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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Nash's Boreen Pedestrian & Cycle Scheme

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1. Introduction

The works are proposed to take place in the locality of Nash's Boreen, Co. Cork, situated approximately 3 km Northwest of Cork City. The development aims to upgrade Active Travel (walking and cycling) infrastructure within the project area.

Flynn, Furney Environmental Consultants Ltd has been engaged by DBFL 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 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 proposal 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.

2. Description of proposed project

2.1 Description of the Works

The proposal seeks to upgrade the existing pedestrian and cycle route present in the locality of Nash's Boreen, Co. Cork. The existing route is approximately 2.1 km in length. The facility will be complete with raised traffic calming ramps and drop kerbs at strategic points (Fig. 3-9 in Appendix). The project will include accommodation works for vehicle access, as well as a dedicated vehicle turning facility (CH+ 1700). Traffic management bollards and appropriate signage will also be installed where necessary.

2.2 Project Location

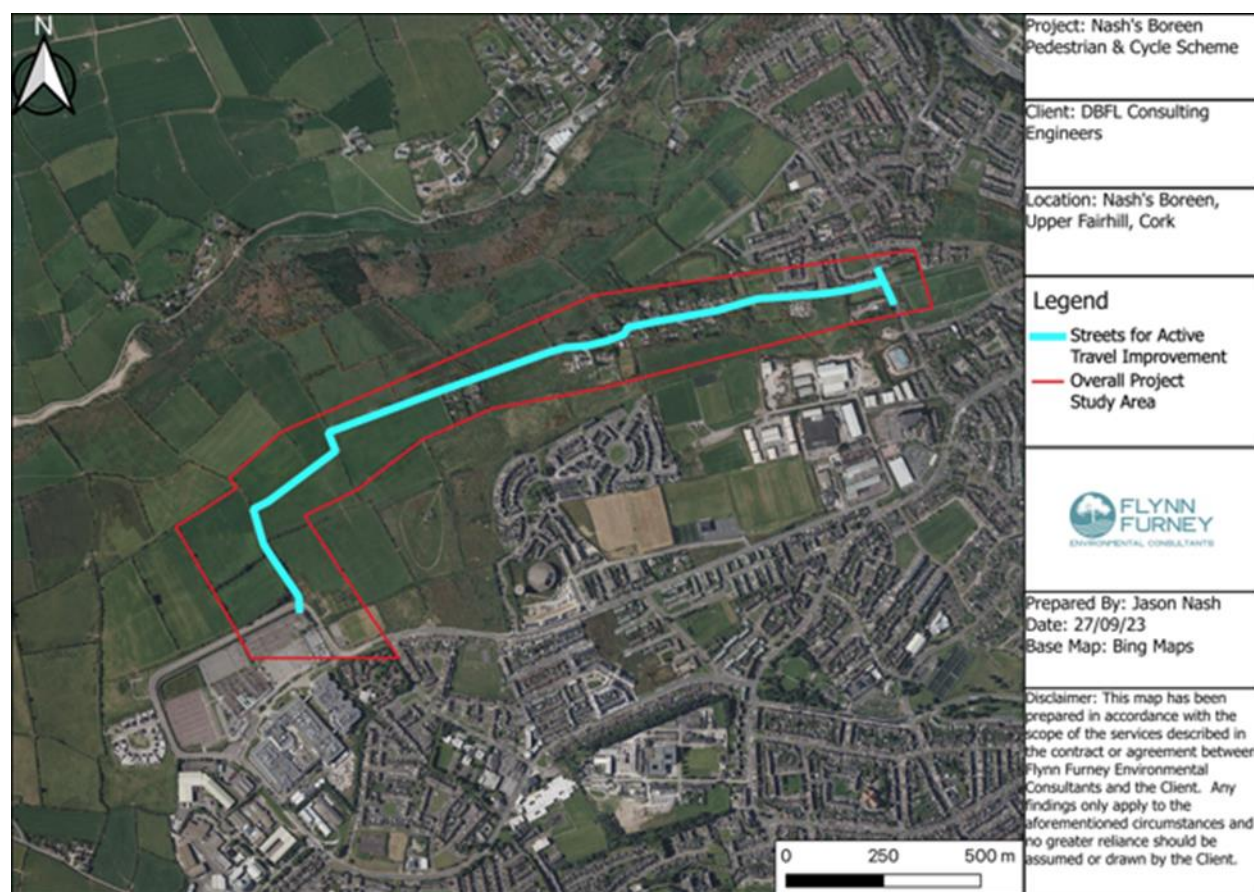


Figure 1. Overview of the proposed works area.

