MWP

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT (EIAR)

Ros an Mhíl Deep Water Quay

Chapter 4: Population & Human Health

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

November 2025

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Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Acceptance Code / Status
24984	6003	A	12/11/2025	VH/WM	MT	MT	FINAL

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4. Population & Human Health

4.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the potential effects on population and human health arising from the proposed remaining works for the Ros an Mhíl deep water quay development in Co. Galway. A full description of the proposed development, development lands and all associated project elements is provided in Chapter 2 of this EIAR. The nature and probability of effects on population and human health 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 significance of effects.
- Consideration of mitigation measures, where appropriate.

One of the principal concerns in the development process is that individuals or communities, should experience no significant diminution in their quality of life from the direct or indirect effects arising from the construction and operation of the development. Ultimately, all the impacts of a development impinge on human health, directly and indirectly, neutral, positively and negatively. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as:

'*Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity*'.

This chapter considers the potential significant effects on population and human health arising from the proposed remaining works for the development.

4.2 Methodology

The assessment of the likely significant effects of the remaining works for the proposed development on population and human health was conducted by reviewing the environment and surroundings of the proposed development site. Demographic trends were analysed at County and local level, with the latter comprising the Electoral Divisions (EDs) where the proposed development site is located.

Information was gathered with respect to the demographic and employment characteristics of the resident population within the study area sourced from 2016 and 2022 Census data. This data included information on population, structure, age health profile, tourism and employment.

The methodology used for this study included desk-based research of published information to assemble information on the local receiving environment. The potential significant environmental effects of the proposed development before and after mitigation on the population and human health of the study area are assessed based on generalised degrees of effect significance per Figure 3.4 of the EPA EIAR Guidelines (May 2022) and outlined in Chapter 1 Section 1.4.2.

4.2.1 Scope of the Assessment

Table 4-1 outlines the issues which the EPA 2022 EIAR guidance documents suggest may be examined as part of the human environment study.

Table 4-1: Issues relevant to the Human Environment

Topic Area	Definition
Employment	Will the development affect employment opportunities?
Settlement Patterns	Will the development change settlement patterns and types of activity?
Land Use patterns	Will the development change land use patterns and types of activity?
Baseline Population	Will the development affect the current population?
Demographic Trends	Will the development change concentrations of a particular ethic group or influence the movement of human populations?
Human Health	Vectors through which human health impacts could be caused. E.g. will there be a risk of death, disease, discomfort or nuisance?
Amenity (e.g. effects on amenity uses of a site or of other areas in the vicinity may be addressed under the factor of Landscape)	Will the development change the uses of the site, loss of rights of way or amenities?

Accordingly, the scope of this assessment is made with respect to these topic areas and considers the effects of the construction and operation of the proposed development in terms of how the proposal could affect population and settlement, economic activity, employment, land use patterns, amenities and tourism, and health and safety.

4.2.1.1 Human Health

The European Commission document 'Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, 2022; provides that: *"Human health is a very broad factor that would be highly Project dependent. The notion of human health should be considered in the context of the other factors in Article 3(1) of the EIA Directive and thus environmentally related health issues (such as health effects caused by the release of toxic substances to the environment, health risks arising from major hazards associated with the Project, effects caused by changes in disease vectors caused by the Project, changes in living conditions, effects on vulnerable groups, exposure to traffic noise or air pollutants) are obvious aspects to study. In addition, these would concern the commissioning, operation, and decommissioning of a Project in relation to workers on the Project and surrounding population".*

Similarly, the EPA Guidelines on the information to be contained in environmental impact assessment reports (2022), states that '*In an EIAR, the assessment of impacts on population & human health should refer to the assessments of those factors under which human health effects might occur, as addressed elsewhere in the EIAR e.g. under the environmental factors of air, water, soil etc'.*

The EPA (2022) guidance also advises that '*The evaluation of effects on these pathways is carried out by reference to accepted standards (usually international) of safety in dose, exposure and risk. These standards are in turn based upon medical and scientific investigation of the direct effects on health of the individual substance, effect or risk. This practice of reliance upon limits, doses and thresholds for environmental pathways, such as air, water or soil, provides robust and reliable health protectors [protection criteria] for analysis relating to the environment'.*

Human health, in this chapter of the EIAR, is therefore considered in relation to health effects/issues and environmental hazards arising from the other environmental factors and the assessment is made with regard to the established international health-based guidelines limit value necessary to protect the public.

The EPA Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022) states that the EIAR should assess the of potential impacts on population and human health under the environmental categories addressed elsewhere in the EIAR, using the source-receptor pathways of air, water and soil and other health and safety issues as relevant.

Accordingly, the potential impacts of the Ros an Mhíl Deep Water Quay project on the population and human health of the study area have been assessed, considering the conclusions of the various other chapters of this EIAR including: **Material Assets** (**Chapter 09**), **Noise & Vibration** (**Chapter 11**) and **Air Quality & Climate** (**Chapter 12**), with which it should be read in conjunction, and considers the likely significant effects of the proposed development on population and human health.

