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TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Killowen Residential

Kenmare, County Kerry.

Prepared by Macro Works Ltd

August 2026



1 LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment report has been prepared in respect of the proposed Killowen Residential Development in Kenmare, County Kerry. This report describes the townscape/visual context of the proposed development and assesses the likely impacts of the scheme on the receiving environment, in terms of both townscape character and visual amenity.

Landscape/townscape assessment relates to changes in the physical environment, brought about by a proposed development, which may alter its character. This requires a detailed analysis of the individual elements and characteristics of a landscape/townscape that go together to make up the overall character of that area. By understanding the aspects that contribute to this character it is possible to make judgements in relation to its quality (integrity) and to identify key sensitivities. This, in turn, provides a measure of the ability of the landscape/townscape in question to accommodate the type and scale of change associated with the proposed development, without causing unacceptable adverse changes to its character.

Visual Impact Assessment relates to changes in the composition of views as a result of changes to the landscape/townscape, how these are perceived and the effects on visual amenity. Such impacts are population-based, rather than resource-based, as in the case of landscape impacts.

1.2 STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

This Landscape/Townscape and Visual Assessment report was prepared by Richard Barker, Divisional Director (Landscape Architect) at Macro Works Ltd (part of APEM Group), Blackrock, Dublin. Richard is a qualified Landscape Architect affiliated with the Irish Landscape Institute, who has prepared LVIA / TVIA reports for a broad range of development types across Ireland over the past 22 years, including residential projects similar to that proposed.

Macro Works Ltd is a consultancy firm specialising in Landscape and Visual Assessment and associated maps and graphics. Relevant experience includes a vast range of infrastructural, industrial and commercial projects since 1999, including numerous residential and mixed-use development projects.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

KPH Construction intend to apply for planning permission for a Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) at a site located off Pat Scarteen Road, Killowen, (townland), Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

The proposed development includes the demolition of 2 no. existing single-storey sheds and the construction of 100 no. residential units comprising 30 no. 1-bed units; 30 no. 2-bed units; and 40 no. 3-bed houses, with ancillary landscaping and associated site development works. The development makes provision for 40 no. two-storey houses, comprising 36 no. semi-detached 3 bed units and 4 no. 3 bed mid-terraced units and 60 no. own-door maisonette/apartment units over 2 no. storeys (30 no. 1 bed units, 30 no. 2 bed units).

Vehicular access to the development will be via an upgraded and relocated entrance off the Pat Scarteen Road, with proposed upgrades including amendments to the existing shared pedestrian/cycle path and modifications to the signing and lining on the public road. The proposed

development also provides for separate pedestrian/cycle entrances off Pat Scarteen Road and includes dedicated pedestrian and cycling paths traversing the site.

Ancillary infrastructure development works will include wastewater infrastructure, a pumping station, surface water attenuation, water utility services, public lighting, bin stores, bicycle stores, ESB substations, landscaping and all associated site development works.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Production of this Landscape/townscape and Visual Impact Assessment involved:

- A desktop study to establish an appropriate study area and relevant landscape and visual designations in the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- Fieldwork to study the receiving environment;
- Assessment of the significance of the landscape impact of the proposed development as a function of landscape sensitivity weighed against the magnitude of the landscape impact;
- Assessment of the significance of the visual impact of the proposed development as a function of visual receptor sensitivity weighed against the magnitude of the visual impact.

This document uses methodology as prescribed in the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and Landscape Institute (UK) 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition' 2013 (GLVIA3).

Although this is principally a 'townscape' assessment, it utilises the same outline methodology as would be employed for the more familiar Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of developments in rural settings. The justification for this approach is provided below.

It is important to note that GLVIA3 follows the European Landscape Convention (ELC) definition of landscape: *'Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'* (Council of Europe, 2000). Thus, GLVIA-2013 covers all landscapes from *"high mountains and wild countryside to urban and fringe farmland (rural landscapes), marine and coastal landscapes (seascapes) and the landscapes of villages towns and cities (townscapes)"* - whether protected or degraded.

In the case of this project, the study area is overwhelmingly that of an urban setting or 'townscape' and this is defined in GLVIA3 in the following manner (Section 2.7):

"Townscape' refers to areas where the built environment is dominant. Villages, towns and cities often make important contributions as elements in wider-open landscapes but townscape means the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationships between them, the different types of urban spaces, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open spaces. There are important relationships with historic dimensions of landscape and townscape, since evidence of the way the villages, towns and cities change and develop over time contributes to their current form and character."

1.4.1 Landscape/townscape Impact Assessment Criteria

When assessing the potential impacts on the townscape resulting from a proposed development, the following criteria are considered:

- Landscape/townscape character, value and sensitivity;

- Magnitude of likely impacts;
- Significance of landscape effects.

The sensitivity of the townscape to change is the degree to which a particular setting can accommodate changes or new elements without unacceptable detrimental effects on its essential characteristics. Landscape/townscape Value and Sensitivity are classified using the following criteria set out in **Table 1-1**.

Table 1-1: Landscape/Townscape Value and Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the townscape character exhibits a very low capacity for change in the form of development. Examples of which are high value townscapes, protected at an international or national level (e.g. World Heritage Site), where the principal management objectives are likely to be protection of the existing character.
High	Areas where the townscape character exhibits a low capacity for change in the form of development. Examples of which are high value townscapes, protected at a national or regional level, where the principal management objectives are likely to be considered conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the townscape character exhibits some capacity and scope for development. Examples of which are townscapes, which have a designation of protection at a county level or at non-designated local level where there is evidence of local value and use.
Low	Areas where the townscape character exhibits a higher capacity for change from development. Typically, this would include lower value, non-designated townscapes that may also have some elements or features of recognisable quality, where management objectives include, enhancement, repair and restoration.
Negligible	Areas of townscape character that include derelict sites and degradation where there would be a reasonable capacity to embrace change or the capacity to include the development proposals. Management objectives in such areas could be focused on change, creation of townscape improvements and/or restoration.

The magnitude of a predicted landscape/townscape impact is a product of the scale, extent or degree of change that is likely to be experienced as a result of the proposed Development. The magnitude takes into account whether there is a direct physical impact resulting from the loss of landscape/townscape components and/or a change that extends beyond the immediate setting that may have an effect on the townscape character. **Table 1-2** refers.

Table 1-2: Magnitude of Landscape/Townscape Impacts

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Change that would be large in extent and scale with the loss of critically important landscape elements and features, that may also involve the introduction of new uncharacteristic elements or features that contribute to an overall change of the townscape in terms of character, value and quality.
High	Change that would be more limited in extent and scale with the loss of important townscape elements and features, that may also involve the introduction of new uncharacteristic elements or features that contribute to an overall change of the townscape in terms of character, value and quality.
Medium	Changes that are modest in extent and scale involving the loss of landscape characteristics or elements that may also involve the introduction of new uncharacteristic elements or features that would lead to changes in landscape character, and quality.
Low	Changes affecting small areas of landscape character and quality, together with the loss of some less characteristic landscape elements or the addition of new features or elements.
Negligible	Changes affecting small or very restricted areas of landscape character. This may include the limited loss of some elements or the addition of some new features or elements that are characteristic of the existing landscape or are hardly perceivable.

