



RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Chapter 10 Landscape and Visual

An Rinn Rua Hotel and Leisure Park

County Kerry

Rinn Rua Holiday Park Ltd

April 2024

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Contents

10. Landscape and Visual.....	10-1
10.1 Introduction	10-1
10.1.1 Competency of Assessor	10-1
10.2 Proposed Development.....	10-1
10.3 Methodology.....	10-2
10.1.2 Key Guidance Documents.....	10-3
10.1.3 Policy Documents.....	10-4
10.1.4 Landscape and Visual Assessment Process.....	10-4
10.1.5 Establishment of Baseline.....	10-4
10.1.6 Assessment of Effects	10-5
10.1.6.1 Methodology for Landscape Assessment.....	10-5
10.1.6.2 Methodology for Visual Assessment.....	10-7
10.1.6.3 Significance of Effect.....	10-10
10.1.6.4 Limitations	10-11
10.4 Receiving Environment.....	10-12
10.1.7 Site Location	10-12
10.1.7.1 Landscape Policy - Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028	10-13
10.1.7.2 Landscape Policy – West Iveragh Local Area Plan 2019 - 2025.....	10-20
10.1.7.3 Kerry Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 - 2022.....	10-21
10.1.7.4 Landscape Policy – Cahersiveen, Waterville & Sneem Functional Areas Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019	10-21
10.1.7.5 Summary of Development Plan Policies	10-21
10.1.8 Landscape Baseline: Description of the Site and Environs	10-22
10.1.8.1 Site Location and Immediate Context.....	10-22
10.1.8.2 Landscape Character of the Site and Surrounds	10-23
10.1.9 Sensitivity of the Landscape	10-31
10.1.10 Sensitivity of the Visual Receptors	10-31
10.1.10.1 Potential Visual Receptors.....	10-31
10.5 Landscape and Visual Effects	10-34
10.1.11 Predicted Landscape Effects – Construction Stage	10-34

10.1.11.1	Landscape Sensitivity	10-34
10.1.11.2	Construction Phase – Magnitude of Change	10-34
10.1.11.3	Construction Phase – Significance of Effect	10-34
10.1.11.4	Operational Phase – Magnitude of Change	10-35
10.1.11.5	Operational Phase – Significance of Effect	10-35
10.1.12	Predicted Visual Impacts and Effects	10-36
10.1.12.1	Summary of Construction Phase Visual Effects	10-50
10.1.12.2	Summary of Operational Phase Visual Effects	10-51
10.1.13	Do-Nothing	10-52
10.1.14	Cumulative Impacts and Effects	10-52
10.6	Mitigation and Monitoring Measures	10-52
10.1.15	Mitigation Measures	10-52
10.1.16	Monitoring Measures (If relevant)	10-52
10.7	Residual Impacts and Effects	10-53
10.8	References	10-53

Tables

Table 10-1: Categories of Landscape Sensitivity	10-6
Table 10-2: Magnitude of Landscape Change	10-7
Table 10-3: Categories of Visual Receptors Sensitivity	10-8
Table 10-4: Magnitude of Visual Change	10-9
Table 10-5: Quality of Effect	10-11
Table 10-6: Duration of Effect	10-11
Table 10-7: Proposed Viewpoints	10-33
Table 10-8: Viewpoint 1	10-37
Table 10-9: Viewpoint 2	10-38
Table 10-10: Viewpoint 3	10-39
Table 10-11: Viewpoint 4	10-41
Table 10-12: Viewpoint 5	10-42
Table 10-13: Viewpoint 6	10-44
Table 10-14: Viewpoint 7	10-46
Table 10-15: Viewpoint 8	10-47
Table 10-16: Viewpoint 9	10-48

Table 10-17: Viewpoint 10.....	10-49
Table 10-18: Summary of Construction Phase Visual Effects	10-50
Table 10-19: Summary of Operational Phase Visual Effects	10-51

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Figures

Figure 10-1: Landscape Masterplan (Prepared by CSR).....	10-2
Figure 10-2: Significance & Sensitivity Matrix (based on EPA, 2022)	10-10
Figure 10-3: Site Location Map	10-12
Figure 10-4: Landscape Designations, Map P (Source: CDP, Appendices).....	10-17
Figure 10-5: Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC / pNHA (Source: CDP, Appendices)	10-18
Figure 10-6: Public Right of Way County Kerry, 30a Renroe Beach (Source: CDP, Appendices).....	10-18
Figure 10-7: Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve with site location. (Source: Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve)	10-19
Figure 10-8: Site location in Ballinskelligs Bay with Inny Strand adjacent	10-22
Figure 10-9: Study Area with site	10-23
Figure 10-10: Neighbouring Residences	10-26
Figure 10-11: Last edition 6 inch Map with site location (Source: Geohive Map Viewer).....	10-29
Figure 10-12: Proposed Viewpoint Locations.....	10-33

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Status
21513	6006	A	08/04/2024	ES/JK	MT		DRAFT
21513	6006	A	19/04/2024	ES/JK/DL	MT		DRAFT
21513	6006	A	25/04/2024	ES/JK/DL	MT/DL	MT	FINAL

MWP, Engineering and Environmental Consultants
Address: Park House, Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork, T12 X251
www.mwp.ie



Disclaimer: This Report, and the information contained in this Report, is Private and Confidential and is intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed (the “Recipient”). The Report is provided strictly on the basis of the terms and conditions contained within the Appointment between MWP and the Recipient. If you are not the Recipient you must not disclose, distribute, copy, print or rely on this Report. MWP have prepared this Report for the Recipient using all the reasonable skill and care to be expected of an Engineering and Environmental Consultancy and MWP do not accept any responsibility or liability whatsoever for the use of this Report by any party for any purpose other than that for which the Report has been prepared and provided to the Recipient.

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

10. Landscape and Visual

10.1 Introduction

The report identifies and discusses the landscape and visual effects in relation to the Proposed Development of the site at Rinn Rua, Ballinskelligs Bay, which includes the renovation of the existing hotel building, a camping area and a surf school along with all associated works. Further details on the proposed development is contained in well as in Chapter 2 of this EIAR.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by CSR was informed by a desktop study and a survey of the site and receiving environment in November 2022, December 2023, and March 2024. The assessment is in accordance with the methodology prescribed in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (GLVIA) published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment. This chapter considers the potential effects on the landscape and visual resource in the area arising from the Proposed Development. The nature and probability of effects on the landscape and visual resource in the area arising from the overall project has been assessed.

The assessment comprises:

- A review of the existing receiving environment.
- Prediction and characterisation of likely impacts,
- Evaluation of the significance of effects, and
- Consideration of mitigation measures, where appropriate.

10.1.1 Competency of Assessor

This assessment has been carried out on behalf of Cunnane Stratton Reynolds, by Evelyn Sikora BA, MA, MILI, a qualified Landscape Architect (Edinburgh College of Art 2006) who has also obtained a Master's degree in Planning and Sustainable Development (UCC 2010). Evelyn is a member of the Irish Landscape Institute with 10 years' experience in Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) and in a range of landscape planning and infrastructure projects including road schemes, flood relief projects, telecommunications, quarry developments, wind farms, solar farms, recreation, residential and commercial development, in both rural and urban contexts. Assistance was provided by Ronan Finnegan, MILI, and Thorsten Peters. Oversight was provided by Jim Kelly, Director, MILI.

10.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development is described in full in Chapter 2 of the EIAR. However *the main* elements that are relevant from an LVIA perspective are outlined below.

- Permission is being sought to renovate the existing derelict beach hotel at Rinn Rua/ Reenroe with an adjoining Leisure Complex, as well as a proposed Leisure Park.
- 6 no. Hobbit Huts, 20 no. Glamping Pods, 25 no. Holiday Homes
- 144 no. Mobile Homes, 20 no. Campervan Stands, 0.8ha Tent Camping Area, Washroom and toilet facilities for campers (58m2), Maintenance Building 600 m2,

- Surf Shop (115m²) /Café (110m²) adjacent to the beach and its access road,
- 138no. Car Parking Spaces, 7 access parking spaces, 2 coach parking bays, and 125no. bicycle spaces,
- Widening of the Reenroe beach access road from the R567 to accommodate two-way traffic, and addition of a separate pedestrian walkway on the east side of the road, and new private access road to two existing neighbouring dwellings to the southwest of the development site,
- Proposed new wastewater treatment system with clear water pump station,UV system and underground percolation area,
- Biodiversity Enhancement Area to the east of the Reenroe beach access road and retention of an onsite derelict cottage for biodiversity use as bat roost.

A Landscape Masterplan has been prepared by CSR to accompany the proposal and is included below:



Figure 10-1: Landscape Masterplan (Prepared by CSR)

10.3 Methodology

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity. The methodology followed for LVIA is that set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), 3rd Edition (hereafter referred to as the GLVIA 2013).

It is also important to note that this definition of landscape applies not only to all types of rural landscape, marine and coastal landscapes (seascapes) but also to the landscape of villages, towns and cities (Section 2.5, LI, IEMA, 2013).

Ireland is a signatory to the European Landscape Convention (ELC). The ELC defines landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’. This definition is important in that it expands beyond the idea that landscape is only a matter of aesthetics and visual amenity. It encourages a focus on landscape as a resource in its own right - a shared resource providing a complex range of cultural, environmental, and economic benefits to individuals and society.

10.3.1 Key Guidance Documents

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity. The methodology for assessment of the landscape and visual effects is informed by the following key guidance documents, namely:

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd Edition. Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)
- *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements*. (EPA, 2022)
- *Kerry County Development Plan 2022 - 2028*
- *West Iveragh Local Area Plan 2019 – 2025*
- *Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 - 2022*
- *Cahersiveen, Waterville & Sneem Functional Areas Local Area Plan 2013-2019*

The GLVIA (2013) is authored by the Landscape Institute in the UK and the IEMA, which contains a network of members in the UK, Ireland and internationally. The guidance was prepared within the parameters of relevant EU directives at the time and is updated, where necessary, by Landscape Institute bulletins online (including the LI TGN 06-19 *Visual Representation of Development Proposals*). The GLVIA (2013) is used internationally and is the industry standard for LVIA in Ireland. Where topic specific guidance on wind farms is in place, the GLVIA notes that this should be referred to.

The EPA guidance (2022) refers to the use of topic specific guidance and specifically references the GLVIA 2013 in relation to professional judgement. It recognises (at paragraph 3.72) that:

“Some uncertainty is unavoidable in EIA, especially about matters that involve an element of judgement, such as assigning a level of significance to an effect. Such judgements should be explicit and substantiated rather than presented as objective fact. This is best done using agreed referable approaches, e.g. the Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impacts Assessment provide guidance on what constitutes a severe visual effect”.

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

10.3.2 Policy Documents

References are also made to the 'Landscape and Landscape Assessment – Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities' document, published in 2000 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Definitions and descriptions of sensitivity, magnitude of change and quality and longevity of effects are derived from the GLVIA. The GLVIA does not set out specific definitions of descriptions used but contains key widely used principles and case studies / examples that are intended to inform a professional's methodology, supported by their experience and judgements in relation to landscape and landscape change. These descriptions expand and complement the EPA guidelines as intended in relation to topic specific guidance.

10.3.3 Landscape and Visual Assessment Process

The GLVIA (2013) outlines the assessment process, which combines judgements on the sensitivity of the resource, and the magnitude of the change as a result of the proposed development. These are then combined to reach an assessment of the significance of the effect.

Another key distinction to make is that in the GLVIA methodology, a distinction is made between landscape effects and the visual effects of a proposed development.

'Landscape' results from the interplay between the physical, natural and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations of these elements and their spatial distribution create distinctive character of landscape in different places. 'Landscape character assessment' is the method used in LVIA to describe landscape, and by which to understand the potential effects of a development on the landscape as 'a resource'. Character is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of landscape that make a place distinctive.

Views and 'visual amenity' refer to the interrelationship between people and the landscape. The GLVIA (2013) prescribes that effects on views and visual amenity should be assessed separately from landscape, although the two topics are inherently linked. Visual assessment is concerned with changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity.

The assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects assesses the effects of the development on the landscape as a resource, and on the fabric and character of the landscape. Assessment of visual effects relates to the change in views and visual amenity experienced by groups of people. The assessment includes the review of the proposed development, desktop study, and several site visits both to the site and the wider landscape. This approach emphasises the distinction between the assessment of Landscape effects and Visual effects, which, though related, are assessed separately. The methodology is as follows:

10.3.4 Establishment of Baseline

The process set out in the GLVIA (2013) and in EPA (2022) involves the preparation of the baseline or receiving environment characteristics. This includes two stages, which are a desk-based study and site visit/field study. These allow the assessor to establish the existing receiving environment and key landscape and visual characteristics and their sensitivities.

The desk-based study includes:

- Review of preliminary proposals and identification of preliminary study area.
- Review of current Development Plan(s) within the study area, and any other plans as appropriate, to identify relevant national and local designations and policies.
- This may include designations such as scenic routes, protected views and other landscape designations including any Landscape Character Assessments (International designations such as UNESCO designations would also be relevant here, if present).
- Other information that may be consulted include aerial imagery, OSI Discovery series mapping, historic (6-inch and 25 inch) mapping and CORINE Landcover Maps (2018).

A site visit was/is then carried out to review and/or confirm the findings of the desk-based study and provide a more detailed description of the landscape and visual character of the study area. Based on both the desk study and site visit, the assessor identifies landscape and visual receptors and their relative sensitivity. Site visits were carried out in November 2022, December 2023, and in March 2024.

10.3.5 Assessment of Effects

Once the Baseline is established, and the proposed development drawings and descriptions reviewed, the assessment process is commenced, as per the GLVIA (2013) and as outlined below.

Use of 'Impact and 'Effect'

Section 1.16 of the GLVIA (referring to the EIA Directive), advises that the terms 'impact' and effect' should be clearly distinguished and consistently used in the preparation of an LVIA.

'Impact' is defined as the action being taken. In the case of the proposed development, the impact would include the construction of the proposed hotel refurbishment and leisure park development and other elements.

'Effect' is defined as the change or changes resulting from those actions, e.g. a change in landscape character, land cover, or changes to the composition, character, and quality of views in the receiving environment. This report focusses on these effects.

10.3.5.1 Methodology for Landscape Assessment

In **Section 10.5.1** and **10.6.1** of this report, the landscape effects of the proposed development are assessed. The nature and scale of changes to the landscape elements and characteristics are identified, and the consequential effects on landscape character are discussed. Trends of change in the landscape are taken into account. The assessment of the significance of the effects takes account of the sensitivity of the landscape resource and the magnitude of change to the landscape, which will result from the proposed development.

