

Dunmanway to Clashavoon 110kV Overhead Line Environmental Reports

Constraints Report - Human Beings

Submission to: ESB International

Stephen Court

St. Stephens Green

Dublin 2

By:

AOS Planning Limited

2nd Floor The Courtyard

25 Great Strand Street

Dublin 1

Tel 01 874 7704

E-mail: enquiries@aosplanning.ie

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1. Introduction

This section identifies the constraints associated with human beings that exist in the study area associated with the proposed 110kV line from Clashavoon to Dunmanway, Co. Cork. The study area is approximately 520km². The northern section includes the urban area of Macroom and surrounding townlands, the central section is made up of primarily agricultural land uses with undulating topography and the southern section is dominated by the urban area of Dunmanway.

2. Methodology and Information Sources

The following list of information sources were reviewed as part of the desk study:

- National Development Plan 2007-2013;
- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020;
- Planning Guidelines for the South West Region 2010-2022;
- Cork County Development Plan 2009;
- Ordnance Survey Mapping and Photography;
- Central Statistics Office data;
- Fáilte Ireland and Local Tourism websites.

3. General Planning Background

The study area is located in the Cork County Council administrative area and at a local level is subject to the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan 2009. At a higher level in land use planning hierarchy, the project falls within the provisions of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Region 2010-2022 and the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020.

All of the plans in the planning hierarchy support the development and reinforcement of the electricity supply network, subject to adequate protection of the environment.

4. Socio-Economic Factors

4.1 Population

Population Structure and Change

In terms of the County, Region and State, population structure and change is strongly influenced by migration and emigration rates, rather than birth and death rates. The mid to

late 1980's in Ireland was a period of heavy population outflow, mainly due to the poor economic and employment situation. Since 1990 there has been a large movement of people into the country due to the 'economic boom' in Ireland. The South West Region has experienced fairly high levels of population growth in the past 10 years. However, recent statistics from the CSO indicate that immigration is declining and emigration is increasing throughout the country, which has resulted in net outward migration for the first time since 1995. Whilst a census is not due to be carried out until April 2011, population estimates from the CSO in April 2009 show an estimated population of 4.5 million in the Republic of Ireland (www.cso.ie).

Table 1 illustrates the changes in population for the State, the South West Region (Counties Cork and Kerry) and locally (Macroom and Dunmanway).

Area	1996	2002	2006	1996-2002 % Change	2002-06 % Change
Ireland	3,626,087	3,917,203	4,239,848	8.0%	8.2%
SW Region	546,640	580,356	621,130	6.1%	7.0%
Co. Cork	420,510	447,829	481,295	6.5%	7.5%
Macroom (town & rural area) *	15,756	16,511	18,079	4.8%	9.5%
Dunmanway (town & rural area)	7,542	7,671	7,937	1.7%	3.5%

Table 1 Population Structure at National, Regional and Local Level [Source: ROI Census of Population 1996, 2002 and 2006]

*Note Macroom is the nearest town to Clashavoon.

The table illustrates that the population of the South West region grew steadily at just below the national average, for the past 10 years. During the period from 1996 to 2002 the population of Cork County increased by 6.5%. 2006 census data indicates a further increase of 7.5% in the County's population between 2002 and 2006, which is just below the State population growth rate of 8.2% in the same period.

The Regional Planning Guidelines indicate a population increase from 580,356 in 2002, to 670,000 – 700,000 persons in 2020. In addition to this, the reaffirmation of Cork City as a Gateway in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) indicates that the area will continue to have a strong development focus.

The Guidelines note that the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government issued population forecasts in October 2009, which reflect a significant growth of population for the South-West region in the order of 127,500 persons between 2010 – 2022, the second highest level of growth in the state. This will result in a population of approximately 795,000 persons in the region by 2022. Table 2 is a copy of the table in the Regional Guidelines outlining the population targets for the South West region.

Area	2006	2019	2016	2022	2010 - 2022
Cork City	119,418	127,710	134,710	150,000	22,290
Cork County	361,877	389,943	436,920	470,622	80,679
Kerry County	139,835	149,847	165,470	174,378	24,531
SW Region	621,130	667,500	737,100	795,000	127,500

Table 2 Population targets for the South West Region [Source: RPGs]

Effective infrastructure and in particular improvements in energy infrastructure are identified as being essential for achieving growth as described in the Regional Planning Guidelines.

