Achill Sound to Bunacurry Greenway, Achill Island

Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment

Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd.

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Achill Sound to Bunacurry Greenway,

Co. Mayo

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Document Stage	Document Version	Prepared by
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This report has been prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd. with all reasonable skill, care and diligence. Information report herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

This report is prepared for Mayo County Council and we accept no responsibility to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Doherty Environmental Consultants (DEC) Ltd. have been commissioned by Mayo County Council to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for proposed Achill Sound to Bunacurry Greenway, Co. Mayo. (see Figure 1.1 for project location and Figure 1.2 for site aerial).

The findings of the EIA Screening assessment for the proposed greenway (i.e. the project) are presented in this report.

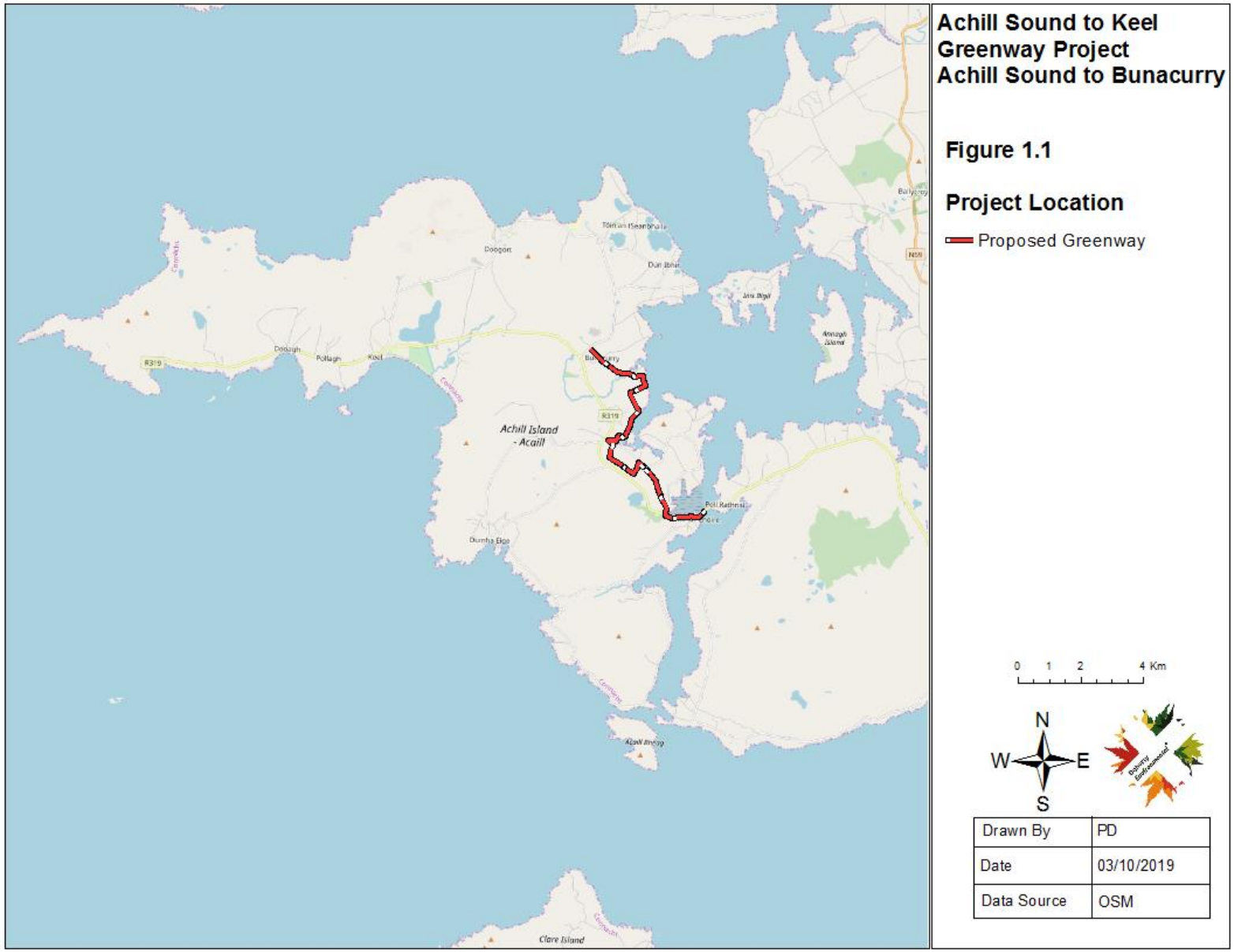
1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

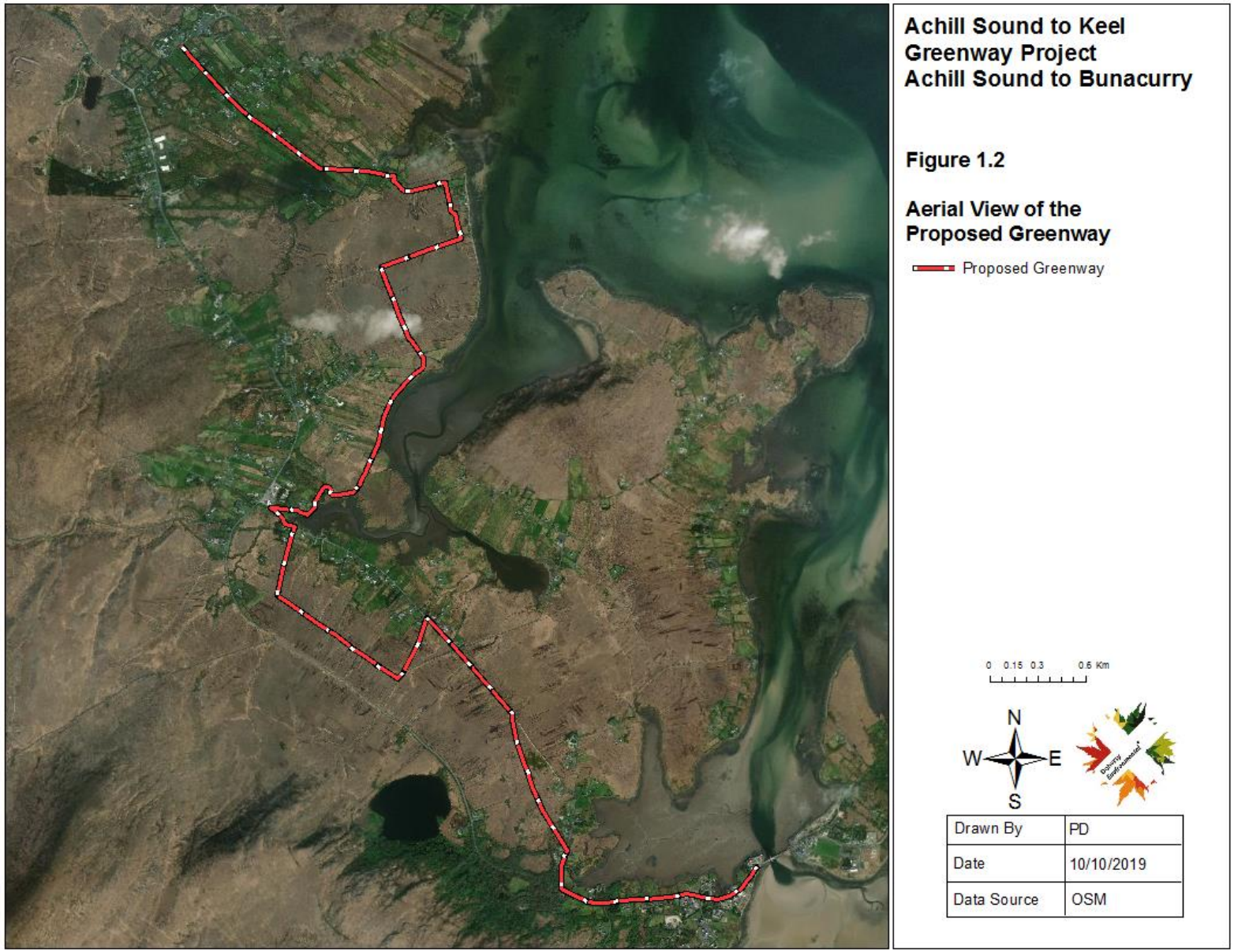
This EIA screening report contains necessary information to enable the competent authority, in this case Mayo County Council, to undertake an EIA screening assessment and determine whether an EIA is required for the proposed development. The findings of the EIA screening assessment are presented in this report and will inform the determination by Mayo County Council for the proposed development between Achill Sound and Bunacurry, (to be referred to throughout this report as "the project" or "the proposed development").

The purpose of this Report is to determine whether or not the project is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, requires an EIA to be carried out and an EIAR to be prepared. This Report provides an overview of the project (section 3), the existing baseline environment (section 4) and then assesses the potential environmental impacts (Section 5) posed by the proposed project.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive) sets out the requirements for environmental impact assessment ("**EIA**"), including screening for EIA. Projects listed in Annex I of the EIA Directive require a mandatory EIA while projects listed in Annex II require screening to determine whether an EIA is required. The proposed development does not require a mandatory EIA under the provisions of the EIA Directive as it is not a project listed in Annex I.


