

Appendix F. Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2)

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Cork City Council

May 2024



Notice

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely as information for Cork City Council and use in relation to EIA Screening for the Glanmire to City Cycle Route.

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This document has 27 pages including the cover.

Document history

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1. Introduction

Atkins Ireland Ltd. (Atkins) have been commissioned by Cork City Council to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening report for the proposed Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2).

1.1. Project Location

The Project is located within Cork City on the northern side of the River Lee. The route starts at the junction with Michael Collins Bridge/Penrose Quay where it connects to the existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and travels east along Penrose Quay, Horgan’s Quay and the N8 Lower Glanmire Road to the Dunkettle Roundabout where it connects to the Glanmire to City Cycle Route – Phase 1 and the Dunkettle Interchange cycleway.

The location of the proposed works is shown in Figure 1-1 below and an aerial view of the proposed works is shown in Figure 1-2.

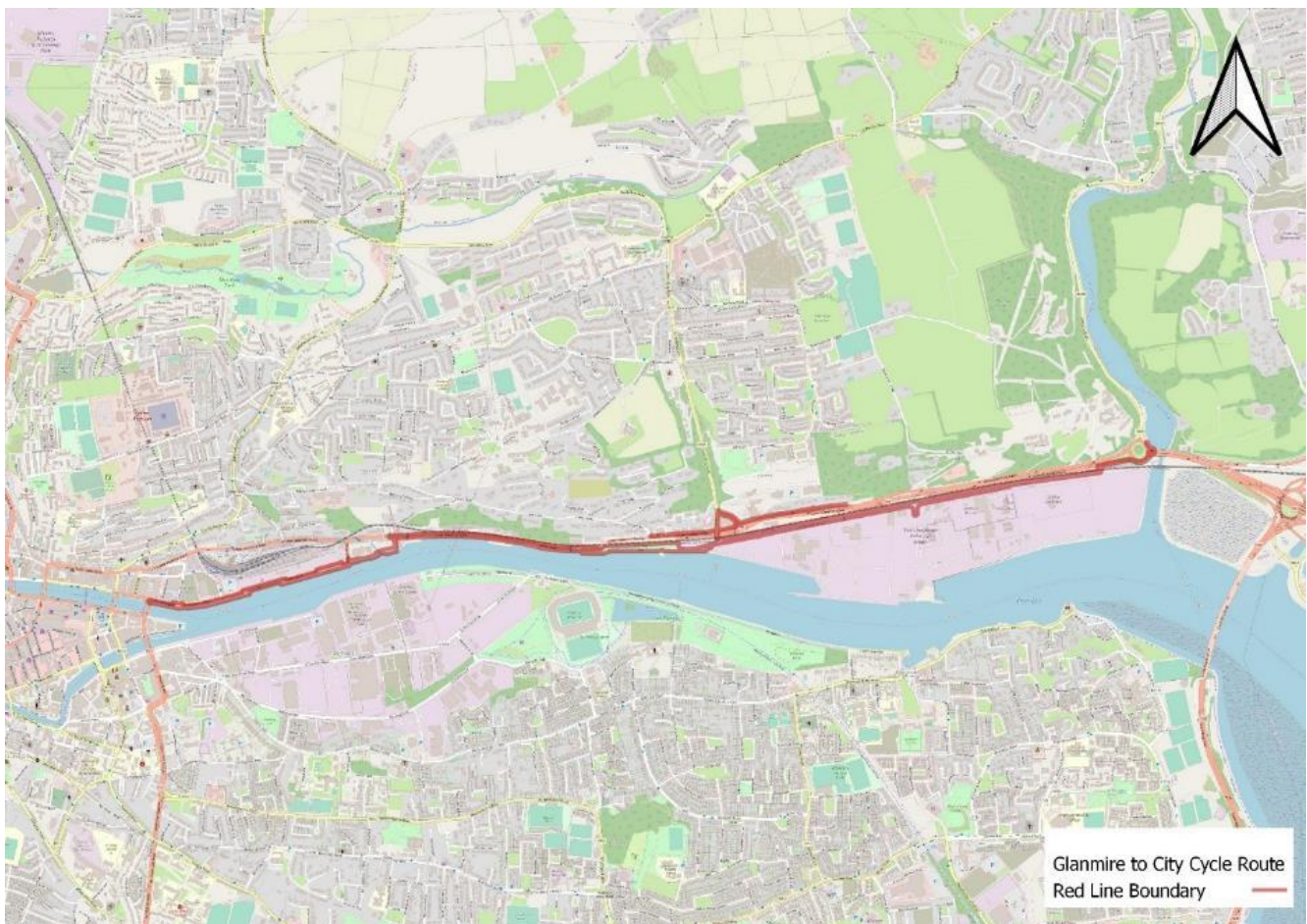


Figure 1-1 - Location of the Proposed Works (Source: OpenStreetMap QGIS)



Figure 1-2 – Aerial view of the proposed Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Source: Bing Aerial Map)

1.2. Purpose of this Report

This report has been prepared to support the Part 8 Planning Application by Cork City Council in relation to the Glanmire to City Cycle Route – Phase 2. The purpose of this report is to determine whether the project requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The project has been screened to generate a summarised overview of the potential impacts on the receiving environment, and in the context of relevant statutory requirements.

A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment has also been prepared (Atkins, 2023). The project has been assessed with regards to the likely significant effects of the project on European sites within the zone of influence of the proposed project. The AA Screening Report concluded that; *'it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not give rise to any impacts which would constitute significant effects on Cork Harbour SPA (site code:004030) or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the authors of this report that Cork City Council, as the competent authority in this case may determine that Appropriate Assessment is not required in respect of the proposed works for the Cycle Route. Should the scope of the proposed works change, a new Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and final determination will be required.'*

2. Methodology