Definitions and descriptions of sensitivity, magnitude of change, quality and longevity of effects are derived from the GLVIA (2013). The GLVIA (2013) does not set out specific definitions of descriptions used, but contains key widely used principles and case studies / examples that are intended to inform a professional's methodology, supported by their experience and judgements in relation to landscape and landscape change. These descriptions expand and complement the EPA guidelines as intended, in relation to topic- specific guidance.

Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource

Sensitivity is a combination of Landscape Value and Landscape Susceptibility.

Landscape values can be identified by the presence of landscape designations or policies, which indicate particular values, either on a national or local level. In addition, a number of criteria are used to assess the value of a landscape. These are described further in below, in **Section 10.4.2.2**

Landscape susceptibility is defined in the GLVIA as, “the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline scenario and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.” Susceptibility also relates to the type of development – a landscape may be highly susceptible to certain types of development but have a low susceptibility to other types of development.

Landscape susceptibility (in terms of its ability to accommodate the proposed development) can include consideration of:

Landscape pattern and landcover – a simple landscape pattern can be less susceptible than a complex pattern, including varying types of landcover.

Settlement pattern – this can influence susceptibility.

It includes consideration of landscape values as well as the susceptibility of the landscape to change. Landscape sensitivity is a function of its land use, landscape patterns and scale, visual enclosure and distribution of visual receptors, scope for mitigation, and the value placed on the landscape. It also relates to the nature and scale of development proposed.

Landscape Sensitivity ranges from Low to Very High as outlined in **Table 10.1** below.

Table 10-1: Categories of Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the landscape exhibits a very strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. The character of the landscape is such that its capacity for accommodating change in the form of development is very low. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national or international value and the principal management objective for the area is protection of the existing character from change.
High	Areas where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that it has limited/low capacity for accommodating change in the form of development. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national, regional or county value and the principal management objective for the area is conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong. The character of the landscape is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.
Low	Areas where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character of the landscape is such that it has capacity for change; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy and where the principal management objective is to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration or enhancement.

Sensitivity	Description
Negligible	Areas where the landscape exhibits negative character, with no valued elements, features or characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that its capacity for accommodating change is high; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes include derelict industrial lands or extraction sites, as well as sites or areas that are designated for a particular type of development. The principal management objective for the area is to facilitate change in the landscape through development, repair or restoration.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape with reference to its key elements, features, and characteristics (also known as ‘landscape receptors’). Five categories are used to classify magnitude of landscape change.

For the purpose of assessment, five categories are used to classify the landscape sensitivity of the receiving environment, from Very High sensitivity to Negligible. These categories are defined in **Table 10.2** below.

Table 10-2: Magnitude of Landscape Change

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Change that is large in extent, resulting in the loss of, or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered totally uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in fundamental change in the character of the landscape.
High	Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in alteration or compromise to key elements, features or characteristics, and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in a moderate to large change to the character of the landscape.
Medium	Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in moderate change to the character of the landscape.
Low	Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape.
Negligible	Change that is very limited in extent, resulting in no alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context. Such development results in minimal change to the character of the landscape.

10.3.5.2 Methodology for Visual Assessment

In **Section 10.5.2** of this report, the visual effects of the proposed development are assessed. Visual assessment considers the sensitivity of the viewers, (i.e. groups of people) and the magnitude of the changes to the composition and character of views. The assessment is made for a number of viewpoints selected to represent

the range of visual receptors in the receiving environment. The significance of the visual effects experienced at these locations is assessed by measuring the visual receptor sensitivity against the magnitude of change to the view resulting from the proposed development.

Sensitivity of the Visual Receptor

Visual receptor sensitivity is a function of two main considerations:

Susceptibility of the visual receptor to change. This depends on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention or interest is focussed on the views or visual amenity they experience at that location. Visual receptors most susceptible to change include residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation focused on the landscape (e.g. trail users), and visitors to heritage or other attractions and places of community congregation where the setting contributes to the experience.

Visual receptors less susceptible to change include travellers on road, rail and other transport routes (unless on recognised scenic routes which would be more susceptible), people engaged in outdoor recreation or sports where the surrounding landscape does not influence the experience, and people in their place of work or shopping where the setting does not influence their experience.

Value attached to the view. This depends to a large extent on the subjective opinion of the visual receptor but also on factors such as policy and designations (e.g. scenic routes, protected views), or the view or setting being associated with a heritage asset, visitor attraction or having some other cultural status (e.g. by appearing in arts).

For the purpose of assessment, five categories are used to classify visual receptor 's sensitivity. These categories range from Very High to Negligible and are described in **Table 10.3** below.

Table 10-3: Categories of Visual Receptors Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Viewers at iconic viewpoints - towards or from a landscape feature or area that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of high value or national value. This may also include residential viewers who are focussed to a large extent on the view.
High	Viewers at viewpoints that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses or outdoor recreation features) and views which are highly valued by the local community. This may also include tourist attractions, and heritage features of regional or county value, and viewers travelling on scenic routes.
Medium	Viewers considered of medium susceptibility, such as locations where viewers are travelling at slow or moderate speeds through or past the affected landscape in cars or on public transport, where they are partly but not entirely focused on the landscape, or where the landscape has some valued views. The views are generally not designated, but include panoramic views or views judged to be of some scenic quality, which demonstrate some sense of naturalness, tranquillity or some rare element in the view.
Low	Viewers at viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping, etc. The view may present an attractive backdrop to these activities but there is no evidence that the view is valued, and not regarded as an important element of these activities. Viewers travelling at high speeds (e.g. motorways) may also be generally considered of low susceptibility.

Sensitivity	Description
Negligible	Viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping where the view has no relevance or is of poor quality and not valued.

Magnitude of Change to the view

Classification of the magnitude of change takes into account the size or scale of the intrusion of the proposed development into the view, (relative to the other elements and features in the composition) i.e. its relative visual dominance), the degree to which it contrasts or integrates with the other elements and the general character of the view, and the way in which the change will be experienced (e.g. in full view, partial or peripheral, or glimpses). It also takes into account the geographical extent of the change, the duration and the reversibility of the visual effects.

Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change to a view. These range from Very High to Negligible and are defined in **Table 10.4** below.

Table 10-4: Magnitude of Visual Change

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs highly valued features or characteristics, or the introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes dominant in the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity.
High	Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.
Medium	Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.
Low	Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.
Negligible	Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

Photomontages

Photomontages are used as a tool to assist in the assessment of visual effects, particularly, the nature of the visual effect. They are used in the proposed development for the Renroe site; and can help to illustrate the location and nature of the visual effects. Further details on the photomontages are contained below as well as the assessment in **Section 10.5.2**. The Photomontage Booklet is contained in **Volume 4 of the EIAR**.

A set of 10 no. photomontages were produced from carefully selected viewpoints, to assist in assessing the visual effects, from various locations throughout the study area. These photomontages were produced by GNET 3D and are included in the Photomontage Booklet in **Volume 4**.

10.3.5.3 Significance of Effect

In order to classify the significance of landscape and visual effects, the predicted magnitude of change is measured against the sensitivity of the landscape/viewpoint. The definitions used by the EPA (2022) provide a useful scale to describe the significance of the effects.

There are seven classifications of significance, namely:

- 1.Imperceptible / 2.Not significant / 3.Slight / 4.Moderate / 5.Significant / 6.Very significant / 7.Profound

The relationship between the magnitude of change and sensitivity of the receptor with the varying classifications of significance is illustrated on the below extract from the EPA (2022) Guidelines (with labels simplified based on GLVIA principles) (**Figure 10-2**).

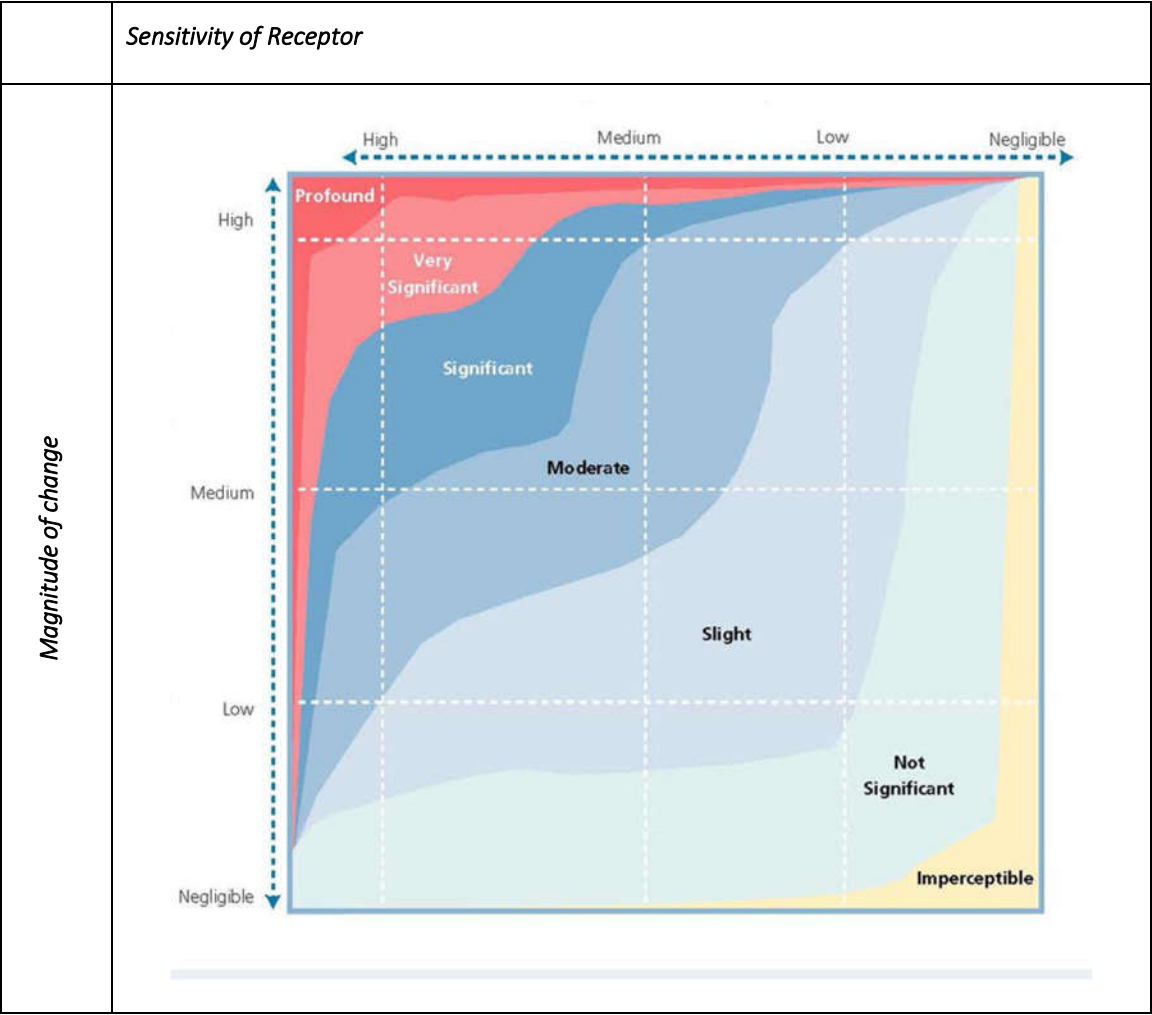


Figure 10-2: Significance & Sensitivity Matrix (based on EPA, 2022)

Note: Figure 10-2 above is a guideline only, but is useful in illustrating the way in which judgements are combined to arrive at a judgement regarding significance, while illustrating that an element of professional judgment is also applied. The assessor also uses professional judgement informed by their expertise, experience and common sense, to arrive at a classification of significance that is reasonable and justifiable.

The GLVIA 3rd Edition recognises (at paragraph 2.23) that:

“Professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements.” The predicted impacts are also classified as beneficial, neutral, or adverse. This is not an absolute exercise; in particular, visual receptors’ attitudes to development, and thus their response to the impact of a proposed development, will vary. However, the methodology applied is designed to provide robust justification for the conclusions drawn. These qualitative definitions are included in Table 10.6 below.

Table 10-5: Quality of Effect

Quality of Effect	Definition
Adverse	Scheme at variance with landform, scale, pattern. Would degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued features, elements or their setting or cause the quality of the landscape(townscape)/view to be diminished.
Neutral	Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.
Beneficial	Improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses.

Impacts / effects are also categorised according to their longevity or timescale as in Table 10.7 below.

Table 10-6: Duration of Effect

Definition of duration	
Duration	Description
Temporary	Effects lasting one year or less
Short-term	Effects lasting one to seven years
Medium Term	Effects lasting seven to fifteen years
Long Term	Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years
Permanent	Effects lasting over sixty years

10.3.5.4 Limitations

None encountered.

10.4 Receiving Environment

This section sets out a review of landscape related Planning Policy as set out in the County Kerry Development Plan 2022-2028 and associated documents, and a description of the study area informed by desktop assessment and site visits.

The local planning and other policy in the County Kerry Development Plan is reviewed which identify development objectives, trends and constraints on development in terms of protections and sensitivities. Precedent and associated planning decisions may be described if appropriate.

The receiving environment is described in terms of its character, physical characteristics and the various elements that make up the landscape, including cultural, recreational, residential and other amenity values.

Cumulatively, this analysis informs a description of the landscape in terms of values that support its protection and conservation and/or its enhancement or change. This reflects best practice guidance under the GLVIA.

10.4.1 Site Location

The subject site is located on the Iveragh peninsula in Kerry between Ballinskelligs and Waterville. A large derelict hotel building sits prominently in the middle of the site with views out onto Ballinskelligs Bay. Adjoining to the raised terrain of the site lie two beaches: An Rinn Rua Beach to the east and Trá na Sasanach to the west.



Figure 10-3: Site Location Map

10.4.1.1 Landscape Policy - Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Kerry County Development Plan, (hereafter referred to as the CDP) was reviewed as part of this assessment, in relation to its guidance informing landscape and visual assessment of the proposed development.

Chapter 2 Climate Change & Achieving a Sustainable Future

The planning context of Chapter 2 generally refers to addressing the necessity of adaptation to climate change, particularly to location, layout, and design of new development. It also refers to the statutory requirement for local authorities to incorporate the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas (p.34). Adaptation measures are to include flood risk management, the promotion of nature-based systems for water management services, the enhancement and protection of green infrastructure and biodiversity, and the promotion of climate action through high quality design, including in placemaking and public realm (p.39-40).

