



## **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

**R445 Newhall Junction Improvement Project Co. Kildare**



**Date: September 2020**

**For: KILGALLEN & PARTNERS CONSULTING ENGINEER**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

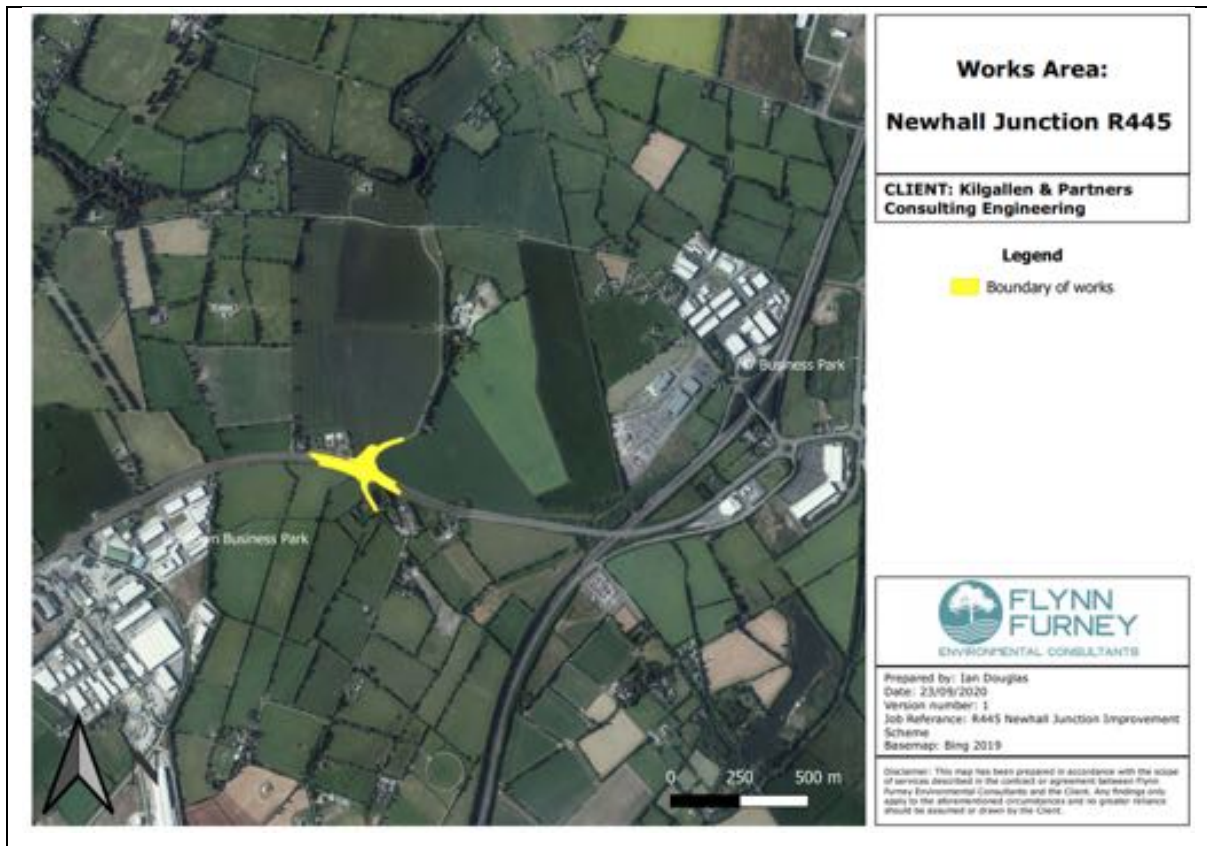
A junction improvement scheme is proposed at the Newhall Junction on the R445 to improve the safety and overall functionality of this junction and the R445 for all road users. Flynn, Furney Environmental Consultants Ltd has been engaged by Kilgallen & Partners Consulting Engineering for the provision of an environmental impact assessment screening report for the proposed works. The principal requirement for these services is to assist the relevant authorities (Kildare County Council) in forming an opinion as to whether or not the proposed works should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and if so whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it.