The proposed project is screened in accordance with Section 3.2 of the ‘*Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*’ (EPA, 2022), the Environmental Impact Directive (85/337/EEC) and all subsequent relevant amendments, Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2023), including S.I. No. 296 of 2018 - European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, and ‘*The Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*’ (DoHPLG, 2018).

As set out under the relevant legislation, there are three key steps when carrying out EIA screening for a particular project;

- **Step 1** is to determine if the proposed infrastructure works represent a project as understood by the Directive and if a mandatory EIAR is required. Such projects are defined in Article 4 of the EIA Directive and set out in Annexes I and II of the Directive and Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2023), specifically Schedule 5, Part 1 – Development for the purposes of Part 10.
- **Step 2** is to determine whether the project exceeds a specific threshold as set out in Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2023) Schedule 5, Part 2 – Development for the purposes of Part 10 (the only type of project to which thresholds do not apply are those considered to always be likely to have significant effects and therefore require an EIAR).
- **Step 3** is to determine if the project is likely to have significant effects on the receiving environment. There are no exacting rules as to what constitutes “significant” in terms of environmental impacts. The responsibility is on Planning Authorities to carefully examine every aspect of a development in the context of characterisation of the project location of the project and type & characteristics of potential impacts. It is generally not necessary to provide specialist studies or technical reports to complete this screening process, rather to investigate where further studies may be required, and where risks, if any, to the integrity of the receiving environment may lie.

The proposed development has been assessed against the three steps when carrying out an EIA screening.

For the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA, all of the relevant information as presented within EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2018 (Schedule 7A) has been provided on behalf of the applicant, Cork City Council. The potential for the project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 - 2023 (Schedule 7).

The findings of the EIA screening assessment prepared for the project has informed our professional opinion as to whether an EIAR is warranted for the proposed project, with due regard to all relevant statutory requirements and technical guidance. However ultimately it is the responsibility of the relevant planning authority to make a determination as to whether an EIAR is required for a particular project, based on screening conducted by the planning authority.

Figure 2-1 provides a summary of the main steps involved in the EIA screening process.