Achill Sound to Keel
Greenway Project
Achill Sound to Bunacurry
Figure 1.1
Project Location
Proposed Greenway
Achill Island
- Acaill
Dooagh
Pollagh
Keel
Dooghmore
Dumha Éige
Clare Island
R319
N59
0 1 2 4 Km
N
W
E
S
Drawn By PD
Date 03/10/2019
Data Source OSM


Achill Sound to Keel Greenway Project
Achill Sound to Bunacurry
Figure 1.2
Aerial View of the Proposed Greenway
Proposed Greenway
0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Km
N
W
E
S
Drawn By PD
Date 10/10/2019
Data Source OSM

The prescribed classes of development and thresholds or criteria that trigger the need for an EIA are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended. A review of the classes of development was carried out to determine whether the proposed development falls into any of the development classes which require an EIA. The proposed development does not fall into any of the classes described in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001. The need for an EIA has therefore not been triggered under the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

The proposed development also falls under the EIA requirements of the Roads Act 1993 as amended by the Planning and Development Acts (2000-2011) and the Roads Act (2007) as well as regulations made under the Roads Acts, The European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 1989-2001, and EC Directives 85/337/EC and 97/11/EC referenced above. A road within the 1993 act is defined to include:

(a) any street, lane, greenway, square, court, alley or passage,

(b) any bridge, viaduct, underpass, subway, tunnel, overpass, overbridge flyover, carriageway whether single or multiple, pavement or footway,

(c) any weighbridge or other facility for the weighting or inspection of vehicles, toll plaza or other facility for the collection of tolls, services area, emergency, telephone, first aid post, culvert, arch, gulley, railing, fence, wall, barrier, guardrail, margin, kerb, lay-by, hard shoulder, island, pedestrian refuge, median, central reserve.

Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) outlines the requirements for EIA for "proposed road developments". An overview of the legislative requirements of section 50 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended), and its applicability to the proposed development are outlined in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Screening for Mandatory EIA

Screening Question	Regulatory Reference	Response

Does the project comprise the construction of a motorway, busway or service area?	S.50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended.	The proposed development is not a motorway, busway or service area. This requirement for mandatory EIA is not triggered.
Is the project representative of a prescribed type of proposed road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road, where the prescribed types of road development comprise: • The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area. • The construction of a new bridge or tunnel, which would be 100 metres, or more in length.	Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Road development prescribed for the purposes of S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993	The proposed development does not involve the provision of a road of four or more lanes for a distance of 8km or more in a rural area or 500m or more in an urban area. The proposed development does not involve the construction of a bridge or tunnel. These requirements for mandatory EIA are not triggered.
Has a direction been issued by An Bord Pleanála (ABP) to the Road Authority to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)?	S.50(1)(b) of the Roads Act, 1993	ABP has not directed the Road Authority (Mayo County Council) to prepare an EIAR for the proposed greenway development.

Where the road authority consider that the proposed road development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall inform ABP in writing and where ABP concurs, it shall direct the road authority to prepare an EIAR?	S.50(1)(c) of the Roads Act, 1993	Where Mayo County Council considers the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, Mayo County council is to inform ABP in writing of this and await direction from the Board.
Is the proposed road development located on 'certain environmental sites' and has the road authority determined whether any significant effects are likely on the environment as a result?	S. 50(1)(d) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended by reg. 56(7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011)	No. A Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken for the project and this Report concluded that the proposed development will not have any likely significant effects, whether on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, on any European sites based on the best scientific evidence and taking into account the conservation objectives of the European sites. The project will not have the potential to interact with or negatively affect the conservation status of any Natural Heritage Areas in the wider area surrounding the project site. No geological heritage sites are located in close proximity to the project site.

Pursuant to section 50(1)(c) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended), Mayo County Council are required to turn their attention to whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, such that an EIAR is required.

Section 50(1)(e) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) states "Where a decision is being made pursuant to this subsection on whether a proposed road development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, An Bord Pleanála or the road authority concerned (as the case may be) shall have regard to the criteria specified for the purposes of article 27 of the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989."

The purpose of this EIA Screening Report is to assist Mayo County Council in determining whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

According to European Commission Guidance (2017[1])

"Screening has to implement the Directive's overall aim, i.e. to determine if a Project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, be made subject to a requirement for Development Consent and an assessment, with regards to its effects on the environment. At the same time, Screening should ensure that an EIA is carried out only for those Projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible, thereby ensuring a more efficient use of both public and private resources. Hence, Screening has to strike the right balance between the above two objectives."

Recent guidelines from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2018) [2] in relation to screening state:

[1] Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017. Page 23.

[2] Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment

"3.1. Screening is the initial stage in the EIA process and determines whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made. A screening determination is a matter of professional judgement, based on objective information relating to the proposed project and its receiving environment. Environmental effects can, in principle, be either positive or negative.

3.2. Screening must consider the whole development. This includes likely significant effects arising from any demolition works, which must be carried out in order to facilitate the proposed development. In the case of transboundary developments, screening must consider the likely significant effects arising from the whole project both sides of the boundary. A screening determination that EIA is not required must not undermine the objective of the Directive that no project likely to have significant effects on the environment, within the meaning of the Directive, should be exempt from assessment."

Annex III of the EIA Directive (as amended)/Schedule 7 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, lists the criteria for determining whether a project should be subject to EIA.

Annex IIA of the EIA Directive (as amended)/Schedule 7A to the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, set out the information to be provided for the purposes of EIA Screening. The information set out in Schedule 7A is grouped together under 3 main headings:

Annex IIA requirements	Relevant section of this screening report
A description of the proposed development, including in particular – a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected	Section 3 of this Report describes the characteristics of the project and provides an assessment against the criteria contained in Schedule 7A under this category heading

A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development	Section 4 of this Report describes the aspects of the environment that may be affected by the proposed development
A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from— (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity	Section 5 of this Report describes the characteristics of the project and provides an assessment against the criteria contained in Schedule 7A under this category heading.

During the evaluation of the projects potential to result in significant negative environmental effects to aspects of the environment current Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) assessment guidelines have been relied upon. While it is acknowledged that the proposed development does not represent a national road scheme the various environmental assessment guidelines published by TII represent best practice guidance for the assessment of road schemes in Ireland. As such these guidelines have been relied upon during the preparation of this Screening Report.

3.0 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 OVERVIEW

The project comprises the provision of a new greenway to a length of 10.6km between the townland of Achill Sound and Bunacurry.

The proposed greenway will include the following features:

- Approximately 10.6km of shared walking and cycling greenway between the townland of Achill Sound and Bunacurry.
- Path widths will vary from 2.6m to 4m in width. Widths will be dictated by existing on site features.
- The provision of a suitable surface i.e. Clause 803 Quarry Dust or Asphalt Tarmac or raised boardwalk depending on local conditions for pedestrian and cyclists use.
- Provision of access controls such as pedestrian and cycle friendly gates along the route.

- The provision of a temporary construction compound to be situated in an existing council depot yard at Achill Sound.
- The provision of a trail-head, car parking, plaza and promenade at Achill Sound.
- The demolition of an existing unoccupied dwelling at Achill Sound for public realm enhancement.
- Traffic calming.
- The provision of a trail-head, car parking, promenade at Achill Sound.
- All associated ancillary works and integrated landscape plans for the reinstatement of any temporary construction footprint.

3.1.1 General Methodology

Surface Type

A tailored surface finish shall be employed to ensure a durable and fit for purpose trail in accordance with National Trails Office Guidance. This surface will provide accessibility and a robust surface that will be able to withstand footfall and cycling traffic. The proposed surface type to be used on the proposed greenway will be an unbound surface of compacted quarry stone and dust.

3.1.2 Trail Surface Construction Materials

Materials for construction of the trail will be imported but not stockpiled on site. The materials to be employed shall principally consist of:

- Geotextile ground reinforcing cloth
- Granular sub-base material (NRA clause 804)
- 6mm crushed limestone dust; and
- Topsoil / grass seed

3.1.3 Construction Methodology

The first item of works to be completed on the ground prior to the commencement of the construction works will be the setting out of the construction footprint along the proposed

greenway. The construction footprint will be limited to the width of the proposed greenway. Once marked out on the ground the construction corridor temporary fencing will be installed. Once fencing is in place all construction plant, machinery and personnel will be restricted from encroaching into areas beyond the temporary construction fenceline.

Construction materials will be transported from stockpiled areas at the construction compounds along the proposed greenway route in 6-ton dumper trucks for construction of the trail. In areas of peatland, where blanket bog habitats dominate the land cover only tracked plant with low ground-bearing pressure will be used. A total of 2 no. dumper trucks and 2 no. tracked, low ground-bearing pressure vehicles will be required throughout the duration of the construction phase.

3.1.4 Construction Methodology For Surface Types

The proposed greenway will utilise three surface types, referred to hereafter as type A, B and C surfaces. Type A surface will consist of existing public road and path surfaces; Type B surface will consist of compact stone and dust/tarmacadam surface; and Type C surface will consist of a boardwalk surface.

Existing public roads and surfaced paths comprise approximately 7.1km of the 10.6km of the proposed greenway. These sections of the proposed route that utilise the existing public road surfaces and surfaced paths will involve very minor works in the form of signage and road markings. There will be no requirement for wholesale changes in the surfaces of these sections of the proposed greenway. Where necessary upgrades will be made to surfaces where repairs and maintenance is required.

A description of the quarry dust/tarmacadam surface and the boardwalk surfaces are provided below.