The screening process includes an assessment of the details of the proposed works with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended by Planning and Development Regulations 2015), the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and relevant EU Guidance including Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, EU, 2015 and Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening, EU, 2017. The report provides a conclusion of the process and finally a recommendation.

## 1.1 Description of Proposed Development

Works proposed are the construction of a roundabout on the R445 at the same location as Newhall Crossroads. The Local Roads L6064 and L2031 will receive minor realignment required for the entry and exit geometry at the roundabout. Significant verge widening will be required on the realigned local roads to provide appropriate forward visibility on the local roads. These works will also involve associated removal of existing roadways and roadway infrastructure, cutting and filling of areas and the installation of new infrastructure or upgrading to existing roadway infrastructure.

Figure 1: General Site Area



## 2 Project Screening Introduction and Methodologies

### 2.1 EIA Screening Methodology

Screening is the first stage in the EIA process, whereby a decision is made on whether or not EIA is required. This Screening Assessment was undertaken with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- The Planning & Development Act 2000, the Planning & Development (Strategic infrastructure) Act 2006 and the Roads Act 2007;
- Guidance on EIA, Screening, European Commission, 2001
- EIA, Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development, DoEHLG, 2003
- Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A Practical Guide (NRA, 2008).
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009.
- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (Draft) - EPA 2017
- European Directive EIA 2014/52/EU<sup>1</sup>
- Transposition of 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) in the Land Use Planning and EPA Licencing Systems. Key Issues Consultation Paper by Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DOHPCLG, 2017).

EIA legislation sets down the types of projects that may require an EIAR. Annex I defines mandatory projects that require an EIAR and Annex II defines projects that are assessed on the basis of set mandatory thresholds for each of the project classes. A detailed desktop study of key environmental, archaeological, visual and cultural receptors on the route has been carried out. Following this, a range of detailed field surveys were carried out.

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<sup>1</sup> [Directive 2014/52/EU](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (OJ L 124, 25.4.2015, p. 1).

The EIA screening exercise initially assesses the development for Mandatory EIA using classifications defined in the appropriate legislation. Where no mandatory requirement is concluded, screening advances to sub-threshold development assessment, where the competent authority evaluates whether the project is likely to have a *significant* effect on the environment, with reference to its scale, nature, location and context.

## 2.2 Mandatory EIA

EIA legislation defines the types of projects that may require an EIAR. *Annex I* defines mandatory projects that require an EIAR and *Annex II* defines projects that are assessed on the basis of set mandatory thresholds for each of the project classes.

The table below gives the mandatory thresholds relevant to the proposed project.

**Table 1: Mandatory EIA Threshold Assessment**

Mandatory Criterion	Clarification	Regulatory Reference	Response
Does the proposed development involve the construction of a motorway, busway or service area?	--	S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993 as substituted by S. 9(1)(d)(i) of the Roads Act, 2007	No
Is the proposed development a prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road?	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 is 8Km or more in length in a rural area, or 500m or more in length in an urban area.	Article 8 of the Roads Regulations 1994 (Road development prescribed for the purposes of S. 50 (1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993)	No
Has a direction been issued by An Bord Pleanála (ABP) to the Road Authority to prepare an EIAR?	Where ABP considers that a proposed road development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall direct the road authority to prepare an EIAR	S.50(1)(b) of the Roads Act, 1993	No

