Comhairle Cathrach Chorcai

Cork City Council

South Douglas Road Junction Upgrade

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

October 2020

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Cork City Council

SOUTH DOUGLAS ROAD JUNCTION UPGRADE

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1.0 Executive Summary

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report has been prepared to consider the requirement or otherwise of carrying out an EIA in respect of the South Douglas Road Upgrade Scheme.

This screening exercise was undertaken in two stages. The first stage considered the requirement for a mandatory EIA, while the second stage considered the requirement or need for a sub-threshold EIA. As part of the sub-threshold screening exercise, the potential for impacts on environmental sensitivities was considered in addition to the interrelationship between those environmental sensitivities. Following on from this, the formal EIA Screening Exercise was completed, having regard to the criteria set out in the Roads Act, as amended and in the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU).

This report concludes that this is a sub-threshold type project which is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment, either by itself or in combination with other plans or projects.

2.0 Legislative Context

EIA legislation sets down the types of projects that may require an EIA. Annex I of Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU defines mandatory projects that require an EIAR / EIS and Annex II lists projects which can be subject to case by case analysis or thresholds to be determined by member states.

3.0 Mandatory Requirements

The proposed scheme has been assessed in terms of the mandatory requirement for an EIA based on the nature or scale of the development, as addressed in the EU Directive 2014/52/EU and also the Roads Act 1993 - 2016. It is considered that the proposed road scheme is not one which falls within the scope of this category. It should be noted that mandatory EIA requirements for non-road type development have also been considered and discounted in this instance. As part of this infrastructure type projects listed in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive as amended were taken into account.

4.0 Sub-threshold Requirements for an Environmental Impact Statement, Legislative Context and Screening Methodology

While the mandatory requirements for EIA for road schemes are straight forward, being based on type and scale, the discretionary (or sub-threshold) requirements are based on an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed road development. Where a proposed road development would be located on certain environmental sites the road authority shall decide whether the proposed road development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The key issue, in the context of the possible need for EIA of sub-threshold development, is whether or not such development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The 2014 amending EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) contains guidance for Member States in terms of deciding whether or not a development is likely to have "significant effects on the environment". The guidance is provided by way of criteria set out in Annex III of the Directive. The criteria are grouped under three headings and are used to help in the screening process to determine whether a development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment are taken from Annex III of the Directive and are grouped under the following three headings:-

1. Characteristics of proposed development
2. Location of proposed development
3. Characteristics of the potential Impacts

5.0 Sub-threshold Development Assessment

The aim of the following section is to address likely impacts, if any on the environment by the implementation of the proposed development having regard to the criteria set out in the EIA Directive, as amended. Criteria for determining whether the project would or would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment as per the requirements of Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and subsequent amendment 2011

5.1 Characteristics of Proposed Developments	
Size of Proposed Development	The proposed development consists of: • Replacement of the existing roundabout at the Junction of the South Douglas Road (R851), the N40 West Douglas off ramp and Willow Park, with a new traffic signalised T-junction • Improved pedestrian facilities with extension of footpaths and provision of pedestrian crossings • Provision of new raised off road cycle tracks on South Douglas Road (R851), N40 West Douglas off ramp and Willow Park • Relocation of the bus stop on the northern side of the South Douglas Road • Coordination of proposed traffic signals with existing traffic signals at the West Douglas/N40 On Ramp junction • Revised layout of road into and out of Willow Park and Gaelscoil na Dúglaise • Revised layout of traffic lanes on the N40 West Douglas off ramp. The total construction area required for the proposed development is 0.5 hectares (ha). It does not equal nor exceed the 2-hectare threshold; therefore, a mandatory EIA is not required.
Cumulation with other Proposed Development	None.
Use of Natural Resources	Services such as power and water will be required during the construction phase. Mobile generators will be used during the construction phase. Construction materials will include paving sets, asphalt, stone fill, pipework, gullies, kerbing, cabling, ducting, traffic signal equipment etc. It is not considered that there will be significant use of these resources as part of the development and it is possible to rule out any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

Production of Waste	Standard construction materials will be used and will not be harmful to human health or the environment. The contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No.291 of 2013). It is envisaged that the risk of accidents having regard to substances or technologies is very low and therefore will not result in significant effects. Inert construction waste generated will be removed from the site areas and disposed of at a suitable licensed facility. The production of waste will be managed in accordance with the relevant waste legislation.
Pollution and Nuisances	This development will not result in an increase in either pollution or nuisance. During the construction stage, it is expected that some dust will be emitted but this will not be significant. Emissions from construction plant and vehicles will arise during the construction phase but these will be minimal. Works may disrupt traffic flow in the area, however only for short periods of time and appropriate mitigation measures, (including phasing, working outside peak traffic times, traffic management plans) will be employed to reduce impacts. Traffic noise and vibration is not likely to be significantly increased as a result of the proposals. Standard construction noise is expected during construction activities. Disturbance resulting from traffic noise and vibration may be reduced from present levels by *the* enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists that should ultimately reduce the quantum and nuisance associated with the alternative transport mode namely use of private vehicles
Risk of Accidents	A "Project Supervisor for Construction Stage" will be appointed to manage safety issues during construction.