The potential wellbeing and disturbance effects of the proposed project on the local human environment have been identified as follows:

- Dust emissions and Odour from construction activities
- Noise emissions during construction activities and operation
- Public safety
- Traffic disturbance during construction

Each of these issues have been fully assessed and are documented in other chapters of the EIAR as set out in **Table 4-2**. These assessments were reviewed to inform this study.

Table 4-2: Disturbance and Health and Safety issues and relevant assessment

Development Phase	Potential Disturbance/ Health & Safety Issue	Addressed in EIAR Chapter
Construction Phase	Noise emissions and vibration	Chapter 11 Noise and Vibration
	Dust emissions	Chapter 12 Air Quality and Climate
	Traffic disturbance	Chapter 14 Traffic
Operational Phase	Noise emissions and vibration	Chapter 11 Noise and Vibration
	Air quality effects	Chapter 12 Air Quality
	Visual effects	Chapter 13 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
	Traffic disturbance	Chapter 14 Traffic

4.2.1.2 Tourism and Amenities

Tourism and amenity effects are interrelated with effects on landscape and visual amenity, archaeology and heritage interests, and transport. Each of these effects are addressed in other chapters of this EIAR and reference

should therefore be made to Chapter 09 Material Assets, Chapter 10 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage, Chapter 13 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Chapter 14 Traffic.

While reference is made to these effects where relevant, this chapter does not re-evaluate these assessments. The focus of this assessment is primarily on physical disruption, severance, or exclusion of users' ability to continue existing activities or deterrence of additional further development of amenities and tourism potential.

4.2.2 Desk Study

The desk study included the following activities:

- Review of the most recent Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census of Ireland data (2011, 2016 and 2022) to establish settlement demographics and economic context of the study area.
- Review of Ordnance Survey Mapping and aerial photography (GeoHive) to establish existing land use and settlement patterns within the study area.
- Review of Galway County Council's and An Coimisiún Pleanála (formally An Bord Pleanála) Planning Register to identify relevant development proposals currently under consideration by the Council and board.
- Galway Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2022-2028
- Review of planning policy and strategies included within the included within the Galway CDP (2022-2028) to identify, way-marked walking and cycling routes and other Rights of Ways within the study area.
- Review of tourism data including Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, and local websites to identify tourism data and visitor attractions within the study area.

The desk-based research also had regard to published information on public health including:

- World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, *Night Noise Guidelines for Europe*, (2009).
- WHO *Environmental Noise Guidelines* for the European Region (2018)

4.2.3 Legislation and Best Practice

The following legislation and published guidance has been consulted in undertaking this assessment:

- European Union, Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – *Guidance on the preparation of the environmental impact assessment report (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)*, Publications Office, 2017
- Environmental Protection Agency, Guidelines on Information to be contained in environmental impact assessment reports', May 2022;
- EU (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018);
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018)
- Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 'Determining Significance for Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment' (2022).
- Planning and Development Act, 2024.

The Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022) state that:

> *'..in an EIAR, the assessment of impacts on population and human health should refer to the assessments of those factors under which human health effects might occur, as addressed elsewhere in the EIAR e.g. under the environmental factors of air, water, soil etc.'*
>
> Recital 22 to the EIA Directive provides that "*In order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures and environmental impact assessments should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including, where relevant, its subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and, where relevant, demolition phases*".

The 2022 EPA Guidelines recommend considering the following issues when assessing the potential impacts and effects of the proposed development on Population and Human Health;

- Employment;
- Settlement Patterns;
- Land use patterns;
- Baseline population;
- Human health (considered with reference to other headings, such as water and air);
- Amenity (e.g. effects on amenity uses of a site or of other areas in the vicinity may be addressed under the factor of Landscape).

4.2.4 Study Area

The Study area for the purpose of this assessment on Population and Human Health focuses on the local receiving human environment in the vicinity of the proposed development site. This comprises of those who reside, work, visit, or use the local road networks.

Electoral Divisions (EDs) are the smallest legally defined administrative areas for which Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) are published from the Census of Population. Therefore, in order to discuss the receiving human environment and other statistics in the vicinity of the proposed development site, the Study Area for this assessment has regard to EDs.

