

5.

POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH

5.1

Introduction

This section of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) identifies, describes and assesses the potential effects of the Proposed Development on population and human health and has been completed in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance and legislation set out in Chapter 1: Introduction. The full description of the Proposed Development is provided in Chapter 4: Description of the Proposed Development.

One of the principal concerns in the development process is that people, as individuals or communities, should experience no diminution in their quality of life from the direct or indirect effects arising from the construction and operation of a development. Ultimately, all the effects of a development impinge on human beings, directly and indirectly, positively and negatively. The key issues examined in this section of the EIAR include population, employment and economic activity, land-use, tourism, human health and vulnerability of the Proposed Development to natural disasters and major accidents.

Reference is also made, in this chapter, to potential impacts from the Proposed Development to human health that are dealt with in other sections of this EIAR such as Chapter 7: Land, Soils and Geology, Chapter 8: Hydrology and Hydrogeology, Chapter 9: Air, Chapter 10: Climate, Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration, Chapter 14: Material Assets and Chapter 15 Major Accidents and Natural Disasters.

5.2

Statement of Authority

This chapter of the EIAR has been prepared by Feargal Lennon and Karen Mulryan, and reviewed by Eoin O'Sullivan, all of MKO. Feargal Lennon joined MKO in 2023. He holds an MSc in Environmental Resource Management from University College Dublin. Feargal has prepared numerous Air chapters for EIARs across a variety of project types, including greenways, quarries, waste facilities, industrial and residential developments. Feargal is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).

Karen is a Senior Environmental Scientist with MKO with over 10 years' experience in the consultancy sector. Karen holds a BA International in Archaeology from NUI Galway and a MSc in Archaeology from the University of Edinburgh. Karen's professional consultancy experience comprises project management, environmental impact assessment reporting and peer reviewing, site selection, feasibility assessment, client liaison and stakeholder engagement. Karen's project management and EIA coordination experience includes large scale renewable energy developments, specifically wind and solar, grid infrastructure, large scale flood relief schemes and residential developments. Karen holds memberships with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ACIfA) and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI).

Eoin O'Sullivan is a Project Director at MKO with over 18 years of experience in the environmental assessment of a wide range of energy and infrastructure related projects and working in the fields of environmental and human health risk assessment, waste management, waste policy and permitting. Eoin has also experience in completing Environmental Impact Assessment Reports for renewable energy projects, quarries, waste infrastructure and wastewater treatment facilities. Eoin holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science & Technology and an MSc in Environmental Engineering. Eoin's key strengths include project strategy advice for a wide range and scale of projects, project management and liaising with the relevant local authorities, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and statutory consultees as well as coordinating the project teams and sub-contractors. Eoin is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management and Chartered Environmentalist with the Society of Environment.

5.3

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This chapter of this EIAR is carried out in accordance with Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13th December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification) as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16th April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (2014) (hereafter known as the EIA Directive) and has been prepared in accordance with guidance referred to in Chapter 1 of this EIAR.

In addition to the guidelines set out in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) *Guidelines on the information to be contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report*¹ and the EIA Directive, the following guidelines, plans and reports have been reviewed, considered, and applied in the preparation of this chapter:

- Department of Health (2026) - Health in Ireland: Key Trends 2025².
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DoHPLG) (2018), Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment³.
- EPA (2022) Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports⁴.
- European Commission (EC) (2017), Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report⁵.
- Fáilte Ireland (2023) EIAR Guidelines for the Consideration of Tourism and Tourism Related Projects⁶.
- Fáilte Ireland (2025) Key Tourism Facts 2024⁷.
- Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2022a) Health in Environmental Impact Assessment: A Primer for a Proportionate Assessment⁸.
- Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2022b) Determining Significance for Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment⁹.
- Institute of Public Health Ireland (IPH) (2021) Health Impact Assessment Guidance¹⁰.
- National Roads Authority / Transport Infrastructure Ireland (2008) *Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes: A Practical Guide (Revision 1)*¹¹.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO)(2022) Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region¹².

¹ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2022) *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*. EPA, Ireland. Available at: <https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring-assessment/assessment/guidelines-on-the-information-to-be-contained-in-environmental-impact-assessment.php>

² Department of Health (2026) *Health in Ireland Key Trends 2025*. Department of Health, Ireland. Available at: :

<https://www.gov.ie/en/departments-of-health/press-releases/minister-for-health-publishes-health-in-ireland-key-trends-2025/>

³ Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DoHPLG) (2018), *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/departments-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/publications/guidelines-for-planning-authorities-and-an-bord-pleanala-on-carrying-out-environmental-impact-assessment-august-2018/>

⁴ European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment, COWI, Milieu, McGuinn, J., Lukacova, Z., McNeill, A. et al. (2017) *Environmental impact assessment of projects : guidance on the preparation of the environmental impact assessment report (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)*. European Union. Luxembourg Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/41362>

⁵ Fáilte Ireland (2023) *EIAR Guidelines for the Consideration of Tourism and Tourism Related Projects*. Available at: <https://www.failteireland.ie/>

⁶ Fáilte Ireland (2025) *Key Tourism Facts 2024*. Fáilte Ireland, Ireland. Available at: <https://www.failteireland.ie/Research-Insights/National/Key-Tourism-Facts-2024-National-Summary.aspx>

⁷ Cave, B. et al. (2017) *Health in Environmental Impact Assessment: A Primer for a Proportionate Approach*. Ben Cave Associates Ltd, IEMA and the Faculty of Public Health, Lincoln, England. Available at: <http://www.iema.net>

⁸ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (now - Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)) (2022) *Determining Significance for Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment*. IEMA. Available at: <https://www.iema.net/media/vjlb2nbs/iema-cia-guide-to-determining-significance-for-human-health-nov-2022.pdf>

⁹ Institute of Public Health Ireland (IPH) (2021) *Health Impact Assessment Guidance*. IPH. Available at: : https://instituteofpublichealth.org/sites/default/files/resources/HIA%20Guidance%20A%20Manual_0.pdf

¹⁰ Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) (2008) *Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes- A practical Guide*. Available at: <https://cdn.tii.ie/publications/PE-ENV-01114-01.pdf>

¹¹ WHO (2022) *Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/>

- United States Environmental Protection Agency (2014) Framework for Human Health Risk Assessment to Inform Decision Making¹².
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (2016) Health Impact Assessment Resource and Tool Compilation¹³.
- Central Statistics Office (CSO): Census of Ireland 2016; Census of Ireland 2022; Census of Agriculture 2020¹⁴.
- Roscommon County Council (2022), Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028¹⁵.
- CHL (2026) Hodson Bay Marina Park Development: Tourism and Economic Study (Appendix 5-1 of this EIAR).

5.4 Scoping and Consultation

The following sections provide a summary of scoping and consultation undertaken for the Proposed Development that is relevant to this chapter. Refer to Chapter 2 Section 2.5 of this EIAR for full details of the scoping and consultation exercise undertaken for the Proposed Development.

5.4.1 Public Consultation

Community engagement and public consultation was carried out for the Proposed Development. During the public consultations many members of the local community shared their support for the redevelopment of an important tourist attraction and public recreation facility for the Hodson Bay area. Some community members expressed their concerns regarding the reduction in some of the golfing green to accommodate active travel and parking measures and the potential increase in traffic to the area. Refer to (Appendix 2-3 Community Survey – 1st Public Consultation Feedback Report and Appendix 2-4 Community Survey – 2nd Public Consultation Feedback Report for further details.

5.4.2 Scoping

Health Service Executive

On 11th August 2025, the Health Service Executive (HSE) responded to a scoping request by providing project-specific recommendations and guidance for the production of the EIAR. In relation to population and human health, HSE highlighted that the applicant should ensure early, meaningful public consultation, consider alternatives, identify sensitive receptors, and assess both positive and negative health effects using approach which aligns with EPA guidance.

As discussed in Section 5.4 above, community engagement and public consultation was carried out during the pre-planning phase (as described in Appendix 2-3 and Appendix 2-4). The consideration of alternatives has also been considered as set out in Chapter 3 Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives. This chapter of the EIAR addresses these concerns by assessing the potential for effects, supported by site-specific data, and proposing appropriate mitigation measures, detailed in Section 5.7 below.

Uisce Éireann

On 5th August 2025, Uisce Éireann responded to a scoping request, outlining that the Proposed Development directly interacts with Lough Ree, the second of three lakes on the River Shannon. This is a

¹² United States Environmental Protection Agency (2014) 'Framework for human health risk assessment to inform decision making' . Office of the Science Advisor Risk Assessment Forum. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/risk/framework-human-health-risk-assessment-inform-decision-making>

¹³ United States Environmental Protection Agency (2016) 'The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Resource and Tool Compilation' Office of Research and Development National Exposure Research Laboratory. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/healthresearch/health-impact-assessment-hia-resource-and-tool-compilation>

¹⁴ Central Statistics Office (CSO), *Census of Ireland 2016; Census of Ireland 2022; Census of Agriculture 2020*. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/census/>

¹⁵ Roscommon County Council (2022), *Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028*. Available at: <https://www.rosdevplan.ie/>

waterbody from which Uisce Éireann operates numerous downstream abstraction points that serves much of the country, and as such the Proposed Development cannot give rise to any deterioration of Lough Ree or River Shannon water sources. Uisce Éireann advised that the applicant shall provide details of measures to be taken to ensure that there will be no negative impact to Uisce Éireann's Drinking Water Source(s) during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

Details on the mitigation measures in place to minimise negative effects to water during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development are set out in Section 8.5 of Chapter 8: Hydrology and Hydrogeology.

5.5 Methodology

5.5.1.1 Population

A desk-based assessment using sources and guidelines referenced in Section 5.3 above was undertaken to examine relevant information pertaining to the population impact assessment. The following aspects were considered in the assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Development on population:

- Population Level: An evaluation of the impact on population level.
- Economic Effects: An evaluation of the impact that the Proposed Development will have on economic development and employment.
- Recreational and Tourism Facilities: An evaluation of the potential impact on recreational and tourism facilities within the population study area.
- Transport, Connectivity and Accessibility: An evaluation of the impact on connectivity and accessibility.

5.5.1.2 Health

The human health assessment is undertaken using the guidance and policies set out in Section 5.3 above. The factors with the potential for environmental effects leading to human health effects as a result of the Proposed Development are assessed in this chapter. These are:

- Health and Safety
- Noise and vibration
- Air quality
- Effects on water quality
- Nuisance effects through traffic disruption
- Risk to/from major accidents and natural disasters

The EPA Guidelines (2022)¹ state that the assessment of impacts on population and human health should draw on relevant environmental assessments within the EIAR (e.g., air, water, soil), rather than duplicating them. This chapter therefore synthesises findings from other relevant chapters, including water and air quality, noise, and residential amenity, together with the human health baseline outlined in Section 5.6.2.

The European Commission's *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance* (2017) emphasises that human health is a broad, project-specific factor, best considered in the context of other environmental factors under Article 3(1) of the EIA Directive. Key considerations include environmentally linked health effects, such as exposure to pollutants, noise, major hazards, changes in living conditions, and impacts on vulnerable groups across all project phases.