The study site is situated in the locality of Nash's Boreen, Co. Cork, and it is bound to the east by residential dwellings (Fig. 1). From here, the existing pedestrian and cycle route extends west and southwards from

Upper Fairhill to David McCarthy Road (adjacent to Apple Computers) for approximately 2.1 km. The existing road is mostly paved and serves houses located on both sides for approximately 1.2 km west of Upper Fairhill. Nash's Boreen is also used as an amenity walk as part of the Cork City Northwest *Slí na Sláinte* loop. The habitats directly adjacent to the footpath are hedgerows (WL1), treelines (WL2) and grassy verges (GS2), earth bank (BL2), stone walls and other stonework (BL1). Treelines included species such as Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), while hedgerows were mainly composed of Waxyleaf Privet (*Ligustrum quihoui*). The surrounding landscape is primarily composed of improved agricultural grassland (GA1), immature woodland (WS2), Sitka Spruce conifer plantation (WD4) and sparse patches of scrub dominated by Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*) and Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) (WS1).

The closest designated sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (004030) and Great Island Channel SAC (001058), which are located respectively 5.3km and 10.1km to the east of the project area (Fig. 2).

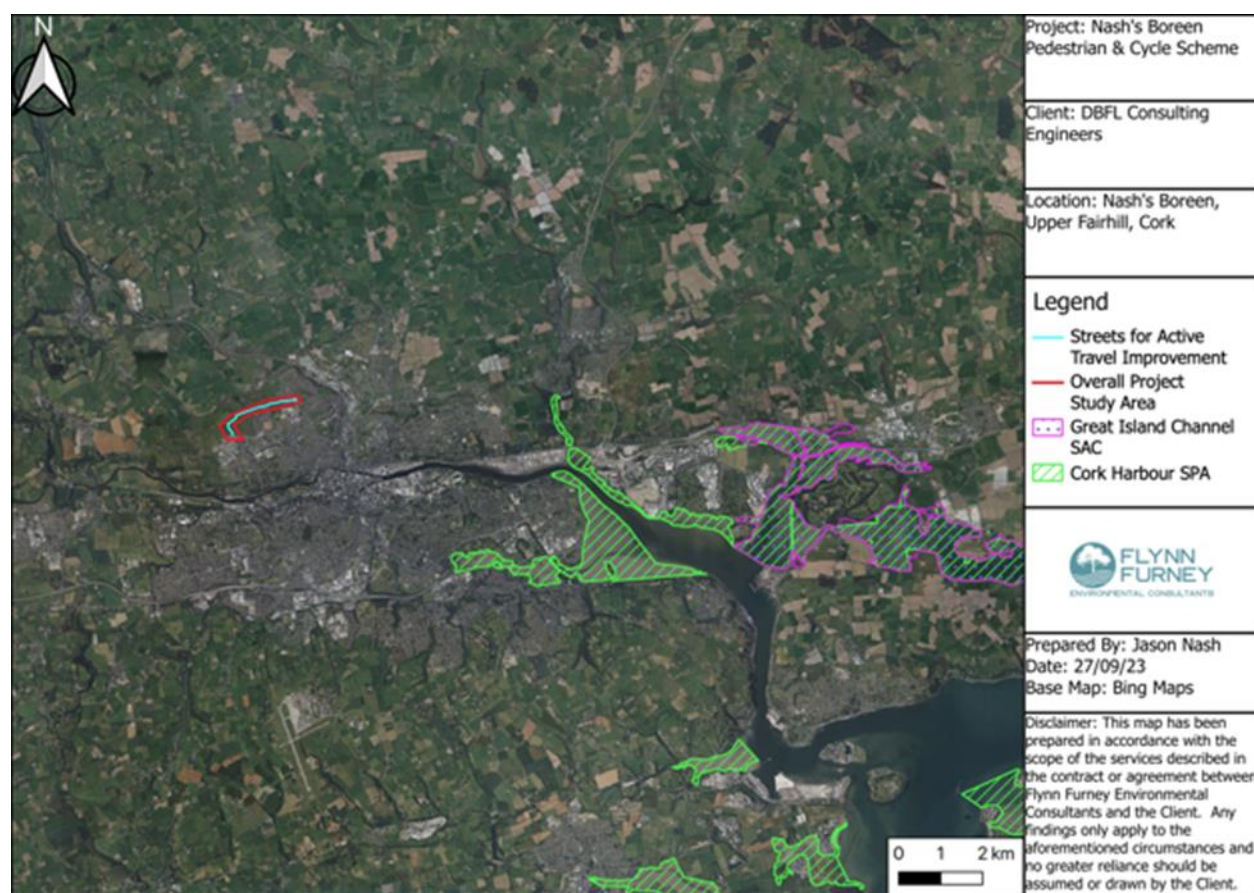


Figure 2. Designated sites in the proximity of the proposed works area.

3. Relevant legislation

Screening represents the initial phase of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, during which a determination is made regarding the necessity of conducting an EIA. The requirements for EIA are established by the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). The amendments to the Directive took effect on May 16, 2017, and the corresponding regulations have been implemented into national law. The amended Directive does not alter the specified project types or thresholds, thus maintaining the classifications and thresholds outlined in the 2001-2010 Regulations. The legislation governing EIA in relation to the planning process has been consolidated primarily within Part X of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018, as well as Part 10 and Schedules 5, 6, and 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018. Schedule 5, Part 1, enumerates project types listed in Annex I of the Directive, which are automatically subject to EIA. Conversely, Part 2 of the same Schedule identifies project types in Annex II. Developments that align with these project types are required to undergo EIA if no threshold is specified or if they surpass a designated threshold. For developments categorized under Part 2 that fall below the specified threshold, a screening process is necessary to ascertain whether an EIA is warranted, based on the criteria outlined in Schedule 7.