<p>Does the road authority consider that the proposed road development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and has it informed ABP in writing of such an opinion?</p>	<p>Where a road authority considers that a 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.</p>	<p>S.50(1)(c) of the Roads Act, 1993</p>	<p>Decision will be based on outcome of this EIA screening process</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Certain environmental sites concerned are:  <b>Special Area of Conservation (SAC):</b> A site notified in accordance with Regulation 4 of the European Communities (Natural Habitats ) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94 of 1997); <b>Special Protection Area (SPA):</b> A site where consultation has been initiated in accordance with Article 5 of Council Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna. A <b>Nature Reserve</b> within the meaning of Sections 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act, 1976                  Refuge for Fauna under Section 17 of the Wildlife Act, 1976</p>	<p>S.50 (1)(d) of the Roads Act, 1993 as inserted by Art. 14 (a) of the EIA (Amendment) Regulations, 1999</p>	<p>No Natura sites occur within the route or within proximity of same. No Nature Reserves occur within the route or within proximity of same.</p>

**Conclusion:** The proposed scheme does not fall within the mandatory requirement for an EIA as addressed in EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC). These proposed works are thus assessed as a sub-threshold development.

**Reasoning:** The approach adopted in the relevant legislation is that EIA is mandatory for the construction of motorways, bus-ways and service areas and prescribed types of road

developments (as set out in Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994) on the basis that these project classes are generally likely to have significant environmental effects. This road improvement project does not fall within the above categories which would trigger mandatory EIA.

Additionally, other instances may require the preparation of an EIA such as where An Bórd Pleanála directs a road authority to prepare an EIA, and generally where the road authority considers that significant environmental effects are likely and where (in these instances) An Bórd Pleanála concurs.

There are no sites designated for conservation of wildlife within the area proposed for works. There are no designated sites within close proximity to the works. The nearest designated site of European significance is c. 4.2km from the proposed site of works.

### 2.3 Sub-threshold Development (Discretionary) EIA Screening

A key determinant of the necessity for Environmental Impact Assessment of sub-threshold projects is whether or not such works are likely to have *significant* effects on the environment. The 1997 amending Directive (97/11/EC) introduced guidance for Member States in terms of deciding whether or not a development is likely to have a “significant effect on the environment”.

These criteria have been transposed fully into Irish legislation in the third schedule of the European Communities Environmental Impact Assessment (Amendment) Regulations 1999, (SI No.93 of 1999) and in schedule 7 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (SI No 600 of 2001) as amended by Planning & Development Regulations 2008. This has recently been updated by transposition of the 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) which amends Directive 2011/92/EU<sup>2</sup>). Guidance is provided by use of criteria set out in Annex III of the new Directive. These criteria as transposed in Irish legislation are grouped under three headings and are used to assist the

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<sup>2</sup> Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification) (OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1).



screening process in determining whether a development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The three headings and criteria details as given in Annex III are given below:

**Table 2: Criteria to assist the screening process**

Heading	Criteria
1. Characteristics of the proposed development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the size and design of the entire proposed development/works</li> <li>• the cumulation with other existing and/or approved developments</li> <li>• the use of natural resources</li> <li>• the production of waste</li> <li>• pollution and nuisances</li> <li>• the risk of major accidents (with regard to substances or technologies used)</li> <li>• the risks to human health</li> </ul>
2. Location of proposed development	<p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by proposed development, having regard in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the existing and approved land use</li> <li>• the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area</li> <li>• The absorption capacity of the natural environment</li> <li>• Annex IV Species (EU Habitats Directive)</li> <li>• Annex I Bird Species ((EU Birds Directive)</li> <li>• Architectural Conservation Areas</li> <li>• Scenic views of protected landscapes (Co. Development Plan)</li> </ul>
3. Type and characteristics of potential impacts	<p>The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 above, and having regard in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population)</li> <li>• The nature of the impact</li> <li>• The transboundary nature of the impact</li> <li>• The intensity and complexity of the impact</li> <li>• The probability of the impact</li> <li>• The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact</li> <li>• The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The possibility of effectively reducing the impact</li></ul>
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**Conclusion:** It is concluded that the nature of the proposed development would not be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**Reasoning:** The size of the proposed development would not be considered significant as it is very limited in extent, involving the maximum use of an area of only around 2.1 hectares. The footprint of the proposed development is therefore very small. In addition to this, no sensitive areas occur within the immediate site of works. This site largely comprises roadside verges, Hedgerows and treelines surrounded by agricultural lands.