The EPA Guidelines (2022)¹ reaffirm that, while "human health" is not explicitly defined in Directive 2014/52/EU, it aligns with the approach in the SEA Directive¹⁶, whereby health is assessed through

¹⁶ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive)

environmental pathways (e.g., air, water, soil). This builds on the 2002 EPA methodology¹⁷, which evaluates health impacts using established standards for exposure, dose, and risk.

The IEMA (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, now ISEP—Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals) Working Group (2022) published *Determining Significance for Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment* in response to gaps and inconsistencies in existing guidance, particularly regarding the assessment of significance. The report aims to support both practitioners and decision-makers. It states that an EIA must identify, describe and assess the direct and indirect significant effects of a proposed development on human health, and include the information reasonably required to reach a reasoned conclusion, taking account of current knowledge and assessment methods.

The Proposed Development is not a recognised source of pollution and does not require EPA licensing under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, as amended. As such, it is not considered to generate ongoing significant emissions to environmental media or associated potential for human health effects. In this context, and in line with the IEMA guidance, this EIAR provides sufficient information to enable a reasoned conclusion on the significance of effects, without applying more detailed tools (such as the IEMA significance matrix) that would typically be required for developments with potential emissions-related health effects.

In summary, EIAR assessments of human health should rely on the analysis of environmental pathways presented elsewhere in the EIAR, ensuring a proportionate, integrated approach without duplication.

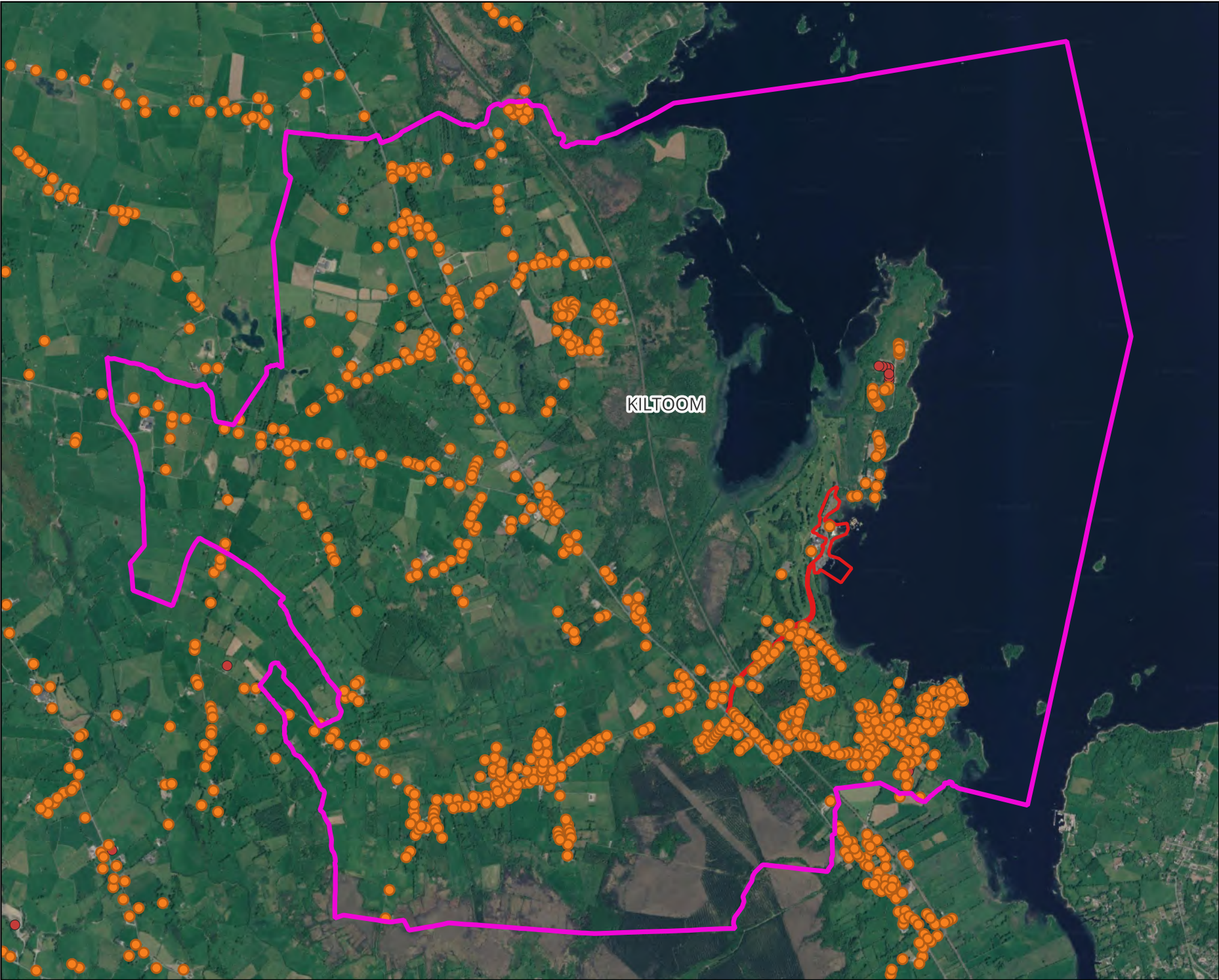
5.5.1.3 Population and Human Health Study Area

The study area is defined in terms of the Electoral Divisions (EDs) where the Proposed Development site is located. The Proposed Development lies entirely within the Kiltoom ED and covers a total land area of 32.23 km² (3,223 hectares). Refer to Figure 5-1 for details. This ED is referred to hereafter as the ‘Study Area’ for this chapter.

5.5.2 Limitations and Difficulties Encountered

No limitations or difficulties were encountered during the preparation of the Population and Human Health Chapter of the EIAR.

¹⁷ EPA (2002) *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements*. Available at: <https://www.epa.ie/publications/>



Map Legend

- Application Site
- Kiltoom Electoral Division
- Residential Dwellings



Drawing Title

Population Study Area

Project Title	
Hodson Bay Waterfront Park and Marina Redevelopment, Co. Roscommon	
Drawn By	Checked By
KM	EOS
Project No.	Drawing No.
241220	Figure 5-1
Scale	Date
1:35,000	02.07.2026

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5.6 Receiving Environment

The Proposed Development site is located approximately 4 kilometres (km) northwest of the town of Athlone. The site is accessed via the L2020 Local Road from the N61 National Road which runs in a northwest-southeast direction to the southwest of the site. The N61 National Road travels between Athlone Town and Roscommon Town.

The Proposed Development site is not located within a village or settlement. The L2020 Local Road leading into the Hodson Bay area is characterised by ribbon development, with residential properties (approximately 20 dwellings) distributed along both sides of the road. Land-use within the site comprises the existing Baysports Waterpark building, marquees, toilet block and associated structures, the existing Waterways Ireland-operated marina, car parking areas, vegetated areas, public amenity space areas, an Uisce Éireann pumping station and the L2020 Local Road corridor.

Land use and land cover within the wider Study Area is characterised predominantly by agricultural pasture, dispersed rural residential development, and tourism and recreational uses. Settlement density is low, comprising mainly one-off housing and ribbon development along local and regional roads, with no significant settlements within the Study Area. The area benefits from its proximity to Athlone, which serves as the principal urban centre and provides access to the national road and rail network, as well as a broad range of retail, commercial and community services.

5.6.1 Population Baseline

5.6.1.1 Population Trends

In the period between the 2016 and the 2022 Census, the population of Ireland increased by 8.1%. During this time, the population of County Roscommon increased by 8.9% to 70,259 persons. Other population statistics for the State, County, and the Study Area have been obtained from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and are represented in Table 5-1. As recorded in the 2022 Census of Ireland, the population of the Study Area is 1,716 persons.

Table 5-1 Population 2016 – 2022 (Source: CSO)

Area	Population Change		Percentage Population Change
	2016	2022	2016– 2022
State	4,761,865	5,149,139	8.1%
County Roscommon	64,544	70,259	8.9%
Study Area	1,630	1,716	5.3%

The data presented in Table 5-1 shows that the population of the Study Area increased by 5.3% between 2016 and 2022. This rate of population growth is slightly lower than that recorded at County level and State level.

The *Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework*, published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in July 2018, provides county-level population projections to guide Regional Assemblies¹⁸. Table 5-2 presents these projections for County Roscommon through to 2031, which were used to estimate corresponding projections for the Study Area.

¹⁸ Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DIPLG) (2018) *Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040)* <https://cdn.npl.ie/wp-content/uploads/NPF-Implementation-Roadmap.pdf>

Table 5-2 Projected Population (2026 & 2031) for County Roscommon, and the Study Area (Source: DHPLG)

Area	Projected Population 2026	% Change 2022 - 2026	Projected Population 2031	% Change 2026-2031
County Roscommon	70,500 - 71,500	0.3% - 1.8%	73,000 - 74,500	3.5% - 4.2%
Study Area	1,721 - 1,747	0.3% - 1.8%	1,781 - 1,820	3.5% - 4.2%

* The projected population for the Study Area was estimated by applying the calculated percentage changes based on County Roscommon figures to the Study Area Census data from 2022.

For County Roscommon, the projected population change between 2022 and 2026 is 0.3% - 1.8%, while the projected change from 2026 to 2031 is slightly higher at 3.5% - 4.2%. Based on the projected population growth for County Roscommon stated in the *Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework*, the projected population in the Study Area is expected to increase slightly from 2022 to 2031.

5.6.1.2 Population Density

The population densities recorded within the State, County Roscommon and the Study Area during the 2022 Census are shown in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3 Population Density in 2022 (Source: CSO)

Area	(Projected) Population Density (Persons per square kilometre)					
	2016	2022	Projected 2026		Projected 2031	
State	67.8	73.3	0.3%	1.8%	3.5%	4.2%
County Roscommon	25.3	27.6	27.7	28.1	28.6	29.2
Study Area	50.6	53.2	53.4	54.2	55.3	56.5

The population density of the Study Area recorded during the 2022 Census was 53.2 persons per square kilometre. This figure is lower than the national figure of 73.28, but much higher than the County level figure of 27.6 persons per square kilometre. Projected population growth is expected to further increase population density across both County Roscommon and the Study Area.

According to the European Union Eurostat website (2011) *Degree of Urbanisation Classification*¹⁹, the Study Area is classified as a Rural Grid Cell, which are grid cells that are not identified as urban centres or as urban clusters, also known as a thinly populated area with more than 50% of the population living in rural grid cells.

5.6.1.3 Household Statistics

The number of households and average household size recorded within the State, County Roscommon, and the Study Area during the 2022 Census are shown in Table 5-4.

¹⁹ European Union Eurostat website (2011), *Degree of Urbanisation Classification*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Degree_of_urbanisation_classification_-_2011_revision#Degree_of_urbanisation_classification

Table 5-4 Number of Household and Average Household Size 2022 (Source: CSO)

Area	2016		2022	
	No. of Households	Avg. Size (persons)	No. of Households	Avg. Size (persons)
State	1,702,289	2.7	1,841,152	2.7
County Roscommon	24,013	2.7	26,021	2.7
Study Area	520	3.0	534	3.0

In general, the figures in Table 5-4 show that the number of households within the State, County Roscommon and the Study Area has increased from 2016 to 2022. The average size of households in the State, County Roscommon and the Study Area has stayed much the same during the 2016 and 2022 Censuses. The Study Area has an average household size of 3.0 persons. This is higher than that observed at a State and County level during the same periods.