With regards to Climate Change & Achieving a Sustainable Future, it is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 2-6

“Promote and support enterprises that create and employ the use of green technologies.”

KCDP 2-10

“Support integrated nature-based solutions and biodiversity to climate change challenges and also initiatives aimed at increasing soil carbon retention, sequestration, and storage.”

KCDP 2-11

“Improve the efficiency, sustainability and the integration of sustainable transport and mobility, with a preference for active travel and including improved and expanded public transport capacity, networks and infrastructure, attractive fares, encouraging vehicle sharing (where appropriate), integrated walking and cycling infrastructure and improved traffic management and bus priority.”

Chapter 4 Towns & Villages

It is worth noting that this section emphasises the objective of the CDP for regeneration and conservation of existing structures and buildings where feasible. The derelict structures of the former Renroe Hotel are to be assessed in the context of a recreational brownfield site, and in the context of the following objective:

KCDP 4-3

“Preserve the architectural heritage of towns and villages and promote conservation-led regeneration and the re-use of buildings where possible.”

Chapter 9 Economic Development

This CDP chapter makes reference to *Sustainable Economic Development and Climate Action* by supporting Ireland’s bioeconomy and transition to a low-carbon economy.

With regards to Economic Development, it is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 9-12

“Prioritise the regeneration of areas in need of renewal, for instance in underperforming or outdated commercial and/ or industrial areas, brownfield land and in town and village centres where higher vacancy rates exist.”

KCDP 9-13

“Support and promote the recovery of the Tourism Sector in Kerry as it recovers from the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic and re-establishes itself as one of the county’s key economic drivers.”

Chapter 10 Tourism & Outdoor Recreation

Sustainable tourism is defined as: “Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities’1. Sustainable tourism development involves a concern for the impact of the industry on the host community, climate change and on the physical environment. Sustainable tourism planning therefore requires a balance to be struck between the needs of the visitor, the place, heritage assets and the host community. Erosion and damage to pathways and vegetation associated with multiple uses, particularly in relation to mountain trails, is a concern and such uses may need to be managed to protect these areas for current and future generations.”(p.204).

With regard to Tourism & Outdoor Recreation, it is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 10-1

“Adhere to the principles of sustainable tourism and have regard to its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts on local infrastructure, sensitive areas and sites, water quality, biodiversity, soils, ecosystems, habitats and species, climate change.”

KCDP 10-2

“Facilitate sustainable tourism development throughout the County and particularly in areas where tourism is currently underdeveloped and where there is a need for local tourism development initiatives including Greenways, Blueways, Peatways, Cycleways, Walkways and Marine Leisure.”

KCDP 10-4

“Facilitate and support the sustainable development of tourism along, or in close proximity to public transport routes.”

KCDP 10-5

“Explore best management practices for sensitive tourism destinations particularly during the peak tourist season.”

KCDP 10-7

“Promote and facilitate sustainable tourism as one of the key economic pillars of the County’s economy and a major generator of employment and to support the provision of facilities such as hotels, aparthotels, guesthouses, bed and breakfasts, tourist hostels, caravan and camping, glamping, cafes, restaurants, visitor attractions and activity tourism.”

The subject site is a coastal site that is directly accessed by the designated Wild Atlantic Way as per the CDP’s reference under 10.3.1 Wild Atlantic Way (WAW), Ireland’s first long-distance touring route that stretches from

West Cork to Donegal. The overall aim of this project is to develop a touring / tourism route that will achieve greater visibility for the west coast of Ireland in overseas tourist markets (p.207).

This chapter notes that tourism-related development proposals will be required to demonstrate a high standard of design, potential impact in terms of scale and intensity and the potential for the proposal to add significantly to the quality of the visitor experience (p209-210). It is noted that Kerry County Council will consider proposals for tourist infrastructure on a case-by-case basis, with regard to its setting, character and ability to successfully integrate the proposed development on, or adjoining the site (p.210).

It is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 10-22

“Facilitate the development of the necessary tourism infrastructure, visitor attractions and supporting facilities at appropriate locations in the County in a manner that does not have an adverse impact on the locality, host community and environment.”

KCDP 10-23

“Facilitate the sustainable provision of parking including coach parking facilities within and on the edge of towns and villages and at appropriate scenic viewing points and tourist facilities.”

The CDP supports the development of tourism throughout the county by encouraging the provision of a wide range of tourist accommodation types and will therefore direct new tourist accommodation including hotels, guesthouses, hostels, B&Bs, holiday homes glamping/camping/caravan and campervan sites to towns and villages with good spatial spread throughout the county. The CDP recognises that the provision of suitable sites for camping/glamping, campervans and caravans is an important element in the range of tourist accommodation offers (p.212). It notes that while camping sites should be located on appropriately zoned land within established or adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate camping sites may be appropriate to complement tourism development in rural and coastal locations within or adjacent to existing settlements. Proposed development for camping sites which support rural tourism initiatives subject to proper planning and sustainable development may be permitted (p.212).

It is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 10-30

“Encourage the sensitive redevelopment and / or return to suitable use, of derelict, vacant or redundant buildings, in appropriate locations in order to provide for visitor accommodation and tourism development. As part of this, potential for impact on wildlife should be taken into account as outlined in S 4.3.4 of this plan.”

KCDP 10-31

“Support the development of appropriately scaled camping/glamping, campervan and caravan type accommodation located within/or adjacent to existing settlements, established tourism assets or adjacent to a main farmyard complex on suitable sites and at an appropriate scale subject to normal planning considerations.”

KCDP 10-32

“Ensure that future caravan, camping and parking facilities in coastal areas will not be visually

intrusive or impact on sensitive coastal environments (e.g., sand dune systems)."

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Chapter 11 Environment

This CDP chapter pertains to Environment and notes in Section 11.1:

"County Kerry's natural environment includes a wealth of features that encompass the character of the County. Kerry's diverse landscapes form part of its 'green' persona and there is much to be proud of. These features are influenced by its geographical location, its climatic conditions, the changing global impact on environmental and climatic conditions as well as the impact of human behaviour at local level."

Section 11.2.1, European / National Designations refers to Natura 2000 Site IE000335 Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC which is situated adjacent to the subject site, while further Natura 2000 Sites and NHA are situated more than 3km from the subject site.

With regards to relevant (i.e., to the site and/or proposed development) biodiversity, it is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 11-3

"Work with all stakeholders in order to conserve, manage and where possible enhance the County's natural heritage including all habitats, species, landscapes and geological heritage of conservation interest and to promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage of the County."

KCDP 11-4

"Promote nature-based solutions to meet national objectives towards achieving a carbon neutral economy by 2050."

The Killarney National Park and Kerry UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (i.e., Section 11.2.2 of the CDP), is located approx. 40km from the subject site.

With regard to Woodlands and Trees, it is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 11-28

"Encourage the provision of locally provenanced native tree species including those recommended by the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan as part of development landscaping schemes."

Section 11.6.2 of the CDP relates to 'Landscape Sensitivity':

The County Kerry Landscape Review is contained in Volume One – Appendix 7. This review includes a process of identifying and describing variations in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) that make landscapes distinctive. In the Landscape Review, the landscapes of the county are described in terms of their type, the impact of various types of development on these landscapes are assessed, landscape areas are defined, with the visual sensitivity of these landscape then determined. This is outlined for the Landscape Character Area of Valentia Island and St. Finan's Bay (32), which includes the subject site at Ballinskelligs Bay (p.279-280):

- *The Perceptual Qualities are considered to be a scenic coastal landscape of medium to high sensitivity.*
- *The Visual Amenities are of views from high roads in the Ballinskelligs area that are of high sensitivity.*

- The Landscape Values are based on views & prospects along extensive stretches of the roads along the coast, with the Wild Atlantic Way passing through the area. The Landscape Values include coastal, island and elevated landscapes, and are classified as **high quality, and of high sensitivity**.

Section 11.6.5 relates to 'Views and Prospects', that provide outstanding natural beauty, of international recognition. These need to be protect and conserved throughout the County, whereas any development that hinders or materially affects these views & prospects will not be permitted:

KCDP 11-79

"Preserve the views and prospects as defined on Maps contained in Volume 4."

KCDP 11-81

"Prohibit developments that have a material effect on views designated in this plan from the public road or greenways towards scenic features and/or public areas."

The following map illustrates Visual Sensitivity and Views & Prospects in the area. While the subject site is clearly within a zone defined as visually sensitive, views and prospects of value are noted in the direction of the site, from the roads R566 and R567.

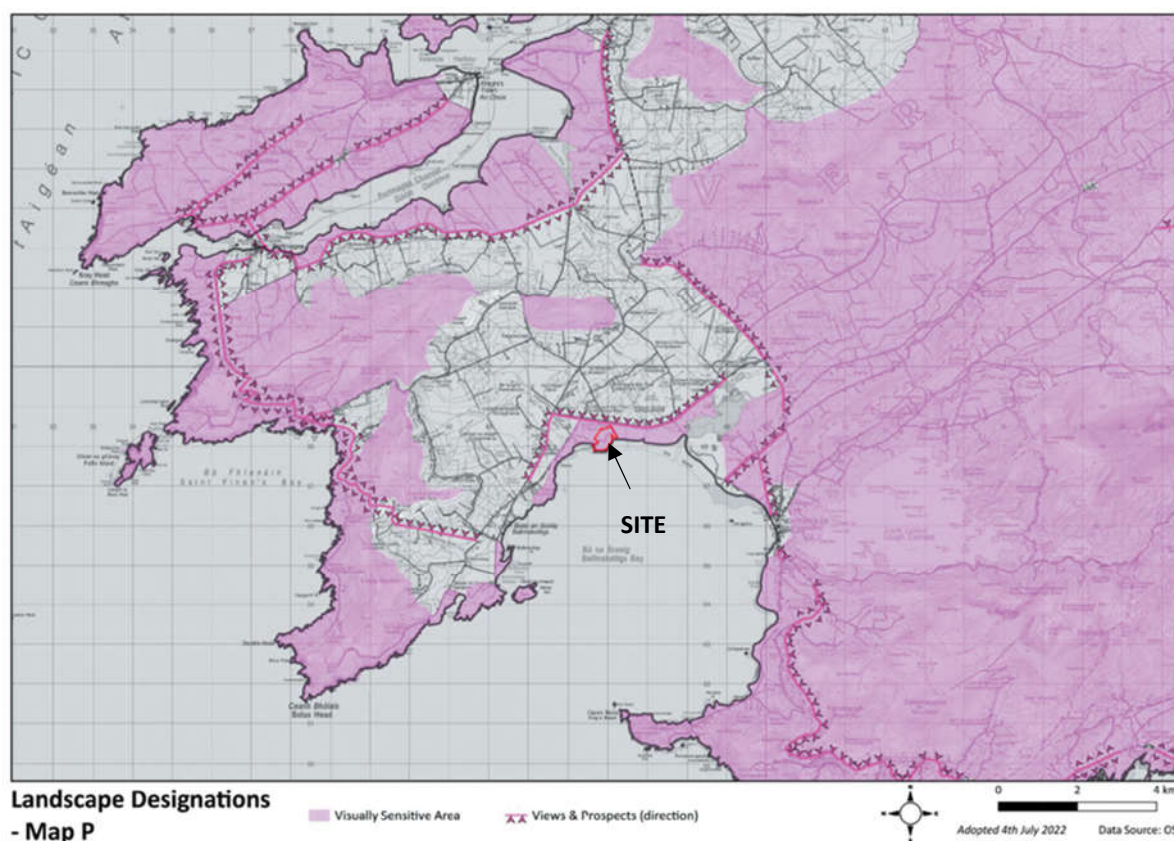


Figure 10-4: Landscape Designations, Map P (Source: CDP, Appendices)

Natura 2000 and Natural Hertiage Area Sites

Volume One of the CDP, Appendix 5, Natural Environment and Designations, lists the following Natura 2000 (SAC and SPA) and Natural Heritage (NHA) Sites near the subject site:

- IE000335 Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC, within and adjacent to subject site
- IE000335 Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary Proposed Natural Heritage Area SAC, adjacent to the subject site



Figure 10-5: Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC / pNHA (Source: CDP, Appendices)

Volume Three of the CDP, Appendix 1, Public Rights of Way notes the right of way ROW 30a: “Access to the beach via a track from the end the L7535 Renroe”.

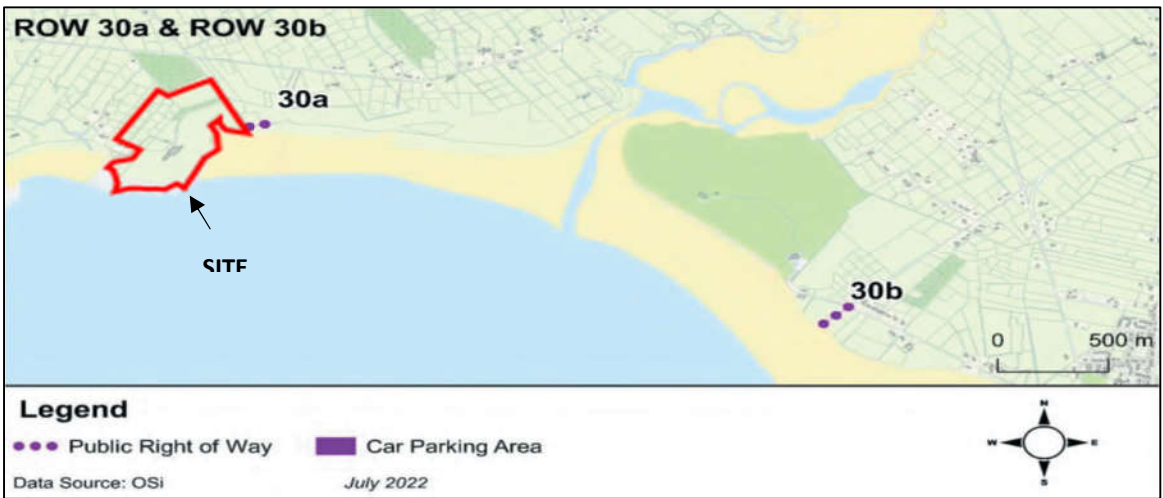


Figure 10-6: Public Right of Way County Kerry, 30a Renroe Beach (Source: CDP, Appendices)

Archaeology

Volume Three of CDP, Appendix 2 / 3, Archaeology notes that ecclesiastical and early monastic sites are common across the peninsula, while the UNESCO World Heritage site at Sceilg Mhichíl is listed as the finest example of an early ecclesiastical hermitage in Europe and is one of its most important and iconic archaeological monuments. Appendix 2 / 3, Archaeology does not list any National or Registered Monuments on or adjacent to the site. The National Inventory of Archaeological Heritage NIAH lists Cultivation Ridges (An tImleach Mór Thiar) under KE097-009 and a Field boundary (Imleach Na Muc) under KE097-010 as archaeological findings, in the eastern wetland habitat areas adjacent the site.