The significance of a landscape/townscape impact is based on a balance between the sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of the impact. The significance of landscape impacts is arrived at using the following graph set out in **Table 1-3**.

Table 1-3: Impact Significance Matrix

	Sensitivity of Receptor				
Scale/Magnitude	<i>Very High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Negligible</i>
<i>Very High</i>	Profound	Profound-substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Slight
<i>High</i>	Profound-substantial	Substantial	Substantial-moderate	Moderate-slight	Slight-imperceptible
<i>Medium</i>	Substantial	Substantial-moderate	Moderate	Slight	Imperceptible
<i>Low</i>	Moderate	Moderate-slight	Slight	Slight-imperceptible	Imperceptible
<i>Negligible</i>	Slight	Slight-imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

Note: The significance matrix provides an indicative framework from which the significance of impact is derived. The significance judgement is ultimately determined by the assessor using professional judgement. Due to nuances within the constituent sensitivity and magnitude judgements, this may be up to one category higher or lower than indicated by the matrix. Judgements of Substantial (negative) and above are considered to be 'significant impacts' in EIA terms.

1.4.2 Visual Impact Assessment Criteria

As with the landscape/townscape impact, the visual impact of the proposed development will be assessed as a function of sensitivity versus magnitude. In this instance, the sensitivity of the visual receptor weighed against the magnitude of the visual effect.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Unlike landscape sensitivity, the sensitivity of visual receptors has an anthropocentric (human) basis. It considers factors such as the perceived quality and values associated with the view, the landscape/townscape context of the viewer, the likely activity they are engaged in and whether this heightens their awareness of the surrounding landscape. A list of the factors considered by the assessor in estimating the level of sensitivity for a particular visual receptor is outlined below to establish visual receptor sensitivity at each Viewshed Reference Point (VRP):

Susceptibility of Receptors

In accordance with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ("IEMA") Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (3rd edition 2013) visual receptors most susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity are:

- "Residents at home;

- *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views;*
- *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
- *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- *Travellers on road rail or other transport routes where such travel involves recognised scenic routes and awareness of views is likely to be heightened”.*

Visual receptors that are less susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity include;

- *“People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity, not their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life”.*

Values Typically Associated with Views

Recognised scenic value of the view (County/City Development Plan (CDP) designations, guidebooks, touring maps, postcards etc). These represent a consensus in terms of which scenic views and routes within an area are strongly valued by the population because in the case of CDPs for example, a public consultation process is required;

Views from within highly sensitive townscape areas. These are likely to be in the form of Architectural Conservation Areas, which are incorporated within CDPs and therefore subject to the public consultation process. Viewers within such areas are likely to be highly attuned to the townscape around them;

Primary views from residential receptors. Even within a dynamic city context views from residential properties are an important consideration in respect of residential amenity;

Intensity of use, popularity. This relates to the number of viewers likely to experience a view on a regular basis and whether this is significant at a national or regional scale;

Provision of vast, elevated panoramic views. This relates to the extent of the view on offer and the tendency for receptors to become more attuned to the surrounding landscape at locations that afford broad vistas;

Sense of remoteness and/or tranquillity. Receptors taking in a remote and tranquil scene, which is likely to be fairly static, are likely to be more receptive to changes in the view than those taking in the view of a busy street scene, for example;

Degree of perceived naturalness. Where a view is valued for the sense of naturalness of the surrounding landscape it is likely to be highly sensitive to visual intrusion by distinctly manmade features;

Presence of striking or noteworthy features. A view might be strongly valued because it contains a distinctive and memorable landscape/townscape feature such as a cathedral or castle;

Historical, cultural and/or spiritual significance. Such attributes may be evident or sensed by receptors at certain viewing locations, which may attract visitors for the purposes of contemplation or reflection, heightening the sense of their surroundings;

Rarity or uniqueness of the view. This might include the noteworthy representativeness of a certain townscape type and considers whether the receptor could take in similar views anywhere in the broader region or the country;

Integrity of the townscape character. This looks at the condition and intactness of the townscape in view and whether the townscape pattern is a regular one of a few strongly related components or an irregular one containing a variety of disparate components;

Sense of place. This considers whether there is a special sense of wholeness and harmony at the viewing location;

Sense of awe. This considers whether the view inspires an overwhelming sense of scale or the power of nature.

Those locations which are deemed to satisfy many of the above criteria are likely to be of higher sensitivity. No relative importance is inferred by the order of listing. Overall sensitivity may be a result of a number of these factors or, alternatively, a strong association with one or two in particular.

1.4.3 Visual Impact Magnitude

The visual impact magnitude relates to the scale and nature of the visual change brought about by the proposal and this is reflected in the criteria contained in **Table 1.4** below.

Table 1.4: Magnitude of Visual Impacts

Criteria	Description
Very High	The proposal alters a large proportion or critical part of the available vista and is, without question, the most distinctive element. A high degree of visual change is generated, directly and strongly altering the visual amenity of the scene
High	The proposal alters a significant proportion or important part of the available vista and is one of the most noticeable elements. A considerable degree of visual change is generated that directly influences the visual amenity of the scene
Medium	The proposal represents a moderate alteration to the available vista, introducing a degree and quality of visual change that directly influences the visual amenity of the scene
Low	The proposal alters the available vista to a minor extent and may not be noticed by a casual observer and/or would not have a marked effect on the visual amenity of the scene

Negligible	The proposal would be barely discernible within the available vista and would have an immaterial effect on the visual amenity of the scene
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1.4.4 Visual Impact Significance

As stated above, the significance of visual impacts is a function of visual receptor sensitivity and visual impact magnitude. This relationship is expressed in the same significance matrix and applies the same EPA definitions of significance as used earlier in respect of townscape impacts (**Table 1-3** refers).

1.4.5 Quality and Duration of Effects

In addition to assessing the significance of landscape/townscape effects and visual effects, EPA Guidance for EIAs requires that the quality of the effects is also determined. This could be negative/adverse, neutral, or positive/beneficial.

Whereas, the introduction of newly built elements into countryside areas more often results in negative landscape and visual effects, in urban settings, development proposals often replace one built feature with another or develop 'brownfield' sites. The consequence for the townscape character and visual amenity is often beneficial or may be a combination of positive effects and negative effects for different receptors. In the context of this assessment, the judgment of the quality of the effects is made in combination with the significance judgement for both landscape/townscape impacts and visual impacts e.g. Moderate/Positive or Moderate/Negative.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publication entitled: 'Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (2022) also requires consideration of the duration of effects and provides a range of classifications from Temporary (less than one year) to Permanent (more than 60 years). In terms of duration, the proposed development will result in short-term (1-7 year) construction stage impacts and thereafter, impacts will be permanent.