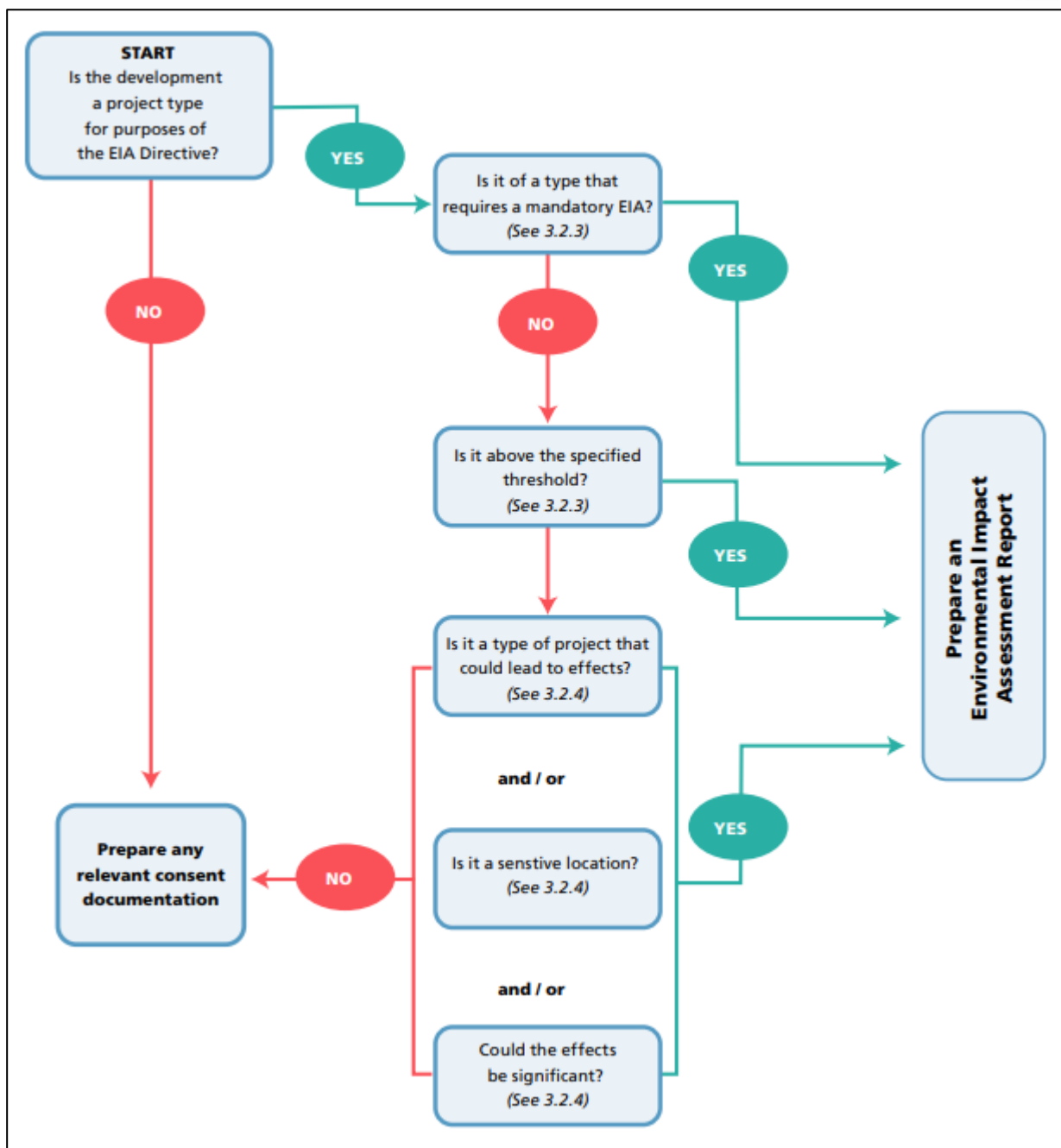


Figure 2-1 - EIA Screening Process (Source: 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (EPA, 2022).

2.1. Relevant Legislation

The Environmental Impact Directive (85/337/EEC) was brought into force in 1985. Subsequent amendments were made with the following pieces of legislation - 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2011/92/EU and 2014/52/EU. The Directive was originally transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989 (S.I. No. 349/1989). This amended the Local Government (Planning and Development Act) 1963 and introduced the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment in certain specified circumstances. The most recent amendment to the Directive is focused on clarifying and simplifying the process of EIA. The screening criteria have been updated, and Member States have a mandate to simplify their assessment procedures. EIA reports are to be made more readily understandable to members of the general public.