Although this chapter predominantly describes the human environment in the vicinity of the proposed development, sensitive human receptors in the broader human environment are considered in the other specialised environmental topics, including the following;

- Material Assets (Chapter 09)
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage (Chapter 10);
- Air Quality and Climate (Chapter 12);
- Landscape and Visual impact Assessment (Chapter 13);
- Traffic (Chapter 14)

4.3 Baseline Environment

4.3.1 Site Location and Description

Ros an Mhíl Harbour is located on the north-east shore of Cashla Bay near the village of Ros an Mhíl in Connemara and approximately 40 kilometres to the west of Galway city, within the functional area of County Galway as illustrated in Chapter 1 Figure 1-1. The surrounding area accommodates several small-scale industries that rely on the harbour's operations. These include fish processing, net and boat repairs and fuel supply services. The harbour contains two piers, Pier 1 and the most recently developed Pier 2, which is a dedicated passenger ferry terminal and a marina for smaller craft. The harbour is linked to Galway City and the national road network via the regional R336 and R372 routes.

4.3.2 Population Trends and Density

Ros an Mhíl lies in the Kilcummin Electoral Division (ED) in County Galway, which encompasses the entire Ros an Mhíl Fishery Harbour Centre (FHC). Ros an Mhíl Head includes the harbour, village, agricultural, recreational and residential areas.

A review of the 2016 and 2022 population statistics for Kilcummin ED was completed. As shown in Table 4-3, the 2016 Census recorded a total population of 1,314 in the Kilcummin ED, while the 2022 Census results show an increase in the total population for the study area to 1,403, which represents an increase of 89 people from 2016 to 2022. The population in Ros an Mhíl increased from 198 people in the 2016 census to 202 people in the 2022 census which represents an increase of 2%.

According to the 2022 Census results, change in population from 2016 to 2022 in Ros an Mhíl was 2%, Kilcummin ED was 6.8% and that of County Galway for the same period was 9.3%.

Table 4-3: Population Trends

Location	Population 2016	Population 2022	% Population Change
Ros an Mhíl	198	202	2%
Kilcummin ED	1314	1403	6.8%
County Galway	179,390	193,323	9.3%

A review of 2022 Census Population shows that while the population density in the Kilcummin ED is is 25 persons per km^2 and this is comparable to that obtained in the 2016 census, which is also 25 km^2. This shows that Kilcummin ED is not densely populated. This is lower than that obtained in County Galway (33 km^2) as illustrated in Table 4-4.

Table 4-4: Population density 2016 - 2022

Electoral Division	Population Density (persons per sq. km) 2016	Population Density (persons per sq. km) 2022
Kilcummin ED	25.1	25
County Galway	31	33

4.3.3 Settlement Patterns

Settlement patterns in the greater region range from small to medium community settlements and relatively isolated farmsteads. The nearest settlements to the proposed development are Ros an Mhíl village, approximately 1km northeast and An Cheathrú Rua, approximately 1.6km to the east of Ros an Mhíl Harbour. Ros an Mhíl village comprises of a number of residential dwellings, a local shop, a school and a church.

A review of planning applications available on Galway County Council website was completed in October 2025 and are available in Chapter 1 of this EIAR. The planning search Identified a granted planning application on the 6th of May 2025 for the construction of a commercial centre with (a) Ticket Sales unit, (b) ferry offices, (c) restaurant, (d) 5 retail units with parking area and all associated site development works. Gross floor area of proposed development: 995 m² (PL. 2460370). There was also subsequent permission for re-use of a car park permitted under Planning Application 041483, and all ancillary works (PL. 2460716) granted on the 6th of January 2025. These applications align well with the established function of the harbour and complement its ongoing role as a marine, transport and tourism hub.

4.3.4 Land Use

Ros an Mhíl Harbour is located on the northeast shore of Cashla Bay, approximately 40 kilometres west of Galway City, near the village of Ros an Mhíl. The village lies about 1 kilometre inland and supports a small community with several residential dwellings, a local shop, school, and church. The primary school, Scoil Naisiunta Colm Cille, is located approximately 1.7 km from the quay.

The existing Fishery Harbour Centre (FHC) accommodates a range of marine and transport-related activities. Core infrastructure includes two principal piers, Pier 1 (120 metres long, 3.7 metres deep) and Pier 2 (313 metres long, 5.5 metres deep), alongside a dedicated passenger ferry terminal and a small craft harbour. To the east of the proposed quay location is the Sean Céibh wharf, where cargo vessels berth adjacent to Iasc Mara Teo, a fish-processing facility.

Land use within the harbour primarily supports the berthing and manoeuvring of vessels, ferry passenger movement and associated operations. Facilities include harbour-related infrastructure, such as piers, pontoons, and terminal buildings, as well as parking areas for cars and coaches. Ancillary infrastructure comprises the Harbour Master's office, the Irish Coast Guard (Costello Bay Unit), the Galway and Aran Co-op auction hall, ferry embarkation points, and sea angling and charter boat services.

Figure 4-1 displays 2018 Corine Land Cover data and provides a general overview of land use in the area. The proposed development boundary landcover consists of water bodies, sea ports and a minority of Moors and Heaths. Beyond the immediate harbour zone, surrounding land uses comprise of pastures, along with areas of Moors and Heaths. The proposed deep water quay development is designed to optimise the use of existing harbour lands without requiring land take from agricultural or residential areas. As such, no change in land use is

anticipated within the Ros an Mhíl footprint. The project is intended to enhance harbour functionality and efficiency while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding settlement and marine uses.

