tourism also supports a substantial number of jobs in Ireland. In Q1 2024, the CSO reported that 174,500 people (7% of total employment) were directly employed within the 'accommodation and food services activities' category, which comprises positions in hotels, restaurants, bars, canteens and catering (CSO, 2024c).

West Clare is a popular destination for domestic and international tourists, with close proximity to Shannon International Airport and a variety of accommodation available. The towns of Kilkee and Kilrush are popular tourist destinations associated with exploring the Wild Atlantic Way, Loop Head Peninsula and West Clare. The ZOI includes a range of cultural heritage sites, cycling and walking routes, scenic landscapes and family-friendly tourist attractions.

Attractions within Kilkee include Kilkee Waterworld, Kilkee Golf Club, Oceanlife Dive Centre, Kilkee Cliff Walk, Loop Head Cycleway, Kilkee Beach and the Pollock Holes. In Kilrush, the Vandeleur Walled Garden, Shannon Dolphin and Wildlife Centre, West Coast Aqua Park, Kilrush Golf Club, Eco-Sea Safari, Museum of Rural Irish Life and Scatterry Island are well-established tourist attractions.

6.4.6.2 **Land and Marine Based Economic Activity**

There are a number of businesses within the Zol servicing the tourism industry. Kilkee is a popular seaside resort with a number of tourist accommodation and eateries located in the town and considered to be significant economic receptors, including Blue Tit Lodge, Lynch's B&B, Bay View Hotel, Stella Maris Hotel, Kilkee Bay Hotel (currently closed) and Holly's Café. There are also a number of water-based activities and associated businesses operating in the area.

The proposed development at Kilrush is located in and adjacent to the marina area which is located at the edge of the Shannon Estuary. Kilrush Marina is a privately operated multi-use facility which accommodates a variety of sporting and tourism facilities and offers year round and seasonal employment to the area. Facilities include a boatyard and associated storage, maintenance and repair services, berths for private watercraft, camper van pitches and floating glamping pods as well as a sailing training centre. The marina services the Western Yacht Club of Ireland as well as a number of seasonal tour operators and eco-tourism businesses including Scatterry Island Tours, West Coast Rib Adventures and Dolphin Discovery. The Shannon Dolphin Centre is located adjacent to the marina along Merchant's Quay.

These businesses support the local workforce and economies in the area and are considered to be of '*medium*' sensitivity given they have little or no capacity to experience the potential impact of the proposed development without incurring a significant socio-economic loss (or gain) of an economic resource, or employment.

Land allocated for employment covers a small area in comparison to other land uses within the Zol and has therefore been identified as a *low* sensitivity receptor.

6.4.7 **Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)**

6.4.7.1 **Existing Pedestrian and Cyclist Infrastructure**

The proposed development is located in a predominantly rural area which is heavily dependent on private vehicle use and currently has very limited infrastructure for non-motorised users (NMUs) within the vicinity of the proposed development. In many instances, streets are not of adequate width to safely accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, parked cars and moving vehicles. At present, there is no safe corridor for NMUs to travel between the settlements. The N67 national road is the main transport link, with a speed limit of 100km/hr and high traffic volumes. It is noted that there have been several NMU fatalities on the N67 in recent years.

In the towns of Kilrush and Kilkee in the vicinity of the proposed development, there are a number of streets which provide narrow, raised footpaths adjacent to the roadside however these are often blocked by parked vehicles and cannot accommodate children's buggies or wheelchairs. At the village of Moyasta, there is a footpath provided on the western side of the road, beginning at Moyasta National School and terminating at the junction by Garrihy's Pub. Traffic calming measures are in place, reducing the speed limit from 100km/hr to 60km/hr on approach to and leaving Moyasta. There is a bicycle rack and a tyre pump just north of Garrihy's Pub along the N67.