1.4.6 Extent of Study Area

It is anticipated that the proposed development is not likely to give rise to significant landscape/townscape or visual impacts beyond approximately 1km. As a result, a 1km radius study area is used in this instance.

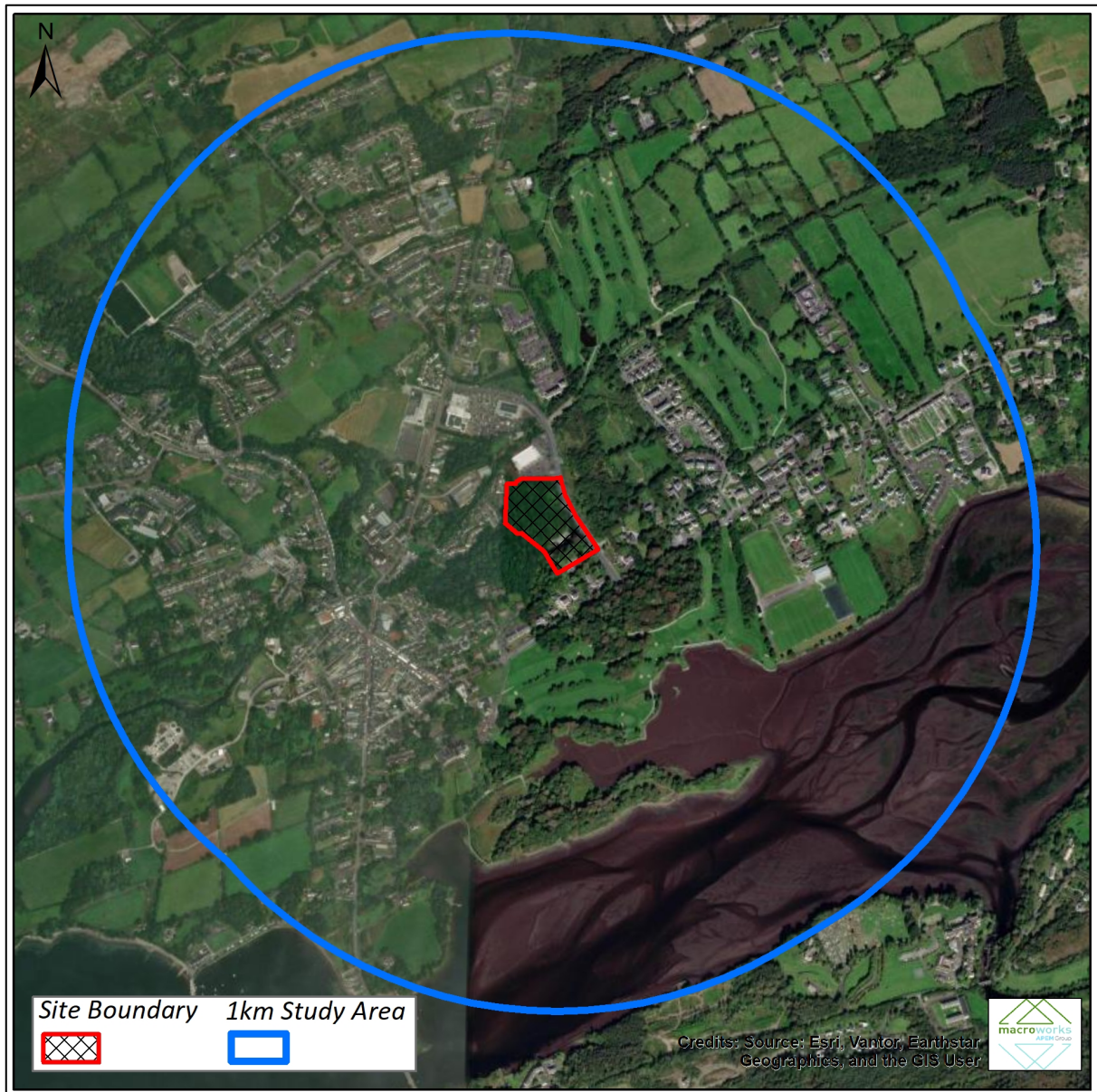


Figure 1.1 TVIA Study Area for the proposed development

1.5 THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

The landscape/townscape baseline represents the existing context and is the scenario against which any changes to it, brought about by the proposed development, will be assessed. A description of the landscape/townscape context of the proposed site and wider study area is provided below. Although this description forms part of the landscape/townscape baseline, many of the elements identified also relate to visual receptors i.e. places from which viewers can potentially see the proposed Development. The visual resource will be described in greater detail in Section 1.9.

1.6 Baseline Environment

The site is located in the eastern area of Kenmare, which is a vibrant, popular and attractive regional town in southwest County Kerry that is a notable tourist hub. The settlement lies at the head of the

elongated Kenmare Bay where it has something of an inland and riverine character despite being a coastal village.

The site itself is around 500m from the core of the village, but it is not at the rural interface as it is buffered from this by several housing estates and the Kenmare Golf Course. It is a vacant infill site that is surrounded by a diverse range of land uses. Immediately to the north is an ALDI supermarket, which is served by the same recently constructed distributor road as the site. Further north of ALDI is another Lidl Supermarket. On the eastern side of this road is another larger empty site contained in the same scrubby land cover as the site. Immediately to the west is wooded area and there are residential housing estates to the northeast and north. Large dwellings line the R569 regional road to the south of the site with many offering B&B accommodation.

There is sense of development latency to the site given the provision of road infrastructure and recent commercial development, coupled with the fact that it is an infill site surrounded by higher utility land uses.

The R569 is the nearest major route to the site being 100m to the southwest, but the main road passing through the village is the N71 national secondary road. The N70 national secondary road diverges from the N71 just to the north of the village and is part of the tourist driving route known as the Ring of Kerry. The other major tourist driving route of note is the Wild Atlantic Way which follows the N70 around the Ring of Kerry and then passes through the centre of the village along the N71 before heading westwards along the R571 coastal road along the southern shores of Kenmare Bay.



Figure 1.2 Oblique aerial view looking northwards across the site



Figure 1.3 Site context (just beyond entrance to ALDI supermarket)



Figure 1.4 View approaching village centre along the R569 road to the south of the site

1.7 PLANNING CONTEXT

1.7.1 Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028

Whilst the Kerry County Development Plan contains a Landscape Character Assessment for the county, this is not particularly relevant to urban areas, which are just identified as Key / Regional Town surrounded by a designation of 'Rural areas under significant urban influence' (see Figure 1.5). Kenmare is identified as being a 'Regional Town', but is not subject of specific land use zoning objectives in the manner that Kilarney, Listowel and Tralee are. This latest iteration of the Kerry County Development Plan has simplified its landscape sensitive designations to indicate areas deemed 'Visually Sensitive' alongside designated views and prospects. The site is not contained in a visually sensitive area and there are no designated Views & Prospects within or near the study area. The nearest Visually Sensitive area is over 1km away to the south of Kenmare Bay (See Figure 1.6).

