



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 2 KILWOGHAN WOODS CRODAUN CELBRIDGE, CO. KILDARE

Seattle construction limited

PC **ROCHE** + associates
landscape architects and site planners

August 2025

Page 3	introduction
	Mythology
Page 4	Receiving environment
Page 6	Character of the site
	Existing views and visibility
	Landscape planning
Page 7	Characteristics of the proposal
	Potential impact of the proposal
	Remedial and mitigation measures
	Predicted impact of the of the proposal
Page 9	Visual impact assessment from specific locations
Page 7,	Cumulative impact
	Residual impact
	Do nothing scenario
Page 18	Monitoring
	Resinstatement and long-term maintenance

1.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

1.1 Introduction

This assessment is to determine the landscape and visual impacts resulting from a proposed alteration to an residential development in Kilwoghan Wood, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. The assessment was carried out by Cass Roche Dip Phy.Plann, MLI (London) of P C Roche and Associate, landscape architects and site planners, with over 20 years' experience carrying out Landscape and Visual Impact Analysis assessments for inclusion in EIAR.

1.2 Methodology

The assessment was carried out by visiting the site and its surroundings in June 2025, by analysing the proposals through photomontages, plans, aerial photographs, a tree survey by The Tree File Ltd., historic maps and by referring to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029 and the Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023.

Character, for the purpose of this assessment, refers to the interaction of elements in the landscape that combine to give the area its identity. In this context, impacts on character include the effect on existing land uses and responses that are felt towards the combined effects of the new development.

The assessment was carried out with reference to the Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 2013 (GLVIA) and the EPA Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports 2022

Table 1.1 Criteria for significance of effects under EPA Guidelines

EPA Rating	Description
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
Not Significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without significant consequences.
Slight	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with the existing and emerging baseline trends.
Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Very Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

The ratings may have negative, neutral, or positive application:

- **Positive impact:** a change which improves the quality of the environment.
- **Neutral impact:** No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
- **Negative impact:** a change which reduces the quality of the environment.

Terms relating to the duration of impacts are described in the EPA Guidelines as:

- **Momentary Effects:** lasting from seconds to minutes.
- **Brief Effects:** lasting less than a day.
- **Temporary Effects:** lasting less than a year.
- **Short-term Effects:** lasting one to seven years.
- **Medium-term Effects:** lasting seven to fifteen years.
- **Long-term Effects:** lasting fifteen to sixty years.
- **Permanent Effects:** lasting over sixty years.

1.3 Receiving environment

The overall site is on the northern fringe of Celbridge town. A triangular shaped area with a total land area of approximately 12.93Ha. The ground levels are generally flat with a slow and gradual rise from the south-east to the north-west. The lowest point is the south-east corner of the site (65.07m OD), rising by 6m towards the northern edge (71.07m OD). The site is currently in two phases with phase one residential development under construction, phase two is this planning application for a change of residential dwellings.

The overall site is enclosed with agricultural hedgerow field boundaries. A small stream, the Kilwogan Stream, runs along the southern boundary and has dense scrub and trees on its embankments. It is proposed to retain the existing hedgerows with the exception of two vehicular entrances.

The site is bounded on the north and east by the R405 Maynooth Road. Beyond the road to the north is the M4 business park and the M4 motorway. South of the business park is the residential development of Ardrath, and south of that is the Crodaun Forest housing development. The southern perimeter is formed by a strong hedgerow with several significant tree specimens, Kilwoghan Lane. Abutting Kilwoghan Lane is the residential development of Castle Village. The western boundary has similar agricultural fields and hedgerows.

The tree cover on the site is primarily within the perimeter hedgerows. The trees and hedgerows have three origins: thorn-based hedgerows from agricultural stock, naturally regenerated scrub and trees along the stream, and a recently planted hedgerow along the Maynooth Road. Most of the internal hedgerows are in a dilapidated state due to a lack of management and overgrowth by bramble, except for the western boundary hedgerow, which is in a better state and classified as Category B. The vegetation near the stream is a scrub thicket, with the western side being healthy. The eastern side, however, is in poor condition due to "dramatic decapitation and removal" to facilitate access to power cables.

There are 7 Category B trees on the site 3 Oak, 1 Ash, 2 Sycamore, and 1 Cherry, with most located on the western and southwestern hedgerows. Of the 24 trees surveyed, 2 are dead or dying, and the remaining 15 are Category C.