There are a number of walks and cycle routes of local and regional importance that cross the Zol, including Kilkee cliff walk, which offers a long walk (12km), short walk (1.8km) or a 4km looped walk following the Kilkee coastline which is popular with tourists. The Eurovelo 1 cycle

network includes a 68 km stretch between Kilkee and Kilrush, with a small section interacting with the proposed development at Moyasta for a short distance along the N67, as well as the local road at Lisgreen and Garraun north of Blackweir Bridge. Refer to Figure 6.3 in Volume 3 of the EIAR.

It is considered that the existing provisions for NMUs are generally of 'Medium' sensitivity due to the presence of public rights of way and routes close to communities which are used for recreation and social purposes.

6.5 Description of Potential Impacts

6.5.1 Do-Nothing Scenario

The 'Do-Nothing' scenario assumes the proposed development is not built, meaning the existing baseline is unchanged whereby there are no active travel infrastructure provided between the settlements of Kilkee, Moyasta and Kilrush.

6.5.2 Potential Construction Phase Impacts

In accordance with the EPA Guidelines and the methodology outlined in Section 6.3 of this Chapter, the following sections provide an overview of the predicted impacts on population during construction and operation phases of the proposed development.

6.5.2.1 Private Property and Housing

There are a number of residential properties adjacent to the proposed development in the three settlements of Kilkee, Kilrush, and Moyasta. One-off residential properties are also present within the vicinity of the proposed development between the three settlements, where agricultural lands are the predominant land use.

There are a number of privately owned residential properties directly impacted by the proposed development. A Residential Impact Assessment has been completed for each property that will be directly impacted both in terms of temporary and permanent land take. The key findings of the RIA are presented in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR.

In addition, access to these and other residential properties adjacent to the proposed development may be temporarily impacted during construction. This will result in *direct, slight, negative, temporary impacts* at the construction phase.

Indirect impacts on residential properties in the vicinity of the proposed development may arise as a result of general construction activities. Considering that the receptor sensitivity is 'High', and the magnitude of impact is 'Negligible', and given the linear nature of the proposed development, the potential *indirect* effect on residential properties is *negative, imperceptible, and temporary* at construction phase.

6.5.2.2 Community Land and Assets

The majority of the proposed development follows the route of the abandoned West Clare Railway or is located on greenfield lands which are largely used for agriculture. Therefore, impacts to community land and assets are reduced.

One small area of zoned open space in Kilkee will be directly impacted by the proposed development. This zoned open space area is located at the western end of the proposed greenway in Kilkee, at the tie-in with Percy French Estate, as shown in Plate 6-6. Direct land take impacts are assessed in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR. This area is associated with the former West Clare Railway and is currently overgrown and not in

use by the wider community. A condition survey was carried out on the 3rd of February 2026 (refer to Appendix 6.1).



Plate 6-6 Lands zoned for Open Space at Percy French Estate in Kilkee, Co. Clare

An additional area of community land at Brews Bridge beach car park will be acquired as part of the proposed development, however works will be limited to tie in works with the proposed greenway at either end of the car park. Direct land take impacts are assessed in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR.

To minimise the impact of the proposed works on traffic in the immediate vicinity of community infrastructure and amenities, and along haulage routes, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be implemented for the duration of the construction phase.

A 'negligible' magnitude of impact is likely on access to 'High' sensitivity community land and assets located within the Zol as the proposed works are mainly located in greenfield areas, and have limited interaction with local roads, only where tie-ins are required. The potential effect on community land and assets within the Zol from construction traffic and the operation of construction compounds is likely to be *negative, indirect, slight, and temporary to short-term*.

6.5.2.3 Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land

A noticeable contribution to local employment levels is likely to be observed as part of the construction phase through both direct and indirect employment opportunities. The direct employment calculation contained in TII 2025 Guidelines (TII, 2025) was used to calculate the approximate number of job opportunities available over the 24-month construction period. A total of approximately 250 jobs are expected to arise from the construction phase of the proposed development. The magnitude of this impact is *medium*, as it will likely result in a noticeable change in net economic output relative to the economic output of the geographical area in and around the Zol. The construction phase is anticipated to have a *direct, slight, positive, short-term* impact upon Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land.