Figure 3.2: Proposed Compacted Stone and Dust

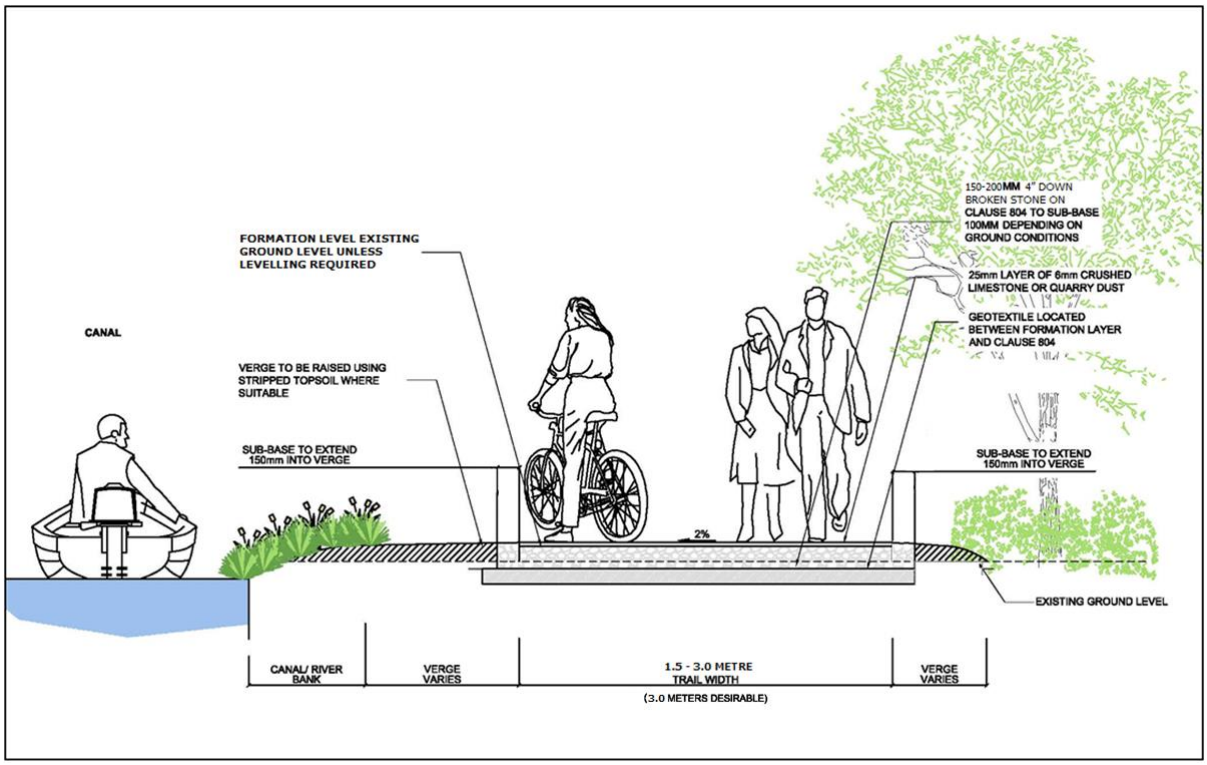


Table 3.1 Type B Compacted Stone and Dust

Compacted Stone and Dust	
LOCATIONS	MATERIAL SPECIFICATION
Saula West – Ch. 3,350 to Ch. 4,640 over defunct bog road. Cashel South Ch. 5,620 to 5,850 over existing track, through scrub and dense bracken Cashel South Ch. 5,850 to 5,950 over improved/wet grassland.	Geotextile Polybrane 240 Membrane or alternative equivalent product grade Sub -Base layer 4" Down Broken Stone, then Granular sub-base, in accordance with Clause 804 of TII Specification. Surface layer 0/6mm crushed limestone or quarry dust

Cashel South Ch. 6,230 to Ch. 6,700 over grassland. Cashel South Ch. 6,780 to Ch. 6,840 over grassland. Cashel South Ch. 6,910 to Ch. 7,030 over grassland. Bunacurry/Cashel South Ch. 8,205 to Ch. 8,245 over grassland. Bunacurry/Cashel South Ch. 8,430 to Ch. 8,505 over existing bog access road.	

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE (Refer Figure 2.2 above)

(a) Formation Tray Excavation where unavoidable (Desirable Width of 4m. (b) Overlay to Width of 2.6m) (C) 1.4m of verge comprised of 0.7m either side of finished overlay to be managed for landscaping with the establishment of species-rich grassland and heath habitat as appropriate.

Grade out irregularities to form 2.6m wide formation tray (width of formation tray to be approximately 300mm wider than the path width) to maximum depth of 100mm below ground level. (Actual depth will depend on depth of sub-base being used, which will depend on ground conditions. Where possible new construction will overlay existing). Formation tray should be rectangular in section with vertical sides and level base.

Any Stripped vegetation and excavated topsoil to be stacked neatly either side of formation tray to be used for reinstatement of path shoulders.

There would be no excavation requirements in regard to the overlay of the existing surface other than to address isolated issues with soft spots.

Geotextile Installation

Lay and secure geotextile sheet in formation tray or on top of the existing ground. Overlap joining sheets by 1.0m.

If required in soft ground - Lay and secure geogrid on top of geotextile sheet. Overlap joining sheets by 1.0m.

Sub-Base Layer

Using either a drag box or suitable excavator lay the required depth of 4" down Broken Stone upon the geotextile sheet to falls and levels, to form 1:50 (2%) camber or 1:40 (2.5%) cross-fall in maximum layer depths of 150mm – 200mm. Then 100mm Clause 804 granular sub-base. Depths of Sub-base will depend on existing ground conditions

Compact sub-base layer using a pedestrian roller taking care not to apply undue pressures to the canal bank until satisfactory compaction is achieved.

Once sub-base layer is compacted, check levels of the surface at regular intervals along the compacted sub-base layer for consistent even surface regularity. Any part of the sub-base layer deviating from the required level must be raked off or topped up with additional Clause 804 granular sub-base and re-compacted to the correct levels.

Surface Layer

Using either a drag box or suitable excavator lay 25mm depth of 6mm limestone dust to falls and levels, to form 2.5m to 3.5m wide path surface with 1:50 (2%) camber or 1:40 (2.5%) crossfall along the centre line of compacted sub-base layer.

Compact surface layer using a roller until satisfactory compaction is achieved.

Once rolling is finished, check levels of the surface at regular intervals along the compacted surface layer for consistent even surface regularity. Any part of the surface layer deviating from the required level must be raked off or topped up with additional 6mm limestone dust and re- compacted to the correct levels.

Landscaping

Using available topsoil and turfs from excavations (and only if necessary, imported topsoil). Landscaped verges and edges should be finished level with path surface and taper down and away from the path surface to allow surface water to run off onto adjacent verges. Landscaping of the verges to be treated with the application of a species-rich grassland and/or heath species mix. All species to be planted as part of the landscaping will be of local and native provenance and will be typical of species-rich grassland/heath habitat occurring in the wider area.

Table 3.2: Type C Raised Boardwalk

Raised Boardwalk	
LOCATIONS:	MATERIAL SPECIFICATION
Saula West Ch. 4640 – Ch. 5060 Cashel South Ch. 5,950 to Ch. 6,230 Cashel South Ch. 6,700 to Ch. 6,780 Cashel South Ch. 6,840 to Ch. 6,910 Cashel/Bunacurry Ch. 8,180 to 8,210 Cashel/Bunacurry Ch. 8,240 to 8,440	Components for boardwalk: Main Beams 150mm x 50mm x 3m length Handrail uprights 100mm x 100mm x 1.5m (centres every1.5m) Handrails 100mm x 50mm x 6m Cross heads 100mm x 50mm x boardwalk width Deck boards 200mm x 50mm x boardwalk width Piles 100mm x 100mm x 1.5m (length depends on ground conditions
Construction Sequence The walkway will be built in a modular way starting from the roadway and working along the proposed route. The construction will be undertaken in sections, with support post installation being undertaken first followed by the installation of the walkway frame and finally walkway surface. This will allow the boardwalk to be constructed and used as access for the construction of the boardwalk. Any surface treatments of the boardwalk frame and posts will be undertaken offsite prior to installation. The plant to be used during the construction phase will include a mini-digger of low ground bearing pressure. The use of this plant will be restricted to a 5 metre working corridor along the boardwalk route. The mini-digger will be used for the installation of posts only and will be permitted to track around the working corridor under the footprint of the boardwalk on only one occasion. The use of the mini-digger	

will be restricted to periods of dry weather conditions. Works to be undertaken within peatland habitat will be done by hand as much as possible.

Construction works will include support post installation and the assembly of the frames and bolting on of the walkway boards.

Only machinery that can be transported along the boardwalk (e.g. power barrow, muck truck, generator and power tools) will be permitted. This machinery will only be permitted to be used on the boardwalk.

Round posts of 4 inches in diameter will be used to secure the boardwalk. Wherever possible posts will be laid approximately every 1.8m on each side of the walkway. This will be constrained by the presence of bog hollows along the boardwalk route, as no posts will be placed in such hollows. Nevertheless it is estimated that, as the walkway is approximately 450 metres in length, approximately 500 posts will be required. Each post will be approximately 100mm x 100mm in width. As such the overall physical footprint of the boardwalk within blanket bog habitat will amount to $5m^2$. All posts will be driven in situ using a mini digger of low ground bearing pressure.

The depths of posts will depend on the ground conditions but they will extend below the base of the blanket bog and will be a minimum of 1.2 metres. Probing during vegetation sampling noted that the majority of the blanket bog underlying the footprint of the boardwalk is in excess of 2m in depth.

The posts will be made of wood or potentially steel although wood is more likely. The boardwalk frame and boards will be plastic but will have a wood finish.

The boardwalk will be raised to a minimum height of 300mm above the blanket bog surface. The boardwalk has been designed to sit above the blanket bog so that surface water runoff and drainage are not impeded and to allow the penetration of light under the boardwalk and facilitate vegetation growth underneath and around it.

Construction works will be supervised by a suitably qualified environmental engineer or ecologist.

The construction staff will be restricted to a small team of 4 people.

3.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

An assessment of the potential characteristics of the Proposed Development as described above against the criteria outlined in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2018 are outlined in Table 3.1 below and a conclusion and rationale is provided to determine whether these characteristics have the potential to result in likely significant effects to the environment.