Volume Three of the CDP, Appendix 4, Record of Protected Structures does not list any structures within or near the subject site, nor does Appendix 5, Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) lists ACAs in the vicinity.

Dark Sky Reserve

In Section 11.3 Air, Noise and Light Pollution, the CDP notes the Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve, an internationally recognised Dark Sky Reserve (www.darksky.org) that is valued for possessing an exceptional and distinguished quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment specifically protected for scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage or public enjoyment. The Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve includes Kells/Folimore, Cahersiveen, Portmagee, Valentia Island, Dromid, The Glen, Ballinskelligs, Waterville and Derrynane/Caherdaniel. Hence the subject site is located within the Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve.



Figure 10-7: Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve with site location. (Source: Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve)

The CDP recognises the potential of the Dark-Sky reserve as a significant tourism attraction. Therefore, it considers the control of light pollution in this area important, particularly of mountainous and peatland areas where there is little or no light pollution, serviced by adjoining rural communities.

With regard to Light Pollution control, it is an objective of the CDP to:

KCDP 11-42

“Require proposals for development that include the provision of external lighting, to clearly demonstrate that the lighting scheme is the minimum needed for security and working purposes and also to ensure that external lighting and lighting schemes are designed so that the incidence of light spillage is minimised ensuring that the amenities of adjoining properties, wildlife and the surrounding environment are protected.”

KCDP 11-43

“Support the Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve and ensure that all new external lights comply with the objectives of the Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve.”

Flood Risks

Volume Five of the CDP comprises policy related to Environmental Assessments. It notes key flood risk management policies for the Plan in section 6.1 to include availing of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenity and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats and, where applicable develop flood storage areas and/or other nature-based solutions to flood risk (p.160).

10.4.1.2 Landscape Policy – West Iveragh Local Area Plan 2019 - 2025

This Local Area Plan (LAP) was adopted in and is effective since 2019. Part D: Villages makes reference to Ballinskelligs (Baile an Sceilg) as a key village in the area.

It is worth noting here that while reference is made to Ballinskelligs as a village, the settlement is perceived and understood rather as a townland that comprises a larger area of several hectares of single building development with considerable distances between these buildings, made of mainly pasture lands, unlike a traditional village settlement with buildings concentrated along a village street or around a historic village core.

Section 3.4 describes the Vision for Baile an Sceilg (Ballinskelligs) as:

“The overall vision for Baile an Sceilg is to ensure that it develops as an attractive location for residents and tourists alike and that future development preserves the village’s character and reinforces it where necessary.”

It is an objective of the LAP to:

BG-GO-02 (General Objective)

“Enhance the visual amenities of the village. The village is on an important tourist route, the Skellig Ring, and development should not detract from the amenities that make this drive a popular tourist attraction.”

BG-GO-06 (General Objective)

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

“Facilitate and support the upgrade of existing wastewater treatment infrastructure in a timely manner to ensure the sustainable development of the area.”

BG-O-06 (Open Space / Amenity)

“Support the provision of camping facilities in the village.”

BG-TM-01 (Tourism)

“Promote the sustainable development of year round facilities providing increased services to the local area and increasing added value of the tourism product.”

BG-T-01 (Transport)

“Seek the improvement of pedestrian connectivity within the settlement by the provision of pedestrian routes and footpaths where required.”

10.4.1.3 Kerry Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 - 2022

This Plan envisages to strike a balance between Economic Development and Job Creation, Quality of Life, and Community and Social Inclusion. Reference to the subject site in Ballinskelligs is not made in this policy guidance document.

10.4.1.4 Landscape Policy – Cahersiveen, Waterville & Sneem Functional Areas Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019

The above listed policy document is out of date, and its guidance to the townland of Ballinskelligs within the Cahersiveen Local Area Plan has not referred to the subject site.

10.4.1.5 Summary of Development Plan Policies

The above policies can be summarised as follows:

- Policies supporting enterprise using green, nature based and related technologies
- Policies supporting regeneration of Areas in need of renewal
- Policies supporting sustainable tourism
- Policies supporting outdoor recreation
- Policies supporting the provision of hotels, caravan, glamping, camping and related facilities and infrastructure that is appropriately scaled and does not negatively impact the locality / host community.
- Policies supporting redevelopment / re-use of derelict buildings
- Policies to conserve County Kerrys natural landscape and heritage
- Policies recognising the sensitivities and perceptual qualities of Ballinskelligs and its environs on the Wild Atlantic Way.
- Policies identifying and protecting views, scenic routes and visually sensitive areas.
- Policies protecting designated habitats inclu. Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC
- Policies protecting cultural heritage
- Policies protecting the Dark Sky reserve
- Specific policies to Ballinskelligs to enhance the amenities of the village on an important tourist route, to provide camping facilities, year round tourism facilities and links.

10.4.2 Landscape Baseline: Description of the Site and Environs

10.4.2.1 Site Location and Immediate Context

Visits to the site and receiving environment were carried out in November 2022, December 2023, and in March 2024. For the purposes of the Landscape and Visual appraisal, an initial study area was defined, which includes the site itself and lands in the environs where landscape and visual effects may potentially arise. Figure 10.5 below illustrates the location of the proposed development on the site of the former Renroe Beach Hotel, on Inny Strand, in Ballinskelligs Bay.



Figure 10-8: Site location in Ballinskelligs Bay with Inny Strand adjacent

According to Section 5.2 of the GLVIA (3rd Edition 2013):

"The study area should include the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it, which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner."

The study area, as shown below, includes the northeastern section of Ballinskelligs Bay, known as Inny Strand, extending from Dún Géagáin (Dungeagan) to the west, along Trá na Sahanach (Tranasassenach), An Rinn Rua (Renroe) to the beach and town of An Coireán (Waterville) in the east. It includes the Protected Views / Prospects along the R566, the R567 (Skellig Ring roads), and the N70 (Ring of Kerry) road. Included in the study area are views from the Emlagh Loop Walk, and from accessible areas of the beach.



Figure 10-9: Study Area with site

10.4.2.2 Landscape Character of the Site and Surrounds

The site, along with the wider landscape and townscape are described below in terms of its location and access, as well as its character in terms of landform, landcover, built and cultural heritage, land use, which contribute to the description of the overall character. The 'Site and Immediate Surroundings' includes the area of the former Rinn Rua Hotel, in ownership of the applicant while the 'Wider Landscape' beyond this is described under a separate heading below.

Site Context and Access

The site of the proposed development is located on the site of the former Rinn Rua Hotel at Rinn Rua, Ballinskelligs Bay. The site is accessible for pedestrians from the local beach access road leading from the R567 to Rinn Rua Beach, from the Emlagh Loop Walk, from Inny Strand, and from the Rinn Rua Cliff Walk. For motorised vehicles, the site is solely accessible from the local (L-7535) road, leading from the R567 (Skellig Ring) to Rinn Rua Beach. The R567 connects with the R566 in Dún Géagáin in a westerly direction, and with the N70 (Ring of Kerry) in an easterly direction. A mooring place for vessels does not exist at Inny Strand. It is worth noting here that a runway for smaller planes did exist immediately east of the subject site within the Emlaghmore lands during the operation of the Rinn Rua Hotel.

Landform – Topography and Drainage

Wider Landscape

Rinn Rua is an area of the townland of Ballinskelligs, Southwest Kerry, located on the coast, within the northeastern section of the Ballinskelligs Bay. The topography of the wider landscape is relatively flat with gentle minor undulations, made of pasture lands in fields, and areas of bogland. There are also some cliff and rock formations towards the sea with intermittent sandy beaches, among these Ballinskelligs Beach, Trasnasassenach Beach, Inny Strand and Waterville Beach as the largest. The dominant topographical feature in the wider area are the Emlaghmore lands, which are higher in elevation to the north of the site. The River Inny Estuary to the east which is tidal and divides the length of the beach in this area of Ballinskelligs Bay into Rinn Rua Beach to the west, and Waterville Beach to the east. There are also views to the distant mountains from Rinn Rua Beach.

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024



Plate 10-1 and Plate 10-2: Inny Strand looking east towards Waterville and south to Ballinskelligs Bay



Plate 10-3 and Plate 10-4: Local Road, looking south towards Ballinskelligs Bay / looking east towards Emlaghmore

Site and Immediate Surroundings

The topography of the site fronting the Local Road to the beach and the Cliff Walk are illustrated below. The images also show the coastal context of the site as part of the Ballinskelligs Bay landscape consisting of flat pasture lands with coastal cliff formations, mature hedgerows and isolated tree lines. Flat areas of wet grasslands and areas of peatland are evident east of the beach access road and the proposed development site.



Plate 10-5 and Plate 10-6: Cliff Walk, looking west towards Ballinskelligs / looking east towards Waterville



Plate 10-7 Wet grassland on east side of Reenroe beach access road and Plate 10-8: Wet grassland and trees on site

Landcover – Vegetation and Built Form

Wider Landscape

A wide variety of landcover can be found in the area. Large fields of pasture lands framed by mature hedgerows dominate the wider area landscape. These extend to the beach and cliff formations of the Inny Strand. Remains of tree trunks and lines of what appear to be former potato plantation can be found along the foreshore line of the beach and are illustrated below. Other forms of landcover associated with high elevation like moors and heathland can also be found, such as Emlaghmore. There are also areas of coniferous forestry and isolated lines of coniferous, mature trees. Buildings are few and scattered, representing the typical settlement pattern of the Ballinskelligs townland.

The closest buildings outside the landholding of the landowner are a single residential building including lands, immediately surrounded by the site (see neighbour number 1 in Figure 10.7), two dwellings in the southwest corner (neighbours 2 and 3), and a group of individual homes along Trasasassenach Beach, approx. 150m west of the site boundary (neighbours 4-9). The nearest buildings to the site boundary inland from Inny Strand are individual homes along the Local Road, between the R567 and the R566, approx. 600m northwest of the site boundary.

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024



Plate 10-9: Bogland, coniferous trees with a backdrop of higher ground, north of the site

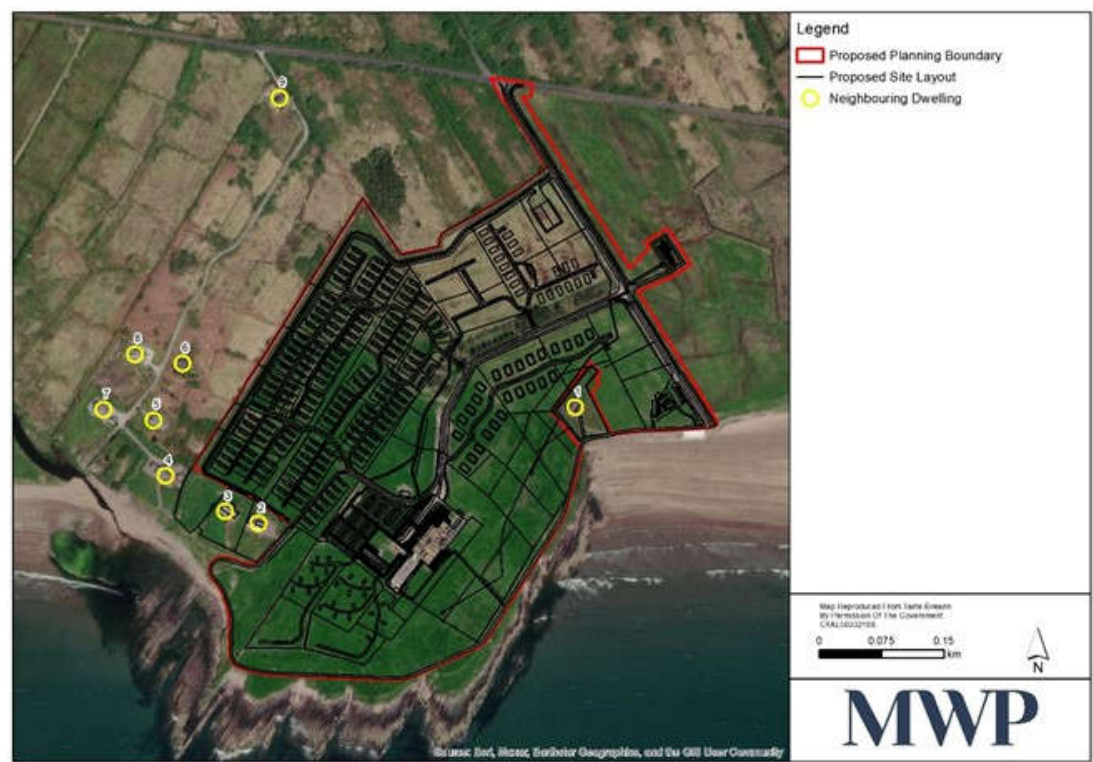


Figure 10-10: Neighbouring Residences

Site and Immediate Surroundings

The site is situated on a slightly elevated grass field, with a cliff edge towards the south and southeast, with extensive views to the sea and the mountains beyond. Defining elements on site are the Cliff Walk with associated grass mounds and some dry stone wall, and the rugged cliffs and rocky shoreline shore below. A line of mature trees parallel to the access road from the local Road. The closest buildings to the proposed development, are two individual homes along Trasnasassenach Beach, approx. 30m west of the site boundary. Within the site boundary of the proposed development lie two buildings: the derelict building complex of the main hotel, erected in the 1970s, and a derelict farm building to the north of the hotel complex.



Plate 10-10 and Plate 10-11: Tree stumps and cultivation ridges (SMR KE097-009) on Inny strand



Plate 10-12 and Plate 10-13: Derelict hotel building and derelict house on the site

Along the cliff walk, stone walls and earth mounds can be seen, which may denote former field boundaries. A former sea swimming pool is evident from the cliffs as shown in Plate 10-14 below.



RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Plate 10-14: Dry stone walls remain along the cliff walk and Plate 10-15; Remains of tidal pool

Cultural Heritage

Wider Landscape

In the wider landscape, the Historic Environment Viewer website (<https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com>) denotes Ballinskelligs Castle (approximately 3.9km west) and Ballinskelligs Abbey (approximately 4.3km to the west) which are publicly accessible sites on the coast.