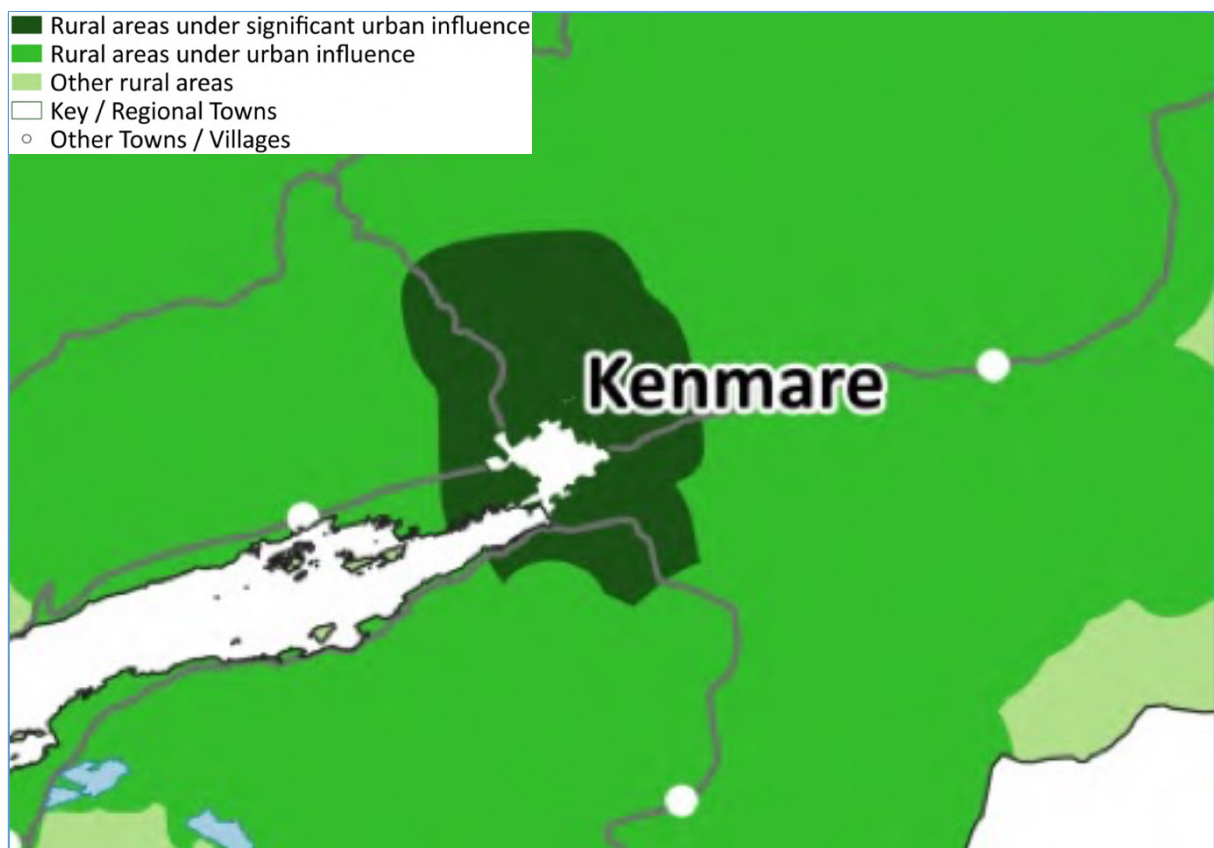


Figure 1.5 – Excerpt from Map 5.1 of the Kerry CDP identifying areas under urban influence