Table 3.3: Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
(a) the size and design of the whole project	The project comprises a greenway of approximately 10.6km in length and 2.6m to 4.0m in width. All construction works will be restricted to the footprint of the proposed greenway the majority of which (i.e. 80%) is restricted to existing public roads, surfaced paths and bog roads. The construction phase of the greenway will be completed within an approximate 15-month period. The construction phase will be guided by a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will seek to ensure the construction phase is completed in line with best practice and does not result in negative effects to surrounding receptors. The scale of the proposed development is minor and is keeping with the scale of other existing greenways such as the Westport to Achill greenway.
(b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;	Mayo County Council online planning portal was searched for recently approved (2015 and later) planning applications in the vicinity of the project site. Four project were identified and are examined for their potential to combine with the proposed project to result in cumulative negative impacts to European Sites.

Screening Question	**Response**
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	Planning Ref 17308: Relates to the retention of an existing first floor accommodation and retention of alterations to an existing dwelling at Bunacurry. This project is located adjacent to a section of the proposed greenway that will utilise the existing public road. Minimal works in the form of road markings and signage where necessary will be required for the proposed greenway along this section. No works associated with either project will have the potential alone or in combination with each other to result in cumulative impacts to European Sites. Planning Ref: 17706: Relates to the construction of a dwelling house in the townland of Cashel and the retention of an existing access road to the site. This project site is located to west of the proposed greenway and is buffered from the greenway by approximately 400m. Both sites are located at remote distance from any European Sites. There are no pathways connecting both sites to European Sites and as such there will be no potential for the proposed greenway to combine with this project to result in cumulative impacts to European Sites. Planning Ref 15707: Relates to the construction of a dwelling house in the townland of Cashel. This project site is located adjacent to the proposed greenway. Both sites are located at remote distance from any European Sites. There are no pathways connecting both sites to European Sites and as such there will be no potential for the proposed greenway to combine with this project to result in cumulative impacts to European Sites.
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works	The existing residential structure at Achill Sound will be demolished as part of the construction works. Based on the results of a bat inspection and survey of this building in early April 2020 this structure is not used as a roost site by bats and the demolition of this building will not result in any loss of roosting habitat for bats. The demolition of the existing structure will be completed in a controlled manner to minimise noise and dust. Any steel and concrete occurring within the structure will be cut and removed in sections before being transported offsite to an appropriately licenced facility for disposal. Water bowsers will be used to dampen surfaces in order to minimise dust generation. The existing sea wall on the seaward side

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	of the building will prevent the discharge of surface water to the foreshore. Where there are gaps in this sea wall, such at the northern end of the platform at the seaward side of the building a silt fence will be installed. This will provide for the controlled release of surface water to the foreshore while eliminating the flow of silt-laden water derived from demolition works to the foreshore. The silt fence will be installed in accordance with Section 18.6.12 of the CIRIA guidance document "Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects, Technical Guidance (C648)".
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	Construction related activities will be restricted to the footprint of the project site. Soil that will be excavated within the project site will be reused for landscaping and filling. Where surplus soil material is generated it will be disposed of at an approved facility. The presence of non-native invasive species, *Rhododendron ponticum* and *Gunnera tinctoria* was noted along the route between Ch. 3,350 and 3650. As part of the proposed construction phase of the project these species will be treated prior to the commencement of any works on site. *Gunnera tinctoria* will be stem injected with a herbicide prior to the commencement of any construction works. It is proposed to undertake this treatment during the growing season of 2020 prior to the commencement of construction activities. Where ground works will result in the disturbance of soil material in the vicinity of the *Gunnera tinctoria* such soil material will either be used as fill material and buried under the proposed path surface at its current location or else transferred to a sealed dumper truck for disposal offsite at an approved waste facility. No soil material arising in the vicinity of *Gunnera tinctoria* will be excavated and deposited elsewhere along the proposed greenway route. These measures will be put in place to prevent the spread of this species. Where the construction phase requires the clearance of *Rhododendron ponticum* the trees will be cut and the stems will be dug out to clear the area of this species. The plant material will be removed off site and will be disposed of in a manner in line with Forest Service and Woodlands of Ireland guidance document "*The Control of*

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	Rhododendron in Native Woodlands" (Native Woodlands Scheme Information Note No. 3). In addition to the above a full survey of the route will be undertaken during the growing season prior to the commencement of construction so that up to date information for the location of all non-native invasive species occurring along the route is available. A Non-Native Invasive Species Management Plan will be prepared in line with best practice guidelines and following the completed the pre-construction survey and all measures detailed in the management plan will be implemented. Areas of peatland habitat will be traversed by the greenway, at Ch. 4640 – Ch. 4,825; Ch. 6,000 to Ch. 6,200; Ch. 6,700 and 6,900; and 8,250 and 8,450. The habitats occurring along these sections of the proposed greenway range from low value eroded and cutover blanket bog to county value recolonising blanket bog/degraded blanket bog edge. An example of recolonising blanket bog of county value occurs for approximately 80m between Chainage 4,640 and 4,720. This recolonising blanket bog occurs in an area of cutover blanket bog that now supports a sward typical of recolonising and active blanket bog. Another poorer example of recolonising blanket bog occurs between Ch. 6,850 and 6,900. Examples of recolonising blanket bog habitat can have links to the EU Habitats Directive Annex 1 habitat "Active blanket bog". The proposed greenway also passes through an area of blanket bog/degraded blanket bog edge between Ch. 6,075 and 6,175 where it runs adjacent and parallel to a deep cut drainage ditch whose presence has resulted in the desiccation of the blanket bog surface over which the greenway is proposed to run. Given the former cutover and/or enclosed, grazed and drained nature of these examples of blanket bog habitat along the route, their restricted extent and the presence of artificial drainage in their immediate vicinity, they are not considered to be representative of good quality examples of the Annex 1 habitat "Active blanket bog". Notwithstanding this the proposed greenway has been designed to minimise negative impacts to the short sections of these areas of peatland habitat crossed by the proposed route through the provision of boardwalk sections. The use of a boardwalk and the approach to the construction of the boardwalk, as outlined in Section 2 above, in these areas and all other areas of greenfield land where degraded peatland habitats occur, will ensure that the proposed greenway does not lead to further disturbance

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	through drainage and fragmentation of these peatland habitats. With the provision of the boardwalk surfaces the proposed greenway has been assessed has having the potential to result in at most minor negative impacts to bog habitats. Type B surface is proposed to be used in areas of existing bog roads, scrub and grassland habitat. The total footprint of Type B surface in greenfield habitats (i.e. scrub and grassland habitats) will amount to approximately 2,680m^2. The significance of the loss of these habitats to the footprint of Type B surface has been assessed in the Ecological Impact Assessment report which accompanies this report and it has been found that the application of this surface type in these habitats will result in an impact of negligible to minor negative significance. The Ecological Impact Assessment Report also details how the project has been designed to achieve no net loss of habitat and describes how the loss of c. 2,680m^2 of scrub and grassland habitat will be offset by applying a landscape treatment of species-rich scrub, grassland and heath (as appropriate) to the verges of the section of Type B surface passing through existing scrub and grassland habitat as well as the section passing over existing bog roads. The total footprint of the verges that are to be treated will amount to approximately 3,320m^2. In addition to this it is also proposed to apply a wildlife and biodiversity landscape treatment of species-rich grassland, heath and scrub/woodland in an area of Council-owned land adjacent to Ch. 500 and the existing playground (This area is shown on Figure 6.1 of the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment Report). The footprint of this area which is to be treated with flowering and fruiting scrub trees and pollinator friendly herbs will amount to approximately 6,200m^2. With the establishment of species-rich scrub, grassland and heath (as appropriate) along the verges of Type B surfaces and the species-rich grassland, heath and scrub/woodland adjacent to Ch. 500 the potential will existing for an overall net gain in species-rich semi-natural habitats occurring along the proposed greenway route. The Ecological Impact Assessment report which accompanies this report has assessed the potential for the project to result in significant negative impacts to fauna, including protected mammals and birds. This assessment has found that the project will not have the potential to result in significant negative impacts to fauna including birds and mammals and that with the implementation of all mitigation measures

Screening Question	**Response**
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	detailed in the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment the project will result in at most minor negative impacts to fauna. Water required for the construction phase of the project will be supplied by the existing mains water supply. No significant effects to biodiversity are predicted to arise as a result of the construction or operation of the project. Natural resources in the form of hydrocarbons will be required for energy and electricity during the construction phase of the project. Other building raw materials will be required during the construction phase. However the natural resources required will be typical of those required for the development and there provision will not have the potential to result in significant negative effects.
(e) the production of waste;	Solid inert waste in the form of soil and stone will be produced during construction but materials will be only ordered as required. Any wastes from the construction process will either be reused within the scheme, or recycled/disposed of at an authorised waste facility. During the construction phase the waste management hierarchy will be implemented onsite, which prioritises the prevention and minimisation of waste generation. The operation phase is not anticipated to generate large volumes of waste. Litter prevention measures will be put in place along the proposed development.
(f) pollution and nuisances;	The construction phase presents the greatest risk of pollution to water resources. Potential sources of water pollution to both surface and groundwater include fuel, lubricants, suspended solids and concrete. Silt-laden surface runoff could arise during vegetation stripping. However as the site compound will be located at an existing Council depot in Achill Sound and at a remote distance from any surface water features and as all machinery will be inspected and confirmed to be free of leaks and weeps prior to use on site the risk of hydrocarbon contamination on site will not be likely. In addition the vast majority