4.2 *Economic Activity*

Economic activity in the study area is principally based around agricultural activities with urban related economic activity occurring in Macroom and Dunmanway. In regional terms these two towns are considered to provide general services, educational and training facilities. The spatial strategy for the region views such towns as continuing to provide housing, local services and shopping facilities and their purpose generally, is to maintain the quality of life by encouraging a balance in growth between rural and urban areas. In addition to the main towns, economic activity occurs at smaller levels throughout the area in the smaller villages within the study area. Planning policies recognise that the traditional mainstays of rural employment have been in decline for some time and that there is a need for new initiatives which will support rural diversification, innovation and enterprise development.

The South West Region is notable in two respects. Firstly, it contains highly scenic areas which are important tourist attractions, with associated economic activity and the secondly it is a strongly performing region across a number of economic indicators. For example, the large cities in the region are home to the headquarters of many multinationals engaged in the food, electronic and pharmaceutical sectors. Whilst these employment sectors are not dominant within the specific study area, it is important to understand that they have regional impacts in terms of socio-economics which impact on the study area. To ensure

continued economic growth and to enable regional towns and villages to meet their obligations under the Regional Planning Guidelines the provision and security of energy infrastructure is essential.

Sectoral employment as a share of total employment in the South West Region may be divided as indicated in Table 3.

Employment Sector	% of total employment (2003)
Services Employment	59.9%
Industrial Employment	31.2%
Agricultural Employment	8.9%

Table 3 Employment Sector [source: www.iro.ie]

4.3 Tourism and Amenities

The main towns of Macroom and Dunmanway have many tourism and amenity features of local interest both to residents and tourists, in terms of older buildings, features of historical interest, local parks, sports facilities, community facilities, etc.

Parts of the South West region (including West Cork, the Ring of Kerry and other areas) are very significant in terms of tourism and attract a large number of tourists to the region. The study area where it is proposed to locate the development has a number of features of tourism and amenity interest. These include:

Gearagh Nature Reserve

The Gearagh is the remains of the only ancient post glacial alluvial forest in Western Europe. It was formed at the end of the last Ice Age and consists of a vast area of submerged islands that once supported a rich woodland flora. It gets its name from "An Gaoire", the wooden river. In 1987 the area was declared a statutory nature reserve. The islands, for the most part, are covered by the waters of the Lee Hydro-electrical scheme. However, during dry periods numerous rare species of plants can be encountered e.g. mud worth, which is only found in one other location outside the Gearagh. This area is also of interest to bird watchers with both summer and winter migrants - from October onwards migratory birds arrive in large flocks.

Inniscarra Lake and the River Lee

Inniscarra Lake is located to the south of Macroom. It originated from the River Lee which passes through the study area from Inchigeena (on the western extremity of the study area). It was created in 1956 by the construction of two hydro electric generating stations,

one in Carrigadrohid and the other at Inniscarra Lake closer to Cork City. The lake constitutes an area of 530 hectares. The purpose was to hold enough water to generate electricity for Cork City and its surrounding towns and villages. It is used for a wide variety of recreational activities including fishing, boating, walking, etc.

The Gearagh and Inniscarra Lake area and their surroundings are protected by ecological and landscape designations.

The River Bandon

The River Bandon rises at Nowen Hill to the north of Drimoleague. The river then flows to Dunmanway, where it absorbs two local tributaries, the Sally River and the Brewery River, before turning eastward towards the twin villages of Ballineen and Enniskeane. The Bandon then flows through the centre of Bandon town, and on to the village of Innishannon, before draining into Kinsale Harbour on Ireland's south coast. Like the River Lee it is used for a wide variety of recreational and amenity purposes and is protected by ecological designations.

Scenic Routes

There are four scenic routes identified in the Cork County Development Plan, in the study area, which are attractive to tourists. A 7km stretch of the Macroom to Carrigadrohid Road (R618) lies to the north of Inniscarra Lake, this provides views of the lake and surrounding countryside. A 4km stretch along a local road from Lissacresig towards Killnamartery provides views of the surrounding countryside. A 6km stretch along a local road from Tooms towards Inchigeena provides views of the River Lee and the surrounding countryside. A circular 5km drive around Knockane (near Teerelton) provides views of the surrounding countryside.