Site and Immediate Surroundings

Features of cultural heritage include the tree stumps and cultivation ridges on Inny Strand, as marked on the Historic Environment Viewer. Other non-listed features include dry stone wall remnants. No buildings are listed as Protected Structures or form an Architectural Conservation Area in the vicinity of the site.

Land-Use and Settlement Pattern

Wider Landscape

Settlement in the wider landscape consists of scattered houses and farms, with some slightly more dense urban form and contiguous development to the west of the site at Dun Geagan and further west at Ballinskelligs.

Site and Immediate Surroundings

The lands of the site are currently used as pasture lands for sheep roaming freely between the derelict structures. The two beforementioned buildings are stand-alone structures which are surrounded by grassed landscape and tarmacked / gravelled access routes. Several detached dwellings lie to the west of the proposed development, with one dwelling to the south-east of the site, adjacent to the cliffs and overlooking the beach.

The historic 6-inch map below indicates the landscape pattern of the site which consisted of several small fields. Analysis of the aerial images today reveal strong traces of this pattern on the site.

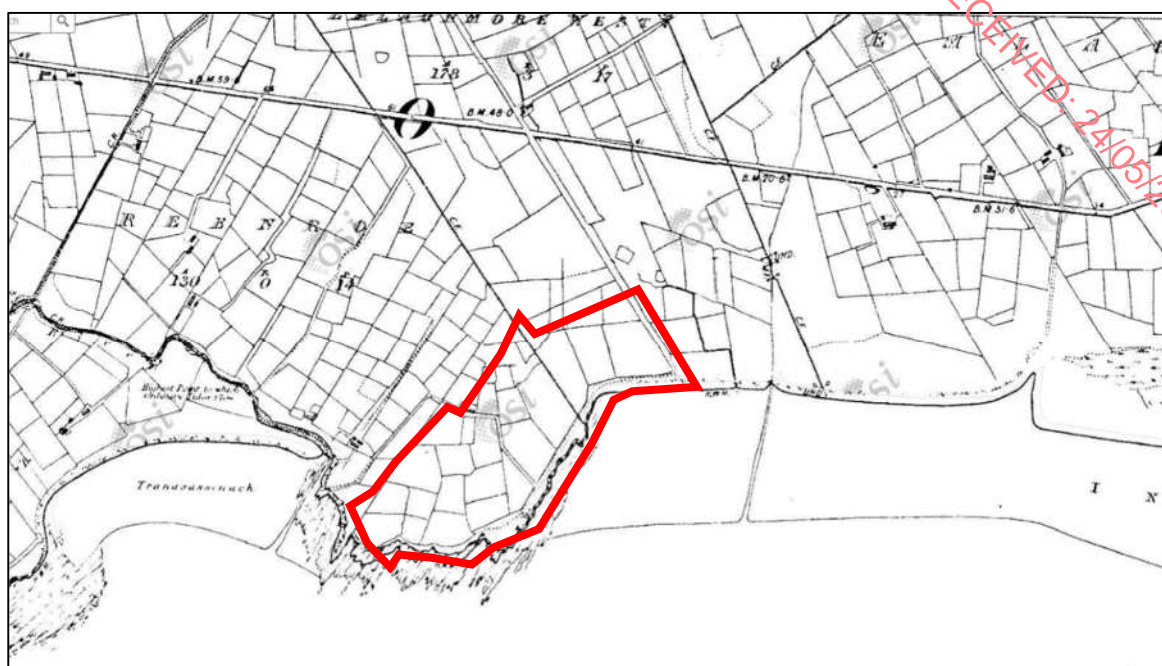


Figure 10-11: Last edition 6 inch Map with site location (Source: Geohive Map Viewer)

Summary of Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

The landscape of the immediate vicinity of the site appears unkempt and vacant, with the two derelict structures, associated hard surfaced car park and materials left on the site. Sheep grazing has kept vegetation along the cliffside low and somewhat controlled. The cliff walk (part of the Dungeagan to Reenroe Loop) appears to be used, with several signs denoting the trail. The Emlaghmore Loop east of the Reenroe beach access road which runs along the beach appears in poor condition, as does part of the lands to the east of the beach access road, adjacent to the beach.

The stark, reduced features of the derelict hotel structure with a weathered pre-cast concrete panel façade visible, define the visual quality of the built form in this location and is prominent in views from both the beach and the cliff walk, as well as views from the roads in the vicinity.

The landscape is characterised by flat pasture lands typical to the area, with some areas of wet grassland and a varied coastal landscape. The coastal landscape near the site is very varied, ranging from cliffs with a rocky foreshore, the sandy expanse of the Inny/Reenroe Beach which contrasts with the broad views over the bay to the south where mountains are visible in good weather.

The open and scenic views to the bay are characteristic of this area. Views from the beach, and the coast/cliffs close to the hotel are scenic and of high value, designated in the Development Plan, as both a visually sensitive area and a scenic route along the R567.

Landscape Values

The GLVIA (2013) Guidelines set out the methodology for assigning landscape sensitivity. This is based on combining judgements on landscape value, and landscape susceptibility which relates to the type of development proposed. Landscape susceptibility is addressed in Section 10.5.1.1 along with the assessment of effects.

Landscape values are derived from both indications of value as seen in national and local policy, as well as other indications that a landscape or landscape element, is valued. As noted above, the areas where the site is located is designated as Visually Sensitive and is also in the viewshed of two scenic routes to the north and north-west of the site along the R567.

Landscape value, as referred to above, can be identified by the presence of landscape designations or policies which indicate particular values, either on a national or local level. These include international designations (such as UNESCO World Heritage sites), national designations, and local designations such as scenic routes, scenic views or amenity designations which are included in County Development Plans. Important tourism, cultural heritage or recreational areas are also indicative of value. In addition, where landscapes do not have designations, a number of criteria are used to assess the value of a landscape. For undesignated areas in the wider landscape in these criteria include:

- Landscape Quality/Condition,
- Cultural Heritage/Conservation value,
- Aesthetic/Scenic Quality,
- Rarity or Representativeness, and
- Public Accessibility and Recreation Value.

Based on the above criteria, in addition to the designations already identified, the landscape values of the overall study area as well as the individual sites of proposed works, can be described. These values can further be categorised in two ways – values which should be conserved, and those that provide opportunity for enhancement and are listed below. The Conservation and Enhancement values of the site are set out in this section.

Conservation Values

The values to be conserved indicate those aspects of the receiving environment which are valued and sensitive and could be negatively impacted on by the proposed development. These are summarised below from the analysis in the previous sections, and include:

- Landscape designations for visually sensitive area with protected views and prospects denote a high-value places on the view over the Bay from the R567 and the overall visual sensitivity of the landscape,
- Inny Strand adjoining the site boundary and in close proximity,
- Cliff formation with rocky coastline and associated Cliff Walk,
- Mature hedgerows, and remnants of drystone walls; and
- Designated areas of protection including Natura 2000 sites and Natural Heritage Areas.

Enhancement Values

The values to be enhanced represent the site's capacity to accommodate change and therefore reflect landscape susceptibility, and include:

- Existing site with history of commercial / tourism land-use similar to proposed development
- Opportunity to reactivate and reuse derelict structures for zoned land-use
- Neglected character of site, buildings and immediate surrounds– lands in need of repair and reuse
- Opportunity to enhance public access to cliff walk to enhance recreation opportunities at existing beach.

10.4.3 Sensitivity of the Landscape

As previously outlined in section 10.4.1.1 the County Kerry Landscape Review has determined the landscape sensitivity of the Valentia Island and St. Finan's Bay (32) landscape character area having an overall High sensitivity value. However, the GLVIA (2013) guidance, considers Landscape Sensitivity to be inherently linked to the type of development proposed and the landscape susceptibility to change is also considered.

Site and Immediate vicinity

The site has a slightly lesser sensitivity to that of the surrounding areas of unspoilt or limited development coastal lands. As its coastal lands have been previously altered in the past by its former hotel accommodation land use which the proposed development is seeking to redevelop the lands and buildings for a similar development type. In its current form the site consists of a degraded landscape due to the presence of the derelict hotel which is surrounded by improved grassland managed for sheep grazing. Some areas of the site have been less altered such as the wet grassland to the north of the hotel, and the areas on the east side of the local road (where the proposed wastewater treatment plant is proposed) and the natural rocky coastline to the south of the hotel.

Thus, the overall sensitivity of the site would be Medium – High.

Wider Landscape

The proposed development will need to consider the sensitivity of the wider coastal landscape setting and its interaction with the highly valued coastal landscape, particularly with regards to views which are considered later in the visual assessment section of this chapter. The sensitivity of the wider landscape is considered also High.

10.4.4 Sensitivity of the Visual Receptors

10.4.4.1 Potential Visual Receptors

A thorough assessment of potential views of the proposed development was carried out during the site visit. The site and surrounding area were visited including travelling along the various scenic routes and visiting areas deemed visually sensitive within the study area.

Viewpoint selection takes into account the sensitive receptors which may be affected by the proposed development, the number of people at the viewpoints, and the nature of the proposed development and where it is likely to be most visible.

Visual Receptors (or viewers) can vary in sensitivity, from Low to High, as outlined in **Table 10.3** in **Section 10.3.6.2**. Highly sensitive viewers may include residents, those undertaking recreation and walking – e.g. where views of the surroundings are part of the experience, and those at tourism or cultural heritage locations or scenic or protected views.

The existing hotel's derelict shell located within the site is already visible to varying degrees across the local landscape. The presence of this vertical structure helped to determine the suitability of the ten representative viewpoints selected for the assessment of likely visual effects of the Proposed Development, as mapped in **Figure 10-8** and listed in **Table 10-8** below. The potential visual receptors were selected from a range of locations across the study area including those within the immediate vicinity and some more distance views on either side of Ballinskelligs Bay.

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Potential Visual Receptors include:

Designated Views/Prospects

Much of the surrounding coastal landscape has been designated Visual Sensitive Area, as indicated on Figure 10.3. The designation covers a large area, and the site is likely to have varying degrees of visibility from within it as experienced by a broad range of visual receptors including those considered below. Parts of the R567 north and north-west of the site are also designated as a view/prospect looking towards the site. Both routes form part of the wider Wild Atlantic Way network.

Varying views of the site are possible by travellers moving along sections of the Kerry Council Views/Prospects on the R567 regional road to the north of the site and along the EuroVelo (EV1) route cycle route to the west of the site. Views are screened closer to the junction with the N70, but become more open, with occasional glimpses of the bay and mountains approximately 3km east of the site. However, the more open views with glimpses of the derelict hotel are available from approximately 1.5km to the east of the site along this road, with intermittent visibility due to dwellings and vegetation.

Views from coastline

The coastline is a popular location for both locals and tourists to engage in recreational activity, and there are some good opportunities to view the site on the elevated coastline headland. This includes views from the local beach, the cliff walk and coastal paths, as well as those engaged in water based activities within Ballinskelligs Bay.

Views from surrounding rural areas

The immediate lands nearest to the site include individual houses and small clusters of houses. One of these houses is to the northeast (neighbour 1 in **Figure 10.7**) and two houses are located on the southwest corner of the site (neighbours 2 and 3 in **Figure 10.7**) and share a property boundary. These and a few other neighbouring receptor's properties are oriented to maximise their views out towards the sea and so are facing away from the site although some views may be available from the rear or side of their property/grounds.

There are some views from rural dwellings located across the wider local road network, with potential views being greatest from those on more elevated lands particularly to the north and west of site. However, the extent of the site's visibility from these receptors can be further influenced by the orientation of these building (many looking onto the local road/lanes), along with any screening provided by the intervening vegetation cover, other nearby houses and local landform fluctuations.

Views from the settlement of Ballinskelligs and Waterville.

A number of views were identified from around these settlements' edges or beachfronts, where the view towards the site are not otherwise obscured by other buildings, vegetation cover or local landform fluctuations.

Views of the hotel from the beach at Waterville are evident, but only in good conditions. However, views from the settlements of Dun Geagan and further west at Ballinskelligs are screened by buildings but views from the coast and at Ballinskelligs Abbey and Castle, were identified.

The views chosen are mapped in Figure 10-7 below and listed in Table 10-8. These views include several views close to the site, as well as views from further away where visibility of the existing hotel building is evident and where visual receptors are considered sensitive.