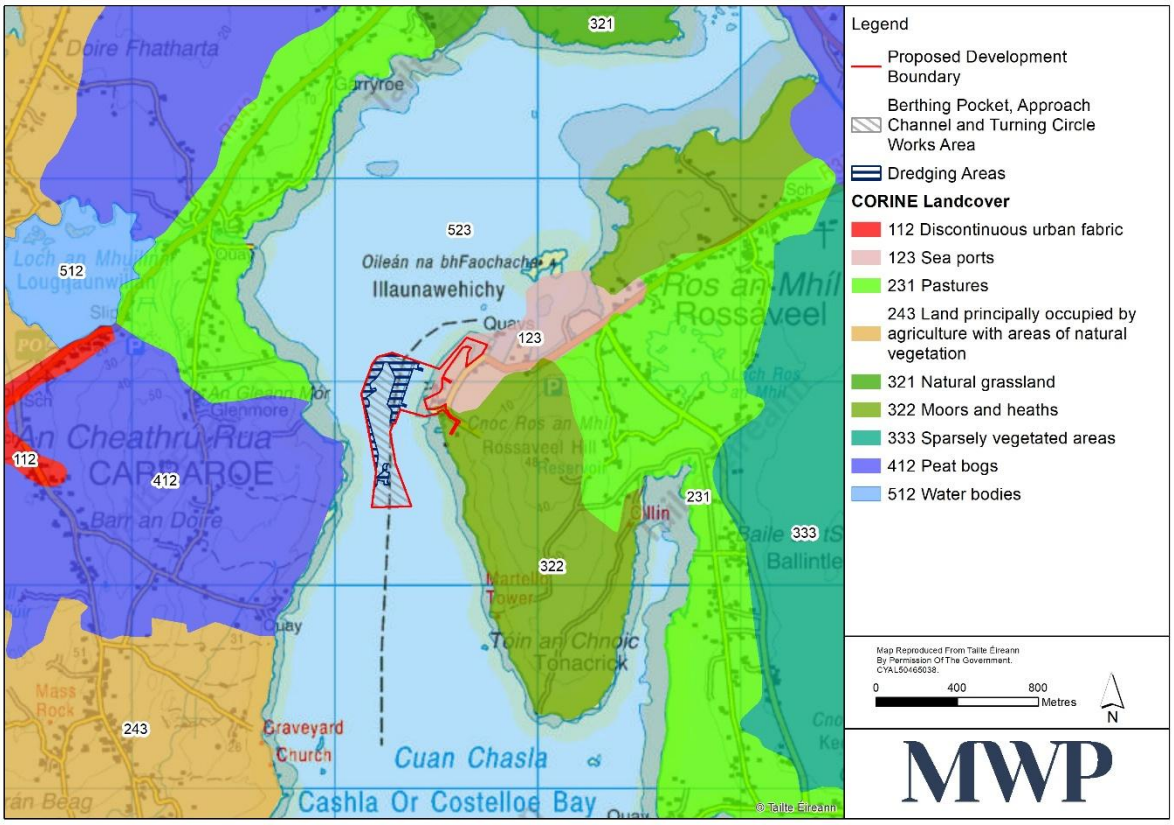

Figure 4-1: Corine Land Cover map of the study area

4.3.5 Human Health

The Healthy Ireland Framework 2013-2025 defines health as "*everyone achieving his or her potential to enjoy complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. Healthy people contribute to the health and quality of the society in which they live, work and play*". The Framework also states that health is much more than an absence of disease or disability, and that individual health, and the health of a country affects the quality of everyone's lived experience.

The 2022 Census provides information on the general health profile of the population for each electoral division. The statistics show that, overall, the local population has good health with less than 2.1% of the population in the study area reporting to have 'bad' and 0.4% or less having 'very bad' health, see Table 4-5. Overall, approximately 51.6% of people in the study area rated their health as being 'very good' and 29% as 'good'. These figures represent a very small proportion of the total population, suggesting that the general health status across the Electoral divisions within the study area is relatively good.