A wide range of recreational and amenity activities are likely to take place throughout the study area including equestrian activities, cycling, walking, fishing, etc. and there are numerous accommodation providers including B & Bs, hotels, farmstays and self-catering.

Conclusions

Whilst there are a number of features and areas that are attractive to tourists, the area is not specifically noted in tourism publications as being of national or regional significance in terms of attracting tourists.

4.4 Landuse

The study area was examined using a combination of OSI mapping and Corine land cover mapping. The study area is largely used for agriculture, forestry and associated activities which include settlements and tourism. Outside of the two main towns a number of small villages occur within the study area including Cappeen, Kilmurry, Killnamartery, Enniskean and Ballineen.

There is one regional road, R587, which links the two towns and the proposed route for the Macroom bypass is in the study area. In addition to this there is an extensive network of smaller interconnecting roads, with associated villages and settlement, throughout the study area.

The area generally comprises a mix of pastures, complex cultivation pattern and broad leaved, coniferous and mixed forests as identified in Figure 1 below.

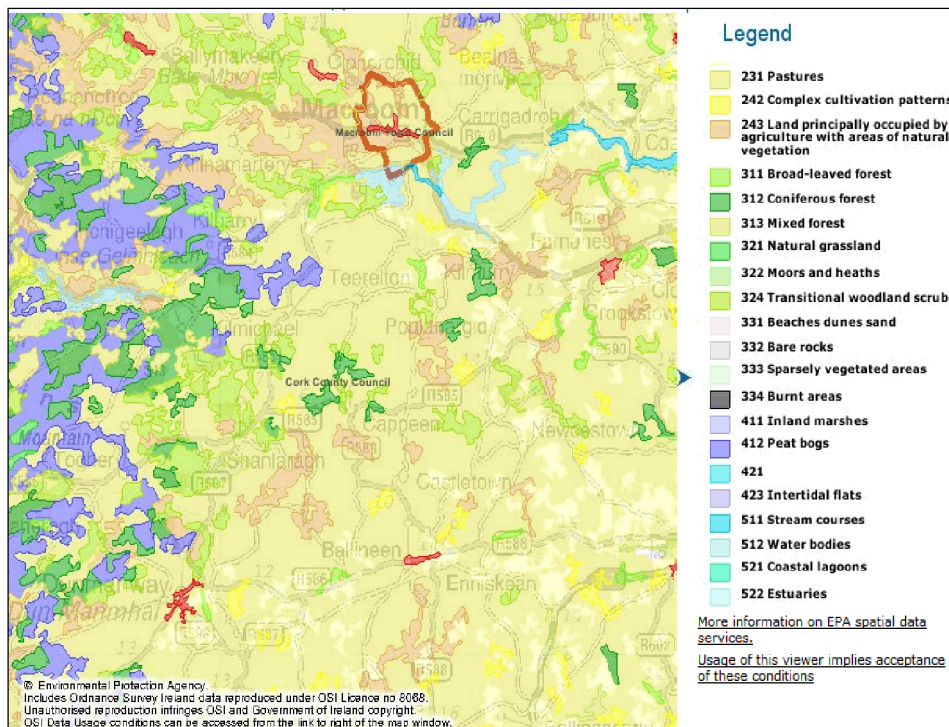


Figure 1 Details of study area showing the mix of the landuses within the general study area (source www.epa.ie)

5. Constraints of Study Area

The key constraints in relation to human beings are the following:

Major Towns – The major towns of Dunmanway and Macroom should be avoided where possible. Given the location of existing electricity stations outside these towns this should be possible.

Physical Constraints – Major water features in the area will constrain the location of structures.

Areas of Tourism Interest – The location of structures in and relative to areas of scenic importance should be carefully considered in order to minimise landscape impacts and associated attractiveness of the area for tourism and amenity purposes.

6. Conclusions

There are no significant constraints in relation to human beings. Cognisance will be taken of the highlighted constraints during the preparation of final environmental assessment. The implementation of appropriate mitigation measures will ensure there will be no significant residual impact on the environment from the proposed development in respect to human beings.