5.6.1.4 Age Structure

Table 5-5 presents the percentages of the State, County Roscommon and the Study Area within different age groups as defined by the Central Statistics Office during the 2022 Census. This data is also displayed in Figure 5-2.

Table 5-5 Population per Age Category in 2022 (Source: CSO)

Area	Age Category				
	0 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 +
State	19.7%	12.5%	27.6%	25.1%	15.1%
County Roscommon	20.1%	11.2%	23.6%	26.6%	18.6%
Study Area	18.3%	12.6%	19.8%	29.4%	19.9%

The age structure of the Study Area, as depicted in Table 5-5 and Figure 5-2, reveals distinct demographic trends compared to the State and County Roscommon. The proportion of the Study Area population is slightly higher in the older age categories when compared to the State and County level. For the Study Area, the highest population percentage occurs within the 45-64 age category, similar to County level. This age category would be considered to be less sensitive to change when compared to other age categories. The lowest population percentage within the Study Area occurs within the 15-24 age category at 13.4%. This category is also the lowest on State and County level. The population percentage within the Study Area 25-44 age category is much lower at 19.8% than State (27.6%) and County level (23.6%).

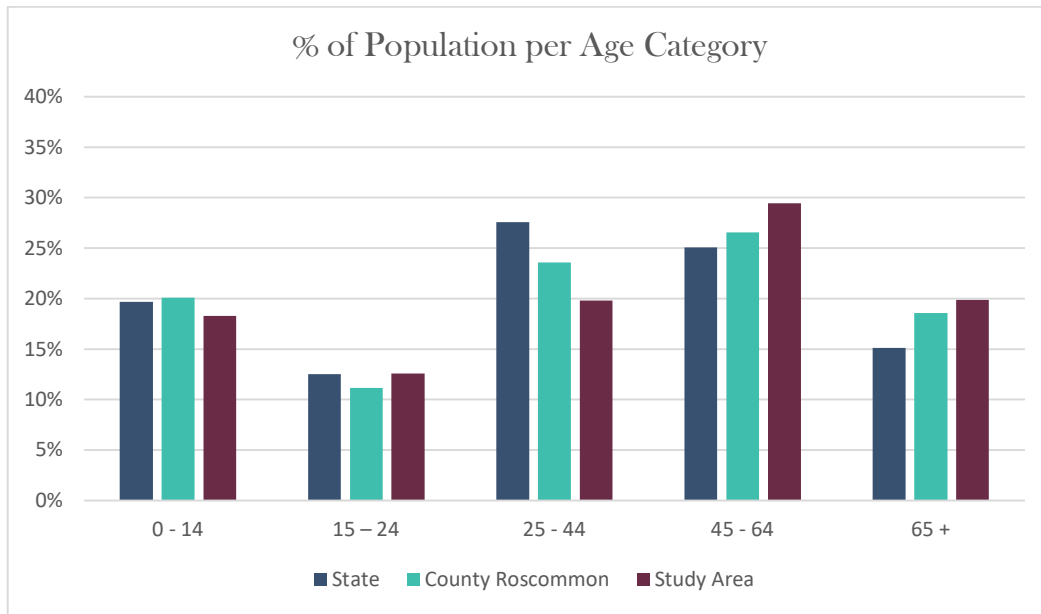


Figure 5-2 Population per Age Category in 2022 (Source: CSO)

5.6.1.5 Employment and Economic Activity

5.6.1.5.1 Economic Status of the Study Area

The labour force consists of those who are able to work, i.e. those who are aged 15+, out of full-time education and not performing duties that prevent them from working. In 2022, there were 2,531,099 persons in the labour force in the State. Table 5-6 shows the percentage of the total population aged 15+ who were in the labour force during the 2022 Census. This figure is further broken down into the percentages that were at work or unemployed. It also shows the percentage of the total population aged 15+ who were not in the labour force, i.e. those who were students, retired, unable to work or performing home duties.

Table 5-6 Economic Status of the Total Population Aged 15+ in 2022 (Source: CSO)

Status		State	County Roscommon	Study Area
% of population aged 15+ who are in the labour force		61.2%	57.6%	58.9%
% of which are:	At work	91.7%	91.6%	94.4%
	First time job seeker	1.4%	1.5%	1.0%
	Unemployed	7.0%	6.9%	4.6%
% of population aged 15+ who are not in the labour force		38.8%	42.4%	41.1%
% of which are:	Student	28.6%	23.8%	30.0%
	Home duties	17.0%	17.0%	13.2%
	Retired	41.0%	44.8%	47.2%
	Unable to work	11.8%	12.3%	6.1%

Status	State	County Roscommon	Study Area
Other	1.6%	2.0%	3.5%

Overall, the principal economic status of those living in the Study Area is broadly similar to that recorded at State and County level. During the 2022 Census, the percentage of people over the age of 15 who were in the labour force was higher at State level (61.2%) and lower at County level (57.6%) when compared with the Study Area at 58.9%. However, the percentage of the population 'At work' is higher in the Study Area than on State and County level. Of those who were not in the labour force during the 2022 census, the highest percentage of the population in the Study Area was the 'Retired' category, which is the same trend recorded at State and County level. Furthermore, the percentage of the population in the 'Student' category was higher in the Study Area than on State and County level, whereas the percentage of those in the 'Unable to work' category is much lower in the Study Area than in the State and County Roscommon.

5.6.1.5.2 Employment by Socio-Economic Group

Socio-economic grouping divides the population into categories, depending on the level of skill or educational attainment required. The 'Higher Professional' category includes scientists, engineers, solicitors, town planners and psychologists, typically requiring advanced degrees or expertise. The 'Lower Professional' category includes teachers, lab technicians, nurses, journalists and actors. The 'Non-manual' group includes a variety of clerical, technical, sales, and service roles, often involving office work, customer interaction, and skilled trades. Skilled occupations are divided into manual skilled, such as bricklayers and building contractors; semi-skilled such as roofers and gardeners, and unskilled, which includes construction labourers, refuse collectors and cleaners. Figure 5-3 shows the percentages of those employed in each socio-economic group in the State, County Roscommon and the Study Area during 2022.

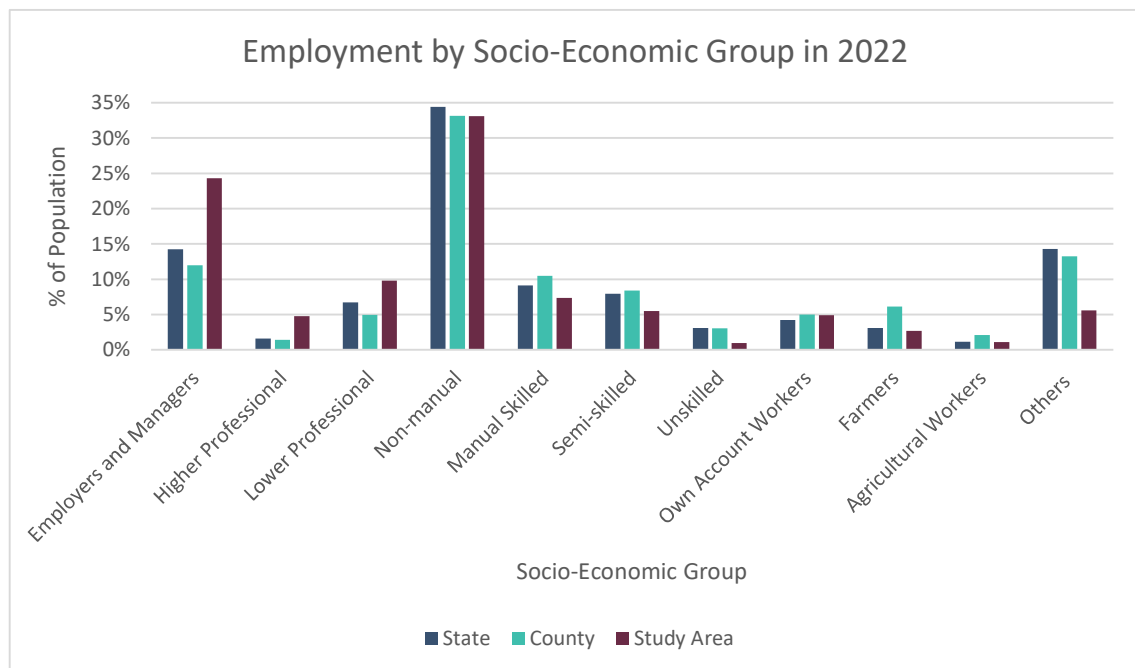


Figure 5-3 Persons in private households by socio-economic group for 2022 (Source: CSO)

The highest levels of employment within the Study Area were recorded in the 'Non-Manual' and 'Employers and Managers' categories. The level of employment within the 'Employers and Managers', 'Higher Professional', and 'Lower Professional' categories within the Study Area was higher than those seen either at a County or State level. Conversely, the levels of employment seen in the 'Non-Manual', 'Manual Skilled', 'Semi-skilled', 'Unskilled', 'Farmers', 'Agricultural Workers' and 'Others' categories were higher at a State and County level than in the Study Area.

The CSO figures for socio-economic grouping have a limitation of including the entire population, rather than just those who are in the labour force. It is likely that this is what gives rise to the high proportion of the population shown to be in the 'Others' category in Figure 5-3.

5.6.1.6 Land-Use

Current land-use at the site comprises the existing Baysports Waterpark building and its associated structures, the existing Waterways Ireland-operated marina, car parking areas, vegetated areas, public amenity space areas, an Uisce Éireann pumping station and the L2020 Local Road corridor. The primary land-use in the vicinity of the site comprises mainly tourism & recreation, residential (one-off housing) and agricultural pasture. The Proposed Development site is located within the Upper Shannon hydrological catchment (Catchment 26E), and the Shannon [Upper]_SC_090 hydrological sub-catchment (Sub-Catchment 26E_6). Lough Ree (EU Code IE_SH_26_750a) is located within and adjacent to the site.

The total area of farmland within the Study Area measures approximately 973.8 hectares, comprising approximately 30.2% of the Study Area, according to the CSO *Census of Agriculture, 2020*²⁰. There are 54 holdings within the Study Area, with an average farm size of 18 hectares. Table 5-7 shows the breakdown of farmed lands within the Study Area. Grassland accounts for the largest proportion of farmland within the Study Area.