Construction activities are likely to result in temporary to short-term effects that are of 'Low' magnitude on economic output of the geographical area in and around the Zol as access to businesses will be maintained and most of the noise, air, visual amenity and traffic disruption

will be limited to daytime working hours. These effects may have indirect impacts on local businesses such as Garrihy's Pub as works will be carried out in front of this economic operator, with a temporary compound located across the road. Similarly, works at the temporary compound in Kilrush may have indirect effects on businesses operating within the adjacent marina area. *Negative, indirect, slight and short-term* impacts are therefore likely on economic operators during construction.

6.5.2.4 Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)

The majority of the proposed development is located offline of the existing road network, following the route of the abandoned railway line and through adjacent agricultural lands. *Neutral* effects on NMUs are envisaged at this location as the public generally do not have access to these lands.

Construction activities have the potential to impact on journey characteristics and journey amenity of NMUs during specific periods. General construction works and temporary construction compounds will result in a range of activities taking place during the daytime working hours including an increase in heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) transporting material to and from the construction site, movements of construction vehicles, and other general construction traffic. *Negative, indirect slight to imperceptible, temporary to short-term* effects are likely due to the general presence of construction machinery and activities at road network used by NMUs in proximity to the temporary construction compounds.

Where the proposed works are online of the existing road network, namely at crossings of public roads at various locations along the proposed greenway, and in Moyasta, where the greenway follows the existing N67 for approximately 215m, works are likely to cause some disruption to NMUs, although there are no dedicated footpaths along this section of the N67. Access will be maintained along existing public roads with localised diversions in place e.g., NMUs may be directed around the proposed works for the proposed at-grade crossings, and along the N67, NMUs will be redirected to use the northern side of the road. The potential impact is therefore considered to be 'Low' in magnitude. Due to the linear and small nature of these works, the potential effects on NMUs are *direct, slight, negative and temporary*.

6.5.3 Potential Operation Phase Impacts

6.5.3.1 Private Property and Housing

The potential direct impacts on private property and housing in terms of permanent land take are assessed in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR. In relation to residential amenity, Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of this EIAR assessed the potential impacts on properties from the change of view as a result of the proposed greenway development. Only one viewpoint was predicted to have a Significant visual effect albeit of Neutral quality. Rather than being a view of the proposed greenway, this is as a result of predicted open views from this viewpoint of the proposed Kilrush trailhead, from residences in the immediate vicinity of the trailhead, albeit on the western fringes of a sizeable town. All other viewpoints were predicted to have a visual effect not higher than Moderate.

Potential effects on lands zoned for residential development within settlements of Kilkee, Moyasta and Kilrush are assessed below, with direct land take impacts on residential property and zoned residential land assessed in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR.

Kilkee

As the greenway approaches Kilkee, it passes through land zoned as open green space under Clare CDP 2023-2029 at the rear of the Percy French Estate (Plate 6-3). Lands zoned as

'Existing Residential' and 'Residential' adjoin the open space land use zoning. The proposed development will have *neutral* effects on lands zoned for future residential development.

Moyasta

The greenway crosses land zoned for tourism at Moyasta under Clare CDP 2023-2029 (Plate 6-4). This land has been allocated for developments such as the West Clare Railway Greenway, therefore the proposed development is fulfilling the potential of this land use. The proposed development will have *neutral* effects on lands zoned for future residential development.

Kilrush

The proposed greenway development follows the abandoned West Clare Railway Line to enter Kilrush from the west, following the alignment for an 'Indicative Route of the West Clare Railway Greenway' as identified in Clare CDP 2023-2029 (Plate 6-5). The proposed development passes in between lands zoned as 'Residential' (R1), 'Existing Residential' and 'Opportunity Site' (OP4) and will have a *neutral* effect on the future residential development.