Figure 1, Site layout

1.4 Character of the site

The site's character is defined by its flat topography, history of agricultural use with traditional hedgerow boundaries, the stream and its dense vegetation, the medium-density housing to the east and south, large industrial and commercial buildings nearby, and the M4 motorway and local roads. The surrounding area, with its mix of recently built structures and historic fields, is considered a "transitional landscape". The landscape has no inherent aesthetic qualities that would distinguish it from the general landscape, and the majority of the lands are considered to have no aesthetic value.

The trees in the perimeter hedgerows and along the stream banks do hold some aesthetic value, but this landscape type is common in the area.

1.5 Existing views and visibility

The site is most visually prominent from the Maynooth Road (R405) to the east. The hedgerow vegetation along the sites south-eastern boundary. From this part of the Maynooth Road only glimpsed views are possible through gaps in the mature hedgerow.

The northern section of this road offers a full view of the site due to a lack of vegetation from road upgrade works. However, the view is not expansive due to the flat topography and dense hedgerows on the western perimeter.

From beyond Salesian College on the Maynooth Road, the site is not visible, with only the trees on the western perimeter being visible from the college itself. The site is also not visible from the wider landscape due to the flat topography, local built development, and a significant number of trees.

The existing mature hedgerow along the sites southern boundary, Kilwoghan Lane and Mooretown Drive, restrict views into the site.

1.6 Landscape planning

According to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2027, the subject lands are in the "Northern Lowlands Character Area". This area is listed as having low landscape sensitivity and is considered highly compatible with urban expansion.

The Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023 identifies the site as a "Key Development Area" and sets a vision for it to have a hierarchy of open spaces, landscape buffers to the Maynooth Road, and for existing landscape features to be integrated into the open spaces.

The plan also promotes open space networks to support and facilitate the provision of open spaces with ecological and recreational corridors to aid the movement of biodiversity and people, subject to appropriate environmental assessment. Incorporate pedestrian and cycle routes, passive and active recreation, and ecological and sustainable urban drainage systems.

There are no protected trees or tree groups or views or prospects within the site.

1.7 Characteristics of the proposal

The proposed development includes to amend a previously permitted Strategic Housing Development (SHD) with,

- Replacing phase two with the construction of 239 residential units in a mix of houses, apartments, and duplexes.
 - The creation of a large nature park and adjoining open spaces with native woodlands, scrub corridors, and grassland meadows.
 - Associated access roads, car parking, footpaths, fencing, and external lighting.
 - Play areas and park landscaping
-

1.8 Potential impact of the proposal

The completed development has the potential to impact on the landscape. ,

Potential impacts include:

- Works during the construction phase,
 - Construction traffic including cranes in the skyline
 - Visual impacts from new structures, machinery, and materials storage.
 - Visual impacts from changes in ground levels and earthworks.
 - Site entrance and vehicular movement
 - Visual impact of new landscaping features, hard surfaces, tree planting and retaining existing vegetation.
-

1.9 Remedial and mitigation measures

The design of the scheme has been influenced by the mitigation of potential negative impacts. Mitigation measures include:

- Retaining and incorporating existing perimeter trees and hedgerow vegetation.
 - Creating a large nature park in the northern section with native woodlands, grasslands, and amenity spaces.
 - Setting back built elements from the perimeter to strengthen existing vegetation and create new tree lines and landscape buffers.
-

1.10 Predicted impact of the proposal

Impact on Landscape Character

- **Construction:** The change from agricultural fields to a construction site will have a **moderate, short-term** negative visual impact on landscape character. This is mitigated by the site's approval for a residential development, commencing on site of placing services and construction compounds. Also, the completion of other recent residential developments within the sites visual window.

- **Operational:** The initial impact of replacing a rural landscape with built development is seen as a negative impact. However, the proposed landscape measures, such as retaining the native mature hedgerow, woodland and grassland habitats, will have a very positive impact on the landscape character and the wider environment. In the long term, this negative impact is expected to be reduced to a slight magnitude as the new habitats establish. The development is considered consistent with existing and emerging trends in the area.

The proposed development will not alter substantially the character of the landscape as the lands have approval for a residential development.

The initial impact of the built environment on the landscape character could be perceived as negative in the short term due to the construction of the proposed site entrance, construction structures, undertaking and completing site and developing works. On completion of the works the impact will continue to be slight as habitats establish and the proposed landscaping planting becomes established.