Screening Question	**Response**
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	of the proposed development site is not located in close proximity to any surface watercourse and no new surface water crossing will be required for the project. The proposed greenway route runs along existing public roads at all watercourse intersections and crossings. The potential for contamination of surface waters downstream of the project site as a result of suspended solids generated by the project will be low and imperceptible. Where possible the vegetation stripping will be completed in dry conditions and the time frame for which denuded soils will be exposed will be minimised. The potential for the construction phase to result in nuisance to surrounding receptors as a result of noise, vibrations and dust generated during construction activities is assessed as being low. This is primarily due to the staged approach that will be adopted to the construction works. This will involve works being undertaken along 100m sections with each section being completed prior to the commencement of the next section. In addition to the above and in order to further minimise any potential for noise and vibration nuisance mitigation measures will be implemented during the construction phase. These measures will adhere to the best practice guidelines outlined in BS5228: Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites – Part 1 Noise (2009 + A1 2014). These standard guidelines offer detailed guidelines on the control of noise and vibration from construction activities. The following mitigation measures will be implemented during the construction phase of the proposed development to ensure noise and vibration limit values are complied with: • The hours during which site activities are likely to create high levels of noise will be limited to a set time period; • During the construction phase a clear line of communication will be established between the contractor/developer, Local Authority and residents;

Screening Question	**Response**
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	• A site representative will be appointed to take responsibility of all matters relating to noise and vibration; • Plant with low inherent potential for generating noise and/ or vibration will be selected for construction; • Noisy plant will be sited as far away from sensitive properties as permitted by site constraints. With the implementation of the measures it is predicted that the nuisance impact of noise generated during the construction phase will be of a short-term and imperceptible nature. There is the potential for dust emissions arising during construction, particularly during dry and/or windy weather conditions. Dust emissions may also be exacerbated by the presence of dry surfaces and uncovered stockpiles during the construction. The quantity of dust is likely to be relatively small and dust emissions would be temporary in nature. Dust effects are likely to create nuisance in the immediate locale rather than significant environmental effects. Best practice mitigation measures will be put in place to minimise adverse effects. The measures will include the following: A dust minimisation measures will be implemented for the construction phase of the project. In order to minimise dust emissions during construction the following measure will be implemented: • Hard surface roads will be swept to remove mud and aggregate materials from their surface while any un-surfaced roads will be restricted to essential site traffic. • Furthermore, any road that has the potential to give rise to fugitive dust must be regularly watered, as appropriate, during dry and/or windy conditions.

Screening Question	**Response**
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	• Bowsers or suitable watering equipment will be available during periods of dry weather throughout the construction period. • During periods of very high winds (gales), activities likely to generate significant dust emissions shall be postponed until the gale has subsided. • Material handling systems and site stockpiling of materials will be designed and laid out to minimise exposure to wind. Water misting or sprays will be used as required if particularly dusty activities such as rock blasting or demolition are necessary during dry or windy periods. • The Principal Contractor or equivalent will be obliged to monitor the contractors' performance to ensure that the proposed mitigation measures are implemented and that dust impacts and nuisance are minimised; • Community engagement will be undertaken before works commence on site explaining the nature and duration of the works to local residents and businesses; • A complaints register will be kept on site detailing all telephone calls and letters of complaint received in connection with dust nuisance or air quality concerns, together with details of any remedial actions carried out; • It is the responsibility of the contractor at all times to demonstrate full compliance with the dust control conditions herein; With the implementation of these dust minimisation measures in addition to a construction management plan including dust mitigation

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	fugitive emissions of dust from the site will be insignificant and will not pose a nuisance at nearby sensitive receptors.
(g) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	Provided the construction works are carried out in accordance with standard best practice guidelines such as those published by CIRIA (i.e. CIRIA C532; C648; and C697) are implemented and that all associated building and environmental regulations are adhered to it is not predicted that the project will not have the potential to result in a major accident or disaster.
(h) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	The preceding items to this Table outline the measures that are to be implemented to ensure that the project does not result in pollution to waters or air or nuisance generated by noise, dust or vibration emissions. All best practice mitigation measures outlined in this screening report will represent a minimum requirement to be implemented for the construction phase of the project. With the implementation of these measures the construction phase will not represent a significant risk to human health.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the proposed development.

Rationale: The scale and compound of the works proposed are representative of a small-scale project and is predominantly restricted to habitats of low ecological value. Measures that will form part of the construction phase of the project as outlined above will ensure protection of the receiving environment.

4.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 OVERVIEW OF SITE LOCATION

The majority of the proposed greenway will be restricted to existing public roads, surfaced paths and old bog roads. Approximately 7.1km of the route runs over existing public road while approximately 1.3km runs over defunct bog roads. Together these sections account for approximately 80% of the length of the proposed greenway. The remaining 20% (approximately 2.2km) is located over greenfield land in the form of grassland and peatland habitats.

The habitats occurring along and adjacent to the proposed greenway route are briefly described below according to chainages along the proposed route. A detailed description of the habitats and their locations along the proposed greenway route is provided in the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment that has been prepared for the proposed greenway. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the land cover occurring along each of the sections of the proposed greenway as described below. The proposed greenway passes through three sections of greenfield land, these are between Ch. 4,640 and 5,100; 5,630 and 7,060; and 8,200 and 8,530. Detailed habitat map figures for these three sections are provided in the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment for the proposed greenway.

Ch 0 to approximate Ch. 3,100 This section of the greenway route is existing and already in place. From Ch. 0 on the Achill Sound side of the causeway bridge until Ch. 1,350 at the junction with the Shore Road, the greenway will be situated along the existing R319 regional road. At Ch. 1,350 it turns north on to the existing Shore Road and follows this public road until Ch. 1,600 where it turns northwest and follows an existing section of tarmacadam greenway. This existing stretch of greenway continues in a northwesterly direction until approximately Ch. 3,350 in the townland of Saula West. The dominated habitat occurring within the footprint of the proposed greenway from Ch. 0 to Ch. 3,350 is existing artificial surfaces (BL3) in the form of impermeable road surfaces and paths.

Ch. 3,100 to approximately Ch. 3,350: Artificial surface (BL3) in the form of an existing paved public road occurs along this section of the proposed route. The proposed greenway will be accommodated along the existing verge of the road. The verge consists of grassy verge (GS2) habitat.

Ch. 3,350 to approximately Ch. 3,800: Artificial surface (BL3) in the form of an existing bog road, which is underlain by road fill and hardcore material occurs along this section. The bog road is in a state of disrepair in areas and has become colonized by heathland species such as *Calluna vulgaris, Molinia caerulea* and *Schoenus nigrans*. Dense stands of *Rhododendron ponitcum* occur along this section closer to Ch. 3,350. *Gunnera tinctoria* was also noted along this section of the proposed greenway.

Ch 3,800 to approximately Ch. 4,650: This section of the route follows along a turbary track that overlays deep peat. The original habitat under the footprint of this track and in the surrounding area was lowland blanket bog (PB3). The habitats along this section of the route varies between an existing grassy tracked surface, best described as grassy verge (GS2), cutover/eroding blanket bog (PB4/5) and rank *Juncus effusus* dominated wet grassland (GS4). The blanket bog habitat occurring either side of the proposed greenway route along this section is representative of cutover blanket bog (PB4).

Ch 4,640 to approximately Ch 4,720: This short section of the proposed greenway represents the end of a largely southeast to northwest orientated section of the proposed route that follows an existing turbary track. The existing turbary track terminates at approximately Ch. 4,640. The next 80m of the track to approximately Ch. 4,720 overly an area of regenerating blanket bog. This area has been cutover in the past (PB4) but is now supporting a typical suite of blanket bog species that are indicative of active blanket bog conditions. As such it is more representative of lowland blanket bog (PB3).

Ch. 4,720 to approximately Ch. 5,160: This south to north orientated section of the proposed greenway route first follows a bank that runs through regenerating blanket bog. Moving north the underlying peat thins out and the habitat becomes more representative of wet heath (HH3) with exposed siliceous rock. Towards the end of this section the route passes through an area of enclosed juncus dominated wet grassland before it merges with an existing paved public road (BL3).

Ch. 5,160 to approximately Ch. 5,630: This section of the route follows an existing public road in a westerly direction over the lower Owenbegacashel River bridge. The estuary of the river is located to the north and east of the public road. The route then turns east, following an existing public road until its terminus at a pier adjacent to the coast.

Ch. 5,630 to approximately Ch. 6,000: The proposed greenway route runs adjacent to the coastline in a north and east direction. It first passes through an area of scrub habitat (WS2) before running through an enclosed improved/wet grassland agricultural field.

Ch. 6,000 to approximately Ch. 6,235: This south to north orientated section of the proposed greenway runs along the edge an area of lowland blanket bog/degraded blanket bog (PB3/PB4_5) and Molinia dominated wet heath (HH3). The blanket bog over which the proposed greenway will pass has been drained and dried out by a deep drainage ditch immediate adjacent to the propsed route of the greenway.

Ch. 6,235 to approximately Ch. 7,060: This section of the proposed greenway runs over a series of fields that have been reclaimed from original lowland blanket bog. The fields are in a varying states of management with some reverting to recolonising blanket bog conditions (between Ch. 6,850 – 6,900), others being representative of improved agricultural grassland (GA1), wet grassland (GS4) and others representative of acidic grassland (GS3).

Ch. 7,060 to approximately Ch. 8,200: This section of the proposed greenway uses an existing public road that is representative of a bog road. The road is surfaced throughout and is representative of artificial surfaces (BL3).

Ch. 8,200 to approximately Ch. 8,530: This section of the proposed greenway runs along the boundary of previously improved agricultural fields that are now representative of wet grassland (GS4) and cutover blanket bog (PB4) and degraded blanket bog.

Ch. 8,530 to approximately to Ch. 10,600 Bunacurry: This final section of the proposed greenway uses existing minor public road surfaces (BL3).

The proposed greenway will not require the provision of any new watercourse crossings. All watercourses to be crossed by the proposed greenway route are already crossed by existing sections of public road. Figure 3.1 shows the watercourses crossed by the existing public road sections of the proposed greenway.