Table 4-5: Health Statistics 2022 - % Population

General Health	Kilcummin	Percentage	Crumpaun	Percentage
Very Good	722	51.46%	1,376	51.63%
Good	399	28.43%	776	29.12%
Fair	166	11.83%	333	12.50%
Bad	18	1.28%	55	2.06%
Very Bad	4	0.29%	11	0.41%
Not Stated	94	6.70%	114	4.28%
Total	1,403	100%	2,665	100%

4.3.6 Economic Activity/ Employment

According to the 2022 census of population employment statistics for the region, the work force within the study area is employed in a diverse range of industries Table 4-6. The statistics show that within the study area, the highest level of employment is within the Professional Services' industry, accounting for 306 people in Crumpaun and 180 people in Kilcummin. Other notable employment sectors include 'Commerce and Trade' and 'Manufacturing industries'. While the fishing industry holds cultural and economic significance within the broader region, its direct contribution to local employment in Kilcummin remains relatively modest. Despite its small footprint in terms of job numbers, the fishing sector continues to play a vital role in supporting seafood processing, marine services, and local tourism, particularly in coastal areas where traditional practices and maritime heritage remain integral to community identity.

Table 4-6: Occupations people employed in Co. Galway 2022

Occupations	Crumpaun	Kilcummin	Co. Galway
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	17	29	4,930
Building and construction	89	46	5,844
Manufacturing industries	122	71	14,519
Commerce and trade	150	86	16,536
Transport/Communication	104	60	5,669
Public admin	66	47	4,399
Professional Services	306	180	22,962
Other	130	92	11,042
Total	**984**	**611**	**85,901**

4.3.7 Tourism and Amenities

Tourism is an important industry in the Kilcummin ED. Ros an Mhíl harbour is one of the principal fishing harbours in Ireland and serves as a harbour for passenger travel to the Aran Islands. Nearby facilities include an auction hall with chill rooms, managed by the Galway and Aran Fishermen's Co-Op, a fully automatic ice plant, administrative offices, and a fish processing plant known as Iasc Mara Teoranta.

Ros an Mhíl village is located approximately 1km from the proposed development and is a very popular coastal destination for tourists. The Galway Gaeltacht offers a unique tourism opportunity, combining language, culture and history with scenic landscapes. Chapter 13 of the draft Galway CDP 2022-2028 includes the Galway Gaeltacht and Islands which support the implementation of *The Connemara Coast & Aran Islands Visitor Experience Development Plans* which recognises the natural and cultural assets of the area.

The Wild Atlantic Way coastal touring route also passes through Ros an Mhíl, with the route making an intentional diversion to take in Ros an Mhíl pier. There are a number of protected structures, and sites of historical interest in the Kilcummin ED. This includes a Martello Tower on the coast, approximately 1.1 km south of Ros an Mhíl harbour.

Ros an Mhíl harbour is an increasingly popular visitor location owing to its scenic setting, its wildlife (including numerous harbour seals) and a range of cafes, restaurants and bars in the village.

4.4 Assessment of Potential Effects

4.4.1 Construction Phase

4.4.1.1 Population and Settlement

During the construction phase, Ros an Mhíl Deep Water Quay will be developed within an established working port, separate from residential properties clustered in Ros an Mhíl village approximately one kilometre inland. As such, the proposed works are not anticipated to directly alter existing settlement patterns or influence local population distribution. Nuisance effects during construction phase are expected to have a ***neutral, short-term, localised,*** and ***not significant*** influence on population and settlement.

Although construction activities, including rock reclamation, quay wall assembly, and dredging, will involve intermittent periods of increased noise, vehicle movements, and marine-based operations, these are expected to be temporary in nature, spatially confined to the harbour zone. No residential dwellings or community facilities will be displaced or physically impacted during the construction period. The proposed development will make use of existing harbour lands and avoid land take from residential or agricultural use, thereby preserving the local settlement footprint. In terms of visual impacts, construction activity will occur in an established industrial-marine setting and will not introduce unfamiliar or obtrusive structures into the landscape. Landscape character effect due to construction phase is expected to have a ***neutral, short-term, localised,*** and ***not significant*** influence on population and settlement.

Construction will also provide short-term employment for up to 30 personnel on-site, with opportunities likely to benefit the local labour force and businesses involved in supply and support services. These economic benefits will offer a modest but positive influence on the area's population retention and financial resilience during the works phase. The construction phase is expected to have a ***positive, short-term, localised,*** and ***not significant*** influence on population and settlement. It is not anticipated to result in any physical displacement, demographic shifts, or long-term disruption to community patterns.

Table 4-7: Construction Effect 1: Population and Settlement

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Population changes due to nuisance effects	Neutral	Not Significant	Localised	Short-term	Indirect
Population changes due to landscape character effect	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Short-term	Indirect
Population changes due to local employment opportunities	Positive	Not significant	Localised	Short-term	Direct

4.4.1.2 Land Use

The construction phase for the remaining works will occur entirely within the confines of the existing harbour and adjacent foreshore, areas already zoned and used for marine and industrial purposes. Consequently, the project will not encroach upon or alter nearby agricultural land, residential areas, or recreational amenities.

Core construction activities, including land reclamation, site preparation, quay wall construction, and dredging, will align with long-established harbour uses. A temporary contractor's compound, concrete batching plant, and designated materials storage areas will be located within the defined development boundary, ensuring that no current land uses are displaced or affected.