Works will be carried out by a contractor highly experienced in infrastructure projects. As no untested techniques, equipment or materials will be utilised in the proposed works, risk of accidents may be deemed not significant. Works will follow a Construction Management Plan and will be subject to an ongoing monitoring programme. The lack of significance of the above potential impacts arising from the nature of the project would thus indicate that in-combination impacts may not be considered significant.

### 3 Screening Assessment

#### 3.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Project

**Table 3: Review of characteristics of the Proposed Project**

Characteristics of the Proposed Project	
Size and Design of the Proposed Development	<p>The size of the project is below the mandatory threshold for an Environmental Impact Statement. The area of land proposed as being within the site footprint (outside existing roadway) is around 2.1 hectares.</p> <p>The development proposal does not fall under the criteria of Annex I or II as set out in the regulations. The development is sub threshold. The scheme is not significant in terms of size and scale. The design of the proposed development is to allow for least land-take.</p>
Cumulation with other Existing and/or approved developments	<p>A desktop survey of other proposed and potential developments was carried out as part of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Process for the proposed works. The conclusion of this screening was that no cumulative or in-combination impacts were predicted.</p> <p>No significant or relevant developments are known at time of writing.</p>
Use of Natural Resources (habitat classification follows Fossitt, 2000)	<p>The project will involve the use of a small area of land on roadside verge to road widening and to allow realignment of the adjoining local roads and residential access roads. However, the amount of land-take is extremely limited.</p> <p>The lands here typically conform to the designation Grassy Verges (GA2). There are also agricultural lands, hedgerows (WL1) and treelines (WL2) habitats which may be impacted upon. There are no other natural or semi-natural habitats within the area to be significantly affected.</p> <p>The project will use natural materials excavated locally as part of the construction phase of this project. Soils that occur <i>in-situ</i> will be used within the works area where possible.</p> <p>No additional use of freshwater or groundwater will be required by works.</p> <p>No abstraction of water will take place.</p>

Characteristics of the Proposed Project	
The production of waste	The proposed development will not produce any significant amounts of additional waste. Works will be subject to a Waste Management Plan.
Pollution and Nuisances	<p>Works do not cross any watercourses. No impacts to water quality are not considered likely.</p> <p>All works will take place within the lands made available for the scheme. A small cluster of houses near the scheme will be subject to some noise pollution during the construction phase of this project.</p> <p>While the project will require the closure of some parts of an existing public road for the construction phase, no significant delays to traffic are anticipated.</p> <p>In operation, the scheme will have the attendant nuisances of vehicular traffic as currently exist here, including air pollution, dust and road soiling.</p>
Risk of Accidents and/or Disasters	<p>Not significant. Providing best construction practices are followed, the risk of accidents which are significant in scale is considered low. A traffic management plan will be put in place for the duration of works.</p> <p>The risk of accidents associated with the operational phase is predicted to be significantly lower than that of the roadway at present. It will also increase the safety of the road here for all users, including motorists.</p> <p>No novel or potentially significantly hazardous substances or technologies will be utilised during the works. A Construction Plan will be employed to ensure adherence to good site practices which will reduce any risk of accidents.</p> <p>No significant impacts as a result of or in combination with enhanced climate change are predicted.</p>
Risks to Human Health	<p>No risks to human health are predicted by the proposed development.</p> <p>The operational phase presents no enhanced risks to human health.</p> <p>Rather, road safety will improve following the completion of works.</p>