The proposed trailhead in Kilrush occupies approximately half of the site zoned as 'Mixed Use' (MU1), with Clare CDP 2023-2029 noting that for mixed use lands "*in or near town or village centres, a diverse range of day and evening uses is encouraged and an over-concentration of any one use will not normally be permitted*". The proposed trailhead will provide parking and other ancillary facilities such as toilets, waste bins and picnic areas to support the proposed greenway as a tourism and community asset, without precluding development within the remaining lands zoned for mixed-use development.

6.5.3.2 Community Land and Assets

The proposed development directly impacts on a small area of zoned open space in Kilkee as outlined below. An area of road bed within the car park at Brews Bridge beach will also be acquired as part of the proposed development to tie in with the greenway on either end of the existing car park. Direct land take impacts on community land are quantified in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR. No other community land and assets are directly impacted during operation phase.

The proposed development will become a new community asset itself, whilst providing an opportunity for improved social cohesion and access to communities along the greenway, and between the three settlements of Kilkee, Moyasta and Kilrush. The proposed development will also significantly improve pedestrian and cyclist access to community amenities and facilities in the wider area, including existing education, religious and recreational facilities and places of work which are currently only accessible by private car. In general, the proposed development is likely to have a 'High' magnitude of impact on community land and assets which are of 'High' sensitivity within the Zol and such, is likely to have *significant, positive, long-term to permanent* effects.

Potential effects at local level, namely within the settlements of Kilkee, Moyasta and Kilrush, are discussed further below.

Kilkee

At Kilkee at the western end of the proposed greenway, the proposed greenway commences at the tie in with the Percy French Estate, a local road that has a mix of residential and commercial properties. This area of open space is not currently accessible or utilised by the wider community. The proposed development will improve the amenity of this local area. A number of community facilities are located within a 30-minute walk, or 10 minute cycle from the starting point of the proposed greenway, such as St. Senan's G.A.A., Scoil Réalt na Mara, Kilkee Community College and St. Joseph's Community College and Kilkee Beach. These

community facilities will be more accessible by active travel modes of travel for the wider community, resulting in *significant, positive, long-term to permanent* effects on community lands and assets in Kilkee.

Moyasta

At Moyasta, the proposed greenway will enhance connectivity to Moyasta National School, which is less than 250m away from the route. *Significant, positive, long-term to permanent effects* on community lands and assets are likely in Moyasta.

Kilrush

The proposed development terminates at lands to the east of Kilrush Marina, which serves as a hub for a number of marine activities such as the Western Yacht Club of Ireland. As with Kilkee, a number of community facilities are located within a 30-minute walk, or 10-minute cycle from the starting point of the proposed greenway, such as St. Senan's Primary School, Gaelscoil Uí Choimín, and Moneypoint AFC. These community facilities will be more accessible by active travel modes of travel for the wider community. *Significant, positive, long-term to permanent* effects are likely on community lands and assets in Kilrush.

6.5.3.3 Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land

The study area is predominantly rural with the exception of areas where the proposed development travels through the settlements of Kilkee, Moyasta and Kilrush. The areas outside of these settlements have 'Negligible' sensitivity due to the small number of businesses present. It is likely that the main economic opportunities will be in the hospitality sector as well as in bike hire and repair services. This will provide these areas with an incentive to broaden the tourism market in the existing towns and villages, and to subsequently generate employment and support the local economies, especially in the rural areas.

To quantify the expected advantages as a result of the proposed development, an economic assessment was undertaken to inform this EIAR. The assessment followed the methodology outlined in TII 2025 Guidelines and was based on Census 2022 and Fáilte Ireland data to determine the existing pedestrian and cyclist demand in the study area (domestic and tourism), and TII MOVE Survey data from other greenways, to calculate future user demand under high, central and growth scenarios. For the purposes of this assessment, the central growth scenario was used as it represents the most likely usage of the proposed greenway.