Table 5-7 Farm Size and Classification within the Study Area of the Proposed Development in 2020 (Source: CSO)

Characteristic	Value
Size of Study Area (Hectares)	3,223.0
Agricultural Holdings (Number)	54
Average Size of Holdings (Hectares)	18.0
Total Area Farmed within Study Area (Hectares)	973.8
Farmland as % of Study Area	30.2%
Breakdown of Farmed Land	Value
Total Grassland (Hectares)	945.1
Total Cereals (Hectares)	0
Grassland as % of Study Area	29.3%
Breakdown of Livestock	Number
Dairy Cows	0
Other Cows	311
Total Cattle	1,134
Total Sheep	2,939
Livestock Units (LSU)	1,031

5.6.1.7 Services

Community services and facilities within the Study Area include educational facilities, local religious and community facilities, tourism accommodation, marina infrastructure and a range of recreational amenities

²⁰ Central Statistics Office (2020), *Census of Agriculture*. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/agriculture/censusofagriculture/>

associated with Lough Ree. Given its proximity to Athlone, the Study Area also has access to its broad range of retail, healthcare, educational, employment and community services.

The Proposed Development site forms part of an established tourism and recreation hub centred on Hodson Bay. Key amenities in the area include the Waterways Ireland-operated marina, the Baysports Waterpark, lakeshore walking routes and popular wild swimming locations. Additional recreational and tourism facilities include Athlone Golf Club, Hodson Bay Hotel and its associated leisure centre.

5.6.1.8 Access and Public Transport

The L2020 Local Road falls within the Proposed Development site. This road connects the Hodson Bay Hotel, the Baysports Waterpark, the marina, the Athlone Golf Club, and residential dwellings to the N61 National Road. The N61 National Road runs in a northwest-southeast direction to the southwest of the site linking Athlone and Roscommon Town and passes through the wider Kiltoom area. Both Athlone Town and Roscommon Town provide strategic connections to the national road and rail network.

The N61 National Road corridor is served by regular Bus Éireann routes, including Route 461, which provides daily services between Athlone and Roscommon, and Route 440, which follows a similar alignment before continuing westwards to destinations such as Castlerea, Knock, Castlebar and Westport. In addition, Local Link and other rural transport services operate along this corridor, some of which serve the Hodson Bay Hotel/Baysports area directly (e.g. Barrymore stop), albeit at lower frequencies.

Overall, the site is connected to Athlone, Roscommon and the wider region by a combination of national and local bus services operating along the N61 National Road, with short walking connections required from the nearest stops.

In addition to the above, a boat operator 'Viking Tours Ireland' runs a boat sailing between Hodson Bay and Athlone along the River Shannon between the months of April – October inclusive.

The Proposed Development will include for improvements to the existing pedestrian access to the lakeshore area. The existing footway is considered too narrow to be safely used as a shared pedestrian and cyclist corridor. The Proposed Development will result in the widening of the existing footway resulting in the provision of a 3-metre-wide shared cycle / pedestrian footway along the length of the L2020 Local Road.

5.6.1.9 Tourism

5.6.1.9.1 Tourist Numbers and Revenue

Tourism is one of the major contributors to the national economy and is a significant source of full time and seasonal employment. At the time of writing, the most recent publication of key tourism facts is the *Key Tourism Facts 2024* published by Fáilte Ireland in 2025 for the year 2024 (Fáilte Ireland, 2025). During 2024, out-of-state (overseas and Northern Ireland) tourist expenditure amounted to €6.5 billion. With a further €1.4 billion spent by overseas visitors on fares to Irish carriers, foreign exchange earnings were close to €8 billion. Domestic tourism expenditure amounted to €3.6 billion, making tourism an €11 billion industry.

Ireland is divided into seven tourism regions. Table 5-8 shows the total revenue and breakdown of overseas tourist numbers to each region in Ireland during 2024 ('*Key Tourism Facts 2024*', Fáilte Ireland, 2025).

Table 5-8 Overseas Tourists Revenue and Numbers 2024 (Source: Fáilte Ireland)

Region	Total Number of Out of State Tourists (000s)	% Total Number of Out of State Tourists	Total Revenue (€m) of Out of State Tourists	% Revenue of Out of State Tourists
Dublin	4,370	41.0%	2,471	37.7%
Mid-East/Midlands	933	8.8%	582	8.9%
South-East	576	5.4%	336	5.1%
South-West	1,541	14.5%	1,215	18.5%
Mid-West	878	8.2%	565	8.6%
West	1,326	12.5%	877	13.4%
Border	1,029	9.7%	506	7.7%
Total	10,653		6,552	

The West region, in which the site of the Proposed Development is located, comprises Counties Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. 12.5% of out-of-state tourists visited the West region. This region generated 13.4% of the total out-of-state tourism revenue.

Although the data from 2025 is not available, Table 5-9 presents the most recent breakdown of overseas tourists' numbers and revenue to the West region during 2017 (*2017 Topline Tourism Performance by Region*, Fáilte Ireland, August 2018). As can be observed in Table 5-9, County Galway had the highest number of overseas tourists visiting the Region during 2017 and had a tourism revenue at €589m.

Table 5-9 Overseas Tourism to the West Region during 2017 (Source: Fáilte Ireland)

Region	Total Revenue (€m)	Total Number of Overseas Tourists (000s)
Galway	€589	1,673
Mayo	€78	324
Roscommon	€27	54

5.6.1.9.2 Tourist Attractions

The Proposed Development site is located at Hodson Bay on the shore of Lough Ree. Roscommon County Council (RCC) recognises that the Hodson Bay / Barrymore area is an important destination in County Roscommon in terms of its leisure tourism and recreation offering. See further information on the RCC *Hodson Bay / Barrymore Area Plan* in relation to Leisure Tourism / Amenity in Section 2.4.4.2 of Chapter 2.

The Hodson Bay location has proved very attractive for groups and individuals seeking an exciting and entertaining experience on the water. There has been a particular interest amongst school and corporate groups as the facilities are ideal for this market. The Proposed Development offers an opportunity to reimagine the existing water sports facilities at Hodson Bay. The existing facility has been successful in establishing the location as a water sports area, but the facilities are not at the standard currently expected at quality water parks.

The tourist attractions within the Proposed Development site include the Waterways Ireland-operated marina, the Baysports Waterpark facility, and the lake shore area which is popular for walking and wild swimming. Hodson Bay makes a significant contribution to economic development in Roscommon, and the Proposed Development offers a flagship tourism facility for the Hodson Bay area with potential to accommodate new boating traffic – in turn bringing additional visitors to the area.

Athlone Golf Club and the Hodson Bay Hotel and leisure centre are key tourist attractions adjacent to the Proposed Development site. The nearest tourist centre to the Proposed Development site is in Athlone town. Athlone and its environs have a wide range of tourism assets which include the following:

- > Athlone Castle Visitor Centre,
- > Luan Gallery,
- > Viking Tours Boat Tour,
- > Sean's Bar,
- > Glendeer Pet Farm.

The nearest designated cycling route is the Old Rail Trail Greenway located approximately 5 km to the southeast of the Proposed Development site at its nearest point in Athlone.

The Proposed Development site is situated within the 'Lower Lough Ree and Athlone Environs' Landscape Character Area (LCA 8), as identified in the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 (RCDP). This area has been assigned a 'Very High' landscape value.

There are no designated protected views or scenic routes in close proximity to the Proposed Development site. All protected views in County Roscommon are set back from Hodson Bay by a distance greater than 5 km where no visibility of the Proposed Development will occur. However, the following policy is stated in the RCDP in relation to views of Lough Ree from the N63 National Road (Landscape Character Assessment, Pg 45):

"There is a need to discourage and restrict development between the designated scenic View on the N63 and Lough Ree, in recognition of the high value of open views and sense of isolation across this landscape"

In County Westmeath, one protected view on the eastern banks of Lough Ree is an elevated vantage point on the N55 National Road between Ballykeeran and Glasson with panoramic views out across Lough Ree towards Hodson Bay and the Proposed Development. Given the substantial distance (7 km) the Proposed Development is unlikely to cause adverse visual impacts from this viewpoint and other protected views to the east.

Hodson Bay Marina Park Development: Tourism and Economic Study 2026

Hodson Bay is an established tourism and leisure destination within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, benefitting from a strong natural asset base centred on Lough Ree and a range of existing recreational activities, including water sports, boating, angling and informal lakeside recreation. The '*Hodson Bay Marina Park Development: Tourism and Economic Study 2026*' (Appendix 5-1 of this EIAR) produced by CHL & Associates identifies that the current tourism offer is primarily focused on seasonal, single-activity 'soft adventure' experiences, with limited integration between activities, constrained ancillary services, and a lack of year-round depth. While the wider Shannon and Midlands region offers a dispersed range of water-based and land-based activities, provision is often fragmented and not fully developed into cohesive, multi-day visitor experiences. This results in relatively short dwell times and underutilisation of the area's tourism potential.

Notwithstanding these constraints, Hodson Bay occupies a strategically significant position within regional tourism policy and the Lough Ree/Shannon corridor, with strong alignment to national objectives relating to nature-based tourism, outdoor recreation and destination clustering. The study identifies a substantial existing market, including local and regional catchments, domestic tourists, and niche groups such as schools and activity-based visitors, supported by existing visitation to the hotel, marina and water-based activities.

The Proposed Development, including upgrades to the marina, public realm, access infrastructure, and the Baysports Waterpark facilities, is intended to address existing gaps by creating a more integrated, higher-quality visitor destination. This will enhance the capacity to accommodate additional visitors, including boating traffic, while improving accessibility, facilities and overall visitor experience. The introduction of expanded activity offerings, improved public realm and increased car parking will support longer dwell times, repeat visitation and broader market appeal.

In this context, the Proposed Development has the potential to function as an anchor tourism hub within a wider Lough Ree area, supporting more coordinated and multi-day visitor experiences, reducing seasonality, and increasing the overall attractiveness of the area. This is expected to contribute positively to tourism activity, visitor satisfaction and regional economic benefits, while maintaining the role of Hodson Bay as a key leisure and amenity resource for both visitors and the local population.

5.6.1.10 Residential Amenity

Residential amenity relates to the human experience of one's home, derived from the general environment and atmosphere associated with the residence. The quality of residential amenity is influenced by a combination of factors, including site setting and local character, land-use activities in the area and the relative degree of peace and tranquillity experienced in the residence.

The closest dwellings are located adjacent to the Proposed Development site along the L2020 Local Road corridor. When considering the amenity of residents in the context of the Proposed Development, there are several potential effects of relevance including noise, dust, traffic disruption and visual amenity. Noise is a quantifiable aspect of residential amenity while visual amenity is more subjective. Detailed noise modelling has been completed as part of this EIAR. A comprehensive landscape and visual impact assessment has also been carried out, as presented in Chapter 13 of this EIAR. Effects on population and human health during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development area assessed in relation to these key issues and other environmental factors such as traffic and dust; see Section 5.7 below. The impact on residential amenity is then derived from an overall judgement of the combination of impacts due to visual amenity, noise, traffic, dust and general disturbance.

5.6.2 Health Baseline

Table 5-10 shows the general health status at the State, County, and Study Area-level. Overall, the Study Area has a higher overall health status when compared to the State or County level. Notably, 63.3% of individuals in the Study Area reported their health as "very good," which is significantly higher than the 53.2% and 52.5% reported at State and County level respectively. Correspondingly, the proportion of residents reporting "fair," "bad," or "very bad" health is lower in the Study Area.