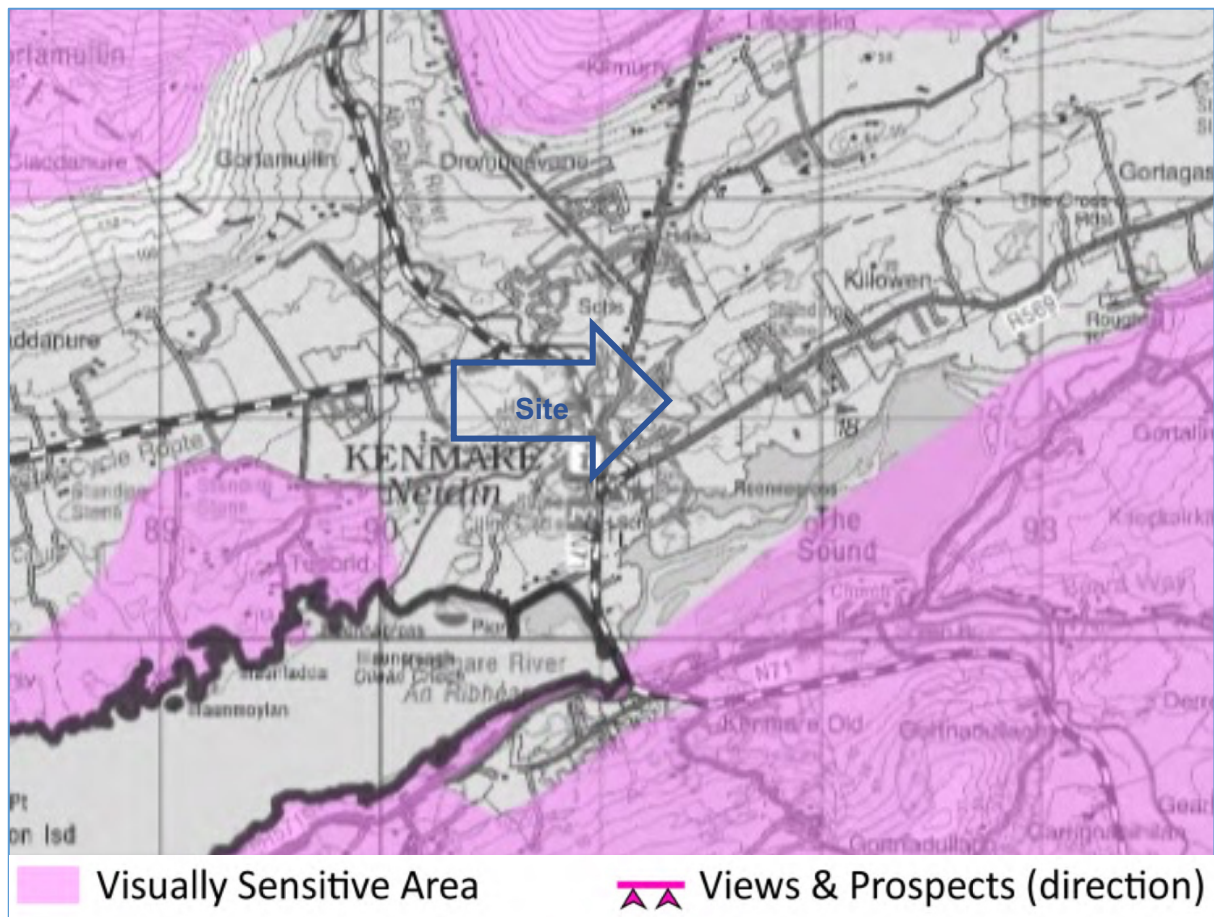


Figure 1.6 – Excerpt from Map S of the Kerry Landscape Sensitivities maps

1.7.2 Kenmare Municipal District Local Area Plan 2024-2030

At a finer grain of planning policy, the settlement of Kenmare is subject to the Kenmare Municipal District Local Area Plan 2024-2030, which covers a number of settlements and a large rural / coastal / Upland area in the southwest of the county. This includes land use zoning objectives for the main settlements including Kenmare. The site is shown to be fully contained within the R1 residential zoning area KENMD-47. Adjacent to the east is another area of the same zoning with G4 - Open Space to the Northeast. There is an area of G1 Open Space / Park to the west with an 'indicative walkway' connecting the site to it. 'Built up areas' are shown to the north and south of the site (See Figure 1.7 below).

Overall, the proposed development and its design is in accordance with the provisions of the LAP.

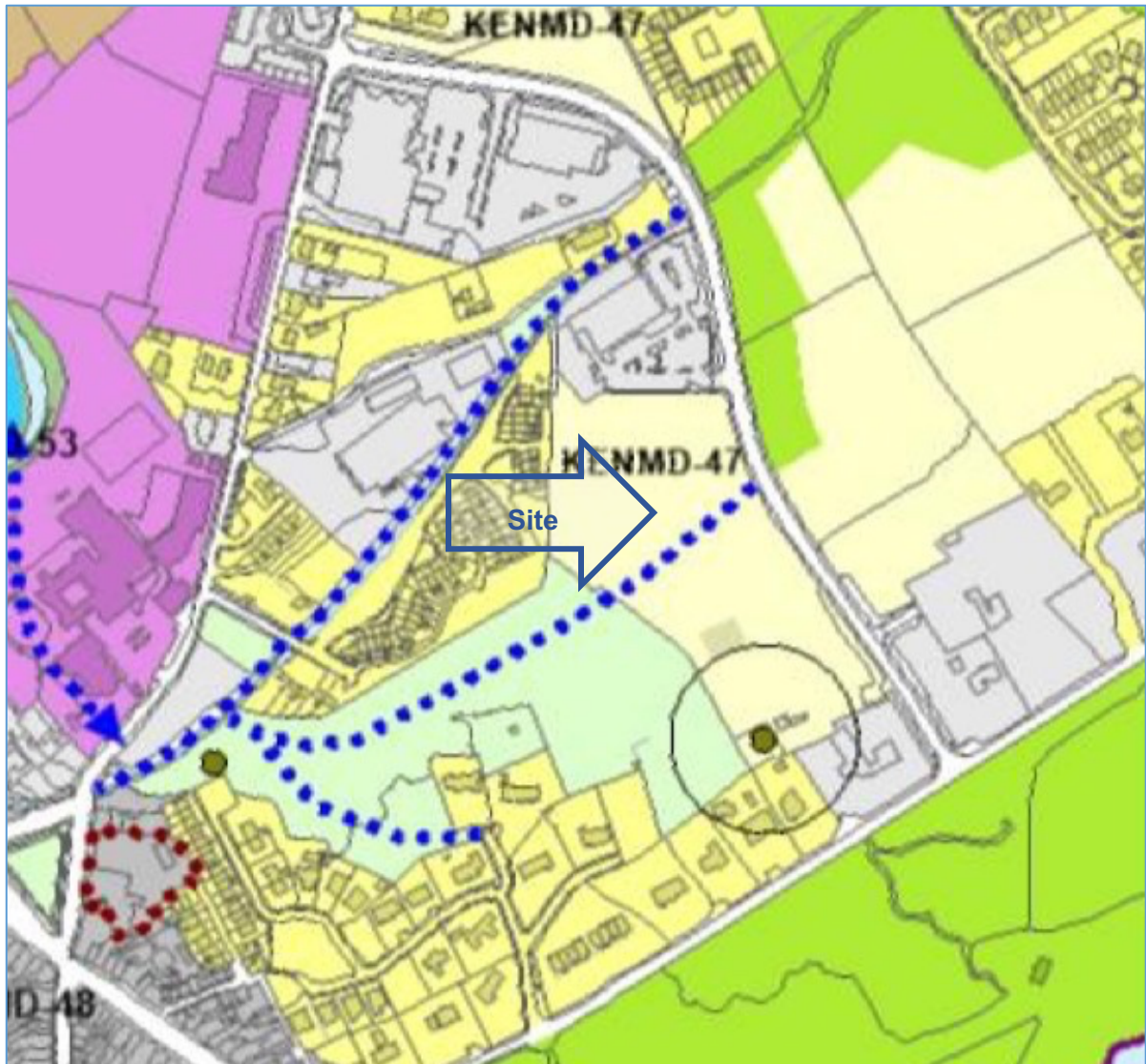


Figure 1.7 – Excerpt from Map S of the Kerry Landscape Sensitivities maps

1.8 Identification of Viewshed Reference Points as a Basis for Assessment

Viewshed Reference Points (VRP's) are the locations used to study the likely visual impacts associated with the proposed development. It is not warranted to include each and every location that provides a view as this would result in an unwieldy report and make it extremely difficult to draw out the key impacts arising from the proposed development. Instead, the selected viewpoints are intended to reflect a range of different receptor types, distances and angles. The visual impact of a proposed development is assessed using up to 6 categories of receptor type as listed below:

- Key Views - from features of national or international importance;
- Designated Scenic Routes and Views;
- Local Community views;
- Centres of Population;
- Major Routes;

- Amenity and heritage features.

The VRPs selected in this instance are set out in Table 1.5 and shown on Figure 1.5 below.