EIA legislation delineates the types of projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). Annex I specifies projects that are mandatory for an EIAR, while Annex II categorizes projects that are evaluated according to established mandatory thresholds for each project class. The EIA screening exercise initially assesses the development for Mandatory EIA using classifications defined in the appropriate legislation. If no mandatory requirement is identified, the screening proceeds to sub-threshold development assessment, wherein the competent authority determines the likelihood of significant environmental effects, taking into account the project's scale, nature, location, and context.

This document outlines the findings of the Screening Assessment conducted in accordance with the aforementioned legislation.

4. Screening and assessment

4.1 Mandatory EIAR

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is mandatory for certain project categories that are likely to significantly affect the surrounding environment. These categories are listed in Annex I of the EIA Directive and are incorporated into Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. These are reported in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Project categories requiring mandatory EIA.

Projects referred to in article 4(1)
Crude-oil refineries and installations for the gasification and liquefaction of materials
Thermal power and nuclear power stations Installations for the processing of irradiated nuclear fuel
Integrated works for the initial smelting of cast iron and steel, and installations for the production of non-ferrous crude metals from ore, concentrates or secondary raw materials
Installations for the extraction of asbestos and for the processing and transformation of asbestos and products containing asbestos
Integrated chemical installations
Construction of railway lines, airports, motorways, express roads, construction of new road with four or more lanes
Inland waterways and ports, trading ports, and piers
Waste disposal installations for the incineration and chemical treatment
Groundwater abstraction or artificial groundwater recharge schemes
Works for the transfer of water resources between river basins
Waste water treatment plants Extraction of petroleum and natural gas for commercial purposes
Dams or other installations designed for the holding back or permanent storage of water
Pipelines with a diameter of more than 800 mm of more than 40 km
Installations for the intensive rearing of poultry or pigs
Industrial plants
Quarries and open-cast mining
Construction of overhead electrical power lines Installations for storage of petroleum, petrochemical, or chemical products
Storage sites Installations for the capture of CO ² streams for the purposes of geological storage

The proposed development in Nash's Boreen does not fall within the list of activities requiring discretionary EIA as set out in the legislation. Therefore, the development proposed at Nash's Boreen will be evaluated according to established mandatory thresholds for each project class in section 4.2.