According to the calculations, in the Opening Year the average daily usage of the greenway is estimated to consist of c. 500 pedestrian and c. 320 cyclist trips which equates to approximately 295,000 trips per annum. User numbers will fluctuate seasonally, with greater user numbers predicted during the summer – see Chapter 5. Taking into consideration the predicted greenway user numbers, it is likely that *positive, very significant and long-term effects* on Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land within the Zol and wider area are likely as a result of the proposed development.

The potential impact on business and development land is assessed for the three settlements as described below. Direct land take impacts on commercial property and development land are quantified in Chapter 18 Material Assets (Non-Agricultural) of this EIAR.

Kilkee

In Kilkee, the receptor sensitivity is 'medium' as the number of employment sites and development land, including tourism covers a moderate area of all lands within the Zol in this settlement, and would experience an impact from additional visitor numbers. The proposed development will expand the tourist base in Kilkee. There are a number of existing businesses that would benefit from the increased number of visitors such as accommodation establishments, namely holiday caravan parks and Stella Maris and Bay View Hotels, food and beverage establishments along O'Curry Street, and merchandises, namely souvenir / gift

shops. The proposed development also provides an incentive for establishment of new businesses due to the increased number of visitors to the area. The magnitude of impact on businesses and development land is 'high', as the proposed development will likely result in a noticeable increase in economic output and employment opportunities for the town due to the anticipated increase in annual tourism. The proposed development is therefore expected to have a *positive, moderate to significant, long-term* effect on Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land in Kilkee.

Moyasta

Moyasta is a small village in Co. Clare with limited number of businesses present, namely Garrihy's Bar. The receptor sensitivity is considered to be 'medium' as this business is considered to be at risk and has little or no capacity to experience the impact without incurring a significant socio-economic gain from the proposed greenway development. The proposed development will provide a trailhead on lands currently zoned for 'tourism' under Clare CDP 2023-2029 across the road from Garrihy's Bar. This will bring significant number of visitors to the village having positive impacts on Garrihy's Bar, and will provide the opportunity to develop more businesses to serve the visitor numbers and the community in Moyasta. It is considered that the magnitude of impact on businesses and development land is 'high', and will have a *positive, moderate to significant, long-term effect* on Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land in Moyasta.

Kilrush

In Kilrush, the receptor sensitivity is 'medium' as the economies have no capacity to experience the impact without incurring a significant socio-economic gain associated with the additional visitor numbers. The proposed development will expand the tourist base in Kilrush. There are a number of existing businesses that would benefit from the increased number of visitors such as accommodation establishments, namely the Grove Guesthouse, Zoe Accommodation and B&B, food and beverage establishments along Henry Street, and merchandises, namely souvenir / gift shops. Existing eco-tourism businesses operating from Kilrush Marina may also benefit. The proposed development also provides an incentive for establishment of new businesses due to the increased number of visitors to the area.

The magnitude of impact on businesses and development land is 'high', as the proposed development will likely result in a noticeable increase in economic output and employment opportunities for the region due to the anticipated increase in tourism rates. The proposed development is therefore expected to have a *positive, moderate to significant, long-term* effect on Socioeconomics, Businesses and Development Land in Kilrush.

6.5.3.4 Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)

The proposed development will provide dedicated and segregated pedestrian and cyclist facilities for NMUs. The proposed greenway will serve as a safe travel route, an amenity which was not previously available, especially within the rural areas of the ZOI. The greenway will also provide links to other popular recreational routes in the locality such as the Kilkee Cliff Walk. It will also complement the existing Eurovelo route by offering a safer off road alternative for sections of the route between Kilrush and Kilkee, in particular where the route is currently shared with the N67. Refer to Figure 6.3 in Volume 3 of the EIAR.

