

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination**

Kinsale Active Travel Scheme, Co. Cork.



Cork County Council
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

Completed by: Kieran Murphy (Ecology Unit)
Cork County Council.

Date: 07/11/2024

This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of a proposed conversion of Kinsale Active Travel Scheme, Co. Cork. The assessment is based on project drawings and details prepared by the Roads Department and O'Donnell Environmental Consultants.

In accordance with Regulation 250 of the Planning and Development Regulations, Local Authorities are required to carry out screening for appropriate assessment of proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on one or more European¹ sites. The Local Authority is required to determine that appropriate assessment of the proposed development is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on one or more European sites.

These requirements derive from Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive which states that

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

EU and National Guidance sets out two main stages to the assessment process which are as follows:

Stage One: Screening

The process which identifies what might be likely impacts arising from a plan or project on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. No further assessment is required where the risk of significant impacts on European sites can be objectively ruled out during the screening stage.

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

Where the possibility of significant impacts has not been discounted by the screening process, a more detailed assessment is required. This is called an Appropriate Assessment and requires the compilation of a **Natura Impact Statement** by the project proponent, which is a report of scientific evidence and data relating to European sites for which significant negative impacts have not been previously screened out. This is used to identify and classify any implications of the plan or project for these sites in view of their Conservation Objectives. The Appropriate Assessment must include a determination as to whether or not the project would adversely affect the integrity of any European site or sites. The plan or project may only be consented if adverse effects on the integrity of European sites can be objectively ruled out during the Appropriate Assessment process. The plan or project may not be consented on foot of an Appropriate Assessment, if it is found that it will give rise to adverse impacts on one or more European sites, or if uncertainty remains in relation to potential impacts on one or more European sites.

¹“European Site” means— (a) a candidate site of Community importance; (b) a site of Community importance; (c) a candidate special area of conservation; (d) a special area of conservation; (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area.

Name of the project

Kinsale Active Travel Scheme

Description of the project

The proposed development comprises the provision of linear pedestrian and cycle facilities along Abbey View Road (L3235), Bandon Road (L3234), local road L7249, Roseabbey Park, and Abbey Court located at the western border of Kinsale Town.

Specifically, the project will involve the following elements:

Section 1 - Abbey View Road / Compass Quay (spans from the junction with the R606 and Abbey View Road,) as far northward as the mini-roundabout):

- Junction tightening at R606 / Abbey View Road junction to reduce turning speeds. Widening of existing footpath on Abbey View Road.
- Provision of segregated cycle lanes commencing just north of the bridge, with space re-allocated from the carriageway and verges to provide dedicated, safe cycle tracks between Cammogue Marsh, the residential developments along Abbey View Road and the two schools.
- Signalised toucan crossing just north of the bridge on Abbey View Road.
- Improvements to local junctions in line with DMURS, including at-grade pedestrian priority crossings over entrances, and junction tightening.
- Realignment of existing informal crossing by Kinsale Community College just north of the junction with the Sáile Sports and Community Centre.
- Raised table junction at Roseabbey Park / Abbey View Road to slow down vehicular traffic and improve pedestrian crossings.
- Incorporate grasscrete, tree planting, rain gardens and landscaping as per accompanying Drawings.

Section 2 - Abbeylands (continues northward from the mini-roundabout to the non-signalised junction with Bandon Road):

- Retrofit the existing mini-roundabout to a compact design in line with DMURS and the Cycle Design Manual to improve safety, accessibility and comfort for all.
- Introduction of a 30kph speed limit zone between the new crossing at Kinsale Community School and the junction with Abbey View Road / Bandon, extending to Roseabbey Park and Abbey View residential streets.
- Development of a Quietway route running in parallel via quiet residential streets (Abbey Court and Abbey View) to boost cyclist and pedestrian permeability between Abbey View Road and Bandon Road. There is an existing path that will be formalised including widening the path, wayfinding signage, and removing kissing gate and fencing between Abbey Court and Abbey View. Supplementary lighting may be required to improve the safety and accessibility in terms of passive surveillance, lighting, and general visibility.
- Access control to the Quietway to ensure safety for all road users.
- Incorporate landscaping as per accompanying Drawings.

Section 3 - S. Bandon Road (continues westward along Bandon Road up to the junction with Cappagh):

- Provision of a shared pedestrian and cycle path on the northern side of the road.

- Provision of a new footpath between the junction with Abbey View Road and entrance to the Quietway. Continuing north from the Quietway, a segregated cycle lane, flush with the carriageway, is proposed.
- Improvements to all local junctions in line with DMURS and the Cycle Design Manual including local junction tightening and pedestrian priority crossings.
- Development of a complementary Quietway route running in parallel via quiet residential streets (Abbey Court and Abbey View) as detailed in Section 2 above, including a toucan crossing at the entrance on Bandon Road.
- Incorporate landscaping as per accompanying Drawings.