4.2 Project Class

EIA legislation defines the types of projects that may require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). Annex I specifies the projects that require mandatory EIAR, while Annex II details those projects that are evaluated according to set mandatory thresholds applicable to each project class. While the proposed development does fall within the categories listed in Annex I and does not necessitate a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), it is however prudent to confirm that the proposed development does not fall within any of the project classes listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, or if it does, that the project is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects. Project classes are reported in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Project categories.

Schedule 5, Part 2	Class of Development
1	Agriculture, silviculture and aquaculture
2	Extractive industry
3	Energy industry
4	Production and processing of metals
5	Mineral industry
6	Chemical industry
7	Food industry
8	Textile, leather, wood and paper industries
9	Rubber industry 10) Infrastructure projects
10	Infrastructure projects
11	Other projects
12	Tourism and leisure
13	Changes, extensions, development and testing
14	Works of demolition
15	Any other project

The subject development does not fall within the development classes set out in Part 1 of Schedule 5. The following development class included in Part 2 of Schedule 5 is relevant to the development proposal;

10. Infrastructure Projects;

(e) Construction of roads, harbours and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I);

Nonetheless, the proposed development does not trigger a requirement for a mandatory EIA as the project involves the enhancement of an existing road rather than the *ex-novo* construction of a road. Therefore, the proposed development does not classify under any of the above-mentioned classes of development.

This EIAR Screening Report has been compiled to furnish adequate information for the competent authority to assess any potential significant effects that may arise. In light of the nature of the

development proposed, Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants believes that significant adverse effects on the surrounding environment are unlikely during both the construction and operational phases of the development.

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). The subject development does not fall within the development classes set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5.

4.3 Sub-threshold EIA Screening Assessment

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations specifies the criteria for assessing whether a development may have significant environmental impacts, which have been directly derived from Annex III of the 2011 Directive. The criteria are specified as follows:

- The characteristics of the proposed development;
- The location of the proposed development, particularly regarding the environmental sensitivity of the geographical areas that may be impacted;
- The characteristics of the anticipated impacts, focusing on the potential significant effects of the proposed development.

The relevant threshold summaries of legislative requirements for EIA Screening for road type developments (in Ireland) are set out in Table 3 below, and are taken from the Roads Act (1993–2016); based on the original format in the NRA Guidelines on EIA (2008)

Table 3. Summary of Legislative Requirements for EIA Screening in relation to road type development

Mandatory		Legislative context
1. construction of a motorway		S. 50.—(1) (a)(i) of the Roads Act, 1993-2016.
2. construction of a busway		S. 50.—(1) (a)(ii) of the Roads Act, 1993-2016.
3. construction of a service area		S. 50.—(1) (a)(iii) of the Roads Act, 1993-2016.
4. Any prescribed type of proposed road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road, namely:	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 would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500m or	Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Part V Environmental Impact Assessment) Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Part V Environmental Impact Assessment)