The proposed development is also likely to have an impact on commuting patterns, as a high percentage of population within the study area rely on private car use as a method of transportation to work, school or college. It is likely that residents will be more motivated to walk and cycle to complete shorter trips due to the availability of this alternative route, and the safety that it provides for its users. This development will be particularly useful in rural areas, where there is no public transport available to complete shorter journeys. The greenway will provide safe off-road routes between rural towns and settlements which are currently only

accessed by local roads. The proposed development may encourage locals to cycle or walk to work or school once the facilities are available. Access to social and employment opportunities will also be improved.

The magnitude of this impact is 'high', as the proposed development provides high-quality active travel transport route for residents and visitors alike. Receptor sensitivity is also 'high', as the route is likely to be used daily for recreational use and some level of commuting, and it is accessible to vulnerable users such as children and those with disabilities. The proposed development will have *positive, direct, very significant, and long-term effects* on NMUs.

6.6 Mitigation and Monitoring

The following mitigation measures will be implemented in order to avoid / minimise negative impacts in relation to population as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed development.

6.6.1 Construction Phase

All construction works will be temporary to short-term in nature and will be carried out in line with best practice thereby minimising the likely significant impacts to the community and human health. The Contractor will work within stringent construction limits and guidelines to protect surrounding populations and amenities. The mitigation measures for population have been identified at construction phase of the proposed development and are listed below:

- All mitigation measures set out in the other specialist chapters of this EIAR – particularly Chapters 5 (Traffic & Transportation), 12 (Air Quality), 14 (Noise and Vibration), 15 (Landscape and Visual Assessment), 18 (Material Assets & Land Non-Agriculture) – will be fully implemented.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) shall be developed and implemented by the Contractor(s) to address all modes of transport during the construction stage and will be agreed with Clare County Council prior to the commencement of the construction phase. With regard to the CEMP, the following will apply:
 - a) The CTMP will be required to maximise the safety of the workforce and the public and to minimise traffic delays, disruption and maintain access to properties.
 - b) The CTMP will be required to minimise disruption to economic operators, including marine operations and users, residential properties and will ensure access is maintained throughout the works, including along haulage routes and in vicinity of the construction site(s) for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and economic operators at all times.
- Prior to the commencement of construction phase, the Contractor will develop and implement all mitigation measures detailed in Chapter 4 (Description of the Proposed Development); this is to include development of Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and associated traffic management proposals to address all modes of transport and will be required to be agreed with Clare County Council prior to construction stage.
 - The CEMP will be required to maximise the safety of the workforce and the public and minimise traffic delays, disruption and maintain access to properties.
 - The CEMP will also address temporary disruption to traffic signals, footpath access and the management of pedestrian crossing points.
 - The contractor shall provide an appropriate information campaign for the duration of the construction works.
 - The CEMP shall minimise disruption to economic operators, marine users and residential amenities.

- Prior to the commencement of the construction phase, the Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) will prepare a Construction Health and Safety Plan, which addresses all relevant construction phase health risks, including potential exposure to contaminated land, risks associated with working at heights and adjacent to / over water.
- Pedestrian access will be maintained during the construction works where the proposed development is online of the existing Public Rights of Way.

6.6.2 Operation Phase

All mitigation measures set out in specialist chapters of this EIAR will be fully implemented – particularly Chapter 5 Traffic and Transportation, Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual, Chapter 18 Material Assets and Land (Non-Agriculture) of this EIAR, no likely significant negative impacts are predicted during operational stage. All mitigation measures are summarised in Chapter 21 of this EIAR.

6.7 Monitoring

Monitoring measures are not proposed as part of this assessment.

6.8 Residual Effects

Residual impacts on private property and housing, community land and assets, socio-economics, businesses and development land, and non-motorised users are as stated in Sections 6.5.2 and Section 6.5.3 of this chapter at construction and operation phase of the proposed development, respectively.

6.9 References

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