

# **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

**for the  
Proposed**

**South Mall / Parnell Place Junction  
Pedestrian Safety Scheme**



## **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 South Mall / Parnell Place Junction Pedestrian Safety 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.

### **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.

The author of this report visited the site on 03/04/2023 to review the proposed upgrades and their likely impact on the existing environment.

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Size of Proposed Development	<p>The development consists of improvements to the junction with the aim of enhancing safety of pedestrians.</p> <p>The scheme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify the existing traffic island between South Mall and Parnell Bridge. This includes widening the island to provide improved safety for pedestrians waiting between traffic lanes.</li> <li>• Move the existing two-way cycle track and footpath northwards to traffic calm the junction and reduce the distance that pedestrians need to cross.</li> <li>• Reducing the number of lanes that pedestrians need to cross at the eastern end of South Mall, from 3 no. lanes to 2 no. lanes.</li> <li>• Maintain 4 no. disabled parking spaces opposite Smith Street but move westward by 1 space to allow for 5 no. motorcycle parking spaces to be installed.</li> <li>• Vehicular access from South Mall to Morrisons Quay, at the eastern end of the buildings on the southside of South Mall, is removed.</li> <li>• Provision of a section of cobble stone paving, on the approach to the revised island at the junction of South Mall and Parnell Bridge. This will aid in calming vehicular traffic on approach to the junction, and thereby improve pedestrian safety and overall public realm.</li> <li>• New road marking and signage</li> <li>• Other necessary associated works.</li> </ul>
Cumulation with other Proposed Development	No other cumulated developments
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 in 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 safety for pedestrians 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 existing services the risk of accidents should be reduced.

<b>2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Existing Land Use	The footprint of the Project is on existing roads and footpaths therefore no change in land use.
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.
Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	<p>There is not likely to be any significant impact on road users as a result of the Project. Construction will be for a short duration and will not impede traffic flow in the City.</p> <p>Preventative measures will be implemented during and post construction in order to reduce the risk of pollution to surface waters.</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, there will be no adverse impacts on the Conservation Objectives of any European sites as a result of 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.
Trans frontier.nature of the Impact	N/A
Magnitude and Complexity of the Impact	<p>Minimal</p> <p><b><u>Air Quality &amp; Climate:</u></b> The objective of the project is to provide improved pedestrian facilities 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><u>Noise:</u></b> At operational stage an increase in the number of pedestrians 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><u>Hydrology:</u></b> The existing drainage will be maintained, and the proposed development will not increase or alter the quantum of surface water discharging to adjoining watercourses.</p> <p><b><u>Biodiversity:</u></b> Having regard to the location, nature, and size of the proposed development, it is considered that there are no anticipated effects on biodiversity.</p> <p><b><u>Archaeology, architecture, cultural heritage:</u></b> There are several recorded monuments and protected structures in Cork City. However, due to the location, nature of the construction and operation of the Project, it is considered that it will not have any significant effect on any of these monuments or structures.</p> <p><b><u>Visual Amenity:</u></b> As the Project is located principally on existing roads and footpaths, it 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. However, this is considered to be a slight impact which is short-term and easily offset by the benefits accrued at the operational stage.</p>

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS	
	<b>Overall:</b> Environmental impacts associated with the proposed development will be minor and short-term and, therefore, significant environmental effects can be ruled out without the necessity for further surveys, investigations, and assessments.
Probability of the Impact	<b>Low</b> 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 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 no effect on the environment. Accordingly, it is considered that an EIS is not required to be submitted

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
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Approved by	G. O'Beirne	Director of Services		26/4/23