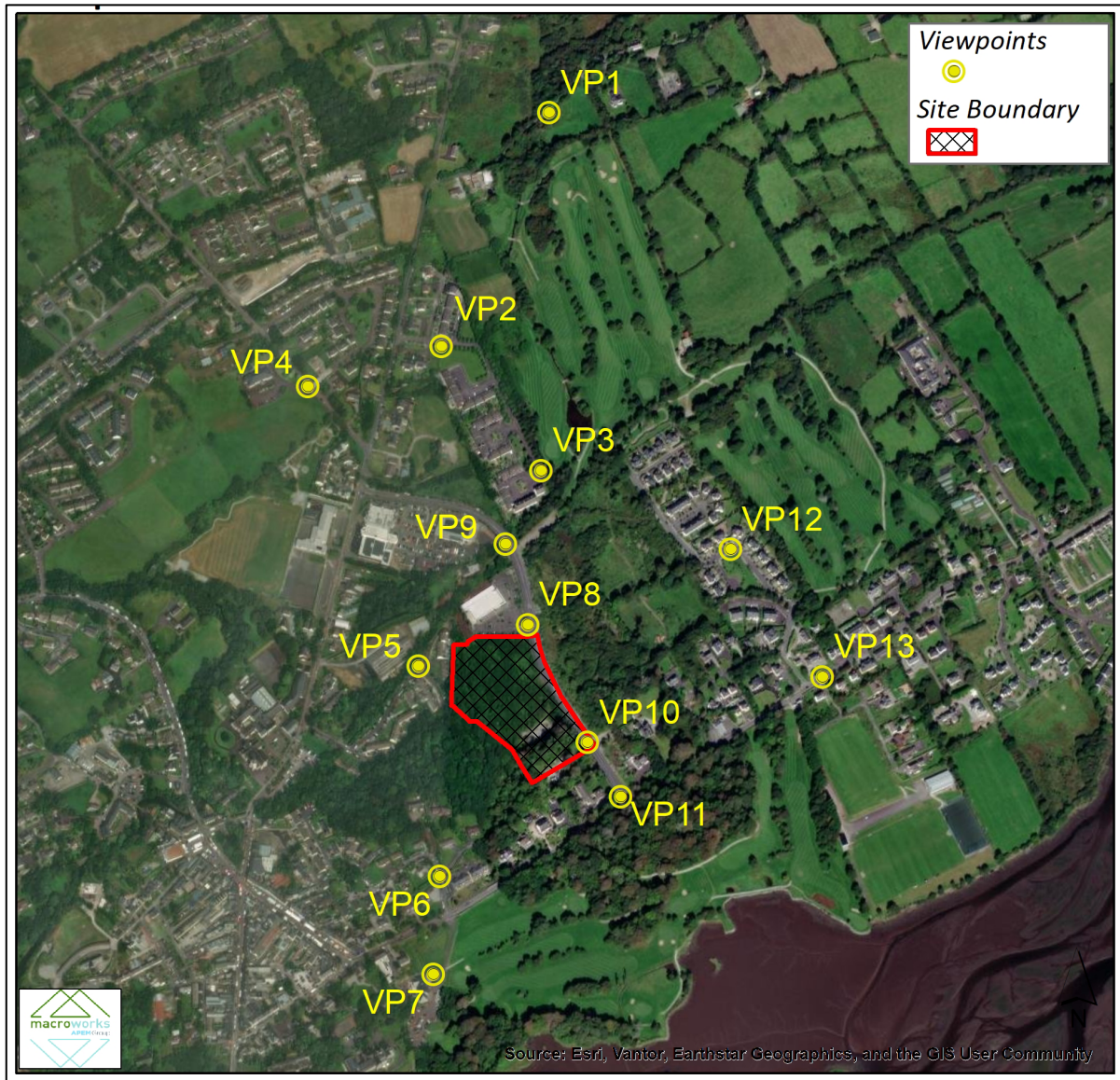


Figure 1.5 VRP location plan

Table 1-5 Outline Description of Selected VRPs

VRP No.	Location
VP1	Local Road north of Kenmare Golf Course
VP2	Cill Muire Close residential estate entrance road
VP3	Cill Muire Close residential estate cul de sac

VP4	Local Road at entrance to Sunnyhill Grove residential estate
VP5	Scarteen Park residential estate
VP6	Lodge Wood residential estate
VP7	Kenmare Golf Club (Clubhouse)
VP8	Pat Scarteen Road adjacent to northern end of site
VP9	Pat Scarteen Road north of ALDI
VP10	Pat Scarteen Road adjacent to southern end of site
VP11	Corner of R569 and Pat Scarteen Road
VP12	Oakwood Manor residential estate
VP13	R569 near entrance to Oakwood Manor

1.9 Proposed Landscape and Visual Mitigation Measures

The main embedded mitigation measure employed in this instance is the proposed development being contained in a site that is zoned as 'R1 - Residential', bordered by similar zoning to the east and built up areas to the north. It is the appropriate scale and nature of infill residential development for the site zoning and the indicative pedestrian access to the parkland zoning to the west of the site has been duly facilitated in the scheme design. An open space buffer area has also been provided in the southwestern corner to reflect the 25m protected monument buffer from the Kenmare Municipal District LAP.

A generous landscape plan of connected open spaces that incorporates considerable new tree planting is also provided, which will help to integrate the site with the surrounding wooded townscape setting.

Aside from those embedded siting and design elements outlined above, there are no specific townscape or visual mitigation measures considered necessary to reduce adverse effects in this instance.

1.10 PREDICTED IMPACTS

1.10.1 Landscape/townscape Impacts

1.10.1.1 Landscape/townscape value and sensitivity

In accordance with Section 5.5 of GLVIA3, a townscape character assessment requires a particular understanding of, among other criteria, *"the context or setting of the urban area and its relationship to the wider landscape"*. In this instance, the context of the study area is influenced by generally low intensity urban development in a variety of forms. The land uses that most heavily influence the local

character include residential housing estates, commercial development (two supermarkets), and transport corridors (R569). There is recreational and amenity value present in the form of Kenmare golf course which wraps around the site at a discrete distance and also a mature woodland area immediately to the west.

Whilst the site is currently undeveloped and contained in scrubby land cover, it falls within an area that is contained by urban development and is undergoing change for residential and commercial land use. This is provided for in planning policy terms in the Kenmare Municipal District LAP and also in physical terms by the completion of a new link road between the R569 to the south and Railway Road to the north. In this regard, the landscape of the site, and the immediate locality are not deemed to be susceptible to the scale and nature of residential development proposed. Instead, there is a sense of development latency and a perceptual void in the urban fabric.

For the reasons outlined above, the townscape sensitivity of the site and its immediate surroundings is deemed to be **Low**.

1.10.1.2 Magnitude of Landscape/townscape effects

Demolition and Construction Phase

There will be permanent physical effects to the land cover of the site, which are not readily reversible. During the construction stage there will be intense construction-related activity within and around the site, including approach roads. This will include, but is not limited to:

- HGVs transporting materials to and from the site;
- Removal of existing vegetation and landcover across the site
- Movement of heavy earth-moving machinery and tower cranes on-site;
- Temporary storage of excavated materials and construction materials on-site;
- Gradual emergence of the incomplete residential development, and associated works;
- Security hoarding and site lighting.