## 3.2 Location of the Proposed Works

**Table 4: Review of the location and setting of the proposed works**

Existing and Proposed Land Use	The project will involve the use of existing roadside verge along with some existing areas of hardstand, hedgerows and a small amount of agricultural lands. When complete, a verge will be reinstated allowing a similar mix of plants to become established.
The Relative Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources	<p>Some of the above habitats will be taken for the project. These types of habitat is extremely widespread in Co. Kildare. However, it should be noted that the land-take of this project is very limited.</p> <p>No significant impact on soils is predicted.</p> <p>No additional water resources will be required. No existing watercourses will be impacted upon during construction phase. No threats to watercourses are predicted for the operational phase of the project.</p> <p>The ecological surveys carried out during the Appropriate Assessment Screening process did not identify any significant natural resources within the area proposed for works.</p>
The Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	There will be no significant land-take or significant loss of existing habitats. Any woody vegetation will be cleared outside the bird nesting season. No wetland, coastal, forest or mountain areas occur within the area proposed for works.
Sites designated for conservation: e.g. SACs, SPAs, pNHAs	<p>The proposed site of works is outside any site designated for conservation of nature.</p> <p>The nearest protected site is Mounds Bog SAC 4.2km away.</p>
Annex I Habitats (EU Habitats Directive)	Detailed ecological assessment works have been completed. The habitat types recorded within the route do not conform to any Annex I habitats. No Annex I Priority Habitats have been recorded within immediate surrounding areas.
Annex II Species (EU Habitats Directive)	None of these surveys carried out on this site have recorded any Annex II species within area proposed for works or the adjacent lands.
Annex IV Species (EU Habitats Directive)	No significant impacts on any Annex IV species are predicted. No significant impacts on any bat species are predicted as there are no known bat roosts within the area proposed for works. Some nearby

	buildings and large mature trees close to the road may contain bat roosting habitat. However, these will not be affected by the works.
Annex I Bird Species (EU Birds Directive)	No impacts are predicted on Annex I bird species. No suitable habitat for any of these bird species exists within the area proposed for works.
Nature reserves and Parks	There are no nature reserves or parks within the area proposed for works.
Architectural Conservation Areas	This criterion is not relevant to works.
Scenic views or protected landscapes (Co. Development Plan.	No views or prospects are known within the area proposed for works.
Protected structures or Recorded Monuments and Places of Archaeological Interest	No Recorded Monuments or Places of Archaeological Interest are known to occur within the area proposed for works.

**Conclusion:** It can be concluded that there will be no significant direct or indirect impacts by virtue of the location of the proposed development on the receiving environment.

**Reasoning:** The project will not require extensive areas of agricultural lands to be taken out of production. The majority of the project will be on existing roadway or roadside verge. No significant reductions in natural resources (e.g. soil, water, biodiversity) will result from the project.

There will be no direct impacts upon the nearest Natura 2000 Sites - Mounds Bog SAC. European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 requires that an Article 6(3) assessment be carried out where it is considered that a development is likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites (SAC/SPA). An Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been completed for the proposed works, which concluded that based on a consideration of the likely impacts arising from the works, no likely significant impacts on the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites had been identified.

No indirect impacts are predicted.

The operational phase of the works will not have any inherent threats to any of the above sites or habitats.

No habitats considered to qualify as Annex I habitats under the EU Habitats Directive will be affected by the proposed development. Due to impacts of grazing, fertilising etc, the ecological significance of surrounding lands is considered to be low in national, regional and local terms.

No Annex II (EU Habitats Directive) listed species occur on the site of proposed works. Recent surveys have been carried out here and no evidence of the presence of these has been recorded.

No breeding or resting places of Annex I species were found within the area of works.

No suitable habitat such as roosting sites for bat species were found within the proposed works area.

No negative impacts on any structures of heritage or architectural significance will occur. There are no protected views or aspects at the proposed site of works.