Land use impacts during construction will be ***neutral, permanent, localised, permanent*** and ***not significant*** and consistent with the ongoing evolution of the harbour as a regional marine hub.

Table 4-8: Construction Effect 2: Land Use

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Land Use due to improved marine infrastructure	Neutral	Not Significant	Localised	Permanent	Direct

4.4.1.3 Human Health

The construction phase of Ros an Mhíl Deep Water Quay is expected to introduce a range of temporary environmental effects, with the primary considerations for population and human health identified as follows:

- Dust emissions from land reclamation, drilling, and material handling
- Noise emissions from blasting, machinery, and site traffic

- Traffic disturbance due to construction-related haulage and vehicle movements

Dust will be generated through activities such as rock placement, loading and unloading of materials, and general vehicle movement around the harbour. If left unmanaged, dust could create a mild nuisance for workers and road users in the vicinity. Dust impacts are predicted to be ***negative, short-term, localised*** and ***not significant***.

Noise impacts will arise from intermittent drilling, blasting, caisson placement, and heavy equipment use. These activities will be limited to standard working hours (Monday to Friday 07:00–19:00 and Saturday 07:00–14:00) and subject to compliance with noise control measures. Although increases in background noise may be perceptible, particularly during blasting or peak operations, they will be temporary and spatially limited to the harbour area. As such, noise impacts are predicted to be ***negative, short-term, localised*** and ***not significant.***

Traffic impacts will primarily involve the movement of materials, construction vehicles, and delivery trucks accessing the harbour via the R336 and R372 regional roads. At peak construction activity, traffic volumes will increase modestly due to deliveries from local quarries, and support vehicles. While this may contribute to temporary congestion and increased road wear, it is not expected to pose a significant safety risk or lead to long-term deterioration in local access. Traffic-related health effects, such as noise, dust, or safety concerns, are considered ***negative, short-term, localised*** and ***not significant.***

Table 4-9: Construction Effect 5: Human Health

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Dust and air emissions	Negative	Not significant	Localised	Short-term	Direct
Noise	Negative	Not significant	Localised	Short-term	Direct
Traffic	Negative	Not significant	Localised	Short-term	Direct

4.4.1.4 Employment and Economic Activity

During construction phase, direct employment will be created for up to 30 on-site personnel, encompassing roles such as engineers, machine operators, construction workers, environmental monitors, and health and safety staff.

Off-site employment will also be supported through the manufacturing and delivery of precast concrete caissons, L-wall units, and foundation beams, produced at facilities in County Offaly and County Mayo.

Local suppliers will benefit from the sourcing of large volumes of materials, including over 20,000 m^3 of imported rock fill, 26,000 m^3 of concrete-making materials, and more than 3,900 m^3 of rock armour, much of which will be provided by nearby quarries.

Ancillary economic benefits will arise through increased demand for accommodation, fuel, catering, and general services, driven by the presence of contractors, equipment deliveries, and project support teams. Businesses in Ros an Mhíl and its hinterlands are likely to experience a boost in activity throughout the construction window.

Although the duration of construction employment and procurement is limited, the project will contribute meaningfully to short-term job creation, income circulation, and commercial confidence within the region. The construction phase is expected to have a ***positive, short-term, localised***, ***regional*** and ***not significant*** effect on employment and economic activity.

Table 4-10: Construction Effect 3: Employment and Economic Activity

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Employment and Economic Activity	Positive	Not significant	Localised and Regional	Short-term	Direct

4.4.1.5 Tourism and Amenities

During the construction phase access to ferry terminals, island services, and marine tourism operators will be maintained at all times. Site management measures, such as controlled working hours, traffic coordination, and physical separation of construction zones, will minimise disruptions to visitors and harbour users. Temporary nuisances, including noise, dust, and occasional visual disturbance, may slightly reduce the appeal of the immediate harbour area during peak tourism months. The construction phase is predicted to have a ***negative, temporary, localised*** and ***imperceptible*** impact on tourism and amenity, with no long-term alteration to the area's character, accessibility, or appeal to visitors.

Table 4-11: Construction Effect 4: Tourism and Amenity

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Loss of tourism demand due to nuisance effects	Negative	Imperceptible	Localised	Temporary	Indirect
Loss of visitors due to visual effects	Negative	Imperceptible	Localised	Temporary	Indirect

4.4.2 Operational Phase

4.4.2.1 Population and Settlement

During the operational phase, the proposed development will function as an active marine facility supporting fishing vessels and associated harbour operations. Given its location within an existing working port and its separation from residential clusters, the proposed development will not generate significant nuisance effects such as noise, traffic, or lighting that would influence local population levels or disrupt established settlement patterns. The influence of nuisance effects on population and settlement patterns during operational phase are considered ***neutral, permanent, localised*** and ***not significant.***

Visually, the completed quay will integrate with the existing maritime setting and retain the area's working harbour character. Rather than detracting from the landscape, the upgraded infrastructure will enhance the harbour's functionality and potential to support local employment. This, in turn, will help sustain population levels and economic resilience in the wider Ros an Mhíl area. The operational phase will have a ***neutral, permanent, localised*** and ***not significant*** influence on landscape character.