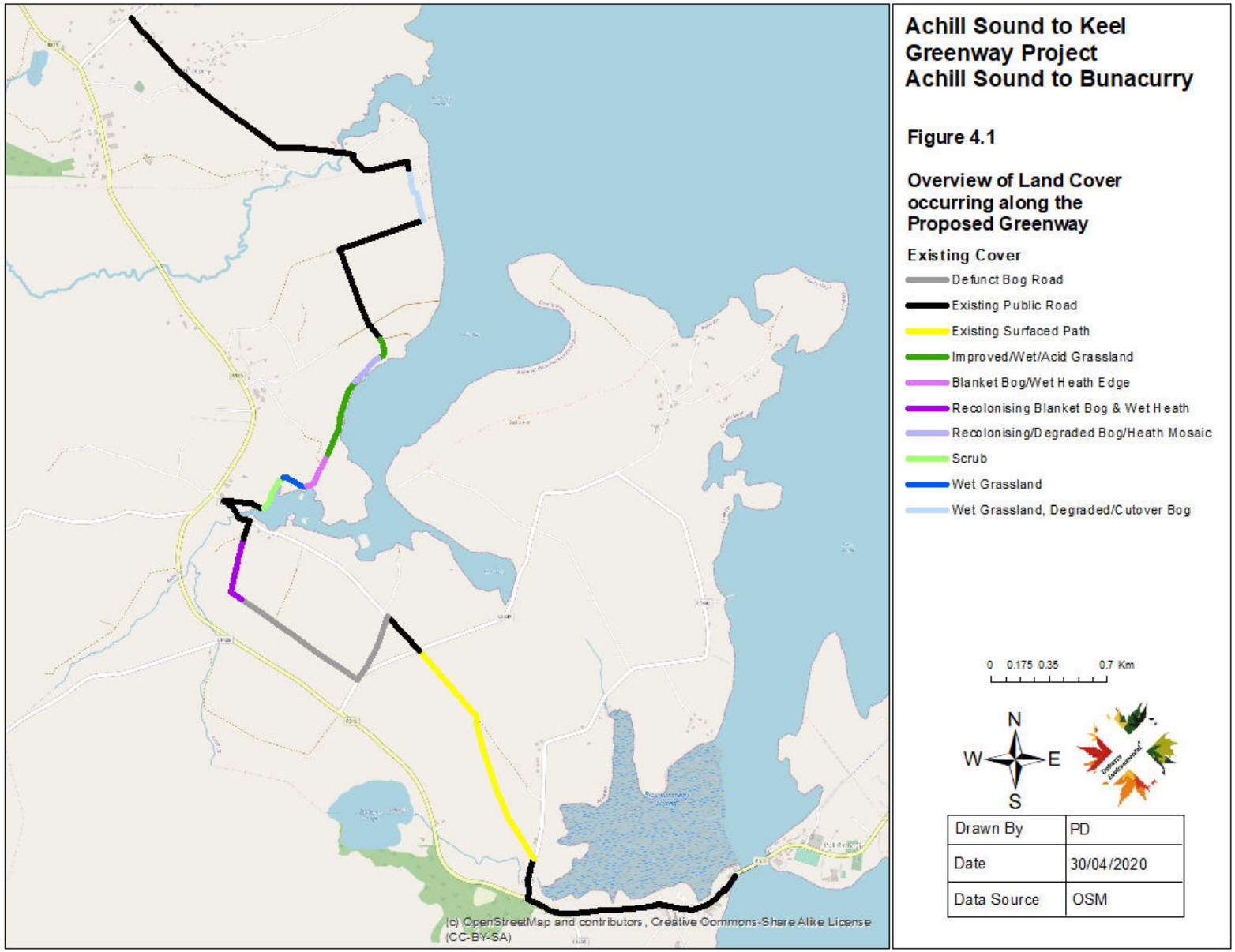
The greenfield sections through which the proposed greenway will pass do not support breeding or resting places of protected mammals. No sensitive bird species were identified along the proposed greenway during field surveys in April 2019 and April 2020 and overall there is little

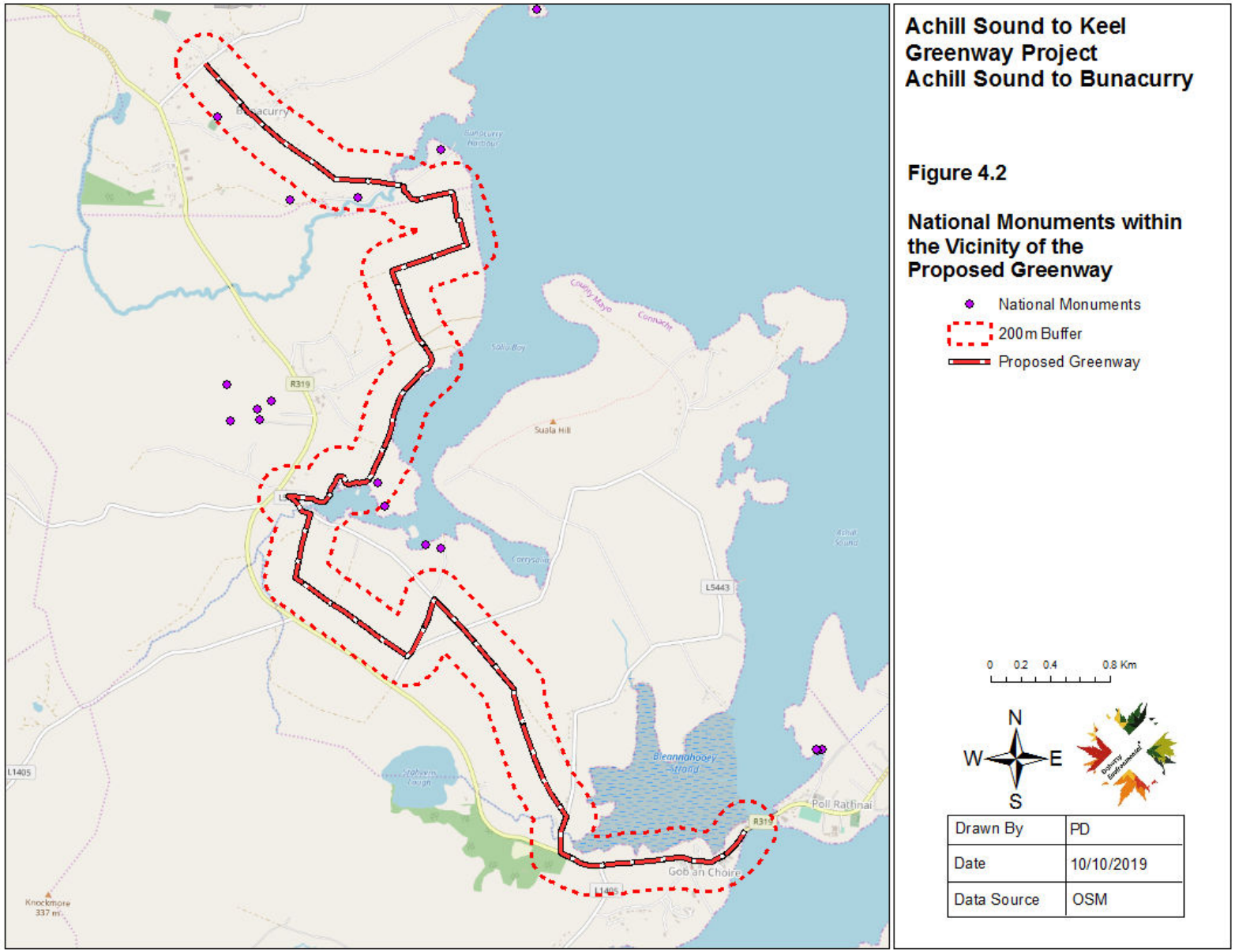
potential for the greenfield sections of the route to function as important breeding habitat for sensitive species such a red grouse, golden plover or dunlin. There is some habitat for meadow pipit and skylark occurring along short sections within the three greenfield sections of the route. No sensitive bird species were recorded relying on coastal habitats to the east of the proposed greenway between Chainage 5,600 and 7,000. This area of coastal is not representative as a sensitive or important bird area.

4.1.1 Cultural Heritage & Landscape

Figure 4.2 shows the location of all national monuments occurring in the vicinity of the proposed greenway. Three national monuments occur within 200m o the proposed greenway route while a further 3 occur just outside the 200m buffer. Of these six monuments occurring in close proximity to the route, 4 are located at the northern end of the route, along the section of the route confined to existing public roads.

Two of the monuments are located in the townland of Cashel to the east of Ch. 6,050. Both monuments are children's burial grounds. The nearest monument to the proposed greenway is located over 60m to the east and is located outside the National Monument Service Zone of Notification as detailed on the Departments Historic Environment Viewer (see http://webgis.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/).


Achill Sound to Keel Greenway Project
Achill Sound to Bunacurry
Figure 4.1
Overview of Land Cover occurring along the Proposed Greenway
Existing Cover
Defunct Bog Road
Existing Public Road
Existing Surfaced Path
Improved/Wet/Acid Grassland
Blanket Bog/Wet Heath Edge
Recolonising Blanket Bog & Wet Heath
Recolonising/Degraded Bog/Heath Mosaic
Scrub
Wet Grassland
Wet Grassland, Degraded/Cutover Bog
0 0.175 0.35 0.7 Km
N
W
E
S
Drawn By PD
Date 30/04/2020
Data Source OSM
(c) OpenStreetMap and contributors, Creative Commons-Share Alike License (CC-BY-SA)


Achill Sound to Keel
Greenway Project
Achill Sound to Bunacurry
Figure 4.2
National Monuments within the Vicinity of the Proposed Greenway
National Monuments
200m Buffer
Proposed Greenway
0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Km
N
W
E
S
Drawn By PD
Date 10/10/2019
Data Source OSM
Bunacurry
R319
Suala Hill
L5443
L1405
Poll Rattinai
Gob an Choire
Knockmore
337 m

St Joseph's Church at Bunacury is the only structure within close proximity of the proposed greenway that is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The proposed greenway will be restricted to the footprint of the existing public road to the southwest of the church and will not involve any construction works in this area.