	more in length in an urban area; The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length	
Sub-Threshold		Legislative context
4. Where An Bord Pleanála considers that any proposed road development (other than development to which mandatory requirement applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, he shall direct the road authority to prepare an environmental impact statement in respect of such proposed road development and the authority shall comply with such direction.		S. 50.—(1) (b) of the Roads Act, 1993 - 2016.
5. Where a road authority considers that any proposed road development (other than development to which mandatory requirement applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall inform the Board in writing and where the Board concurs with the road authority he shall give a direction to the road authority (as above).		S. 50.—(1) (c) of the Roads Act, 1993 - 2016.
6. Where a proposed road development (other than development to which mandatory requirement applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be located on certain environmental sites, the road authority concerned shall decide whether the proposed road development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The sites concerned are:	(i) a European Site, meaning (I) a candidate site of Community importance, (II) a site of Community importance, (III) a candidate special area of conservation, (IV) a special area of conservation, (V) a candidate special protection area, or (VI) a special protection area	S. 50.—(1) (d) of the Roads Act, 1993 – 2016.
	(v) Land established or recognised as a nature reserve within the meaning of section 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act, 1976 (No. 39 of 1976)	
	(vi) Land designated as a refuge for fauna under section 17 of the Wildlife Act, 1976 (No. 39 of 1976)	

If the authority decides that the proposed road development would be likely to have significant effects, it shall inform An Bord Pleanála in writing (as outlined in (6) above).	
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With reference to section 6 (highlighted in table 3 above), screening questions will be hereby assessed with regard to the Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations. This screening assessment uses the checklist provided in the 'Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)' (EC, 2017). This is provided in Table 4-6 below.

Table 4. Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Questions	Relevance	Is it likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
<i>Is the scale of the project considered significant?</i>	The proposed works are located within the footprint of an existing road, which measures approximately 2.1km. The scale of the proposed development is in keeping with the scale of the receiving setting and surrounds in terms of size and design, and is therefore not considered significant.	Given the nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that impacts in terms of scale of the project will be significant.
<i>Is the size of the project considered significant when considered cumulatively with other adjacent developments?</i>	No permitted or proposed projects were identified which in combination with the proposed development would give rise to significant cumulative impacts.	It is not anticipated that the project will give rise to significant impacts in combination with adjacent developments.
<i>Will the project utilize a significant quantity of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water, or biodiversity?</i>	No. The footprint of the proposed development is small in scale and will not require any natural resource for its completion. No significant impacts to land or land area will occur. Excavation or earthworks requirements are not considered to constitute a significant effect. No water will be abstracted from any watercourses during the construction or operation of this development. The site is currently built land (BL3) and it is primarily surrounded of agricultural fields (GA1), with grassy verge habitats, low diversity hedgerows and treelines. No habitats of higher than low local significance were found within the subject site.	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, this project will not constitute a significant effect on natural resources.

	In addition, no protected species were found within the subject site. Possible impacts to the European Designated site were assessed during an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for the proposed development (FFEC, 2024). This concluded that the proposed development individually/in combination with other plans and projects (either directly or indirectly) is not likely to have any significant effects on nearby designated sites. <i>Therefore, progression to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.</i>	
<i>Will the project produce a significant quantity of waste?</i>	During the construction phase, normal construction waste will be produced, segregated where possible and sent to an appropriately permitted waste or materials recovery facility. The waste management hierarchy will be implemented onsite, which prioritises prevention and minimisation of waste, followed by reuse and recycling. During the operational phase, waste will be sorted and collected by a suitably licensed contractor and sent to an appropriately permitted waste or materials recovery facility.	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that this project will produce significant quantities of waste.
<i>Will the project create a significant amount or type of pollution?</i>	No significant water or air-borne pollution is envisaged. The proposed development is not a project type that will give rise to significant emissions or pollution.	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that this project will create a significant amount or type of pollution.
<i>Will the project create a significant amount of nuisance?</i>	Limited disruption to local receptors may arise during the construction phase but this will be short-term in duration.	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that this project will produce significant amount of nuisance.
<i>Will there be a risk of major accidents?</i>	The proposed development is not of a type that poses a risk of major accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used. The proposed construction works will employ best practice methodologies, and be subject to the contractor's safety statements and risk assessments.	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that this project will pose a risk of major accidents.