The proposed developments operational phase influenced population and demographic trends due to the creation of long-term employment opportunities for locally sourced skilled operations and maintenance personnel. The proposed development is not expected to result in changes to population and demographic trends of the study area during the operational stage. The effects on population and demographic trends are considered to be ***neutral, permanent, localised*** and ***not significant***.

Table 4-12: Operational Effect 1: Population and Settlement

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Population changes due to nuisance effects	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Permanent	Indirect
Population changes due to landscape character effect	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Permanent	Indirect
Population changes due to local employment opportunities	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Permanent	Direct

4.4.2.2 Land Use

The proposed development will occupy lands already functionally designated for harbour and industrial use, ensuring full compatibility with existing land use policies and planning objectives.

The enhanced infrastructure, comprising the quay wall, reclaimed hinterland, and associated marine facilities, will support more efficient vessel berthing, fish processing and passenger services. This solidifies the harbour's role as a working port and transportation hub, while reinforcing the area's status as a focal point for economic activity in the Kilcummin ED.

No residential, agricultural, or recreational lands will be displaced or altered as a result of the proposed development entering its operational phase. The operational phase effects will be ***positive, permanent, localised*** and ***not significant*** on land use.

Table 4-13: Operational Effect 2: Land Use

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Land Use due to improved marine infrastructure	Positive	Not significant	Localised	Permanent	Direct

4.4.2.3 Human Health

During operation, the proposed development will function as an active marine facility supporting fishing vessels and passenger services. Noise associated with operational activities, such as vessel berthing, offloading, and equipment use, will generally be consistent with existing harbour noises. Operational noise will be intermittent and activity-dependent, rather than continuous. There is no increase in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), anticipated. The operational traffic noise effect on sensitive receptors is expected to be ***neutral, long-term, localised*** and ***not significant.***

Dust emissions during operation are considered minimal, as the majority of on-site surfaces are hard-paved, and bulk materials are handled in accordance with maritime environmental guidelines. Routine maintenance and occasional cleaning may be sources of minor dust, but these are unlikely to pose health risks or affect local air quality significantly. Vehicle emissions are not expected to have any measurable health impact due to the area's low population density and open setting. The operational impact of road traffic on air quality and climate from the proposed development will be ***neutral, long-term, localised*** and ***not significant.***

A traffic assessment was carried out for the proposed development and is included Chapter 14 of this EIAR. The fishing season is from October to April and does not coincide with the peak summer tourist season, including that of the Aran Island Ferries and Wild Atlantic Way. Fishing traffic during October to April is typically generated during the early morning and late evening/night. Traffic nuisance, in the form of increased vehicle movements to and from the harbour, is expected to remain moderate and spread throughout the day. While there may be periodic peaks linked to ferry schedules, the existing road infrastructure can accommodate projected traffic volumes without causing prolonged congestion or safety hazards. The operational impact of road traffic nuisance of the proposed development is expected to be ***neutral, long-term, localised*** and ***not significant.***

Table 4-14: Operational Effect 3: Human Health

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Dust and air emissions	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Long-term	Direct
Noise emissions	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Long-term	Direct
Traffic	Neutral	Not significant	Localised	Long-term	Direct

4.4.2.4 Employment and Economic Activity

During the operational phase, employment and economic activity in the region is expected to experience a modest but positive uplift. The enhanced harbour infrastructure will enable increased capacity for fishing vessels and ferry services, which in turn support employment within the maritime, logistics, and seafood processing sectors.

The quay facilitates handling and storage of goods, potentially attracting new business opportunities and bolstering the operations of existing enterprises such as fish processors, fuel suppliers, and transport services. Local service providers, including those offering accommodation, catering, and vessel maintenance will benefit from the increased activity and regular presence of port users and crew.

This phase of the project will reinforce Ros an Mhíl as a regional economic hub and contributed to the resilience of the local economy, particularly in the Gaeltacht area, by supporting job retention and the potential for future investment such as the recent granted planning permission for the construction of a commercial centre with (a) Ticket Sales unit, (b) ferry offices, (c) restaurant, (d) 5 retail units with parking area and all associated site development works. Gross floor area of proposed development: 995 m² (PL. 2460370). Overall, the operational phase will have a ***positive, permanent, localised, regional*** and ***not*** significant impact on employment and economic activity in the area.