Table 5-10 2022 General Health Status

Area	General Health Status (2022)					
	Very good	Good	Fair	Bad	Very Bad	Not Stated
State	53.2%	29.7%	8.6%	1.4%	0.3%	6.7%
County Roscommon	52.5%	31.0%	9.7%	1.6%	0.4%	4.8%
Study Area	63.3%	27.7%	6.1%	0.9%	0.3%	1.6%

Figure 5-4 presents the trend in general health of the population within the Study Area for the years 2011, 2016, and 2022 (Census data). The figure shows that, while all categories are broadly similar, the "very good" health category has declined slightly over the years while the categories "good" and "fair" have both increased in 2022. The decrease in the "very good" health category in 2022 may be partially attributed to a lower participation rate, as the percentage of "not stated" responses is slightly higher in this year.

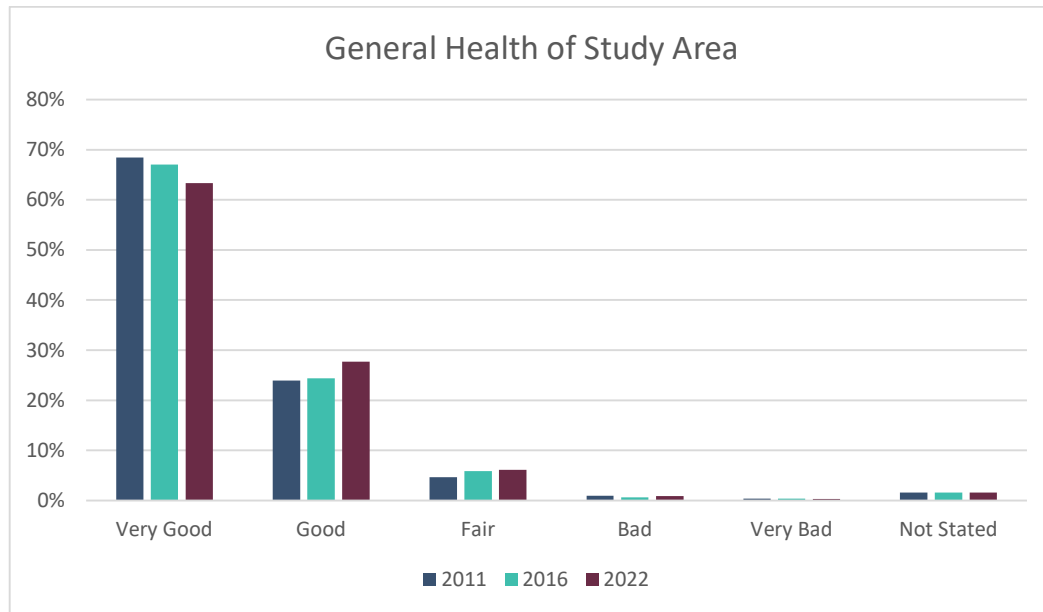


Figure 5-4 Trend in General Health Status of Study Area 2011, 2016 and 2022 (source: CSO)

5.6.2.1 Air Quality

The air quality of the Study Area is typical of that of rural areas in the midlands of Ireland. Prevailing south-westerly winds carry clean, unpolluted air from the Atlantic Ocean onto the Irish mainland. The Study Area is located in Air Quality Zone C which is typical of large towns (e.g. Athlone, located 4 km to the southeast). For Zone C areas in the most recent EPA air quality monitoring results (*Air Quality in Ireland 2024*, published by the EPA in September 2025), there were no exceedances of Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂), 3 no. exceedances of PM₁₀ daily limits at Athlone, exceedance reports of upper and lower limits for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), no exceedances for Carbon Monoxide (CO) and no exceedances for Ozone (O₃). Based on professional judgement, it is likely that the Proposed Development site would have similar to fewer exceedances given its rural character. There are no statutory limits for dust deposition in Ireland. The EPA recommends a maximum daily deposition level of 350 mg/m²/day when measured according to the TA Luft Standard 2002. As the existing activities at the Proposed Development site comprise slow moving traffic, water sports activities, boating, swimming, walking and golfing, dust soiling is considered to be relatively low.

5.6.2.2 Water Quality

As set out in Chapter 8: Hydrology and Hydrogeology, potential health effects are associated with negative impacts on public and private water supplies and potential flooding. There are no mapped public supply group water scheme groundwater protection zones in the area of the Proposed Development. The Detailed Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix 8-1), prepared by CIVIC Engineers, determined that flood risk at the site arises from elevated lake levels within Lough Ree during extreme, catchment-wide rainfall events.

5.6.2.3 Traffic and Transport

Key trip-generating land uses within the Study Area include the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone Golf Club, Baysports Waterpark, marina facilities and a range of lakeshore and water-based recreational amenities. The area also contains dispersed residential development and associated open space lands.

Access is primarily car-based, with Athlone providing regional rail and bus connections. The L2020 Local Road is the principal access route, linking the N61 National Road to Hodson Bay Marina and waterfront facilities, and crossing the Dublin-Galway and Dublin-Westport/Ballina railway line at the Hodson Bay Level Crossing (XM038).

Traffic and parking surveys were undertaken between 31st July and 6th August 2025, comprising three Automatic Traffic Counts (ATCs) on the L2020 Local Road and video-based parking surveys across Hodson Bay. Results indicate moderate traffic volumes generated primarily by hotel guests, recreational users and seasonal tourism activity, with demand increasing during weekends and peak summer periods.

All ATC locations recorded 85th percentile speeds above the posted 50 km/h speed limit, with the highest recorded value reaching 67.3 km/h. These results indicate that vehicle speeds along the L2020 Local Road are consistently higher than the posted speed limit, suggesting a high level of speeding along the route. Refer to Chapter 14, section 14.1 for further details on baseline traffic data.

Existing parking provision comprises 353 spaces distributed across multiple locations within Hodson Bay, primarily serving the hotel, marina and waterfront amenities. No dedicated bus or boat trailer parking is currently provided.

5.6.2.4 Noise and Vibration

A baseline noise survey was carried out during daytime hours on Saturday 7th March 2026 by the MKO acoustics team. Monitoring was undertaken at five locations. The daytime soundscape at all positions was influenced by local and distant road traffic, bird song/calls, barking and aircraft. The local noise environment is semi-rural in character, with the soundscape dominated by local and distant traffic.

5.6.2.5 Vulnerability of the Project to Natural Disaster and Major Accidents

The Study Area receiving environment indicates a very unlikely risk associated with geological hazards such as peat instability, landslides, earthquakes or extreme meteorological events, beyond those typically seen in Ireland in winters, such as storms and heavy rainfall. Likewise, the site is not located within the consultation distance of any Seveso establishment and is not considered vulnerable to industrial accidents arising from hazardous substances. However, hydrocarbons will be present onsite and there is potential for run off into the lake without proper controls in place. Portions of the Proposed Development site are identified for flood risk owing to its location adjacent to Lough Ree and within a low-lying lakeside environment.

While transport and utility infrastructure are present in the vicinity, including the N61 National Road, L2020 Local Road, railway line and electricity network, the scale and nature of the infrastructure present, together with established operational and safety controls, indicate that the likelihood of major accidents or disasters associated with this infrastructure is very low. Overall, due to the existing nature and activities of the Proposed Development site, it is considered to have a low susceptibility to major accidents and natural disasters, with flood risk representing the primary baseline consideration. Refer to Appendix 8-1 Detailed Flood Risk Assessment for details. Refer to Chapter 15: Major Accidents and Natural Disasters, which risks assesses the potential for the Proposed Development to cause, or be vulnerable to, major accidents and natural disasters.

5.7 Likely and Significant Effects and Associated Mitigation Measures

5.7.1 Do-Nothing Scenario

If the Proposed Development were not to proceed, the site would continue to function as it does at present, with no changes to population and human health. The impact of this is considered neutral in the context of the EIAR. If the Proposed Development were not to proceed, there would be no potential for negative effects on population human health during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. However, the opportunity to redevelop a key tourism and amenity area in County Roscommon, and to provide safer access to the site for road users, pedestrians and cyclists would be lost. Additionally, the opportunity to fulfil socio-economic development goals, tourism promotion and the public realm enhancement, would be lost.

5.7.2 Construction Phase- Population

5.7.2.1 Population Levels

Identification of Impact

Those working on the construction phase of the Proposed Development will travel daily to the Proposed Development site from the wider area. The construction phase will have no effect on the Study Area in terms of changes to population trends or density, household size or age structure.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.2.2 Employment, Investment and Economic Activity

Identification of Impact

There will be an opportunity for increased employment during the construction phase of the Proposed Development, as it is anticipated that there will be an increase in job opportunities for those working in the construction sector, building services and supplies, as well as in local business. Up to approximately 25 jobs could be created during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. It is estimated that the construction phase of the Proposed Development will take approximately 30 months. Where possible, construction workers and materials will be sourced locally, thereby helping to sustain employment in the construction trade. This will have a Short-term Slight Positive impact.

The injection of money in the form of salaries and wages to those employed during the construction phase of the project has the potential to result in an increase in household spending and demand for goods and services in the local area. This would result in local retailers and businesses experiencing a short-term positive impact on their cash flow. This will have a Short-term Slight Positive indirect impact.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

None Required.

Residual Effects

Short-term, Slight Positive Impact.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.2.3 Land-use

Identification of Impact

The construction phase will involve a phased, short-term change in land-use activities e.g. berthing and sailing usage at the marina will change to a construction site for approximately 6 months; and the existing Baysports Waterpark facility will change to a construction site for approximately 18 months. An alternative reduced scale Baysports Waterpark location can be accommodated to the north of the site, adjacent to Carpark C; thus, temporarily changing this existing carpark/ amenity grassland area to a water sport activity service. The L2020 Local Road will not change from its existing function with the

construction of the active travel improvements; however, it is anticipated that traffic disruptions will occur until works are completed. Overall, the construction phase is considered to result in a Reversible, Short-term, Moderate negative effect on existing land use in the absence of mitigation.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- A Traffic Management Plan will be prepared for the Proposed Development ahead of construction which will set out the traffic management measures that will be in place to minimise disruption to local traffic users.

Mitigation by Design:

- An alternative temporary relocation of Baysports' water sports facilities has been optioned to the service provider and assessed throughout this EIAR to reduce the land-use and tourism and activity service loss in the area. Refer to Section 4.5.8 of Chapter 4 Description for further details.

Residual Effects

The residual effect on land-use during the construction phase is assessed as Reversible, Short-term, Slight Negative effect occurring within the overall short-term construction phase.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.2.4 Tourism and Local Amenity

Identification of Impact

The construction phase of the Proposed Development is expected to take approximately 30 months to complete and will be undertaken on a phased basis. As such, only certain areas of the site will be under construction at any one time.