EIA Regulations ((Planning and Development) Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I No. 296 of 2018)) transposing the 2014 EIA Directive were adopted and came into operation on 1st September

2018. These regulations amend the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No.600 of 2001); they seek to transpose EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and to give further effect to the 2011 Directive, as follows;

- An EIAR is required as a matter of course on specified large-scale projects which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023), Schedule 5, Part 1 – Development for the purposes of Part 10.
- Each EU Member State has discretionary consideration for the requirement of an EIA in relation to various processes and activities. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023), Schedule 5, Part 2 – Development for the purposes of Part 10. If the proposed project is listed under Schedule 5, Part 2, but does not exceed the relevant stated thresholds, it is considered to be sub-threshold. Part 10, article 92 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended states “sub-threshold development’ means development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5, which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development”. Any sub-threshold developments should be evaluated to determine if the project is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.
- Criteria to evaluate whether significant impacts on the receiving environment will arise from a proposed development are listed under Schedule 7 of the relevant Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023). A list of the relevant information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of sub-threshold EIA screening is presented in Schedule 7A of the Regulations, and summarised below;
 1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular:
 - (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works; and,
 - (b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
 2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
 3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from:
 - (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant: and,
 - (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
 4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

3. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

3.1. Step 1 - Mandatory Screening for EIA

The scheme has been screened against the list of developments which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment and therefore require the mandatory preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment, under Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations as amended, 2001-2023. **This project does not fall within any category of development requiring a mandatory EIA; hence the preparation of an EIAR is not required under Schedule 5 Part 1.**

3.1.1. Sub-threshold Development Likely to Have Significant Effects on the Environment

The scheme has been screened against the criteria outlined in Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023, as follows:

10. Infrastructure Projects

b (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere. (In this paragraph, “business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

13. Changes, extensions, development and testing

(a) Any change or extension of development already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension referred to in Part 1) which would: -

(i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and

(ii) result in an increase in size greater than –

- 25 percent, or

- an amount equal to 50 percent of the appropriate threshold,

Whichever is the greater.

14. Works of Demolition

Works of demolition carried out in order to facilitate a project listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of this Schedule where such works would be likely to have significant effects on the environment having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

15. Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

The proposed development is not of a type identified within Schedule 5, Part 2 as:

- The location of the Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2) is located within a built-up area and is 8.8 hectares (ha) in total. Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2) does not involve an area greater than 10 hectares in a built-up area. Therefore, this scheme does not require an EIAR to be produced in accordance with Schedule 5 Part 2 (10)(iv).
- Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2) does not meet the criteria for a project listed in Schedule 5 Part 1 or Schedule 5 Part 2 and therefore does not require further consideration under Category 13, Changes, extensions, development and testing. The cycle route will not increase the size of a current development by 25 percent. Hence, the requirement for EIAR under Schedule 5 Part 2 (13)(a) has been screened out.
- Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2) does not meet the criteria listed in Schedule 5 Part 1 or Schedule 5 Part 2 and therefore does not require further consideration under Category 14, Works of demolition.
- Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2) does not fall under projects listed in Schedule 5 Part 1 or Schedule 5 Part 2 and is not likely to have significant effects on the environment with regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7. Having regard to the scale and nature of the project and based on the

above information, the overall probability of significant impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed scheme is considered to be low.

3.2. Step 2- Determining if the project is likely to have significant effect on the receiving environment.¹

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7A has been provided on behalf of Cork City Council and is presented within this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001-2023 (Schedule 7), as presented within this screening report.

3.2.1. Description of the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (1))

A description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Proposed Development and Where Relevant of Demolition Works (Schedule 7A (1) (a))

The following is a brief description of the construction for the non-structural sections of the route:

- Existing Quays – This will be a scarifying of the concrete with an application of a bond coat and then approximately 125mm of blacktop laid on top.
- Along existing grassed areas, footpaths, and verges – The existing material will be excavated to a depth of 200mm and replaced with 100mm of Clause 804 or 808 depending on the site conditions and 100mm blacktop on top of this. Excavated material to be removed off site for disposal in a licensed facility.