<i>Will there be a risk of natural disasters, including those caused by climate change?</i>	Based on flood analysis data from Floodinfo.ie the site is not within an area prone to flooding. In terms of fire risk, the proposed development will comply with all relevant health and safety legislation.	It is considered that the risk of significant flooding or fire occurring, affecting the proposed development and causing it to have significant environmental effects, is limited.
<i>Will there be a risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)?</i>	There is limited potential for negative effects on human health during the construction phase as a result of potential emissions to air, or the potential emissions to land and water. Best construction site practices will prevent any risk of pollution running off the site. A pedestrian and cycle route improvement is not a recognised source of pollution and is not an activity that falls within any thresholds requiring Environmental Protection Agency licensing.	The potential for negative health effects associated with the proposed development is negligible.
<i>Is the combination of the above factors likely to have significant effects on the environment?</i>	There are no factors above which when combined would result in any significant effect on the environment.	

Table 5. Location of the proposed development.

Screening Questions	Relevance	Is it likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
<i>Is the existing land use of the project considered significant?</i>	All of the proposed development will take place on built or modified areas. Land-use will not be altered.	Given the nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that impacts in terms of land use will be significant.
<i>Is the project likely to affect the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area and its underground?</i>	The development will not entail works that have the potential to affect the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources. No significant excavations will be required.	No significant impacts are anticipated given small scale of scheme. No natural or semi-natural habitat areas are to be impacted upon. No impacts on groundwater may be anticipated.
<i>Is the project likely to affect the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</i>	None of these habitat types occur within area of proposed development. No Area classified as protected is located within the footprint of the proposed development or in its adjacent environs. The closest Natura 2000	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, this project is not likely to affect the absorption

-Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; -Coastal zones; -Mountain and forest areas; Nature Reserves and National Parks; -Areas classified or protected under legislation, including special protection areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC; -Areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the EU have already been exceeded; -Densely populated areas -Landscapes of historical cultural or archaeological significance;	site is Cork Harbour SPA located at a remove of 5.3 km from the proposed works area, with no pathway for impact identified. As for <i>densely populated areas</i>, while the proposed works area is located in Cork, this is situated in the outskirts of the city, approximately 3 km from the city centre. No Landscapes of historical cultural or archaeological significance are found in the area.	capacity of the natural environment.
Will there be a risk of natural disasters, including those caused by climate change?	Based on flood analysis data from Floodinfo.ie the site is not within an area prone to flooding. In terms of fire risk, the proposed development will comply with all relevant health and safety legislation.	It is considered that the risk of significant flooding or fire occurring, affecting the proposed development and causing it to have significant environmental effects, is limited.
Will there be a risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)?	There is limited potential for negative effects on human health during the construction phase as a result of potential emissions to air, or the potential emissions to land and water. Best construction site practices will prevent any risk of pollution running off the site. A pedestrian and cycle route improvement is not a recognised source of pollution and is not an activity that falls within any thresholds requiring Environmental Protection Agency licensing.	The potential for negative health effects associated with the proposed development is negligible.

Table 6. Characteristics of the anticipated impacts

Screening Questions	Relevance	Is it likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
Is the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (geographical area and size of	The proposed works are located within the footprint of an existing road, which measures approximately 2.1km. The scale of the proposed	Given the nature of the proposed development, it is not anticipated that impacts

<i>the affected population) of the project considered significant?</i>	development is in keeping with the scale of the receiving setting and surrounds in terms of size and design, and is therefore not considered significant.	in terms of their magnitude and spatial extent will be significant.
<i>What is the nature of likely impacts?</i>	Temporary visual, noise and traffic delay impacts may be anticipated during construction phase. These will be highly localised and temporary in nature. A long-term positive impact on road safety and human welfare may be anticipated.	
<i>Is any transboundary impact predicted?</i>	No	It is not anticipated that the project will give rise to significant transboundary impacts.
<i>Are any predicted impacts considered significant in terms of their intensity and complexity?</i>	No.	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, any impacts are considered insignificant in terms of their intensity and complexity.
<i>Are any predicted impacts considered significant in terms of their expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility?</i>	No	Given the size and nature of the proposed development, any impacts are considered insignificant in terms of their expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility
<i>Are any predicted impacts considered significant in combination with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects?</i>	A search of the online planning database (Cork County Council) was carried out. for the area was also carried out. No recent or other applications which could have cumulative impacts with the present project were found.	No projects are known at time of writing that may result in cumulative impacts.