A key part of the Proposed Development involves the upgrade and expansion of the existing Baysports Waterpark buildings. These works are estimated to take approximately 18 months. In order to achieve this, the current Baysports Waterpark building and associated hardstanding must be demolished prior to the construction of the new dedicated buildings. To minimise the impact on this tourism provider as much as practicable, a temporary alternative location has been provided to allow the Baysports activities to continue. It should be noted that Baysports Waterpark does not operate all year round and demolition works are expected to begin in September/October of Year 1 due to ecological sensitivities as described in Section 4.4 of the EIAR. The commencement of works coincides with the shoulder season of Baysports' operations in Year 1 of construction. The operations of Baysports will be impacted by ongoing construction of the Water Sports Pavilion throughout the entirety of Year 2 and it is expected that works will conclude in March/April of Year 3 allowing for operations to be established in the new Water Sports Pavilion ahead of the peak summer season in Year 3.

The temporary closure of the Waterways Ireland-operated marina for a maximum period of approximately 6 months will require the displacement of berthing and boating activity. Due to ecologically sensitive timelines, the in-water construction works will be required to be carried out between the months of August-September inclusive which coincides with the peak tourism season for boating on the River Shannon navigation.

The construction activities in proximity to Hodson Bay Hotel may give rise to temporary to short-term disturbances for hotel guests and visitors, including increased noise levels associated with construction plant, temporary increases in Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements along the local road network (see

Section 14.1.8.2 of the EIAR), and minor dust generation during certain activities. These effects will be Negative, Short term and Localised in nature.

Construction of the golf ball stop netting, localised planting and landscaping, widening of the footway along the L2020 Local Road, impacts to the tees and fairways and greens, and impact to the greenkeeper's yard will result in a Moderate, Temporary to Short-term, Negative disruption to Athlone Golf Club while the works are underway.

RCC continues to engage with Athlone Golf Club in respect of the impact to the course. Any modifications to the Athlone Golf Club grounds fall outside the scope of the planning application for this Proposed Development, but this planning application includes improved boundary treatments (ball stop netting) where the Proposed Development interacts with the course, to improve safety, and those boundary treatments are considered within this EIAR.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- When construction works are being undertaken on specific areas of the Proposed Development site, hoarding will be erected around the area under construction to screen much of the construction site from view.
- Best-practice noise and vibration mitigation measures and air quality and dust mitigation measures will be employed during the construction phase as set out in Chapter 11 and Chapter 9 of this EIAR.
- Construction works will be confined to 0700-1900 h Monday-Friday and 0800-1700 h Saturday, when hotel guests will likely be outdoors or sightseeing. No works will be undertaken outside of these hours when it is anticipated that guests would be dining, using hotel services e.g. spa facilities and sleeping.
- Traffic management safety measures will be in place to ensure continued safety to local residents and visitors to the hotel and Baysports Waterpark alternative location during the construction phase.
- Alternative marina facilities are available within the wider Shannon Navigation, including nearby locations such as Athlone and Coosan Point, which can accommodate users during the construction period. This will reduce the overall impact on boating activity, albeit with some inconvenience to regular users.
- A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been prepared and included as Appendix 4-2.

Mitigation by Design

- An alternative temporary relocation of Baysports Waterpark has been optioned to the service provider and assessed throughout this EIAR to reduce the land-use and tourism and activity service loss in the area. Refer to Section 4.5.8 of Chapter 4 Description for further details.
- The Proposed Development provides additional carparking spaces for hotel, Golf and Baysports Waterpark guests:
 - An additional 156 standard carparking spaces
 - 30 electric vehicle (EV) charging spaces;
 - 28 accessible parking spaces;
 - Three dedicated bus parking bays within the northern car park;
 - Three dedicated boat trailer parking bays adjacent to the marina.

Throughout the phased construction programme, these additional spaces will come online in a phased approach, i.e. some will be constructed and ready for use during the construction phase providing a much-needed facility for the area.

Residual Effects

Following the implementation of the above mitigation measures, there will be a Short-term Slight to Moderate Negative residual effect on tourism and local amenity during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.3 Construction Phase - Health

5.7.3.1 Health and Safety

Identification of Impact

Construction of the Proposed Development will necessitate the presence of a construction site. Construction sites and the machinery used on them pose a potential health and safety hazard to construction workers if site rules are not properly implemented. In the absence of mitigation, this is a potential Temporary Significant Negative effect.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

The Proposed Development will be constructed and operated in accordance with all relevant Health and Safety Legislation, including:

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (No. 10 of 2005);
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 299 of 2007), as amended;
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 291 of 2013), as amended; and
- During construction of the Proposed Development, all staff will be made aware of and adhere to the Health and Safety Authority's Guidelines on the Procurement, Design and Management Requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013, as amended. This will encompass the use of all necessary Personal Protective Equipment, Risk Assessments and Method Statements, and adherence to the site Health and Safety Plan.
- All hazards will be identified and risk assessed, with appropriate control measures implemented where risks cannot be eliminated. A competent contractor will be appointed, and all personnel will comply with site Health and Safety Plan requirements, including Safe Pass and CSCS certification (where applicable).
- Construction activities will be undertaken in phases, with appropriate planning of works and equipment use to ensure safe operations, particularly where works occur near existing infrastructure, water bodies or overhead lines. Relevant Health and Safety guidelines for working in proximity to water and overhead electricity lines will be adhered to on site.
- A Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP) and Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) will be appointed in accordance with the Construction Regulations, with responsibility for hazard identification, coordination of safety procedures, development and implementation of the Safety and Health Plan, site inductions, monitoring compliance, and reporting of incidents.
- Public safety will be maintained through controlled site access, including the erection of fencing in areas where uncontrolled access is not permitted, and the provision of appropriate health and safety signage throughout the site.

Residual Effects

With the implementation of the above mitigation measures, there will be a potential Short-term Slight Negative residual effect on health and safety during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.3.2 **Air Quality/Dust**

Identification of Impact

The construction phase will require the use of construction plant and vehicles, resulting in short term exhaust emissions within and around the site. These effects will be localised to the construction areas and limited to the duration of the works. Emissions associated with the transport of materials, waste and personnel will also occur, resulting in a Short-term, Slight Negative effect on air quality.

Construction activities, including demolition, excavation, earthworks and material handling, have the potential to generate dust across the site, which has been assessed in accordance with IAQM (2024) guidance. The surrounding area is considered to have high sensitivity to dust soiling, while sensitivity to human health effects from PM₁₀ is assessed as low. The potential effects of dust emissions during the construction phase are considered to give rise to Short-term, Moderate, Negative effects in the absence of mitigation.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- All plant and vehicles will be maintained in good working order, regularly serviced and switched off when not in use, with staff trained in inspection and maintenance to minimise exhaust emissions.
- Dust generation will be controlled through damping down of exposed materials and haul routes, minimisation of drop heights and handling, covering of stockpiles and transport loads, and use of water-suppressed equipment where required.
- Trackout and road cleanliness will be managed through regular cleaning of site roads and inspection/cleaning of adjacent public roads, with use of road sweepers during peak construction activity.
- Site layout and operations will minimise emissions, including appropriate siting of stockpiles, restriction of unsurfaced areas to essential traffic, and locating material handling and recovery areas as close as practicable to reduce vehicle movements, in accordance with the CEMP Appendix 4-2.
- Refer to Chapter 9 for a full and comprehensive list of mitigation measures to minimise dust and noxious emissions during the construction phase.

Residual Effects

With the implementation of the above mitigation measures, there will be a potential Short-term, Slight Negative residual effect on air quality during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Significance of Effect

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.3.3 **Water Quality**

Construction phase activities have the potential to impact upon surface water and groundwater quality through earthworks, shallow excavation dewatering, release of hydrocarbons, contamination from wastewater disposal, release of cement-based products, and installation of piles. In the absence of mitigation, the potential effects are Temporary to Short-term, Slight to Profound, and Negative for water quality. There are no mapped public supply group water scheme groundwater protection zones in the area of the Proposed Development.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- Section 8.5.4 of Chapter 8: Hydrology and Hydrogeology sets out a comprehensive suite of mitigation and monitoring measures to ensure no significant residual adverse effects on ground and surface waters are anticipated during the construction phase.

Mitigation by Design

- Surface water management proposals are described in detail in the Drainage Strategy Report (CIVIC, 2026; Appendix 4-4). The management of surface water for the Proposed Development has been designed to comply with the philosophies of nature-based (Sustainable Drainage Systems) SuDS and CIRIA guidelines as embodied in the recommendations of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) and with the requirements of RCC.

Residual Effects

With the implementation of the above mitigation measures and those set out in Chapter 8 Hydrology and Hydrogeology, there will be Temporary to Short-term, Imperceptible to Slight, Negative residual effects on water quality during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects. .

5.7.3.4 Traffic and Transport

Identification of Impact

The Proposed Development comprises a comprehensive package of public realm improvements, active travel infrastructure, transport enhancements, parking reconfiguration works. The overall objective of the Proposed Development is to improve accessibility, enhance sustainable transport provision, and support the continued operation and growth of the area as a regional tourism and leisure destination. Key elements of the traffic proposals include the reorganisation and net increase of car parking provision, the introduction of new pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along the L2020 Local Road corridor, enhancements to waterfront accessibility, and the provision of improved traffic management and safety measures. The construction of these elements will be undertaken across an approximate 6-month period within the overall 30-month construction phase. Temporary impacts on local road users include increased HGV activity along the L2020 Local Road, occasional delays associated with construction vehicles entering and leaving the site, temporary disruption to pedestrian and cyclist movements adjacent to construction areas, temporary changes to vehicle circulation within the site. These effects are considered to be Negative, Localised, Temporary to Short-term, and Slight.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

Preliminary traffic management measures for the construction of the Proposed Development are set out in the CEMP (Appendix 4-2).

- A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared ahead of the construction phase. In the event that planning consent is granted for the Proposed Development, the TMP will be updated to address the requirements of any relevant planning conditions, including any additional mitigation measures, which are conditioned and will be submitted to the planning authority for written approval. The TMP will include the following:
 - Construction and Delivery Programme – a programme of construction and deliveries will be submitted to RCC in advance of deliveries of material to the

site. Liaison with the relevant local authorities and TII will be carried out where required.

- A Pre and Post Construction Condition Survey – A pre-condition survey of roads associated with the transportation of materials to and from the Proposed Development site will be carried out immediately prior to construction commencement to record an accurate condition of the road network at the time. A post construction survey will be carried out after works are completed to ensure that any remediation works are carried out to a satisfactory standard. The timing of these surveys will be agreed with the local authority. All road surfaces and boundaries will be re-instated to pre-development condition, as agreed with the local authority engineers.
- Liaison with the Roads Department of RCC - Once the surveys have been carried out and “prior to commencement” status of the relevant roads established, the Roads section will be informed of the name and contact number of the Project Supervisor of the construction stage as well as the Site Environmental Manager.
- Traffic Management Coordinator – a competent Traffic Management Coordinator will be appointed for the duration of the project, and this person will be the main point of contact for all matters relating to traffic management.
- Information to locals – Locals in the area will be informed of any upcoming traffic related matters via letter drops and posters in public places. Information will include the contact details of the Contract Project Coordinator, who will be the main point of contact for all queries from the public or local authority during normal working hours. An “out of hours” emergency number will also be provided. Local access to all properties located within the proximity of the proposed works will be maintained at all times.
- Identification of delivery routes – The delivery routes for the transportation of all materials will be agreed and adhered to by all contractors.
- Temporary traffic signs – As part of the traffic management measures temporary traffic signs will be put in place at the location where works are being undertaken. All measures will be in accordance with the ‘Traffic Signs Manual, Section 8 – Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Road Works’ (DoT, 2019) and ‘Guidance for the Control and Management of Traffic at Roadworks’ (DoT). A member of construction staff (flagman) will be present at each construction site location along the route.
- Additional measures - Various additional measures will be put in place in order to minimise the effects of the construction traffic on the surrounding road network including wheel washing facilities at the entrance to the site and sweeping/cleaning of local roads as required.
- Road Opening Licence – All roads’ works will be undertaken in line with the requirements of a road opening licence as agreed with RCC.