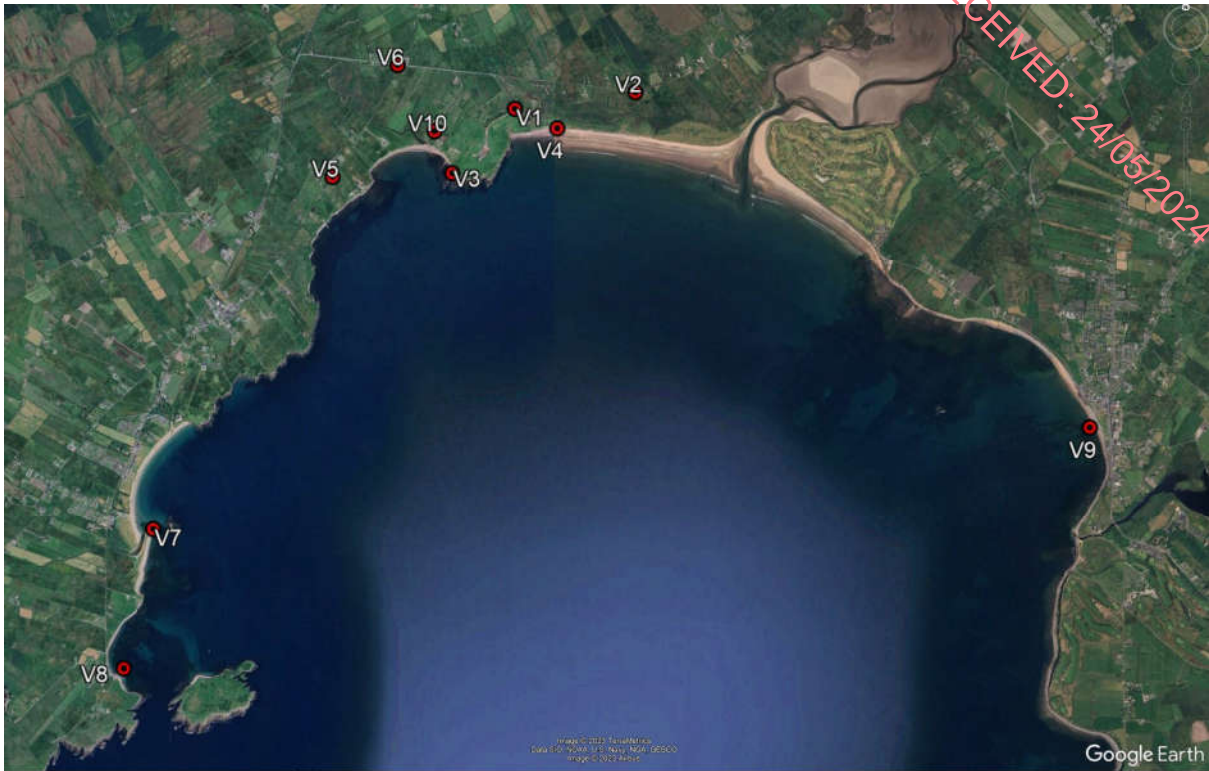


Figure 10-12: Proposed Viewpoint Locations

Table 10-7: Proposed Viewpoints

No	Receptor and views	Rationale for selection	Approx. distance and direction from site boundary
1	Local road leading to Reenroe Beach	Nearest roadway passing site entrance	0m east
2	The R567 road at Emlaghnamuck, Waterville	Protected View and Wild Atlantic Way route	870m northeasat
3	Coastal path next to site	Popular recreational route	1m southwest
4	Reenroe Beach	Popular recreational amenity	382m eastnortheast
5	EV1 Route at Meeliguleen Ballinskelligs	Designated cycle route on the Wild Atlantic Way	835m southwest
6	R567 crossroad at Reenroe	Protected View and Wild Atlantic Way route	583m northwest
7	Ballinskelligs Castle	Historic Site and next to Wild Atlantic Way Point/popular beach	3.30km southwest
8	Ballinskelligs Pier	Wild Atlantic Way Point	4.20km southwest
9	Waterville Beach	Popular recreational amenity	4.66km southeast
10	Houses at Reenroe west of site	Group of houses nearby the Site	96m westnorthwest

10.5 Landscape and Visual Effects

The following considers the potential impacts and effects of the Proposed Development through its different phases, as outlined in Chapter 2 of this EIAR, and 10.2 above, upon the landscape and visual receptors identified above.

10.5.1 Predicted Landscape Effects – Construction Stage

10.5.1.1 Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape Sensitivity is considered to be High in the wider landscape, and Medium-High in the vicinity of the site. The areas considered Low-Medium include the area around the derelict buildings, and the degraded/overgrazed fields. Sensitivity is considered high in areas such as the cliff walk and wet grassland habitat where the wetland areas are bordered by dense native vegetation, visible along the approach road to the beach.

10.5.1.2 Construction Phase – Magnitude of Change

The Construction Phase will be programmed over five years resulting in ongoing infrastructure, building and related works for some period of time. Overall, the site works will be localised and temporary in nature and will occur over a phased period, as outlined in the project description, not exceeding 5 years in total. The most significant level of site works will occur during Phase 1 which include installation of the main services and restoration of the hotel as well as the installation of some of the holiday accommodation units. The later phases will typically involve lighter levels of site works to install the remaining holiday accommodation units which occur towards the periphery of the site. The construction activities are generally disruptive and visually adverse in nature.

The landscape sensitivity is described above as Medium-High. The magnitude of change is described below and at Construction Phase would also affect the wider landscape setting but to a lesser extent.

Change involves the development of the site currently neglected to a restored hotel and associated holiday accommodation units as per the proposed site layout. Much of the works will be occur on areas of open grassland. Existing trees and hedgerows will be retained and protected during the site works and all works carried out in line with best practice as set out in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure minimal disruption.

Therefore, the magnitude of change is **Low-Medium**- with a **Medium** rating relevant to the immediate vicinity of the site and **Low** in the wider landscape.

10.5.1.3 Construction Phase – Significance of Effect

Given the sensitivity of the environment and the magnitude described above the significance of this change is **Moderate-Significant**, with the more significant effects occurring in the higher sensitivity areas e.g. the Cliff Walk and Wet grassland areas. However, the duration is **temporary to short-term**. Qualitatively this change would be **Adverse**.

10.5.1.4 Operational Phase – Magnitude of Change

The policies outline in Section 10.4 reflect a broad body of policy that is supportive of site regeneration including for tourism use and the continued need to provide a diverse range of tourism activity and accommodation types for local and international visitors coming to this part of County Kerry because of its highly valued landscapes.

The landscape values identified predominantly reflect the distinctive wider setting of the coastal landscape, including the adjoining Inny Strand, wider Ballinskellings Bay, designations in the form of Natura 2000 sites and Natural Heritage Areas. Much of the coastal lands are designated in the Development Plan as visually sensitive areas and include views and prospects from the R567. There is existing vegetation such as tree lines and hedgerows/hedge banks of merit on the site contribute to the character of the site.

The proposed development will result in extensive change across the site, transforming the derelict hotel and redundant adjoining fields into a functioning holiday destination with a range of accommodation options. The restored hotel and new leisure centre will be the most prominent elements of this change given their elevated location near the shoreline cliffs and the bright colour finishes in building elevations. Their prominence will be similar to that associated with the existing hotel structure albeit with a slightly enlarged profile and footprint. The use of bright colour finishes in their elevations is also similar to that of existing dwellings in the locality.

The introduction of mobile homes, lodges, glamping pods and hobbit huts across other parts of the site will further demonstrate the change in use of the site. A key feature of the design strategy for the site is the introduction of a network of hedgerows along the perimeters of the various accommodation areas as well as within some of the larger areas as shown on landscape masterplan **drg. no. 22179_A-2-100** (see section 2.4.10 of Chapter 2 of the EIAR). The hedgerow network will screen and integrate the accommodation areas in the site, thus reducing the magnitude of change to the landscape in external views of the site.

The proposed surf school and café in the south-eastern corner of the site will be visible from the access road to the beach but the building has a low profile and dark roofing materials which assist with its integration at this location. Proposed hedgerow planting will also have a beneficial mitigating effect as it matures.

The existing cliff walk along the southern extremity of the site is to be retained for public use.

The change of the existing hotel from a derelict building to a functioning hotel is considered to be a **Low-Medium** magnitude of change, as the scale is larger but not dramatically different to the existing bulk, and the proposed layout of the immediate surrounds is also considered **Low-Medium**.

The change of the fields to the north and west of the site which are primarily wet grassland, to a camping area with associated facilities, is a greater magnitude of change, with the scale of the proposed camping area considered relatively large. This, combined with the widened local access road, wastewater treatment plant will result in a **Medium-High** magnitude of change. Evidence of change across the site in external views of the site and surrounding landscape will be reduced as the proposed hedgerow planting throughout the site and along site boundaries matures.

The **Magnitude of Change** is defined in **Table 10.2**. *Medium* is defined as:

Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.

10.5.1.5 Operational Phase – Significance of Effect

Landscape Sensitivity is discussed in Section 10.5. and is considered to be **High** for the wider landscape. Within the site landscape sensitivity is considered to be **Medium-High** for the majority of the site with the exception of the areas around the derelict hotel and former dwelling which is considered to be **Low-Medium**.

The magnitude of change varies from Low to Medium-High as set out above, throughout the site.

The significance of landscape effect also varies throughout the site. The hotel and its immediate vicinity including leisure centre and car parking area result in a **Moderate** and **Neutral to Beneficial** landscape effect resulting from the restoration of derelict buildings, the introduction of the new leisure centre and car parking area

For the remainder of the site there will be some short-term **Adverse** landscape effects arising from the introduction of the mobile homes, glamping pods and lodges which will be visible across significant areas of the site. These effects will be mitigated, however, in the medium to long term as the proposed hedgerow infrastructure matures to screen the units and integrate them into the site and wider sensitive landscape setting

Significant short-term **Adverse** landscape effects will, thus, change to **Neutral** landscape effects in the medium to long term.

Other site-specific landscape effects relate to the inevitable removal of wetland/wet grass habitat as the use of the site changes which is assessed in chapter 5 of the EIAR.

The existing cliff walk path is currently in poor condition and is to be upgraded with a bitumen macadam surface finish which will result in a localised landscape change of **Negligible** significance, with a **Neutral** landscape effect.

10.5.2 Predicted Visual Impacts and Effects

The following considers the potential visual changes the Proposed Development will have on the existing receptors views as experienced from the selected 10 no. viewpoints listed in Table 10-7 and mapped in Figure 10-7 above. Each viewpoint is described below in several parts - the existing (baseline) condition, the sensitivity of the visual receptor, the magnitude of change brought about by the proposed development, and the significance of visual effect. Temporary effects at Construction Phase are briefly described. Effects at Operational Phase are described in more detail.

Photography and presentation of viewpoints

Each Viewpoint is illustrated by a photograph showing the existing view and the photomontage showing the proposed development. Photomontages have been produced by GNET 3D and are presented in Volume 4 of the EIAR and reflects the requirements of the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on Visual Representation 2019.

To correctly view the photomontage at the correct scale, the extents of the 50mm lens or 40-degree angle of view should be extended to A3 in size and viewed at arm's length. This can be done by printing a hard copy or, more easily, digitally on screen, allowing reference back to the wider angle to understand the context.

Viewpoint Descriptions

Each viewpoint is described below in its existing condition and the effects of the proposed development. The descriptions, including of the change / effects, focus primarily on the extent of the 50mm image, but refer to the wider context, as appropriate, to inform analysis.

Table 10-8: Viewpoint 1

Viewpoint 1: Local road leading to Reenroe Beach**Existing View:**

The existing view is taken from next to the former hotel's main access road on a local road leading to An Rinn Rua beach, and looks south west towards the existing derelict hotel building. This gateway and pillars occupy the foreground with shrubby, stunted vegetation to the north of the drive. To the left (south) of the drive are rising fields in pasture. The distinct former hotel's concrete structure appears above the small rising landform centrally in the view. Part of a single storey bungalow residence, is visible to the left (south east) of the view, on lands closer to this point with open rear views looking across into the site. The outline of Knocknaskereighta Mountain is partially visible in the background on the right.

The view is typical of local minor roads in the area with some scenic value on the way to the beach, however the redundant gate, driveway and distant derelict building giving a sense of disuse and neglect.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be primarily those viewing the entrance from the local road, which has some scenic value. Viewers are considered of **Medium** sensitivity.

Proposed View- Magnitude of ChangeConstruction Phase

There will be a notable temporary change in the current view from open rural lands to one of a construction site, which will occur as works progress on the site over a phased period up to 5 years. The construction activity occurring nearest to this point will include the initial services being implemented during phase 1 which would see the creation of the new entrance and associated landscape works. Later construction of the holiday lodges during phase 2 will be less visible and relatively benign. The use of hoarding around these areas being developed, and subsequent planting works will limit views of the site works during phase 1 and later.

The magnitude of change would be **Medium to High**.

Operational Phase:

The photomontage view shows the view of the new site entrance with low stone walls, and an upgraded internal access road with dedicated pedestrian footpath leading to the centre of the site. The lodges in the field adjacent to the access road are prominent in the view signalling the transition of the site from its current redundant condition to that of a functioning holiday destination. The proposed berms and associated hedgerow planting along the access road will partially screen the cabins in the short-term. The restored hotel and leisure centre complex will not be visible from this location. In the medium and long term the planting and included trees will soften and screen the lodges integrating them into the view and receiving environment.

The magnitude of change will be **Medium- Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in moderate change to the character of the landscape.**

Significance of Visual Effects:Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Significant and Temporary – Short-term. And Adverse.**

Viewpoint 1: Local road leading to Reenroe BeachOperational Phase:

The Visual Effects will be **Moderate- in the Short, Medium and Long Term**. The proposed development will change the redundant perception of the site by introducing an upgraded site entrance, access road and holiday lodges. The lodges will have a relatively low profile and will appear integrated in the site by the proposed roadside hedge and planting which will have an enhanced effect as it matures.

Quality of Visual Effect:

Qualitatively the impact will be **Neutral**- the glimpse of the distant mountains, and the existing mature trees in the view remain. The proposed cabins, though uncharacteristic elements visible in the foreground, do not obstruct any valued features. The proposed planting when fully established in the medium to long term, will further assimilate the development into the landscape.

Table 10-9: Viewpoint 2**Viewpoint 2: The R567 road at Emlaghnamuck, Waterville****Existing View:**

The existing view looks southwest from a cluster of houses along the R567 regional road which is a designated view/prospect. The immediate lands to the south of the road leading to the shoreline are designated as a visually sensitive area. The view looks across the low coastal farmlands and scrub towards the coastal inlet of Ballinskelligs Bay in the middle-ground, with the hills on the western side of the bay providing a dramatic backdrop to the view.

The derelict hotel on the subject site and adjacent dwelling/holiday house are clearly visible and prominent in the middle ground. The view is an attractive rugged coastal landscape scene in which the derelict hotel is a prominent and unusual component with a grey almost industrial elevation.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be primarily those travelling along the route and residents of immediate houses, where the views of scenic quality are recognised by designation it a view/prospect and it forms part of the Wild Atlantic Way. Therefore, sensitivity is considered **High**.

Proposed View-Magnitude of ChangeConstruction Phase

Works across the site as it progresses through the proposed development phases will be evident but at a low level given the distance involved. The most evident works will be associated with the restoration of the hotel.

The magnitude of change would be **Low**. Given the distance the quality of effect would be **Neutral**.

Operational Phase:

The photomontage view shows the upgraded hotel and leisure centre complex which is prominent by virtue of colour finishes in building elevations. The derelict former hotel structure is replaced by a larger building/complex with a different profile and more varied / interesting elevations. The other changes on the site include the introduction of lodges and mobile homes which recede in the view by virtue of distance and the screening effect of the existing and proposed tree and hedgerow planting across the site. The overall development occupies a relatively low horizontal extent of the image, and the vertical extent or height of the existing hotel provides a precedent for the proposed building with its improved presentation. The wider expansive views of the sea and hillside will remain unchanged. The proposed hotel building will be clearly distinguishable in the distance by virtue of colour finishes in building elevations. These colours reflect the

Viewpoint 2: The R567 road at Emlaghnamuck, Waterville

finishes of most rendered houses in the view which are part of the pattern in the landscape. Over time the elevation of the new hotel would be broken up by taller trees in the surrounding maturing planting.

The magnitude of change is considered to be **Low**.

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.

This reflects the fact that there is an existing large disused structure prominent in the view that will be replaced by a new active building and surrounding estate of similar scale.