### 3.3 Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

**Table 5: Review of the type and characteristics of potential impacts**

Table 5: Review of the type and characteristics of potential impacts	
Spatial extent of the impact geographical area and size of the affected population	Extent of geographical area exposed to any potential impact is extremely small. The area proposed for works is 2.1 hectares.  An overall potential positive impact may be expected for road users by providing a safer and wider roadway.
Nature of the impact	Some limited impacts of a temporary nature may be expected within the environs of the immediate work areas. These include some disruption to local traffic on the R181. However, these may be mitigated by traffic management and good site practices. No significant negative impacts outside the site may be expected. Long-term positive impacts are predicted from the improvement of the route safety for all users.
Transboundary nature of the	Not relevant to screening. Route will not cross any

impact	boundaries/frontiers.
Magnitude of the impact	The magnitude of impacts from the proposed works cannot be considered significant. This is due to the small size and scale of works (as above). A positive impact for road users may be predicted.
Intensity and complexity of the impact	Works involve construction within existing roads and roadside verge areas. No works are to take place outside of this area. Best practice measures will ensure no impacts on adjoining areas. No negative impacts on human beings, built or cultural interests are involved. Therefore, any potential impacts may not be complex.
Probability of the impact	The likelihood of significant negative impacts on the receiving environment is extremely low due to the nature and scale of the proposed works. No long-term negative impacts are predicted as likely.
Onset and Duration of impact	Duration of works is estimated at 2-3 months. Operational phase of the completed road is indefinite. However, no long-term impacts are predicted.
Frequency of impact	Once completed, works will not be repeated. Short-term impacts (e.g. temporary delay to traffic on the R445) will not exist past construction phase. Positive impacts on humans are predicted from the operational phase of the project.
Reversibility of the impact	Impacts arising from works in terms of changes in land-use will not be readily reversible. This is because the realigned road will be a permanent structure.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects	There are no cumulative impacts predicted. No other existing or approved projects are known at time of writing.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	Any temporary impacts – e.g. disruption to traffic, dust emissions – may be readily reduced by the implementation of best practice management plans and adherence to guidelines.

**Conclusion:** It is concluded that the characteristics of the potential impacts would not be considered significant.

**Reasoning:** The extent of the site is very small, given the length and area of road to be realigned. The scheme does not have any potential to impact negatively upon human populations, given the



location and scale of the project and the limited nature of the proposed works. Some temporary impacts to local residents will exist during the construction phase of this project.

While some temporary negative impacts (e.g. delays to traffic during construction phase) may arise, these will be of low intensity, short duration and may readily be managed. Potential exists for positive impacts upon nearest human populations and road users. These would arise from the access to a safer road route. Long-term positive impacts may thus be predicted with confidence.

The DoEHLG (2013) Guidance Document 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development' notes that 'The greater the number of different aspects of the environment which are likely to be affected and the greater the links between the effects, the more likely it is that an EIAR should be carried out. Where complexity of impacts is deemed to apply in the case of a specific sub-threshold development proposal, there should be a predisposition towards the preparation of an EIAR'. In this instance, the effects would not be considered complex.

### 3.4 Significance of Potential Impacts

The most significant potential impacts as described above are assessed (as per NRA, 2008) briefly in the table below as per the themes typically covered in the EIA process (as specified by EU Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended by Directive 97/11/EC).

**Table 6: Review of significance of potential Impacts**

Significance of potential Impacts	
Human Beings	Positive impacts of long-term duration are predicted as being highly likely as a result of a safer road route being made available.
Flora and Fauna	No significant negative impacts may be anticipated. No designated conservation site, Annex I Habitats or Annex II Species will be impacted upon.
Soils and Geology	Soils in-situ will be used. No bedrock will be impacted upon. Significance of impacts may therefore be described as imperceptible.
Water	No significant negative impacts from construction may be anticipated. No enhanced risk of flooding is predicted arising from the project. The operational phase of the road will not have any potential negative impacts

	on water quality.
Air Quality and Climate	No impacts on air quality or climate may be predicted from a project of this nature and scale.
Noise and Vibration	An increase in noise levels at site of works is anticipated. However, this will be of short duration. This may have a short-term minor impact upon nearby houses. The operational phase of the road will have no potential negative impacts. Significance of this impact is therefore low.
Landscape	No significant impacts are predicted given that the project involves the realignment of an existing roadway.
Material Assets	Positive impacts are anticipated given that the project will result in a safer roadway.
Cultural Heritage	No negative impacts are predicted.
In-combination Impacts of Above	No in-combination impacts are predicted.

