

# **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

**for the  
Proposed**

## **Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Link – Alden Grove Connection**



## **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 Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Link – Alden Grove Connection, Grange, Cork City.

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.

### **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.

### **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 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 considered.

### **Sub-threshold requirement 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 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 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

## 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,

<b>1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Size of Proposed Development	<p>Currently the construction of the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Pedestrian and Cycle Link (GRTVP-PCL) is underway, with expected completion in August 2023. This link includes a pedestrian/cyclist bridge over the N40 South Ring Road which will connect the PCL to the existing footpath on the north side of the N40 leading to Tramore Valley Park. The proposed project, subject involves connection to the PCL from Alden Grove housing estate, Douglas, Cork. The extent of the proposed works is located between a residential housing estate with amenity grassland and woodland adjacent to the PCL. The total site area for the planned works equals 1097m<sup>2</sup> (0.110ha) which allows for the placement of two new speed bumps on the approach to the new access link. The new link will provide both pedestrian and cyclist access to and from the new GRTVP-PCL.</p> <p>The construction of this link will include a mechanically stabilised embankment on the north side of the link with a vegetated facing. The majority of the new link will be below existing ground level in excavated ground with 2:1 side slopes which will be landscaped. The link will have new timber post and rail fencing on each side to direct users onto the link. The link itself will be constructed using the same materials as the PCL which consists 20mm "Topcoat" Stone Carpet surfacing (or equivalent approved) on 50mm Flexible Surfacing on 150mm Clause 804 Granular Material on suitable fill.</p> <p>A number of trees within the extents of the proposed works would need to be felled prior to works, in order to accommodate the width and construction of the new link. The woodland around the main PCL at the location of the proposed Alden Grove Access link follows along the Grange Stream, south of the N40 and the southern margin of the existing Tramore Valley Park.</p> <p>There would be an 8-12-week construction duration expected for the completion of proposed works from May to July 2023.</p> <p>On the basis that project can proceed while the existing Contractor is still on the ground, the Construction workers and other personal on site will use existing compound and welfare facilities put in place for the current construction of the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Pedestrian and Cycle Link.</p>

	Access to the eastern side of the proposed works site from Alden Grove housing estate will only be used for the construction of the new 3.0m wide footpath behind the existing estate road kerb line and installation of the tactile paviers and the new speed bumps.
Cumulation with other Proposed Development	The proposed development will form an extension to the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Link, currently under construction and represents an increase in the overall size of the current scheme of approximately 1%.
Use of Natural Resources	The use of natural resources will be limited to the materials used in the construction works. Anticipated materials include stone, aggregate and bituminous materials which will be provided on a like for like basis with the material to be replaced.
Production of Waste	Waste production will be limited to the construction phase and will consist of general excavated inert material (stone, aggregate, Bituminous materials) which will be disposed of to local licensed facilities.
Pollution and Nuisances	<p>This development will not result in an increase in either pollution or nuisance.</p> <p>During the construction stage, the likelihood of an accidental spillage of construction materials into the aquatic environment will be managed through the adoption of strict best practice construction management.</p> <p>Enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists should ultimately reduce the quantum and nuisance associated with alternative mode namely use of private vehicles.</p>
Risk of Accidents	As the development involves the upgrading of services the risk of accidents should be reduced.

## 2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Existing Land Use	The footprint of the Project is on un-tended space, comprising of semi mature trees and scrub.
Relative Abundance, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources in the Area	The Project will have minimum impact on the quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area. All construction material will be imported for the construction of the Project.



<b>2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	<p>New trees will be planted in the vicinity of the Project following the construction stage.</p> <p>It has been concluded that the Project does not have the potential to impact, either directly or indirectly, the Qualifying Interests or Special Conservation Interests of any European site. Consequently, therefore, there will be no adverse impacts on the Conservation Objectives of any European sites resulting from the Project.</p>

<b>3. CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS</b>	
Extent of the Impact	The primary impact will occur during the construction phase which is short term.
Transfrontier nature of the Impact	N/A
Magnitude and Complexity of the Impact	<p>Minimal</p> <p><b>Air Quality &amp; Climate:</b> The objective of the project is to provide facilities with an increased level of service for pedestrians and cyclists thus having a likely positive impact on air quality and climate. It is considered that the level of construction traffic required for a project of this scale will not have a significant impact on the local air quality or climate; neither will a construction project of this scale result in any significant generation of dust.</p> <p><b>Noise:</b> At operational stage an increase in the number of pedestrians and cyclists will likely have a positive impact on noise or vibration in the local environment. It is also considered that the level of construction traffic and construction operations required for a project of this scale will be short term and will not result in the creation of any significant levels of noise or vibration. Furthermore, works will be carried out in compliance with BS5228: Part 1 and the European Communities (Noise Emission by Equipment for Use Outdoors) Regulations, 2001 which will ensure a controlled level of noise during construction phase.</p> <p><b>Hydrology:</b> The existing drainage will be maintained. The proposed development will not increase or alter the quantum of surface water discharging to adjoining watercourses.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity:</b> Having regard to the location, nature and size of the proposed development, it is considered that there are no anticipated affects on biodiversity. Some semi mature trees will be removed as part of the Project. New trees will be planted in the vicinity of the Project following the construction stage.</p> <p><b>Archaeology, architecture, cultural heritage:</b> The proposed works will not have an effect on Archaeological, architectural on sites of cultural heritage in the area.</p> <p><b>Visual Amenity:</b> The Project is unlikely to have a significant impact on the landscape of the area. During construction, the presence of plant and machinery will detract from certain views. This is considered to be a slight impact which is short-term and easily offset by the benefits accrued at the operational stage.</p>
	Overall: Environmental impacts associated with the proposed development will be minor and short-term and, therefore, significant



3. CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS	
	environmental effects can be ruled out without the necessity for further surveys, investigations and assessments.
Probability of the Impact	Low During the construction stage, noise nuisances and air pollution may occur over a short duration.
Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact	Potential impacts are limited to the construction phase These impacts will be temporary, reversible and one-off.

SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT
Having regard to the contents of Article 120 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) regulations 2011 and Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact report is not therefore required

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
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Approved by	G. O'Beirne	Director of Services		9/3/23