Significance of Visual Effects:

Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Slight-Moderate, Neutral and Temporary & Adverse**

Operational Phase:

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Slight- Moderate** in the Short, Medium and Long Term. The proposed development will stand out in the distance by virtue of colour finishes in building elevations. The cabins in the view will be partially visible but well integrated in the site by the proposed hedgerow screen planting. The overall composition of the panoramic view from the scenic route will not be affected.

Quality of effect:

The restored hotel will replace the existing derelict building as a reference point in the local landscape. The lodges, though not characteristic of this view, are introduced on the site, and over time, will be increasingly screened as the vegetation establishes. The views to the higher ground remain evident and the development is considered to fit well into the landscape.

Qualitatively the impact will be **Neutral** – defined as

Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.

Table 10-10: Viewpoint 3

Viewpoint 3: Coastal path next to site

Existing View:

This view looks northeast from the coastal path adjacent to the site's southwestern boundary. In the foreground, partly intact drystone walls create a distinctive rural character to the view, dividing an area of wet grassland currently used for grazing sheep. However, in the middle ground, the presence of the derelict hotel and house structures create a sense of degradation and abandonment on the site. A ridge of higher ground is seen to the left (north) of the view. The view is open and somewhat bare, with a clump of coniferous trees adjacent to the derelict vernacular dwelling to the left of the view.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Viewpoint 3: Coastal path next to site

Visual receptors would be those walkers on the coastal path which is located within a visually sensitivity area. However, the main views are out to the bay, and while there are some scenic qualities, the view of the derelict buildings and environs cannot be described as highly scenic, so viewers are considered of **Medium-High** sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of ChangeConstruction Phase

Due to the proximity of the viewpoint to the site there will be clear views of the site works, which occurs over a phased period. The greatest works occurring around the existing hotel's structure as it is being restored along with associated infrastructure being installed. As the proposed hobbit huts aren't expected to be installed to the later phase this will initial allow some views further into the site and its works as it progressed through the site. The use of temporary hoarding will help contain works around the hotel at ground level although the works at upper floor levels including scaffolding will be visible from this point.

The magnitude of change would be **Medium**.

Operational Phase:

The proposed view shows the dry-stone walls in the foreground are retained, with dense native planting to the inside of the walls. This planting partly screens the proposed 'hobbit huts' which are integrated into the landscape with grass mounding. The new hotel (of a similar height and extended mass) and the roofs of two of the hobbit huts will be partially visible above proposed hedgerow planting. The screening will develop further in the medium to long term to fully screen these built elements. The unobstructed view across the site will be lost due to the proposed boundary hedgerows which are designed to integrate the hobbit huts into the landscape, however the higher ground to the left of the view is still partly visible. The development occupies a moderate extent of the view.

The magnitude of change would be **Medium- Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in moderate change to the character of the landscape.**

Significance of Visual Effects:Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Significant and Temporary, and Adverse**

Operational Phase:

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Significant in the Short, Medium and Long Term**

The open aspect across the site will be restricted by the proposed hedgerow planting which will soften and close views and assist in integrating the development in the landscape. The hotel and hobbit huts will be partially visible in the short-term but will become significantly screened as the hedgerows mature in the medium to long term. The view, therefore, will alter significantly but in a manner which is in keeping with the local landscape character.

Quality of the Effect

The proposed development will limit the view across the site and the experience of the local open landscape which includes views of the derelict hotel building and house. While the loss of the view across the open landscape could be considered as a negative aspect, the photomontage view shows a re-purposed site and hotel facility, (compared to two

Viewpoint 3: Coastal path next to site

derelict buildings) the details of which have been developed to sit comfortably in the landscape. The retention of the stone walls and the introduction of the hedgerow infrastructure is in keeping with the local landscape character. In addition the main enjoyment of the coastal path is seaward views.

Qualitatively the impact will be **Neutral**- *Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality*

Table 10-11: Viewpoint 4

Viewpoint 4: Reenroe Beach

Existing View:

This view is from the beach looking southwest. Much of the foreground view is of the beach itself, a wide sandy shore giving way to low cliffs to the left of the view and to a timber and wire fence line denoting grazing grassland to the right of the view. To the left of the view, set on elevated lands, the derelict hotel is a prominent and unusual element in the middle ground view. Also visible is the nearby slightly elevated bungalow to the north and the conifer trees along the hotel's existing access track. The various vehicles located along the road to the beach reveal the use of the beach as a recreational destination. The distant hills further west provide a backdrop to the view. There is a clear variation between the low coastal lands in the foreground/middleground and much higher hills in the background.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be those recreational users visiting the beach, where its location within an enclosed bay is further emphasised by the varied mountains and hills on either side of the bay. This area has highly scenic qualities. Visual receptors are considered of **High** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of Change

Construction Phase

There will be clear views of elements of the proposed phased site works, the most evident of which will be the restoration of the hotel. Temporary hoarding will help mitigate this while works to the upper levels will remain visible including scaffolding and upper jibs of machinery in line with typical construction practices. Installation of the lodges and hedgerow planting operations will also be evident but not so prominent. The lodges will be delivered over two phases and the surf school and café will form part of phase 2 development.

The magnitude of change would be **Medium**.

Operational Phase:

The proposed view shows the restored hotel with a slightly larger profile and enhanced elevation than that of the existing hotel structure and it be the most prominent element of the proposed development. Cliff-top vegetation is retained and proposed hedgerow infrastructure planting is visible where it provides shelter and partial screening to the front of the lodges along the site access road, as well as to the front of the hotel. The surf school and café building is visible in the centre foreground where it has a low profile assisted by the dark coloured roofing material.

The proposed development will see extensive change on the site of which the restored hotel will be the most prominent element. The cabins which are aligned along the main access road into the site will also be visible as part of this change, but as low-level features will be screened and integrated in the setting as the proposed hedgerow screen planting matures in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 4: Reenroe Beach
<p>The magnitude of change would be Medium- <i>Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in moderate change to the character of the landscape.</i></p>
<p>Significance of Visual Effects:</p> <p><u>Construction Phase</u></p> <p>The Significance of Visual Effects will be Significant and Adverse but Temporary and Short-term.</p> <p><u>Operational Phase:</u></p> <p>The proposed development will result in wide change across the site, transforming the derelict hotel and unmanaged fields to a holiday destination comprised of restored hotel, surf school/café building, lodges, mobile homes, glamping pods lodgesand hobbit huts. Only the hotel, lodges and the roof of the surf-school and café can be seen from this view. The visible lodges are low rise and will recede significantly in the view as the hedgerow planting matures in the medium to long term.</p> <p>The Visual Effects will be Significant in the Short, Medium and Long Term</p>
<p>Quality of the Effect:</p> <p>The overall quality of the impact will be Beneficial- Improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses.</p> <p>This generally reflects the restoration of existing derelict hotel as the most prominent feature on the site without significantly altering its scale and massing and, thus, not altering the overall composition of the view. The replacement of the existing derelict structure also has beneficial aspects in terms of perception of the site.</p> <p>Views of the lodges immediately after installation could be considered adverse but these are a small low-rise element in the view and the strategy for the planting of hedgerow screening across the site will help integrate the lodges in the short-term and provide significantly enhanced screening as it matures in the medium to long term.</p> <p>The surf school / café building has a very low profile which is not visually intrusive.</p>

Table 10-12: Viewpoint 5

Viewpoint 5: EV1 Route at Meeliguleen Ballinskelligs
<p>Existing View:</p> <p>This view is taken from a local road (L-11527) and designated cycle route looking north-westwards towards the site. It is an expansive panoramic view across the local low-lying coastal landscape and distant mountains along with intermittent dwellings and the prominent redundant hotel structure on the subject site.</p> <p>In the foreground, the road is bounded by a low vegetation, with fields of wet grassland and scrub behind. In the middle ground, a sandy expanse of Tra na Sasanach beach is visible, with an adjacent rocky shoreline. Clusters of dwellings are visible to the left (north) of the view, near the beach. Behind the inlet to the beach, a headland is visible to the northeast, with the existing derelict shell of the former hotel prominent in the middle ground with several houses appearing to the left of the view. The hotel, along with the derelict building and the clumps of conifers, are the main visible elements of the</p>

Viewpoint 5: EV1 Route at Meeliguleen Ballinskelligs

site and as in other views, present an industrial and incongruous structure to the viewer. In the background, closing the view is the dramatic outline of two ridgelines, with higher hills and mountains forming a jagged outline against the sky.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be those of local residence or visitors located on the road and cyclists on the designated route. The lands in front of this viewpoint are designated by KCC as a visually sensitive area, for their highly scenic qualities. Visual receptors are considered of **High** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of ChangeConstruction Phase

The viewpoint will have clear views of the site works as it progressed through the proposed phases. As with previous viewpoints the initial view will be dominated by the works occurring around the existing hotel's structure as it is being restored along with associated infrastructure being installed. Later views will be of various individual holiday accommodation units being installed along the western boundary during phases 2 and 3.

The magnitude of change would be **Medium**.

Operational Phase:

The photomontage shows the transformation of the derelict hotel to its restored condition and the addition of the leisure centre building which slightly increases the horizontal extent of the building. The rendering of the building in white also increases its prominence in the view although this reflects a local rural housing vernacular. Other elements visible are the proposed hedgerow planting which reflects the field system and provides a landscape framework for the mobile home areas and glamping pods. The hedgerow infrastructure has a screening effect which integrates the mobile homes, lodges, glamping pods and hobbit huts in the landscape setting. To the left of the proposed hotel building, rows of lodges are visible in the middle ground. Though low in height, this extends a considerable distance from the hotel building to the left of the view but is low in character.

The magnitude of change would be **Medium-High**. **Medium is defined as-** *Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in moderate change to the character of the landscape.*

Significance of Visual Effects:Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Significant and Temporary** and given the distance **Neutral**.

Operational Phase:

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Moderate-Significant in the Short, Medium and Long Term**

The most prominent element of the proposed development will be the restored hotel which will replace the existing derelict structure while the surrounding vegetation will also be evident as it establishes. Other elements of the development such as the lodges and mobile homes are less prominent but will also be visible over a considerable extent in the view. However, once vegetation establishes, they will be less prominent, with mainly the rooflines and upper walls visible due to the screening provided by the proposed berms and hedgerow infrastructure on the site. The colour finishes of the accommodation has been chosen to recede among the vegetation but may in the short-term appear to stand out.

Quality of the Effect:

Viewpoint 5: EV1 Route at Meeliguleen Ballinskelligs

The quality of the visual effect includes beneficial and some short-term adverse elements.
The refurbished and extended hotel building, and leisure centre are considered beneficial as is the comprehensive tree and hedgerow screen planting infrastructure across the site.

Views of the lodges and mobile homes immediately after installation is considered adverse as the scale of change is not in keeping with the scale or pattern of the landscape in the view. The adverse effect will be mitigated as the hedgerow planting provides a new landscape structure and partial screening in the short-term and significantly enhanced screening as it matures in the medium to long term, thus integrating the lodges and mobile homes in the landscape.

The overall quality of effect, after mitigation measures take effect, will be **Neutral**, the overall composition and quality of the view will not be compromised.

Beneficial : *Improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses*

Adverse:

Scheme at variance with landform, scale, pattern. Would degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued features, elements or their setting or cause the quality of the landscape(townscape)/view to be diminished.

Neutral: *Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.*

Table 10-13: Viewpoint 6

Viewpoint 6: R567 crossroad at Reenroe

Existing View:

This view is taken from the regional road R567 with this section designated a KCC scenic route and forms part of the Wild Atlantic Way route. The view looks southeast across the surrounding low coastal agricultural lands consisting of wet grassland with low hedgerows and clumps of vegetation towards the existing derelict hotel building and site. The existing derelict hotel's shell is clearly visible in the middle ground. Beyond the hotel are views of Ballinskelligs Bay set against the backdrop of the distant hills including Faraniaragh Mountain.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be those driving or walking along the road and protected view/prospect which has highly scenic qualities. The immediate coastal lands being designated by KCC as visually sensitive area. Visual receptors are considered of **High** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of Change

Construction Phase

As with the previous viewpoint, this view will have some clear views of the site works as it progresses through the proposed phases, but at a distance. The initial view will be dominated by the works occurring around the existing hotel's structure as it is being restored along with associated infrastructure being installed. Later views will be of the some of the various holiday accommodation units being installed along the western boundary during phases 2 and 3.

Viewpoint 6: R567 crossroad at Reenroe

The magnitude of change would be **Medium**.

Operational Phase:

The photomontage shows the existing hotel building restored and extended with the addition of the leisure centre building which appears to the front of the hotel from this position. The outline of the hotel building varies slightly from the original form due to an increase in height along the western part of the building. The proposed hedgerow planting which extends the pattern of the local field system across the site is also evident but not intrusive. The lodges and mobile homes are visible in the view, appearing over a medium-large horizontal extent in the view, though at a very low level. These are likely to be more visible in the short-term before the vegetation establishes. The dense screening vegetation proposed has the effect of altering the open character of much of the site but has a beneficial screening effect which integrates the mobile homes, lodges, and hobbit huts in the landscape setting. The new vegetation reflects the type of regenerating scrub that would naturally colonise these lands.

The magnitude of change would be **Low-Medium – Medium defined as:**

Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in moderate change to the character of the landscape.

Significance of Visual Effects:Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Significant and Temporary, and Neutral – Adverse**.

Operational Phase:

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Moderate in the Short, Medium and Long Term**

The most prominent element of proposed development will be the restored hotel which will replace the existing derelict structure. Other elements of the development such as the lodges and mobile homes will also be visible but only partially so due to the screening provided by the proposed hedgerow infrastructure on the site and the colour finishes of the accommodation which recedes among the vegetation.

Quality of the Effect:

The quality of the visual effect includes **beneficial** and some short-term **adverse** elements.

The refurbished and extended hotel building, and leisure centre are considered **Beneficial** as is the comprehensive tree and hedgerow screen planting infrastructure across the site. The

Views of the lodges and mobile homes immediately after installation is considered **Adverse** as the scale of intervention is not considered to be in keeping with the scale or pattern of the landscape in the view. The adverse effect will be mitigated as the hedgerow planting provides partial screening in the short-term and significantly enhanced screening as it matures in the medium to long term, thus integrating the lodges and mobile homes in the landscape.

The overall quality of effect, after mitigation measures take effect, will be **Neutral**, the overall composition and quality of the view will not be compromised.

Beneficial : *Improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses*

Adverse:

Viewpoint 6: R567 crossroad at Reenroe

Scheme at variance with landform, scale, pattern. Would degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued features, elements or their setting or cause the quality of the landscape(townscape)/view to be diminished.