Table 4.1: Location of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	**Response**
(a) the existing and approved land use;	The existing land use within the project site is dominated by existing artificial surfaces for transportation purposes, grassland used for agricultural purposes and peatland used for agriculture and turbary.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	The project site is currently representative of existing transport routes and cultivated and/or impacted (i.e. cutover, drained) peatland. Minor sections of the route will cross over stretches of peatland habitat that have been altered by past land use practices. The use of a boardwalk at these locations will minimise the impact of the greenway to these peatlands and will ensure that a sensitive design is implemented for the provision of the greenway. The Ecological Impact Assessment which accompanies this report has found that the proposed greenway will not have the potential to result in significant negative impacts to biodiversity and with the implementation of mitigation measures will at most have the potential to result in minor negative impacts. The Ecological Impact Assessment has also identified measures to minimise the loss of any greenfield habitats through the provision of boardwalk sections and the minimisation of the width of Type B surfaces in greenfield lands through which the

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	**Response**
	proposed greenway will pass. Furthermore in order to offset the loss of any scrub or grassland habitat to the footprint of Type B surfaces species-rich scrub, grassland and heath vegetation communities will be established along the verges of all Type B surface including those sections passing through scrub, grassland and along existing sections of defunct bog roads. In addition the loss of greenfield land to the footprint of the Type B surfaces along the greenway route will be further offset by the provision of wildlife and biodiversity landscaping in an area of Mayo County Council-owned lands occurring adjacent to c. Ch. 500 along the greenway route. The implementation of biodiversity landscaping along the verges of Type B surfaces and within the Council-owned lands adjacent to Ch. 500 will ensure that the project does not result in any net loss of habitat and will in fact have the potential to provide for a net gain in the extent of species-rich semi-natural habitat occurring along the proposed greenway route. These measures will allow for the regeneration of biodiversity along the proposed greenway route. The proposed development will not have a significant effect on the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources.
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	The potential for the proposed development to significantly effect the absorption capacity of the environment, with respect to the parameters listed in Column 1 opposite are outlined below. (i) no works are proposed that will affect riparian areas or river mouths. Peatland habitats are classified as wetland habitats. Two sections of peatland habitat occur along the route and at these locations a boardwalk will be provided to ensure that negative impacts to these habitats are minimised to a negligible/low impact.

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	**Response**
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment; (iii) mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;	(ii) Sections of the project occur close to the foreshore at Cashel South. The section of the route at these located will be restricted to existing road surfaces before heading landward across rank scrub habitat. (iii) not applicable, the project is located at a remote distance from mountainous and forested areas. (iv) not application, the project is located at a remote distance from any nature reserves and parks. (v) The Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that accompanies the proposed development application has assessed the likely significant effects of the proposal on the conservation objectives of European Sites within a 15km buffer of the development and has concluded in a finding of no likely significant effects. In addition no NHAs or pNHAs are located in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The nearest such site is the Sraheens Bog NHA which is located approximately 750m to the south of the nearest point of the proposed greenway. This NHA is buffered from the proposed greenway by existing public roads and cutover bog and there will be no potential for the project to interact with this NHA or any other NHA or pNHA in the wider surrounding area.
(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and	No areas along the footprint of the proposed carriageway have been identified as failing to meet environmental quality standards.

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	**Response**
relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	
(vii) densely populated areas;	The proposed greenway is not located within a densely populated area.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The proposed greenway will be predominantly restricted to existing surfaced roads, paths and bog roads and will not result in any perceptible change to the landscape character of the area. Six national monuments are located within the vicinity of the proposed route. Four are located in the vicinity of a section of the proposed greenway that will be restricted to the existing public road in the vicinity of Bunacurry. No works, with the exception of he provision of sign posts, will be required for the greenway along this section in the vicinity of these 4 monuments. As such there will be no potential for the project to result in any negative impacts to these monuments. A section of the proposed greenway at Ch. 6,050 will be located approximately 65m to the west of a national monument – a children's burial ground (SMRS Ref: MA055-012). An additional children's burial ground is located approximately 215m to the southeast of this point of the greenway route (SMRS Ref: MA055-013). It is noted that the greenway is located outside the Departments Zone of Notification and that a boardwalk section is proposed at this location.

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	**Response**
	The provision of a boardwalk section in the vicinity of monument MA055-012 will minimise ground disturbance in the wider area surrounding this monument and ensure that a sensitive approach to the design of the greenway is implemented. Notwithstanding the sensitive design to the greenway at this location and the buffer distance separating the project from this national monument in order to ensure that works associated with the greenway and the provision of the boardwalk at this location do not result in significant effects to archaeology a suitably qualified archaeologist will be appointed as part of the detailed design team in order to advice on specific potential impacts as and when they may arise. This will result in continuous impact assessment of the detailed works, allowing mitigation measures to be agreed in advance, in full consultation with the statutory bodies. As part of the project all relevant measures outlined in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities will be implemented. The implementation of such measures will ensure that the project does not result in significant effects to features of cultural heritage. In addition it is recognised that given the extensive, linear nature of the proposed development it is possible that unrecorded, surface and/or sub-surface archaeological remains/artefacts may be encountered during the construction phase of the project. By way of mitigation, all works associated with the project, including all machine work must be subject to archaeological monitoring, conducted under archaeological licence, by a suitably qualified licensed archaeologist. Any work within greenfield or peatlands will require continuous monitoring, while works in existing carriageway must be subject to regular spot checking by a licence archaeologist. An appropriate archaeological monitoring programme, including the degree and extent of monitoring will be

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	**Response**
	agreed with the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Should archaeological material be found during monitoring, the archaeologist on the project may have work on the site stopped, while the nature and extent of the archaeological remains are assessed, recorded, sampled and mitigation measures such as excavation, preservation in-situ, re-routing of works etc - are considered, agreed and sanctioned by the National Monuments Service (Dept. of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) and the National Museum of Ireland. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the National Monuments Service and the National Museum of Ireland regarding any necessary mitigation action (eg. preservation in situ and or excavation). All work along the length of the proposed Greenway needs to be carried out under archaeological licence. The archaeological licence application process involves the preparation of a detailed method statement, by a suitably qualified archaeologist and can take up to four weeks to be issued by the National Monuments Service. No ground works can commence until the archaeological licence is in place, and an archaeological mitigation strategy has been agreed with the statutory authorities. Archaeological licences are legal documents, granted under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004) and are subject to strict conditions. The developer should be aware of these conditions. Post-excavation analysis of any archaeological material uncovered during monitoring is an integral part of the archaeological process. Post excavation work may involve sample processing; find analysis, radiocarbon dating etc. Post excavation work generally requires the input of outside archaeological specialists. Post excavation must be completed. The developer must guarantee that funding is available for monitoring and any subsequent testing, excavation and post-excavation works. The archaeologist/s attached to the development

Screening Criteria ***The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:***	Response
	needs to be informed of any changes to the proposed site layout or any additional works not included in the original specifications. Any additions to the original specifications will have to be archaeologically assessed.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the location of the proposed development.

Rationale: Sensitivities with regard to the presence of a national monument and the presence of peatland habitats along the proposed greenway route have been identified. The design of the greenway has sought to minimise disturbance to these receptors by implementing a boardwalk design at these locations. In addition a range of mitigation measures will be implemented to further ensure that the proposed greenway does not result in any significant disturbance to these receptors. A Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment has determined a finding of no likely significant effects on the conservation management objectives of European Sites within a 15km radius of the study area. In addition there will be no potential for the proposed greenway to result in disturbance to NHAs and pNHAs in the wider surrounding area.

5.0 CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Having considered the above environmental factors the aim of this section is to address likely impacts on the environment by the implementation of the proposed development. Whether an EIA would be deemed necessary relevant to the scale of the project and the environment will then be determined.

The 2014 EIA Directive requires that an assessment of the likely significant effects of a project on the environment must be considered with regard to the factors specified in Article 3(1) of the Directive and Section 171A(b)(i)(I) to (V) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2018, taking into account:

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);

(b) the nature of the impact;

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;

(e) the probability of the impact;

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;

(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

The factors outlined in Article 3(1) of the Directive are presented in Table 5.1 below under the heading of "Environmental Factor". The results of the assessment provided in Table 5.1 are then used to inform an assessment against the criteria evaluating the characteristics of potential impacts.

Table 5.1: Characteristics of Potential Impacts on Environmental Factors

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Populations & Human Health	Some short-term, local and negligible effects from noise and air emissions of the construction phase are expected. In addition all construction activities will have to comply with best practice measures as outlined in this screening report. All relevant best practice mitigation measures required for avoiding likely significant effects to populations and human health through potential effects to soils, water, noise, air etc will be required to be implemented as part of the construction phase of the project. No negative operational impacts are identified for human beings.