The following is a brief description of the construction for the structural sections of the route:

Dry Dock Bridge

Substructure to comprise in-situ reinforced concrete abutments founded on bored reinforced concrete piles. 1m deep excavation of the existing ground required within the footprint of the abutments behind the existing quay walls either side of the dry dock, with the excavated material to be removed off site for disposal in a licensed facility. Suitable protection to be erected along the quay walls during the substructure construction to prevent any material entering the water. The steel truss will be fabricated off site before being transported to site and lifted into position using a suitable size crane.

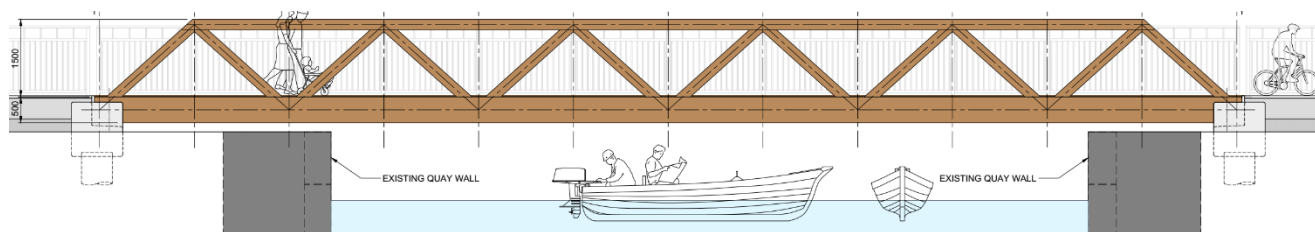


Figure 3-1 - Artistic Impression of the Footbridge over the Dry Dock

Railway Bridge

Substructure to comprise in situ reinforced concrete columns founded on bored reinforced concrete piles. 1m deep excavation of the existing ground required within the footprint of the pile cap at each support location with the excavated material to be removed off site and disposed of at a licensed facility. The ramps will comprise precast prestressed concrete beams fabricated off site and lifted into position with the deck formed by in situ concrete construction. The steel truss will be fabricated off site also and lifted into position using a suitable size crane.

The Tivoli docklands area is likely to be redeveloped in the future. Redevelopment of the area could potentially require decommissioning of the railway bridge. The span could be removed in one piece, and potentially reused, while the abutments and ramps would be demolished.

¹ Pursuant to Schedule 7(A) of the Planning and Development Regulations as amended 2001-2023

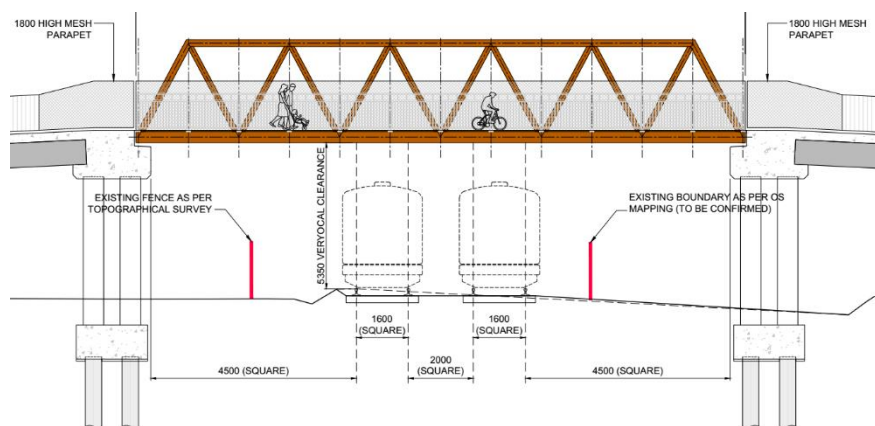


Figure 3-2 - Artistic Impression of the Footbridge over the Railway

Tivoli Ramp

Substructure to comprise in situ reinforced concrete columns founded on bored reinforced concrete piles. 1m deep excavation of the existing ground required within the footprint of the pile cap at each support location with the excavated material to be removed off site and disposed of at a licensed facility. The ramp will comprise precast prestressed concrete beams fabricated off site and lifted into position with the deck formed by in situ concrete construction.