5.2 Location of Proposed Development	
Existing Land Use	The land use across the area of the proposed development is classified as 'artificial surfaces' according to the EPA Corine (Coordination of Information on the Environment) land cover classification. No significant negative effects on land use or material assets are predicted during the construction or operational phases of the proposed development. The proposed development area consists of hardstanding – mostly road surface, cycle track and footpath with limited greenfield space. There will be no change of land use within the development boundary. Services will be diverted within the road as required and surface water will be managed as is it currently, via street side gullies, some of which will be modified as part of the design works. During construction surface water will be contained within the construction areas or gravitate towards street gullies.
Relative Abundance, Quality and regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources in the Area	The extent of the works within the urbanised environment are relatively small. Thus, significant effects on the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area are not predicted.
Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	The works associated with this development are minor and construction work is frequent throughout the development area. This, along with the fact that the development area is not of significant ecological importance means the absorption capacity of this environment is high, making it less sensitive to works of this kind.

The EC Guidance on EIA Screening (EC, 2017) provides a checklist to help users decide whether EIA is required based on the characteristics of a project and its environment. This screening checklist is included in **5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts** below.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
No.	**Brief Project Description**	**Yes/No**	**Is this likely to result in a significant impact** **Yes/No - Why**
(1)	Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	No	This area of the city is already highly developed for infrastructure. The works proposed are minor and will not cause any physical changes to the surrounding environment.
(2)	Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	No. Services such as power and water will be required during the construction phase. Mobile generators will be used during the construction phase. Construction materials will include paving sets, asphalt, stone fill, pipework, gullies, kerbing, cabling, ducting, traffic signal equipment etc. It is not considered that there will be significant use of these resources as part of the development.
(3)	Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes	No. Standard construction materials will be used and will not be harmful to human health or the environment. The contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No.291 of 2013). It is envisaged that the risk of accidents having regard to substances or technologies is very low and therefore will not result in significant effects.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
(4)	Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	No. Inert construction waste generated will be removed from the site areas and disposed of at a suitable licenced facility. The production of waste will be managed in accordance with the relevant waste legislation.
(5)	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC?	No	No It is expected that some dust will be emitted during the construction works but this will not be significant. Emissions from construction plant and vehicles will arise during the construction phase but these will be minimal.
(6)	Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes.	No. Standard construction noise is expected during construction activities. Rock breaking maybe required as part of the works but will be short-term in duration.
(7)	Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal wasters or the sea?	Yes.	No. The extent of the works on land (in a highly urbanised area) is relatively small, excavation works are not significant, and dewatering is not required. There will be no works carried out in the Tramore River.
(8)	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the project which could affect human health or the environment?	Yes.	No. A "Project Supervisor for Construction Stage" will be appointed to manage safety issues during construction.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
(9)	Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes.	No. The proposed development will have a positive effect on people living, working and visiting the area as there will be improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
(10)	Are there any other factors which should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes.	No. Currently there are no other factors which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality
(11)	Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. The extent of the works on land (in a highly urbanised area) is relatively small, excavation works are not significant, and dewatering is not required. During excavation works some water will be encountered and this will be allowed to percolate naturally through the existing soils. There will be no works carried out in the Tramore River.
(12)	Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	No.	No. There are no additional areas of importance.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
(13)	Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No.
(14)	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. The Tramore River is culverted under part of the development footprint and will not be affected by the works.
(15)	Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	No. The area is highly developed, and the proposed works are only to footpaths and roads and will not affect the landscape.
(16)	Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be implemented for the duration of the construction works in order to minimise any disruption to traffic flow on the road network at and surrounding the proposed development areas.
(17)	Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be implemented for the duration of the construction works in order to minimise any disruption to traffic flow on the road network at and surrounding the proposed development areas.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
(18)	Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes.	No. The proposed development is concerned with improvements to footpaths and cycle lanes and therefore there will be no structures of significant height.
(19)	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	No There are no areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the proposed works.
(20)	Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	No.	No. There will be no loss of greenfield as part of this development.
(21)	Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. There are two schools and residential dwellings located in close proximity to the proposed development boundary. Access to these will be maintained during the construction phase. Significant impacts will not arise.
(22)	Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	No. There are no plans for future land uses.
(23)	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. There are two schools and residential dwellings within close proximity to the proposed development. Access to these will be maintained throughout the construction phase. Significant impacts will not arise.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
(24)	Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. There are a number of sensitive receptors in close proximity to the proposed development such as, residential dwellings and two schools. The proposed development is located in an already busy environment. Any disturbance caused by the proposed development will be short term and temporary and will not have any long term significant effects.
(25)	Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. Construction works will take place over a section of culverted section of the Tramore River. There are no instream works and there will be no significant negative effects on water quality due to the nature and extent of the works to be carried out.
(26)	Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No.	No. There are no areas around the proposed development which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage.
(27)	Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No	No. The proposed development is close to the Tramore River, however, the proposed works are minor. The proposed development will not exacerbate existing flooding. Neither will flooding cause the proposed works to present environmental problems given the minor nature of the works.

5.4 Screening Conclusion Statement

- The information provided in this report and prepared by Cork City Council provides details on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects (if any) on the environment. It also provides the relevant details under each of the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.
- Based on the information provided in this report, it is determined that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required.
- Having regard to the contents of Article 120 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) regulations 2011 and Schedule 7m of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, it is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its nature, scale and location will have a beneficial effect on the environment. Accordingly, it is considered that an EIS is not required to be submitted

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Approved on behalf of Cork City Council	G. O'Beirne	Director of Services Infrastructure Development		