Table 4-15: Operational Effect 4: Employment and Economic Activity

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Operational Employment and Economic Activity	Positive	Not significant	Localised and Regional	Permanent	Direct

4.4.2.5 Tourism and Amenity

During the operational phase, tourism and local amenity will be supported and, in some respects, enhanced. The harbour's improved functionality, particularly its ability to accommodate larger vessels and more efficient operations, reinforce its role as a key access point for ferry passengers travelling to the Aran Islands, one of the region's main tourist attractions. The upgraded infrastructure will enable better scheduling and handling of passenger services, which will contribute positively to visitor experience and confidence in using the port. While the visual landscape of the harbour reflect its expanded commercial role, the quay will remain consistent with the established maritime character of Ros an Mhíl and is not expected to detract from the overall aesthetic of the area.

The operational phase is expected to have a ***positive, permanent, localised, regional*** and ***not significant*** effect on tourism and amenity in the area.

Table 4-16: Operational Effect 5: Tourism and Amenity

Impact	Quality of Effect	Significance	Spatial Extent	Duration	Other Relevant Criteria
Tourism demand and amenity	Positive	Not significant	Localised and Regional	Permanent	Indirect

4.5 Mitigation Measures

4.5.1 Construction Phase

The proposed development is located within an existing working harbour and will not result in the displacement of residential dwellings or changes to settlement patterns. Although construction activities such as rock reclamation, quay wall assembly, and dredging may cause intermittent increases in noise, vehicle movements, and marine operations, these impacts will be temporary, spatially confined to the harbour zone, and regulated under the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (see Appendix 2A in EIAR Vol. 3).

- To minimise disturbance to nearby residential communities, controlled working hours will be enforced—Monday to Friday from 07:00 to 19:00 and Saturday from 07:00 to 14:00.
- All construction activities will be carried out in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
- Noise and vibration impacts will be managed through restricted working hours and ongoing environmental monitoring.
- A Dust Minimisation Plan will be developed specifically for the construction phase, and dust suppression techniques, such as wheel washing, will be implemented.
- Traffic impacts will be mitigated through scheduling and adherence to safety access protocols.

4.5.2 Operational Phase

During the operational phase all fishing vessels will be required to utilise the onshore power supply to reduce emissions while berthed.

4.6 Residual Effects

A summary of construction and operational phase residual effects are summarised in Table 4-17.

Table 4-17: Residual Effects

Impact/Activity /Receptor	Quality Of Effect	Pre-Mitigation Significance Rating	Mitigation Measures	Post-Mitigation / Residual Significance Rating
CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS				
Population changes due to nuisance effects	Neutral	Not significant	No Mitigations	Not significant
Population changes due to landscape character	Neutral	Not significant	Mitigation measures outlined in the CEMP	Not significant
Population changes due to local employment opportunities	Positive	Not significant	Mitigation measures outlined in the CEMP	Not significant
Land use due to improved marine infrastructure	Neutral	Not significant	Mitigation measures outlined in the CEMP	Not significant
Dust and air emissions	Negative	Not significant	Dust Minimisation Plan	Not significant
Noise	Negative	Not significant	Restricted working hours and monitoring.	Not significant
Traffic	Negative	Not significant	scheduling and safety access protocols.	Not significant
Employment and Economic Activity	Positive	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant
Loss of tourism demand due to nuisance effects	Negative	Imperceptible	Mitigation measures outlined in the CEMP	Imperceptible
Loss of visitors due to visual effects	Negative	Imperceptible	Mitigation measures outlined in the CEMP	Imperceptible
OPERATIONAL EFFECTS				
Population changes due to nuisance effects	Neutral	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant
Population changes due to landscape character	Neutral	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant
Population changes due to local employment opportunities	Neutral	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant
Land use due to improved marine infrastructure	Positive	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant
Dust and air emissions	Neutral	Not significant	Fishing vessels to use onshore power supply	Not significant
Noise	Neutral	Not significant	Fishing vessels to use onshore power supply	Not significant
Traffic	Neutral	Not significant	No mitigation required.	Not significant
Employment and Economic Activity	Positive	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant
Tourism demand and amenity	Positive	Not significant	No mitigation is required.	Not significant

4.7 Cumulative Effects

Other projects considered for cumulative effects are detailed in Chapter 1 of this report. An effect during the construction phase is only likely to arise if these phases of the proposed developments are to run concurrently with construction of another project. Based on a review of developments, plans and projects in proximity to construction works, there is no significant cumulative effects anticipated on Population and Human Health.

4.8 Conclusion

An assessment of the likely effects on population and human health associated with the project has been undertaken. During the construction phase of the project, best practice measures such as a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), the implementation of controlled working hours (Monday to Friday 07:00–19:00 and Saturday 07:00–14:00) and dust minimisation plan will be implemented to minimise any adverse effects on population and human health. During the operational phase, vessels will be connected to a shore electrical supply minimising greenhouse gas emissions while berthed.

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