The physical impacts on the site's land cover during the construction stage that will be permanent and not readily reversible. There will also be impacts on the character of the site and central study area as a result of the intensity of movement and clutter of temporary structures associated with the construction works, but these are of a familiar scale and nature within an expanding townscape setting such as this. Most notably, some of the established vegetation across the site and around the site perimeter will be removed. Ground level activity and stockpiling will also be contained behind a security hoarding.

Construction stage effects on townscape character will be localised within the immediate setting and approach roads to the site, and will be 'short-term' (i.e. lasting 1-7 years), in accordance with the EPA definitions of impact duration.

On the basis of the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of the Short-term construction stage landscape/townscape impacts is deemed to be **Medium** and of a **Negative** quality.

Operational Phase

Following the completion of the proposed works, landscape/townscape impacts will relate entirely to the development's impact on the character of the receiving landscape/townscape and whether this is positive or negative.

The most notable landscape/townscape impacts of the proposed development will result from the permanent presence of new dwellings along with associated infrastructure and landscaping. This will add a notable degree of intensity to the quantity of built development locally, albeit set in context by the surrounding existing residential housing estates and commercial developments. The scale and form of the proposed development is considered appropriate to both its surrounding setting and is consistent with the LAP zoning objectives. It is a low-rise development of predominantly two-storey dwelling houses that follows the profile of the site terrain, is of a sympathetic design and finish, and is further integrated into its landscape/townscape setting through a considered landscape design that incorporates semi-mature tree planting and retains some existing amenity trees in the southwest corner of the site. Street tree planting will serve to soften and establish the new development as well as defining streets and open spaces. As provided for in the LAP, a pedestrian connection has been provided through the site and across an open space to connect with the woodland to the west.

Overall, the magnitude of townscape impact is deemed to be no greater than **Medium-low**, but of a **Neutral-Positive** quality.

1.10.1.3 Significance of Landscape/townscape effects

In summary, construction stage townscape impacts will be experienced in the form of clutter and intensity of movement of workers and machinery coupled with the constantly evolving, partially completed development. These are familiar and short-term effects that will be perceptually contained within the hoarding of the construction site. The combination of a Low townscape sensitivity judgement with a Medium magnitude of townscape impact is considered to result in a Moderate-slight significance of impact. This impact is deemed to be of a Negative quality and thus, the overall construction stage significance is **Moderate-slight / Negative**.

Once completed and operational the proposed development will complement the existing residential and commercial context in the locality. Coupled with the Low sensitivity judgement, the Medium-low magnitude of impact is deemed to result in a Moderate-slight significance of impact. Unlike the negative construction stage effect, the operational stage effect is deemed to be of a Positive quality as it represents the appropriate manifestation of the land use zoning for the site as desired by the Planning Authority and population through the CDP/LAP forward planning mechanisms. The resulting significance of impact is therefore, **Moderate-slight / Positive**.

1.11 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1.11.1 Visual Receptor Sensitivity

In this instance, most of the representative viewpoints are located within a relatively contained residential area, with the main difference in visual receptor sensitivity relating to whether or not they represent residential receptors or people moving within commercial areas (i.e. likely at work) or involved in recreational pursuits. VP8 represents a close view from a commercial area immediately outside the entrance to ALDI supermarket from a new arterial road that does not currently represent residential receptors. This VP is deemed to be of Low sensitivity. A similarly close view (VP10) from

further south on the same road is deemed to be more representative of residential receptors but not direct amenity related views. Consequently, it is deemed to be of Medium-low sensitivity. From VP7 which represents the Kenmare Golf Course outside of its clubhouse, the visual receptor sensitivity is deemed to be Medium on balance of the fact that this is a recreational amenity feature, but surrounding residential development is already characteristic of views. For the remaining viewpoint locations that represent residential receptors and local community views, visual receptor sensitivity is deemed to be 'Medium-Low'.

1.11.2 Magnitude of Visual Effect

The assessment of visual impacts at each of the selected viewpoints is aided by photomontages of the proposed development. Photomontages are a 'photo-real' depiction of the scheme within the view, utilising a rendered three-dimensional model of the development, which has been geo-referenced to allow accurate placement and scale. For each viewpoint, the following images have been produced:

1. Existing View
2. Wireline View
3. Montage View

Table 1.6 Visual Impact Assessment for selected VP

VRP No.	<i>Title and description of existing view</i>	<i>Receptor Sensitivity</i>	<i>Description and Magnitude of Visual impact</i>	<i>Significance / Quality / duration of Visual Effect</i>
VP1	Local Road north of Kenmare Golf Course This view is from an elevated location above the northern extent of Kenmare Golf Course where potential views may be afforded. However, it is an area strongly enclosed by mature roadside and hedgerow vegetation that encloses the peri-urban setting. This has been used as an illustrative view – to illustrate the level of enclosure.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term
VP2	Cill Muire Close residential estate entrance road This is a slightly elevated view from the top of a green area within a residential housing estate to the north of the site. It is afforded primarily to residents and visitors to the housing estate. The foreground is relatively open across the green and then somewhat enclosed by an enclave of semi-detached dwellings in an array of pastel colours. These are surrounded and backed by vegetation on the lower ground within the settlements with hills rising in the background.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening rooftops. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term
VP3	Cill Muire Close residential estate cul de sac This view is from the southern end of the same housing estate as represented by VP2. It is nearer to the site than VP2 and still to the north of it. Similar houses occupy the foreground backed by mature vegetation generating a strong degree of enclosure.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening dwellings and vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term

VP4	Local Road at entrance to Sunnyhill Grove residential estate This view is from a local road that is aligned in the direction of the site. Large dwellings line the immediate roadside with generous treelined gardens. In the middle distance, dwellings and vegetation occupy the lower ground with mountains rising in the distance and adding to the sense of enclosure and sense of place.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening buildings and vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term
VP5	Scarteen Park residential estate This view is from the nearest residential housing estate to the northwest of the site. The view looks across a small greenspace within the cul-de-sac beyond which is a series of bungalows flanked by two-storey dwellings to the north. A tall but intermittent treeline contains the foreground view.	Medium-low	The nearest line of proposed two storey dwellings within the north-western corner of the site. These afford a slightly lesser degree of enclosure as the foreground two-storey dwellings and are of a similar form and function. The new dwellings will increase the intensity and extent of built development within the scene, but also the consistency of enclosure as the open site beyond currently presents as an urban void. There is a greater sense of overlooking generated by the new dwellings, but this is from upper level rear windows and is similar in nature to back-to-back lines of dwellings throughout the country. The dwellings are of a high standard of design and finish and occupy a site that is zoned for this type of development. Hence, there would not be an expectation from residents of this housing estate that the land to the east will remain undeveloped in perpetuity. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium and of a marginally negative quality i.e. Neutral-Negative.	Moderate-slight/ Neutral-Negative/ Long Term
VP6	Lodge Wood residential estate This is a view from a small residential housing estate that is accessed from the R569 to the southwest of the site. The foreground dwellings are low-lying and surrounded by mature vegetation. The view represents residents and visitors of the housing estate.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term