Mitigation by Design

- > Phasing of construction activities to maintain access to existing facilities;
- > Maintaining access to the hotel, marina, businesses and adjacent properties throughout construction;
- > Locating construction compounds within the development site;
- > Scheduling major deliveries to avoid periods of peak visitor demand where possible;
- > Maintaining pedestrian and cyclist routes through temporary traffic management;
- > Minimising the duration of temporary traffic management arrangements.

Residual Effects

It is considered that the effect on local roads and road users during the construction phase will be Temporary, Negative and Slight.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.3.5 Noise and Vibration

Identification of Impact

There will be an increase in noise levels in the vicinity of the Proposed Development site during the construction phase as a result of HGVs and building operations, both of which have the potential to cause a nuisance to sensitive receptors such as hotel guests, local residents and tourists during the construction phase. Construction noise at any given noise sensitive location will be variable throughout the construction phase, depending on the activities underway and the distance from the main construction activities to the receiving properties. Noise levels associated with the construction works at all receptors will be lower than the 65 dB BS 5228-1:2009 criterion and therefore is considered a Short-term, Imperceptible, Negative impact.

Proposed works along the L2020 Local Road may give rise to brief or temporary exceedances of the 70 dB TII criterion at receptors along the road and is considered Slight, Negative and Brief to Temporary. The potential noise impacts that will occur during the construction phase of the Proposed Development are further described in Chapter 11 of this EIAR: Noise & Vibration.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

As construction noise levels at all receptors will be lower than the 65 dB BS 5228-1:2009 criterion, specific mitigation measures are not warranted. The following best practice measures will reduce these potential noise emissions further and minimise the impacts for receptors along the L2020 Local Road.

- Construction operations will in general be confined to 0700–1900 h Monday-Friday and 0800-1700h Saturday when hotel guests are generally out of their rooms participating in activities and sightseeing.
- Any works outside these hours, if required, will be limited to quieter operations, and will be agreed in advance with the planning authority.
- Drivers of plant and vehicles will be instructed to avoid idling onsite at all times.
- Plant used onsite during the construction phase will be maintained in a satisfactory condition and in accordance with manufacturer recommendations. In particular, exhaust silencers will be fitted and operating correctly at all times. Defective silencers will be immediately replaced.
- Queuing of trucks on public roads near receptors will be prohibited.
- Machinery not in active use will be shut down.
- Driver training will be provided to ensure smooth machinery operation, to minimise unnecessary noise generation.
- A site representative will be appointed as a liaison officer with the local community. Prior to road improvement works along the L2020 Local Road, notification will be given to the residents along this road via letter drop.
- Any complaints of noise received during the construction phase will be logged in a register and investigated immediately. Details of follow-up action will be included in the register.
- Where it is proposed to import potentially noisy plant to the site, the potential impact of noise emissions will be assessed in advance.
- Guidance set out in BS 5228-1:2009 with respect to noise control will be applied throughout the construction phase.

Residual Effects

Predicted construction noise levels are below the assessment criteria at all receptors, for all phases of construction of the Proposed Development site. The residual effect is assessed as Imperceptible, Negative and Brief to Short-term.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects. .

5.7.3.6 Major Accidents and Natural Disasters

Identification of Impact

As discussed in section 5.6.2.5, and Chapter 15 Major Accidents and Natural Disasters, flood risk and hydrocarbon mismanagement are the only likely major accidents and natural disasters that could occur during the construction phase, the effects of either potentially causing a Short term Negative Significant effect on health, safety and biodiversity.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- Minimal refuelling or maintenance of construction vehicles or plant will take place on site. Where possible, off-site refuelling will occur at a controlled fuelling station;
- On-site re-fuelling will be undertaken using a double skinned bowser or a refuelling truck with spill kits kept onboard. Only designated trained operators will be authorised to refuel plant on site.
- All plant and machinery will be serviced before being mobilised to site.
- All oils, fuels, paints and other chemicals will be stored in a secure bunded construction hardstand area.
- Refuelling of construction machinery will take place using drip trays at all times.
- A response procedure will be put in place to deal with any accidental pollution events and spillage kits will be available and construction staff will be familiar with the emergency procedures and use of the equipment.
- An emergency spill kit with oil boom, absorbers etc. will be kept on-site for use in the event of an accidental spill. A specific team of staff will be trained in the use of spill containment.
- Fuels stored on site will be minimised. Any storage areas will be bunded appropriately for 110% of the fuel storage volume for the time period of the construction.
- Daily checking of lake side water levels following and during periods of heavy rain.
- The works programme for the construction phase will give consideration to weather forecasts and predicted rainfall in particular. Large excavations and movements of soil/subsoil or vegetation stripping will be suspended or scaled back when heavy rain is forecast.
- The CEMP (Appendix 4-2) sets out the Emergency Response Procedure to be adopted in the event of an emergency including contamination, flooding during construction and environmental protection. The CEMP provides details on all mitigation and monitoring measures to be actioned prior and during the construction phase. The CEMP will be subject to ongoing review through regular environmental auditing and site inspections. This will confirm the efficacy and implementation of all mitigation measures and commitments identified in the application documentation.

Residual Effects

It is considered that when the mitigation and monitoring measures outlined above and, in the CEMP, (Appendix 4-2) are implemented the likelihood of a Major Accident and/or Natural Disaster will be low or in EIA terms (EPA 2022), Short term Imperceptible and Negative.

Significance of Effect

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.3.7 Residential Amenity

Identification of Impact

Residential receptors are located adjacent to and in the vicinity of the Proposed Development, particularly along the L2020 Local Road corridor. During the construction phase, residents may experience temporary to short-term effects arising from construction noise, increased construction traffic, dust generation, visual disturbance associated with construction activities, and general disruption resulting from the presence of a construction site. Given the proximity of a number of dwellings to the works, these effects have the potential to reduce residential amenity for limited periods during construction. The construction works will be undertaken on a phased basis, and many activities will be temporary and localised in nature. Dust, traffic, noise and visual effects are assessed separately within this EIAR and are subject to specific mitigation measures. In the absence of mitigation, the overall effect on residential amenity is assessed as Temporary to Short-term, Moderate and Negative.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

Residential amenity will be protected through the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in this EIAR, including:

- Implementation of the CEMP (Appendix 4-2);
- Implementation of the Traffic Management Plan which will be prepared ahead of construction;
- Application of noise and vibration mitigation measures outlined in Chapter 11;
- Application of dust and air quality mitigation measures outlined in Chapter 9;
- Restriction of construction working hours;
- Maintenance of access to adjoining residential properties throughout the construction phase;
- Provision of advance notification to local residents regarding significant construction activities and temporary traffic management measures.

Residual Effects

Following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, the residual effect on residential amenity is assessed as Temporary to Short-term, Slight and Negative.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.4 Operational Phase - Population

The Proposed Development will have no effect on the population of the Study Area with regards to changes to trends, population density, household size or age structure.

5.7.4.1 Employment and Economic Activity

A 'Tourism and Economic Study' on the Proposed Development has been prepared by CHL & Associates (see Appendix 5-1). The Proposed Development will result in an increase in visitor numbers to the area and a resultant increase in economic activity. The total future visitor demand during the operation of the Proposed Development is estimated at approximately 168,000 visitors per year. Current visitor numbers to the site are estimated to be approximately 80,000 visitors per year to split roughly equally between Baysports visitors and visitors on boat tours such as the Viking Boat.

Revenue potential from the Proposed Development is estimated at €4,072,807 average additional spend in the local economy each year of operation when compared with current levels.

The Proposed Development will facilitate employment in the creation of temporary and full-time employment positions in the Hodson Bay area. It is estimated that the project will support approximately 82 jobs in the primary catchment once it is operational. This is a Long-term Significant Positive impact on employment and economic activity.

Residual Effect

Long-term Significant Positive effect.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effect

5.7.4.2 Land-use

Identification of Effects

The Proposed Development comprises a coordinated package of public realm enhancements, active travel infrastructure, transport improvements, parking reconfiguration and expansion within the Hodson Bay area, and the construction of a new water sports and café building and an expansion and upgrade to the existing marina. The overall aim of the Proposed Development is to enhance accessibility, promote sustainable travel, and support the continued development of Hodson Bay as a key regional tourism and recreation destination. As such, the operational phase will see a continuation of the existing use but on a larger scale, with a considered design incorporating landscaping, outdoor play area, multifunctional venue usage, enhanced health and safety measures (signage, paths, lighting), enhanced active travel. This is a Long-term, Moderate, Positive Effect.

Residual Effect

Long-term Moderate Positive Effect.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.4.3 Tourism and Local Amenity

Identification of Effects

During the operational phase, the Proposed Development will significantly enhance Hodson Bay's role as a key tourism and recreational destination within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. The integration of upgraded marina facilities, enhanced water sports infrastructure, improved public realm, and better access and connectivity will create a higher-quality, more cohesive visitor experience. This will address existing gaps in the current offer, including fragmentation, seasonality and limited multi-day experiences, and will support increased visitor numbers, longer dwell times and repeat visitation.

It is noted that there will be minor modifications to some areas of Athlone Golf Club to facilitate the Proposed Development. This will be a Permanent, Moderate, Negative Effect. RCC is committed to working through the impacts with the Athlone Golf Club to minimise the impact, and has included extensive lengths of improved boundary treatments (ball-stop netting) within this planning application where the Proposed Development interacts most closely with the golf course.

The Proposed Development is expected to generate positive effects on population and human health through improved access to outdoor recreation, increased opportunities for physical activity, and enhanced social and wellbeing benefits associated with engagement in nature-based activities. In addition,

the project will contribute positively to the local and regional economy by increasing tourism-related expenditure, supporting employment, and strengthening the wider Lough Ree tourism cluster. As such, the Proposed Development will result in a long-term, moderate positive effect on population and human health, particularly in terms of recreation, wellbeing, and socio-economic benefits. As detailed in the Tourism and Economic Study (Appendix 5-1), it is anticipated that the Proposed Development will significantly contribute to increased visitor numbers in the local area. This is a Long-term, Moderate, Positive Effect.