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Biodiversity	The proposed greenway is predominantly restricted to existing public roads, surfaced paths and old bog roads that are of negligible to low biodiversity value. Three sections of the proposed greenway will pass through greenfield land. The impact of the proposed greenway to the habitats and fauna occurring in these sections of the greenfield land are assessed in the Ecological Impact Assessment report which accompanies this report. This assessment has found that the project will not have the potential to result in significant negative impacts to biodiversity and with the implementation of all mitigation measures will result in at most minor negative impacts. The provision of biodiversity landscaping, as specified in the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment report will ensure that the project does not result in the net loss of habitat occurring along the proposed greenway route.
Soil and Geology	There will be no significant impact to soils or geology.
Water	The project will not involve any watercourse crossings or works in the vicinity of watercourses. The construction phase measures outlined in this screening report will ensure that the project does not present a risk of significant pollution to this watercourses during construction. The operation phase of the project will not have the potential to result in activities that present a risk to water quality.
Air Quality and climate	The potential will exist for localised, temporary and negligible impacts associated with dust generated from construction plant and machinery such as diggers or excavators. Emissions during the works phase will be further minimised through the implementation of best practice mitigation techniques as outlined in this Screening Report.
Noise and Vibration	Noise during the construction phase is likely to result in a negligible level of nuisance. In addition noise and vibration during the works phase will be minimised through best practice and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in this screening report. With the implementation of these measures the construction phase will not result in significant noise

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
	nuisance to sensitive receptors and will be minimised to an imperceptible impact. The operation phase will not have the potential to generate noise or vibration nuisance.
Cultural Heritage	Given the location of the project along the verge of an existing road corridor that has been subject to significant construction works in the past it is considered that no features of cultural heritage occur along the proposed greenway route or will be negatively affected by the project.
Landscape & Visual	The proposed development is largely located along existing roads, paths and bog roads and will blend in with these existing routes such that it does not result in any significant change to the landscape and visual setting of the surrounding area.
Interrelationship between above parameters	Given that the project is not expected to result in negative impacts to the environmental parameters assessed in the preceding sections of this Table, it is expected to result in any negative impacts as a result of the inter-relationship of the foregoing parameters.

Table 5.2: Characteristics of the potential impacts

Characteristics of potential impacts (The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out below are informed by the results of the assessment provided in Table 5.1 above)	**Potential Impact**

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	Negligible, localized temporary impacts are identified primarily at construction stage only.
(b) the nature of the impact;	The nature of the impact associated with the proposed development to environmental parameters have been set out in Table 5.1 above. It has been concluded that provided all best practice and mitigation measures as outlined in this Screening Report are implemented the project will not have the potential to result in significant environmental effects.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;	Given the size, scale and location of the proposed development potential transfrontier impacts will not arise.
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;	The project is representative of a small scale development. The construction phase will be of a short-term duration being completed within an estimated timeframe of 15 months. With the implementation of best practice measures and associated mitigation it will not result in intense or complex impacts to the receiving environment.
(e) the probability of the impact;	Potential impacts during the construction phase associated with nuisance to sensitive receptors at adjacent dwellings and schools are assessed as being negligible and the implementation of best practice measures and associated mitigation will ensure that these effects are of a short term and slight negative impact.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	It is estimated that impacts associated with the construction phase will commence within 3 months of planning approval and will last for approximately 15 months. This will represent a short-term impact. No long-term or permanent significant negative impacts are predicted to arise as a result of the construction phase. There will be an irreversible and permanent loss of grassland, and scrub habitat to the footprint of the project. The provision of the greenway will not represent a significant negative

	environmental effect. The provision of biodiversity landscaping will ensure that there will be no net loss of semi-natural greenfield habitats occurring along the proposed greenway route.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;	As outlined in Table 2.1 an assessment of the potential for cumulative negative impacts to arise in combination with other existing or approved projects has been provided and it has been determined that the proposed greenway will not have the potential to combine with these other projects to result in significant negative cumulative effects to the environment.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	Measures to minimise any adverse effects to the environment are detailed in this screening report and are derived from best practice guidelines. These measures have been implemented as a best practice approach for the proposed development and are proven to be effective at reducing the potential for adverse environmental impacts to occur.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the potential impacts on environmental parameters.

Rationale: As outlined in Table 5.1 the proposed development will not have the potential to result in significant adverse effects to biodiversity, soils and geology, water, landscape and cultural heritage, noise and air quality parameters.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the potential impacts.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed greenway development between Achill Sound and Bunacurry does not trigger the threshold for mandatory EIA/EIAR as set out in the 2001 Regulations (as Amended) and has been assessed as a sub-threshold EIA development. This EIA Screening Assessment has determined that the characteristics of the proposed development are considered not significant due to the scale and nature of the proposed development, the characteristics and sensitivities of the receiving environment and design and mitigation measures that will be implemented as part of the construction phase and operation phase of the proposed development.

The European Guidance on EIA Screening provides a checklist to assist with the decision of whether an EIA is required based on the characteristics of a project and its environment. This screening checklist is presented in Table 5.1 below and have been informed by the various assessments that have been set out in Sections 2, 3 and 4 above.

Table 6.1: Screening Checklist

Questions to be Considered	Yes / No? Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	Yes	No. The construction of the proposed development will involve a minor change in land cover within sections of its footprint. This will involve a small area of physical land cover change. The project has been designed to be in keeping with the surrounding landscape.
2. Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	No. The proposed development will require natural resources in the form of standard construction materials. The quantities to be used as part of the proposed development will be relatively small given the scale of the proposed development.
3. Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or	Yes	No. Standard construction materials for a proposed project will be used during construction, however

production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?		it is unlikely that this would include any quantity of materials that could be harmful to human health or the environment. Best practice construction will be implemented during the construction phase and all such materials will be stored in secure locations and will be handled in accordance with accepted construction procedures.
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	No. Waste in the form of construction material wrappings and pallets etc. will be generated during the project. In addition waste generated by site operative at the site canteen etc. will be generated. All solid waste will be managed in accordance with relevant waste legislation and all waste would be removed by the site by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facilities. Efforts will be made to reuse wherever possible soil material generated during excavations at the project site. Where materials cannot be reused (e.g. where soil material is at risk of being contaminated with non-native invasive species seed material) they will be transferred off site by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facilities. The movement of a soil material from the project site will be subject to the control measures.
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes	No. It is expected that dust and emissions from construction vehicles, plant and equipment may be released temporarily during construction. Mitigation measures as outlined in this Screening Report will be implemented to minimise emissions and prevent discharge. All emissions will be kept within standard air quality limits outlined in the relevant legislation.
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	No. It is expected that noise and vibration will occur during construction of the project. Mitigation measures have been outlined this Screening Report to minimise the potential impact of noise and vibration. No night time lighting is proposed as part of the project.
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters,	Yes	No. All potential polluting substances will be stored and managed appropriately by the contractor to reduce the risk of accidental spillages and/or discharges. There will be no discharge to surface

groundwater, coastal wasters or the sea?		water; groundwater, coastal waters or the sea and appropriate measures to ensure effective incident control will be provided for the construction phase of the project. The operation phase of the project will not pose a risk of contamination of waters.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	Yes	No. Construction activities would be undertaken with due regard to occupational health and safety. The site manager would be responsible for the management of health and safety on site during construction.
9. Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	No	No. The project is not predicted to have the potential to result in social changes in demography, traditional lifestyles or employment.
10. Are there any other factors which should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes	This Report undertook a review of the Mayo County Council planning portal to identify other existing and approved projects within the wider surrounding area. Projects were identified and an assessment for cumulative effects has been completed. This assessment has found that the proposed greenway will not have the potential to combine with these other projects to result in significant negative impacts to the environment.
11. Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	No	No protected natural areas such as European Sites or NHAs occur in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The Sraheen Bog NHA is located approximately 750m to the west of the project site. The nearest SAC or SPA is located over 1km from the project site. A Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment for the project has been completed and has found that the proposed development is not likely alone or in combination with other projects result in significant effects to any European Sites. There are no connections between the project and NHAs or pNHAs in the surrounding area and there will be no potential for the project to result in negative impacts to these sites. Cultural heritage receptors have been identified in the vicinity of a section of boardwalk along the route and measures have been outlined to ensure that these monuments remain undisturbed by the project. The project will be predominantly restricted to the footprint of existing roads, paths and old bog roads

		and will not result in any perceptible change to the landscape character of the area.
12. Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	No	The habitats occurring within and in the vicinity of the project are dominated by artificial man-made land cover of low to local value. There are sections of peatland habitat occur along the route and a boardwalk has been provided along these sections to ensure disturbance to these peatland habitats are minimised.
13. Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	No	The project site and surrounding area does not support habitats that are relied upon by important or sensitive species of fauna or flora.
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No.
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No.
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No. The construction phase will be of a short-term duration and will involve a low number of construction vehicular movements that are not predicted to have the potential to result in significant traffic volumes that could lead to congestion.
18. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes	Yes. During the construction phase mitigation measures will be put in place to minimise the visual disturbance caused by the construction works.

		Once constructed the project will blend in with the surrounding built landscape.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No, for reasons set out above. .
20. Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes	No. The project is located along the verge of an existing road.
21. Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No.
23. Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No. The construction phase will be restricted to the project site and with the implementation of a best practice approach to the construction phase and all measures outlined in this Report there will be no potential for significant effects to the population occurring in the surrounding area.
24. Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	Sensitive land uses are located in the vicinity of the route at Achill Sound and Bunacurry. Given that works to the greenway will be very minor at these locations (e.g. the erection of signage etc.) there will be not potential for disturbance to such sensitive land uses.
25. Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism,	No	No.

minerals, which could be affected by the project?		
26. Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No	No.
27. Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes	No.

Given the scale and nature of the project and taking account of all available information, the overall probability of impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed development (during the construction or operational phases) is considered to be low, as summarised in Table 5.3 above.

No significant environmental impacts will occur and the implementation of best practice measures outlined in this Report will further reduce the potential for such impacts to arise.

The information provided in this EIA Screening Report can be used by the competent authority, Mayo County Council, to conclude and determine that an EIA is not required for the proposed greenway between Achill Sound and Bunacurry, Achill Island Co. Mayo as there will be no significant environmental effects.