Section 4 - N. Bandon Road (continues westward along Bandon Road as far as the entrance to the proposed new Kinsale GAA Grounds):

- Continuation of the shared pedestrian and cycle path northward, varying between 3m-4m with a 0.5m grass verge buffer.
- Raised table toucan crossing at Bandon Road / Cappagh junction (to Gaelscoil).
- Improvements to local junctions in line with DMURS and Cycle Design Manual, including at-grade pedestrian priority crossings over entrances to development, and reduced corner radii.
- Gateway Treatment from the existing GAA Grounds to calm vehicular traffic and indicate to motorists they are approaching the edge of Kinsale Town, including an extension of the 50kph limit.
- Incorporate landscaping as per accompanying Drawings.

Section 5 - Cappagh

- Provision of a shared pedestrian and cycle path on the southern side of the road, between the junction with Bandon Road, as far as the Gaelscoil.

Section 6 - Roseabbey Park

- Provision of a raised table junction at Roseabbey Park / Abbey View Road to slow down vehicular traffic and improve pedestrian crossings.
- Reallocation of space for a shared pedestrian and cycle path on the western end between junction with Abbey View Road and entrance to Scoil Naomh Eltin.
- Extension of footpath and additional pedestrian crossing at eastern end of Roseabbey Park to improve pedestrian comfort and safety.
- Additional public realm improvements in line with the Safe Routes to School design guidance, such as rain gardens.

Surface water runoff within the bounds of public roadways currently is collected by a series of roadside drains associated with the municipal drainage network. This runoff feeds into the stormwater network which flows south along the L3235 via a series of gravity and private pressurised mains before discharging into the Lower Bandon Estuary. The remaining surface water outside the bounds of this network discharges largely to ground. Portions of surface water likely flows overland into the Knocknabohilly Stream at the north, and Commoge Marsh and Lower Bandon Estuary to the south.

The proposed scheme typically involves works in close proximity to existing roadways, which are already lit. Additional lighting is proposed in Section 2 only.

Site Context

The proposed site spans from Commoge Marsh at the southern end of Kinsale town, to the Y junction of the L3234 local road, north-west of Kinsale G.A.A Club, west along the L7249 local road to Kinsale Gaelscoil and east along Roseabbey Park road. All roads proposed for development are currently operational. While Commoge Marsh is not a designated site it is an estuarine lagoon that is considered a locally important habitat that possesses Annex I quality habitats and hosts a variety of roosting and foraging Annex bird species. Other adjoining land uses are residential, educational, commercial and recreational.

Figure 1 Site location



Figure 1.1 - Study Site Location

Project:
Kinsale Active Travel







Prepared for:

Cork County Council

Colm Breslin BSc (Hons)
D: 16/10/2024

Legend

-  Survey Area
-  Watercourses [EPA]
-  Commoge Marsh
-  Bird Night Roost



Microsoft product screen shot(s) reprinted with permission from Microsoft Corporation

Name and location of EU sites subject to screening

There are six Natura 2000 (European) sites located within a 15km radius of the site, these include:

1. Sovereign Island SPA (site code: 4124) located approximately 6km southeast of the proposed development.
2. Old Head of Kinsale SPA (site code: 4021) is located approximately 8.65km south of the proposed development.
3. Courtmacsherry Bay SPA (site code: 4219) located approximately 10.1km southwest of the proposed development.
4. Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC (site code: 1230) located approximately 10.1km southwest of the proposed development.
5. Seven Heads SPA (Site code: 4191) located approximately 13.98km southwest.
6. Cork Harbour SPA (site code: 4030) approximately 14.57km northeast.

Figure 2 Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development



Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites listed above?

No.

Describe how the project (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 Site

There are no direct source-receptor pathways between the proposed site and any of Natura 2000 site.

Given the nature and scale of the proposed works, the distances involved and the lack of a viable source-receptor pathways, the potential for impacts on the above designated sites could only occur as a result of ex-situ impacts on mobile species associated with SPAs mentioned above. However, no evidence of usage of the site by birds listed as qualifying interests of surrounding SPAs were identified within the proposed development boundary and that the habitats contained therein are not of significant importance for any relevant bird species.

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project being assessed that could affect these sites (provide details)?

No potential for impacts identified, therefore the proposed project does not pose a threat of contributing to effects which could be significant when considered in combination with other impact sources.

Cork County Council evaluation and overall conclusion that there are no significant effects on European Sites foreseen as a result of the proposal.

In accordance with Section 177S of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant negative any EU site for the following reasons:

- No works are proposed within any of the listed European sites.
- No direct loss, alteration or fragmentation of habitats will occur within any EU sites;
- The site is located sufficiently distant from any EU site to be satisfied that there is no risk of activities associated with the project causing disturbance to qualifying habitats or species.
- All works will be carried out applying standard environmental controls throughout the construction phase and in accordance with standard construction procedure (e.g., CIRIA, 2001).

It is therefore determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 is not required.