Residual Effect

Long-term Moderate Positive effect.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.5 Operational Phase – Health

5.7.5.1 Air Quality

Identification of Impact

There will be no impact on human health from dust emissions in the vicinity of the Proposed Development site once the Proposed Development has been built, and all construction vehicles and personnel are offsite. Any further works which may need to occur on site as part of maintenance and repairs during the operation of the site, may cause slight brief dust emissions, and is unlikely to have any negative significant impact on human health. The predicted increase in traffic volumes is slight and will result in a corresponding slight increase in traffic-related air pollutant emissions. The provision of enhanced active travel infrastructure will encourage access by walking and cycling, while the inclusion of electrical vehicle charging points will facilitate the uptake of low-emission vehicles. No significant additional emission sources (e.g. from on-water activities or fixed plant) are anticipated. Overall, the operational phase of the Proposed Development will result in a Long-term, Imperceptible Negative effect on air quality.

5.7.5.2 Water Quality

Identification of Impact

As described in Section 8.5.6 of Chapter 8 Hydrology and Hydrogeology, the Proposed Development design ensures that the potential for impacts on the water environment are not significant and there is no pathway to public or private water supplies which in turn could impact human health. Additionally, the Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix 8-1) shows that the risk of the Proposed Development contributing to downstream flooding is minimal, and that the Proposed Development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Refer to Chapter 8: Hydrology and Hydrogeology and Appendix 8-1 Flood Risk Assessment for further details. The impacts to water quality during the operational phase range from Negative Slight with an unlikely probability of occurring in the absence of mitigation. For potential impacts from foul drainage, the pre-mitigation impact is Negative Significant and likely in the absence of mitigation.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

Mitigation by Design

- The risk from flooding is reduced by using a minimum floor level of 38 mAOD of the proposed buildings and incorporates a 0.5 m freeboard allowance above the design

- flood level, providing resilience to extreme flood events inclusive of climate change and residual uncertainty.
 - The risk to water quality from surface water drainage is reduced by use of interception storage, silt traps, and oil/petrol interceptors.
 - The risk to water quality from foul drainage is removed through discharge of wastewater to the existing sewer and treatment at the receiving Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Residual Effects

The residual effect on flood risk is considered Neutral to Negative, Imperceptible, Long-term, with an Unlikely probability.

The residual effect on water quality from surface water drainage is considered Negative, Imperceptible, Long-term, and with an Unlikely probability.

There is no residual adverse effect on water quality from foul drainage.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.5.3 Traffic and Transport

Identification of Effects

The Operational Phase of the Proposed Development delivers substantial improvements to the transport environment within Hodson Bay. The Proposed Development is forecast to generate approximately 432 additional two-way vehicle trips per day, and the associated peak hour increase is approximately 44 two-way vehicle movements. These increases can be accommodated within the existing road network without resulting in any significant capacity or operational issues. The operational benefit of the Proposed Development includes for the following:

- An increase in parking provision from 353 to 504 spaces, addressing the existing parking shortfall identified through survey work;
- Improved parking distribution through enhanced wayfinding and the greater utilisation of the northern car park;
- Dedicated coach parking, bus set-down areas and boat trailer parking;
- Provision of EV charging facilities and accessible parking spaces;
- A continuous shared pedestrian and cycle route linking the N61 with the waterfront;
- Improved pedestrian connections throughout the site;
- Traffic calming measures designed to reduce vehicle speeds along the L2020 Local Road;
- Improved lighting, signage and road markings;
- Enhanced safety for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Improved internal vehicle circulation and manoeuvrability for buses and service vehicles.

Overall, the Proposed Development provides a significant enhancement to the transport environment within Hodson Bay. While a modest increase in traffic demand will occur, this is offset by comprehensive improvements to parking provision, active travel infrastructure, accessibility and road safety. This is a Long-term Moderate Positive Effect.

Residual Effects

The residual effect for local roads and road users during the operational phase is Long-term, Moderate and Positive.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.5.4 Noise and Vibration

Identification of Effects

Apart from potential live and prerecorded amplified music played at events, the Proposed Development will not include any sources or activities likely to give rise to LAeq T levels at residential receptors which exceed the 55 dB daytime, 50 dB evening or 45 dB night-time criteria recommended by the WHO and EPA. Similarly, the 60 dB night-time LAFmax limit recommended by the WHO is highly unlikely to be exceeded at any receptor.

Live and prerecorded amplified music played at events may result in LAeqT levels of 60 dB at the hotel and 50 dB at Yewpoint receptors. These levels will exceed the daytime 55 dB criterion at the hotel, and the 50 dB criterion if such events occur during the period 1900-2300 h.

The impact at receptors is assessed to be neutral and imperceptible at distant receptors, increasing to moderate adverse at the hotel and Yewpoint receptors when noise emissions are present. Events however will be short and infrequent, the overall effect is therefore expected to be Slight and Negative.

Residual Effects

While vessel engines at the marina may give rise to a not significant adverse impact at the hotel, the overall impact attributable to the Proposed Development in its entirety is likely to be Neutral, Long-term and Imperceptible at receptors. Although music events will give rise to Slight, Adverse impacts at the hotel and Yewpoint receptors, these events will be infrequent and brief, and thus the overall impact of the Proposed Development is expected to remain Neutral and Imperceptible

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.5.5 Major Accidents and Natural Disasters

Identification of Effects

As discussed in section 5.6.2.5 above, the likelihood of major accidents and/ or natural disasters at the site are low due to the general meteorological conditions of the Study Area and the lack of strategic infrastructure within or near the Proposed Development site. During the operational phase, flood risk is the only likely natural disaster that could occur. As discussed in section 5.7.5.2 above, in Chapter 4 Description and Appendix 8-1 Flood Risk Assessment, the finished floor levels of the buildings have been raised to 38 mAOD and incorporates a 0.5 m freeboard allowance above the design flood level, providing resilience to extreme flood events inclusive of climate change and residual uncertainty. The development does not encroach upon functional floodplain storage, does not obstruct flood conveyance and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. While sections of the retained promenade access may be inundated during extreme events, the gradual nature of lake flooding and the non-residential use of the building ensure that residual risk is Low and manageable. As such, the effects from major accidents and natural disasters during the operational phase is Long-term Imperceptible and Negative.

Residual Effects

The residual effect for major accidents and natural disasters during the operational phase is Long-term Imperceptible and Negative.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above there will be no significant effects.

5.7.5.6 Residential Amenity

Identification of Effects

The operational phase of the Proposed Development will continue the existing tourism, recreation and marina use of the site, albeit at an enhanced scale and with improved facilities. The Proposed Development will result in increased visitor activity within the area and a corresponding increase in traffic movements. However, the Traffic and Transport Assessment, Air Quality Assessment and Noise and Vibration Assessment conclude that residual effects associated with these factors will be slight to imperceptible. The Proposed Development will also provide significant improvements to the public realm, landscaping, pedestrian facilities, traffic management and general appearance of the area. Overall, the operational phase is considered to result in a Long-term, Slight, Positive Effect on residential amenity.

Residual Effects

The residual effect on residential amenity during operation is Long-term Slight Positive.

Significance of Effects

Based on the assessment above, the effect on residential amenity during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is considered Not Significant, with some positive benefit arising from improvements to the public realm, active travel infrastructure and overall quality of the environment.

5.7.6 Cumulative Impact Assessment

This section presents an assessment of the cumulative effects associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development in combination with other projects and/or plans on population and human health. Section 2.6 of Chapter 2 details the Cumulative Impact Assessment methodology undertaken for each discipline of this EIAR. Appendix 2-1 details all the valid applications, granted and proposed within 1 km of the Proposed Development site boundary (relative for cumulative consideration for most topics within this chapter), while Appendix 2-5 details all the valid applications, granted and proposed within the Shannon[Upper]_SC_090 WFD Sub Catchment (relevant for cumulative consideration for water quality) within which the Proposed Development is located considered for cumulative assessment.

The projects within Appendix 2-1 predominantly comprise one off housing as well as the Yew Point Eco tourism development (Planning Ref: 2360204, Granted 2024), an application for the current Baysports Waterpark facilities (Planning Ref: 315842, Granted, 2024) and an application by ESB for the restringing of 35.7 km of overhead lines (OHL) from Athlone to Lanesboro (Planning Reference 2460559, Granted 2024).

The potential for large scale noise and dust emissions, traffic disturbance, impacts to water quality and impacts on tourism from one off housing developments is considered extremely unlikely. As such, the potential for any of the aforementioned impacts to exceed the associated development boundaries of the projects listed in Appendix 2-1 is considered unlikely. As such, potential for cumulative effects between developments listed in Appendix 2-1 and the Proposed Development on Population and Human Health is considered Unlikely, Imperceptible and Negative for both the construction and operational phases.

The Baysports Waterpark application (Planning Reference 31584-23, Granted, 2024) comprises marquees, prefabricated buildings and waterslide inflatable installations. These works are of minimal environmental impact, with negligible to no potential for dust soiling. Furthermore, these works are already installed onsite and will be dismantled and relocated temporarily to facilitate the construction of the Proposed Development. As such, cumulative effects with Planning Reference 31584-23 cannot occur

and cumulative effects from the dismantling and relocating of this type of development alongside the construction phase of the Proposed Development are not anticipated.

The nearest works associated with the application by ESB (Planning Reference 2460559, Granted 2024) to restring existing overhead lines is approximately 500 m from the N61-L2020 junction and is located within the middle of an agricultural field on the other side of the N61. This project is small scale, minimally invasive with no spatial overlap with the Proposed Development. Likewise, this project is likely to be completed by the time the construction phase of the Proposed Development commences, and as such, temporal overlap is unlikely.

During the construction phase, temporary and localised cumulative effects may arise where works coincide with other minor construction activities in the wider area; however, given the scale and dispersed nature of other developments, significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated. A slight, short-term negative cumulative effect may occur due to temporary increases in noise, dust, traffic and general activity levels.

In relation to water quality, due to the incorporation of SuDS, nature-based stormwater solutions and permeable surfaces to the drainage design no cumulative effects pertaining to discharges on Lough Ree are anticipated. There are no proposed discharges of any substance from the site during the construction phase of the Proposed Development directly to any surface water body. The hydrological regime will not be altered during the construction phase. With the recommended mitigations and controls in place, no uncontrolled releases to the Lough will occur. The potential for residual impacts on water and ground water receptors is considered to be imperceptible and so the potential for cumulative effects associated with these receptors are not foreseen. Refer to chapter 8 Hydrology and Hydrogeology for further details.

A slight positive cumulative effect is anticipated in socio-economic terms, as construction employment and procurement associated with the Proposed Development and any other proposed projects as listed in Appendix 2-5 will contribute to local income generation and spending.

During the operational phase, the Proposed Development—comprising marina upgrades, enhanced Baysports facilities, public realm improvements and improved access and parking—will act as a significant tourism and recreational asset within the area. When considered cumulatively with existing tourism infrastructure, including the hotel and wider Lough Ree/Shannon corridor activities, the Proposed Development is expected to result in a positive cumulative effect on population and human health through increased opportunities for outdoor recreation, improved accessibility, and enhanced visitor experience.

Overall, it is considered that there will be no likely significant adverse cumulative effects on population and human health arising from the Proposed Development in combination with other developments within the Study Area. Instead, the Proposed Development is expected to contribute to a Moderate Positive cumulative effect during the operational phase, particularly in terms of tourism, economic activity, and wellbeing associated with enhanced recreational opportunities.