4.4 Summary of Potential Impacts by EIA Topic

Table 7. Review of potential impacts by EIA topics.

Topic	Comment
<i>Population and Human Health</i>	The potential impacts of the construction phase on human beings are not considered to be significant. During construction, there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience, dust and noise. However, the work will be short-term in duration. Standard best practice construction methodologies will limit disturbance to people in the area. Once completed, the proposed development will provide an upgraded pedestrian and cycle route which is considered a significant positive impact, adding value to the amenity infrastructure available in the area.
<i>Biodiversity/ Species and Habitat</i>	The potential impacts of the construction phase on biodiversity are not considered to be significant. The site was surveyed by FFEC Ecologists as part of survey works for an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (FFEC, 2023) for the proposed development. It was concluded that the proposed development will not result in any significant effects on the flora and fauna of the existing environment. No habitats of higher than high local ecological value were found within the subject site. The subject site was not found to support any protected flora or fauna. No rare, threatened, or protected species of plants as per the Red Data List (Wyse Jackson et al., 2016) were found. No species listed in the Flora Protection Order (2015) were found to be growing within the site. Possible impacts to the designated sites were also assessed. It was concluded that no potential for the proposed development to impact upon any designated site exists (FFEC, 2023). While one Third Schedule invasive species was found within the proposed development site, this will be addressed in a invasive species management plan, which is to be drawn up prior to construction. The impacts relative to the presence of this species were not considered to be significant.
<i>Land and soil</i>	No significant impact; the development will be constructed in accordance with best practice environmentally sensitive methods and environmental management systems.

<i>Water</i>	No watercourses are found within or with connectivity to the proposed development site.
<i>Air and climate</i>	During construction, there is the potential for short-term minor negative impacts related to dust to occur, however, this will be short-term in duration and limited to the works area. Best practice construction site management will minimise emissions.
<i>Noise and vibration</i>	Potential short-term noise impacts may arise during construction activities however this will be managed through best practice measures. No significant impacts are anticipated.
<i>Material Assets: Built Environment</i>	Possible effects include short-term interruption to existing services. No significant impact that could trigger the requirement for an EIAR is predicted.
<i>Material assets: transportation</i>	There will be no significant long-term impacts on local traffic movements due to the scale of the proposed development. During the construction phase, appropriate traffic management and signage will be in place to ensure safe access and egress from the site, and the safety of other road users.
<i>Waste management</i>	The development will involve limited excavation and land re-shaping. Possible effects include the re-use / recycle / disposal of excavated material as well as other waste generated on-site i.e. construction and demolition waste, and domestic waste once occupied. Any effects will be mitigated by the implementation of best practices in construction and demolition and operational waste management procedures.
<i>Cultural heritage</i>	The proposed development will not give rise to any significant impacts on cultural heritage.
<i>Landscape</i>	No significant impact. The proposed development is located within an urban area and will not give rise to any significant landscape or visual impacts that could trigger the requirement for EIAR.

5. Conclusions

The proposed project is not a development for which an EIA is mandatory. Part 2 of Schedule 5 refers to infrastructure projects such as the improvement of an existing public road that would be located on certain environmental sites. While not located on any of the listed environmental sites, a sub-threshold EIA Screening exercise was carried out to determine the potential for the proposed development to have significant environmental effects or not, and further inform the relevant road authority.

Following the screening exercise, it was 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 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. 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 absence of any impacts predicted upon any protected sites such as Nature Reserves, parks or Natura 2000 Sites.

It is concluded that the type and characteristics of the potential impacts would not be considered significant. This is based primarily upon the very limited size and scale of the proposed works. The lack of sensitive receptors being directly affected by the works is also a significant factor in this assessment. Impacts on landscape, soils and geology are not considered significant, given the very limited nature and scale of works. Given the size and scale of the proposed development and the absence of any other projects or plans known at time of writing, no significant cumulative impacts are considered likely. No negative transboundary impacts are anticipated.

It is therefore deemed that a EIAR is not necessary.

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Figure 3. Details of project - Section 1