**Conclusion:** Potential negative impacts on humans identified for the construction phase are limited to local traffic delays and short-term noise impacts to local residents. However, these may be mitigated by the implementation of an effective plans to manage traffic and appropriate works methodologies. No negative impacts are predicted as being likely on humans for the operational phase. Rather, positive impacts of long-term duration are predicted. These are owing to the junction being made safer.

No significant impacts associated with water quality are to be anticipated. No significant soil movement is anticipated. No bedrock geology will be affected by proposed works.

It is considered that the impacts in terms of material assets and thus human beings would be largely positive due to the access for the population to a safer road route.

No negative impacts on any aspects of cultural heritage are anticipated.

No impact interactions have been identified and it is considered that any minor impacts identified during the screening process can be managed through the implementation of best working practices for the construction and maintenance of the junction. No likely significant long-term or permanent negative environmental impacts have been identified in the course of the screening process.

## 4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded that the characteristics of the proposed development would not be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. This is based primarily on the very limited size and scale of the proposed works and low potential to have significant impacts. No other projects emerged from the screening process with which the proposed works may have significant cumulative impacts. No demolition is anticipated. The works will be below the threshold of quantity requiring EIA. No water abstraction will be required. No waste materials will arise from the proposed works in any significant quantities. No significant pollution or nuisance is anticipated to the population here. No significant risk of accidents is anticipated.

It is concluded that there will be no significant direct or indirect impacts by virtue of the location of the proposed development on the receiving environment. This is based primarily upon the low risk of impacts to any Natura 2000 site qualifying interests. A number of Annex II species were investigated but no impacts were predicted given the implementation of mitigation measures and best practise. The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 requires that an Article 6(3) assessment be carried out where it is considered that a development is likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites. An Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been completed for the proposed works. This concluded that based on a consideration of the likely impacts arising from the works, no likely significant impacts on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site had been identified. Works will not take place within any other designated site. No Annex I Habitats (EU Habitats Directive) occur within the site of works. No Annex II Species of the same directive were found to occur on site. An Appropriate Assessment screening for the project predicted no impacts on any of these species. The operational phase of the route will have no potential for negative impacts on these sites or species. No archaeological or built heritage assets will be negatively impacted upon by the proposed works.

It is concluded that the type and characteristics of the potential impacts would not be considered significant. This is based primarily upon the limited size and scale of the proposed works. The lack of sensitive receptors is also a significant factor in this assessment. Impacts on landscape, soils and geology are not considered significant, given the scale of works; while it is considered that the impacts in terms of material assets and human beings would be largely positive due to the new access to a safer road route with the exception of minor short-term noise impacts to some local residents. There may also be some short-term negative impacts from delays to local traffic on this

regional road and on local roads. However, these would be of short-term duration and readily managed.

The assessment has been carried out on the proposed works as a sub threshold development. The overall conclusion of this screening exercise is that there should be no specific requirement for a full Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed works.

## 5 REFERENCES

DoEHLG. (2003) 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development'. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

DOECLG (2015) *Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2013* (Unofficial Consolidation). Unpublished Report by Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

FFEC (2020) *AA Screening R445 Junction Improvement Scheme*. Unpublished Report for Kildare County Council by Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants Ltd, Cork.

NRA (2008) *Environmental Impact Assessment of National Roads Schemes – a practical guide*. National Roads Authority (Now Transport Infrastructure Ireland) , Dublin.