Impact on Landscape Planning

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with the general landscape objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan and the vision statement for the "Crodaun Key Development Area" in the Celbridge Local Area Plan. The creation of significant belts of native woodland and tree planting will increase the ecological value of the lands and create strong ecological corridors, aligning with the Green Infrastructure objectives.

The medium to long term impact will reduce as habitats establish and become integrated into the surrounding landscape. The impact would be considered moderate as the alteration to the character is consistent with the emerging landscape in this location. The moderate negative impact will be short-term impact on the landscape character.

The proposed landscape treatment will contribute positively to the landscape character of the area. The level of tree planting and mixed woodland planting will significantly increase the ecological value of the proposed development and will create strong ecological corridors through the site and connect to the wide landscape.

1.11 Visual impact assessment from specific locations

The assessment found no sensitive views that include the site in the visual envelope. Out of the six views assessed:



Figure 2, Location of verified views

View 1 (Maynooth Road near M4 Business Park):



Figure 3, existing view from Maynooth Road, north of the site



Figure 4, proposed view over amenity lands to site

This view is a distant view from the northern edge of the subject lands. The fields and hedgerows of the site are visible and prominent in this view.

- **Visual impact of proposed development during construction**
The visual impact on these views during construction will be slight and short term. Construction scaffolding and cranes will be visible,

- **Visual impact of proposed development during operation**
The impact of the proposal on this view is considered to be positive due to the creation of a large, visually attractive parkland landscape.

View 2 Ardrath View:



Figure 5, existing view from the entrance to Ardrath View and Maynooth Road



Figure 6, proposed view from the entrance to Ardrath View and Maynooth Road

This view is from the Eastern edge of the subject lands. The existing trees and hedgerows of the site are visible and prominent in this view.

- **Visual impact of proposed development during construction**
The development will have negative, moderate in magnitude and short term in duration. The visual impact on these views during construction will be construction scaffolding, cranes and construction materials visible.
- **Visual impact of proposed development during operation**
Moderate negative and long term is mitigated by existing hedgerow and new tree planting.

View 3 Crodaun Forest Park:



Figure 7, Existing view Crodaun Forest Park, entrance roadway



Figure 8, proposed view

This view is from the entrance road to the mature and settled established residential development of Crodaun Forest Park, to the east of the subject lands. The existing trees and hedgerows of the site are visible and prominent in this view.

- **Visual impact of proposed development during construction**
The development will have negative, moderate in magnitude and short term in duration. The visual impact on these views during construction will be construction scaffolding, cranes and construction materials visible.
- **Visual impact of proposed development during operation**
Moderate negative and long-term impact are mitigated by existing hedgerow and new tree planting.

View 4 Crodaun Forest Park:



Figure 9, existing view



Figure 10, proposed view

Construction is predicted to have a significant negative, short-term impact as building activities will be prominent in the skyline. Operationally, the impact is considered to be moderate negative and long-term due to the development's prominence in the skyline. However, the impact is localized to this section of the public street, affecting a low number of people.

- **Visual impact of proposed development during construction**
The development will have negative, moderate in magnitude and short term in duration. The visual impact on these views during construction will be construction scaffolding, cranes and construction materials visible.
- **Visual impact of proposed development during operation**
Moderate negative and long-term views are mitigated by existing hedgerow and new tree planting.

View 5 Maynooth Road, on the sites south-eastern boundary:



Figure 11, existing view

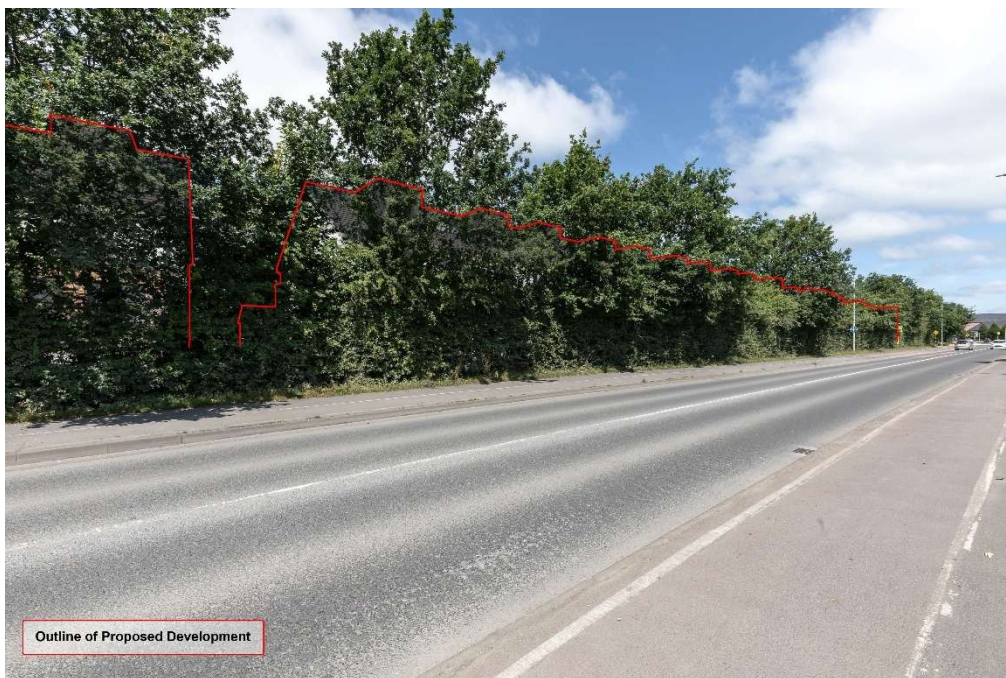


Figure 12, proposed view

Construction is predicted to have a moderate negative, short-term impact as building activities will be prominent in the skyline. The impact is considered to be moderate negative and short-term. However, the impact is localized to this section of the public road, affecting a low number of people. The existing mature hedgerow and trees completely screen the proposed development.

The red line indicates the outline of the proposed buildings.

- **Visual impact of proposed development during construction**
The development will have negative, moderate in magnitude and short term in duration. The visual impact on these views during construction will be construction scaffolding, cranes and construction materials visible.
- **Visual impact of proposed development during operation**
Moderate negative and long term are mitigated by existing hedgerow and new tree planting.

View 6 Maynooth Road to the east of Thornhill Court):



Figure 13, existing view



Figure 14, proposed view

The construction phase is predicted to have a moderate negative, short-term visual impact, but the impact is limited by dense hedgerows and proposed hoarding. Operationally, the impact is considered to be moderate negative and long-term but is mitigated by existing vegetation and new tree planting which will mature over time.

- **Visual impact of proposed development during construction**
The development will have negative, moderate in magnitude and short term in duration. The visual impact on these views during construction will be construction scaffolding, cranes and construction materials visible.
- **Visual impact of proposed development during operation**
Moderate negative and short-term are mitigated by existing hedgerow and new tree planting.

1.12 Cumulative Impact

The cumulative effects of this development with a proposed 239-unit development are considered. This development together with the approved phase one will read as an extension of the existing built environment of Celbridge.

This development proposal together with recently completed Ardrath residential development, to the east of this site, will create a cumulative landscape and visual impact. The two developments will read as an extension of the existing built environment with both occupying the zone between the built edge of the town and the M4 and associated built development. The built landscape of Celbridge town would be enveloping the subject lands on the south, north and east.

The proposed nature park to the north of the subject application will act as a large landscape buffer reducing the cumulative landscape and visual impact. The cumulative impact of this development together with the recently completed surrounding developments would not significantly affect the landscape beyond the impacts outlined in this study. The cumulative impact is consistent with existing and emerging trends.

1.13 Residual Impact

The operational phase will result in a noticeable change to the landscape character. However, the proposed landscape measures, such as new native woodland and grassland habitats, will have a very positive impact. As the landscaping matures, visual impacts will be reduced, and the scheme will become visually integrated into the surrounding landscape, further reducing the magnitude of impacts.

1.14 'Do nothing' scenario

In this scenario, the land would be to build the previously approved development.

1.15 Monitoring

The appointed contractors will ensure good working practices to minimize negative construction impacts, including proper location of storage areas to avoid impacting sensitive views and natural features. The works will be continuously monitored to ensure adequate protection of areas outside the construction site.

1.16 Reinstatement and long-term maintenance

Upon completion, all soft areas, including side slopes, cuttings, and embankments, will be prepared for soil, and planted with appropriate native tree and hedgerow species.

Maintenance will commence immediately the landscaping; planting and the site and development works are completed. This maintenance will allow the designed environmental works, as envisaged, to mature ensuring that the proposed development integrates into the landscape.