VP7	Kenmare Golf Club (Clubhouse) This view takes in a foreground of a manicured fairway that is split by the entrance road to the golf course. The fairway is flanked by a heavy enclosure of mature woodland trees on both sides to the northeast. The scene is more open beyond the entrance where there is a view afforded of large dwellings that overlook the course beyond the busy regional road.	Medium	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term
VP8	Pat Scarteen Road adjacent to northern end of site This is a view across the site from the entrance to the ALDI supermarket that neighbours it directly to the north. The site is currently contained in scrubby grassland and surrounded by mature woodland vegetation to the west. Pat Scarteen Road sweeps to the southeast and the opposite side of the road is in a similar condition to the site.	Low	The site is completely transformed from an unutilised void in the urban fabric of Kenmare into a high quality modern housing estate replete with generous landscaping measures. The design of the buildings incorporates rich variation in form and high quality materials, which manifests the land use zoning for the site. While the intensity of built development is markedly increased, it is of an appropriate scale and intensity for the site and provides improved urban context for the neighbouring ALDI supermarket, which is currently flanked by a brownfield site. The proposed dwellings front the curving road in a loose and varied manner complimented by generous landscape planting. However, there is a consistent alignment that balances a relaxed but deliberate road frontage aesthetic. The proposed landscaping complements the backdrop of mature woodland and generates an established sylvan character. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High-medium and of a Positive quality.	Moderate / Positive/ Long Term
VP9	Pat Scarteen Road north of ALDI This view is from just to the north of VP8 at a point where the road bends to the northwest. While the open site to the east of the road remains visible, a foreground wall and vegetation largely screen the ALDI supermarket and proposal site.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default. The combination of VP8 and VP9 illustrates how locally enclosed the proposed development is.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term

VP10	Pat Scarteen Road adjacent to southern end of site This is an abrupt view into a rocky slope generated when this new road was cut through between the R569 and Railway Road. It is topped by vegetation and contains the scene to the west. Further north the scene open up along the road alignment and the roof of the ALDI supermarket is visible to the left hand side of the road. Farmed slopes and mountains can be seen in the distance beyond.	Medium-low	The view is completely changed from one enclosed by a vegetation-topped slope to one enclosed (to a lesser extent) by the south-eastern corner of the proposed housing estate. A terrace of dwellings runs across the southern boundary of the site buffered from the surrounding woodland by car parking and landscaping. Running along the existing road is an intermittent line of semi-detached and terraced dwellings that confidently front the street scene softened and complemented by formal hedge and tree planting. The design of the buildings incorporates rich variation in form and high quality materials, which manifests the land use zoning for the site. While the intensity of built development is markedly increased, it is of an appropriate scale and intensity for the site. The proposed landscaping complements the backdrop of mature woodland and generates an established sylvan character. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High-medium and of a Positive quality.	Moderate / positive/ Long Term
VP11	Corner of R569 and Pat Scarteen Road This view is from a short distance to the southeast of VP10 and takes in several of the large dwellings that front onto the R569 in the foreground. The road to the north is channelled through a tight cutting of rock and vegetation and slopes gently downhill to the northwest. Farmed slopes and mountains can be seen in the distance beyond.	Medium-low	Only a small section of the northernmost dwelling from the proposed development can be seen from here emerging beyond the intervening road cutting. It replaces a view of more distant dwelling on the slopes beyond and in that respect is a like-for-like replacement in terms of setting. The nearer proposed dwelling provide a sense of scale and contextual perspective that is more legible, but ultimately the visual change is subtle. The magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low-negligible and of a Neutral quality. The combination of VP10 and VP11 illustrates how locally enclosed the proposed development is.	Slight-imperceptible / Neutral / Long Term
VP12	Oakwood Manor residential estate This is a view from a residential housing estate that is accessed from the R569 to the northeast of the site and is contained between farmland to the west and Kenmare	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term

	Golf Course to the east. The foreground dwellings are large, relatively modern and surrounded by mature vegetation. The view represents residents and visitors of the housing estate.			
VP13	R569 near entrance to Oakwood Manor This view looks to the southwest along the alignment of the busy R569 regional road as it approaches the village centre. Just above the road on the right hand side is a series of large detached dwellings, many of which offer B&B accommodation. They are interspersed by mature boundary and specimen tree planting.	Medium-low	The proposed development will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact is therefore Negligible by default.	Imperceptible/ Neutral/ Long Term

1.12 CONCLUSION

It is important to appreciate that effects on landscape character and visual amenity are an inevitable consequence of any development proposal of this type given the change in land use, and given the proximity and variety of visual receptors.

The proposed development at Killowen is an infill development in an area zoned 'Residential' and flanked by an ALDI supermarket to the north and a similarly zoned residential site to the east. Indeed, the site reads as a latent void in the urban fabric of Kenmare. Given its location and zoning this is precisely the scale and nature of development what would be expected of this site and with an appropriately strong emphasis on the architectural and landscape architectural design and materials.

In arriving at the design for the proposed development, consideration has been given to the physical and visual connection between the site and the woodland area immediately to the west. A connection, which is dictated by instinctive connectivity as well as the land use zoning of this site.

From a townscape perspective, the proposed Killowen residential development has been designed with a scale, design and finish that is sympathetic and appropriate within its locality, which will aid in successfully assimilating the proposed residential development into its landscape/townscape context. Consequently, the significance of operational stage townscape effects is deemed Moderate-slight and Positive as it represents the appropriate manifestation of the land use zoning for the site. Notwithstanding that short-term construction stage effects are deemed Moderate-slight and Negative.

In terms of visual impacts, the proposed development will be most noticeable to lower sensitivity visual receptors in the immediate locality of the site, and will be potentially visible from very few locations within the wider townscape context. Indeed, from all but four of the 13 representative viewpoints there will be no visibility at all. Limited localised visibility is not necessarily an ameliorating factor for the development as the effects from close receptors with clear views of the development along the Pat Scarteen Road are deemed Moderate and Positive due to the high quality of the architectural design and finish complemented by landscape interventions appropriate to the surrounding sylvan setting. Only from VP5 is there a Neutral-Negative visual effect and this is only of a Moderate-slight significance. In that case, the rear façade of a line of proposed dwellings will rise into view in a gap in the mature treeline that backs the foreground cul-de-sac of Scarteen Park.

Overall, the proposed development is not considered to generate any Significant and Negative landscape and visual effects. Rather, it is considered to make a generally positive contribution to the urban fabric of Kenmare with few localised, marginally negative effects.