Neutral: *Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.*

Table 10-14: Viewpoint 7

Viewpoint 7: Ballinskelligs Castle

Existing View:

This view is taken from the ruins of Ballinskelligs Castle at a distance of 3.3km from the subject site looking northeast. The sea is the main element of the view, with extensive views across Ballinskelligs Bay which is framed by low steep coastal cliffs and beaches and the backdrop of the distant hills. The site is visible in the distance, the most distinctive element of which is the derelict hotel structure near the distant shoreline at the centre of the view.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be those visiting the castle, walking to this headland and also those engaged in recreational activity including on the water. As with other viewpoints, this area is designated by KCC as a visual sensitive area due to its highly scenic qualities. Visual receptors include those visiting a location of cultural heritage importance and are considered of **High** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of Change

Construction Phase

Views of site works will be heavily restricted by the considerable distance from this viewpoint to the subject site. The magnitude of change would be **Low**

Operational Phase:

The proposed view shows the restored hotel and new leisure centre which stand out in the distance by virtue of the light colour finish on building elevations compared with the dull grey of the existing ruined hotel structure. The visual effect of other interventions on the site is significantly limited by distance.

The magnitude of change would be **Low**

Significance of Visual Effects:

Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Slight and Temporary, and Neutral.**

Operational Phase:

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Slight in the Short, Medium and Long Term**

The restored hotel and leisure centre complex will be visible in the distance by virtue of the white building elevations, reflecting local traditional finishes while other lower key elements of intervention on the site are not evident at this distance.

Quality of the Effect:

The Qualitatively the impact will be **neutral:**

Viewpoint 7: Ballinskelligs Castle

The restored hotel and new leisure centre will be apparent in the distance but not intrusive. The composition and quality of the panoramic view will be maintained.

Neutral: *Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.*

Table 10-15: Viewpoint 8

Viewpoint 8: Ballinskelligs Pier

Existing View:

This view looks northeast towards the site, from the Wild Atlantic Way Point at Ballinskelligs Pier, a distance of 4.4km. The view shows an expanse of sea in the foreground, with slightly elevated coastal land visible in the middle ground and closing the view, in the background, a backdrop of higher ground is visible. Scattered buildings are evident in the lands to the left (west) of the view, mainly coloured white. The derelict structure of the existing hotel on the subject site is just discernible due at this distance.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be those walking on this pier, entering and exiting boats, and also those engaged in recreational activity including on the water. As with other viewpoints, this area is designated by KCC as a visual sensitive area due to its highly scenic qualities. Visual receptors are considered of **High** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of Change

Construction Phase

Views of site works will be heavily restricted by the considerable distance from this viewpoint to the subject site. The magnitude of change would be **Negligible**.

Operational Phase:

The restored hotel is more apparent in the proposed view due to its brighter façade and increased horizontal extent, when compared with the more subdued appearance of the existing hotel.

The other elements of the proposed development are not discernible. The key view out from this point across the sea and the mountains beyond remain unchanged by the proposed development.

The magnitude of change would be **Negligible**.

Significance of Visual Effects:

Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Not Significant and Temporary, and Neutral**

Operational Phase:

The Significance of Visual Effect will be **Not Significant in the Short, Medium and Long Term**

Viewpoint 8: Ballinskelligs Pier

The restored hotel and leisure centre complex will be visible in the distance by virtue of the white building elevations. However this is similar to other dwellings apparent in the existing view.

Quality of the Effect :

Qualitatively the effect will be **Neutral** - *Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.*

The proposed development will be apparent in the distance but not intrusive and of a scale similar to the existing building. The composition and quality of the panoramic view will be maintained.

Table 10-16: Viewpoint 9**Viewpoint 9: Waterville Beach****Existing View:**

This is a view from Waterville Beach and similar to Viewpoint 8, is a distant coastal view but from the other (eastern) side of the bay some 4.5km distant. The main elements in the view are the wide expanse of water in the bay, and the dramatic view of higher ground in the background, to the west, that encloses the view. Low lying coastal lands are visible, to the western side of the bay, with scattered buildings which mainly blend into the colours of the landscape. The existing grey coloured derelict structure of the former hotel is just about visible as a minor element in the middle of the view on the west coast of Ballinskelligs Bay.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors would be those walking along the beachfront and around the edge of Waterville a popular tourist destination. As with other viewpoints, this area is designated by KCC as a visual sensitive area due to its highly scenic qualities. A scenic route is also located on the nearby approach road into Waterville). Visual receptors are considered of **High** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of ChangeConstruction Phase

Views of site works will be heavily restricted by the considerable distance from this viewpoint to the subject site. The magnitude of change would be **Negligible**.

Operational Phase:

Distance will have a significant diminishing effect from this location. The hotel will be visible, with a very slight increase in horizontal extent, and the change in colour which renders the building much more visible even at this distance. (It is noted that visibility will depend on weather conditions. The other elements of change on the site associated with the proposed mobile homes, lodges and hobbit huts located within the network of proposed hedgerows are not discernible. The composition of the panoramic view will not be affected.

The magnitude of change would be **Low**

Significance of Visual Effects:Construction Phase

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Not Significant and Temporary and Neutral**

Operational Phase:

Viewpoint 9: Waterville Beach

The Significance of Visual Effects will be **Slight in the Short, Medium and Long Term**.

Quality of the Effect:

The Qualitatively the impact will be **Neutral** - Scheme complements (or does not detract from) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.

Neutral: *The proposed development will be apparent in the distance but not intrusive. The composition and quality of the panoramic view will be maintained.*

Table 10-17: Viewpoint 10**Viewpoint 10: Houses at Reenroe west of site****Existing View:**

This view is from the laneway to a small group of neighbouring residences (numbers 3-8 in Figure 10.7) directly west of the site. The former hotel's derelict shell is clearly visible above the surrounding scrub vegetation on the hedge bank in the centre of the view. A residence is visible to the right of the view. A small glimpse of distant mountains is available to the rear of the derelict hotel.

Visual Receptors Sensitivity:

Visual receptors will be a small group of residents, which are also located with an area designated as a visually sensitive area due to its highly scenic qualities however the view in question has not highly scenic qualities. This view is from a cul-de-sac road which provides access to a six private dwellings/structures and some adjacent farm land. Visual receptors are considered of **Medium** Sensitivity.

Proposed View-Magnitude of ChangeConstruction Phase

The proximity to the site will mean the siteworks will be clearly visible particularly that of the upper level works around the hotel structure. The existing hedge bank and scrub will help restrict ground level views of the site works.

The magnitude of change would be **Low**.

Operational Phase:

The view shows that the restored hotel building will be visible in the centre of the view, resulting in some change and improvement to the original building profile from this location. A glimpse of the roofs of a few mobile homes, among the vegetation, is also visible. The proposed tree and hedgerow planting on the site will provide a sense of separation from the dwelling in the foreground which will increase as the planting matures in the medium to long term.

The magnitude of change would be **Low**.

Significance of Visual Effects:Construction Phase

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Viewpoint 10: Houses at Reenroe west of site
The Significance of Visual Effects will be Slight and Temporary, and Neutral
<u>Operational Phase:</u> The Significance of Visual Effects will be Slight in the Short, Medium and Long Term The proposed development will be visible to a similar extent in the view as the existing hotel structure, which is considered a Low magnitude of change. Combined with a Medium receptor sensitivity, this results in a Slight Long-term visual effect.
Quality of the Effect Qualitatively the impact will be Beneficial - <i>Improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses.</i> The restoration of the hotel will represent an improvement in the view from this location and proposed screen planting will provide an enhanced sense of separation between the subject site and neighbouring property as it matures in the medium to long term

10.5.2.1 Summary of Construction Phase Visual Effects

Table 10-18: Summary of Construction Phase Visual Effects

No	Description	Construction Visual Effect
1	Local road leading to Reenroe Beach	Significant and Temporary – Short-term. And Adverse
2	The R567 road at Emlaghnamuck, Waterville	Slight-Moderate, Neutral and Temporary & Adverse
3	Coastal path next to site	Significant and Temporary, and Adverse
4	Reenroe Beach	Significant and Adverse but Temporary and Short-term
5	EV1 Route at Meeliguleen Ballinskelligs	Significant, Temporary and Neutral
6	R567 crossroad at Reenroe	Significant and Temporary, and Neutral – Adverse.
7	Ballinskelligs Castle	Slight and Temporary, and Neutral.
8	Ballinskelligs Pier	Not Significant, Neutral and Temporary
9	Waterville Beach	Not Significant, Neutral and Temporary
10	Houses at Reenroe west of site	Slight,Neutral and Temporary.

10.5.2.2 Summary of Operational Phase Visual Effects

Table 10-19: Summary of Operational Phase Visual Effects

No	Description	Operational Phase Visual Effect
1	Local road leading to Reenroe Beach	Moderate & Neutral in Short, Medium and Long Term
2	The R567 road at Emlaghnamuck, Waterville	Moderate, neutral in the Medium and Long Term with some Short-term adverse effects
3	Coastal path next to site	Significant and Neutral in the short, Medium and Long Term
4	Reenroe Beach	Significant & Beneficial in the Medium & Long Term with some short-term adverse effects
5	EV1 Route at Meeliguleen Ballinskelligs	Moderate-Significant, beneficial in the Medium and Long Term, with some short-term adverse effects
6	R567 crossroad at Reenroe	Moderate & Neutral with some short-term adverse effects
7	Ballinskelligs Castle	Slight and neutral in the Short, Medium and Long Term
8	Ballinskelligs Pier	Not Significant, neutral in the Short, Medium and Long Term
9	Waterville Beach	Slight, neutral in the Short, Medium and Long Term
10	Houses at Reenroe west of site	Slight, Beneficial in the Short, Medium and Long Term

Visual effects in the Operational Phase range from Not Significant (more distant views) to Significant. The Significant or Moderate-Significant views are closer to the site where the change is the greatest, however it is noted that the majority of the proposed views are considered to be neutral in quality while two of them are beneficial in quality.

For views 2, 4, 5 and 6 there are some short-term adverse effects recorded in respect of the of the proposed mobile homes and lodges which will be visible from these locations. These effects will be mitigated in the medium to long term as hedgerow planting across the site matures to screen the units and integrate them in the landscape setting.

The restored hotel and new leisure centre will be the most prominent element of the development in the short, medium and long term by virtue of their prominent location and light colour finishes in elevations. In relatively close up views 4, 5 and 6, the transition of the existing derelict hotel structure to its restored condition, along with the leisure centre, is recorded as a beneficial effect where the design qualities of buildings are clearly evident.

In middle distance view 2 the visual effects of the hotel / leisure centre facility are recorded neutral somewhat as detail recedes due to distance.

In long distance views 7, 8 and 9, the hotel and leisure centre are also the only visible elements of the proposed development by virtue of the light colour finishes. Distance, however, has a significant diminishing effect in these views such that the facility appears as a distant reference point not too dissimilar to dwellings which appear in the wider coastal landscape.

10.5.3 Do-Nothing

Were the Proposed Development not to go ahead the existing lands would remain in a degraded state with the existing derelict house and hotel building structures overtime likely to degrade further as they are continually exposed to the elements. Much of the site lands currently under grassland is likely to continue to be farmed by grazing.

Given there the two derelict structures already on the site, it is envisaged that some form of this development type would occur on these lands overtime, either in the form of a replacement dwelling or tourist accommodation, potentially resulting in similar changes to landscape character and visual amenity as that predicted for this application.

10.5.4 Cumulative Impacts and Effects

Table 1-5 in Chapter 1 provides the details of 13 non-residential development planning applications within 10km that were approved in the last 7 years. All are related to tourism activities. Six of these were in the pre-covid period and are likely to be completed and will therefore have no cumulative effect with the proposed development. One of these (No. 1 - the Hogs Head Hotel complex in 2017) and the last two more recently included the provision of new tourism accommodation.

The proposals represent an intensification of tourism activity and facilities, accommodation, and services in the area, smaller in scale than the proposed development. These changes are in keeping with policy and are not perceived or experienced cumulatively in the landscape. The cumulative effect is regarded as **Negligible and Neutral**.

10.6 Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

10.6.1 Mitigation Measures

The current use of the improved grassland for grazing will be lost, however the landscape management plan for the proposed development will retain grassland cover between the various holiday accommodation units and access paths and parking areas. The existing grass cover will be improved with areas of meadow with differential cutting regime to provide improve habitat cover. Similarly, the area required for the proposed waste-water treatment plant on the unmanaged wet grassland area will be kept to a minimal with additional hedging proposed along its edges which will connect into the existing roadside hedgerow.

Overall, the proposed landscape measures seek to contain the proposed development in the receiving landscape and improve the characteristics of the existing lands. This will be done through enhancing the current vegetation cover with a diverse mix of native species suited to the coastal environment. These will include pollinator friendly species. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposed Landscape Management Plan submitted as part of the planning application.

10.6.2 Monitoring Measures (If relevant)

None are required.

10.7 Residual Impacts and Effects

Impact (Pre-mitigation)	Mitigation Measures	Residual Effect (Post-Mitigation)
Construction		
N/A	N/A	There are no residual Construction effects. Where effects occur during construction they are temporary or short-term
Operational		Residual effect reflects maturing and establishment of planting
N/A	Planting and Structural Landscape	Moderate and Neutral - Beneficial
N/A	Replacement of existing derelict building with new hotel with similar profile and new elevations	Moderate and Neutral - Beneficial
	Low level of lodges and other amenities excluding hotel	Moderate and Neutral - Beneficial

Mitigation is integral to the design of the scheme and is part of its overall masterplan / character. Measures that specifically mitigate adverse impacts are listed above. These areas are also part of the quality of the scheme proposal. However, some elements will take time to fully impact on landscape and visual effects.

10.8 References

Cahersiveen, Waterville & Sneem Functional Areas Local Area Plan 2013-2019

County Kerry's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021

County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition. Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013

Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements EPA 2022

West Iveragh Local Area Plan 2019 – 2025

Kerry County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 - 2021

National Climate Action Plan 2024

National Economic Recovery Plan 2021

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/>

National Parks and Wildlife Services NPWS Natura 2000 <https://www.npws.ie/faq/natura2000>

National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040

Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy (2021-2025)

People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025, Department of Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sport and the Gaeltacht 2019

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020

Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016 – 2022 (Failte Ireland, 2016)

Tourism Recovery Plan 2020-2023

The Economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy of County Kerry

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024