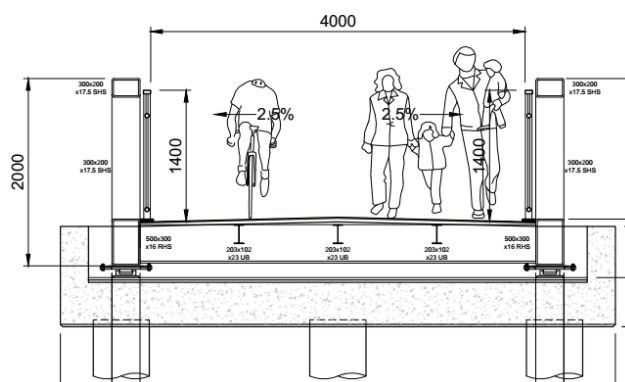


Figure 3-3 - Artistic Impression of the Ramp from the North Ring Road

3.3. Landscape Design

A preliminary landscape plan for the proposed works has been prepared by Eamonn Byrne Landscape Design Architects (EBLA). The concept for the landscape plan follows:

- Tree planting throughout as shown on the landscape drawings (subject to service locations)
- Colourful high impact ornamental flowering perennials with some low shrub planting to the verges along Penrose / Horgan's Quay and possibly Glanmire Road, including species that would be attractive to pollinators
- Colourful high impact ornamental flowering perennial planting to sections around seating/ existing features (sculptures etc.) within Port of Cork 2000 Garden including species that would be attractive to pollinators
- Wildflower meadow to some verges east of Port of Cork 2000 Garden along Tivoli Estate

- Low native species hedges to buffer the cycle track along Tivoli Estate.

3.4. A Description of the Location of the Proposed Development, with Particular Regard to the Environmental Sensitivity of Geographical Areas Likely to be Affected (Schedule 7A(1)(b)).

The proposed scheme will be constructed within the City predominately along existing roadways, Under the Cork City Development plan 2022 - 2028 (CCC, 2022) the following zoning objectives have been identified adjacent to the footprint of the proposed project:

- *ZO 1 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods – To protect and provide for residential uses and amenities, local services and community, institutional, educational, and civic uses;*
- *ZO 2 New Residential Neighbourhoods – To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure;*
- *ZO 4 Mixed Use Development – To provide and promote a mix of residential and other uses to ensure the creation of a vibrant and sustainable urban area;*
- *ZO 5 City Centre – To consolidate and facilitate the development of the central area and to promote its role as a dynamic mixed used centre for community, economic, civic, cultural, and residential growth;*
- *ZO 15 Public Open Space – To protect, retain and provide for passive and active recreational uses, open space, green networks, natural areas and amenity facilities;*
- *ZO 18 Quayside Amenity Area – To protect and preserve quayside, natural heritage, and river amenities;*
- *ZO 19 Rivers and Water Bodies Protection – To protect and provide for the appropriate recreational, amenity and transport use of the City's rivers and waterways.*

It is considered that the proposed scheme is fully compatible with the zoning requirements of the development strategy for the area, under the Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028, providing a social amenity and cycle access and traffic management in the area.

Hydrology and European Sites

The proposed scheme is within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment area and the Kiln_SC_010 WFD sub catchment area. There are 2no. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) watercourses within the project site; Lee River (EPA Code: IE_SW_060-0900) Glashaboy River (EPA code: IE_SW_060_0800). The Glashaboy River is adjacent to the eastern most section of the proposed scheme and discharges into the River Lee which is adjacent to the site and flows west to east along the length of the scheme before discharging into Lough Mahon. The section of the River Lee running adjacent to the proposed scheme forms part of the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower Transitional Water Body (EPA Code: IE_SW_060_0750). The River Lee could potentially provide hydrological connectivity to Cork Harbour Special Protected Area (SPA) and Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation (SAC). As identified within the AA Screening (Atkins, 2023) *'there is potential for accidental pollution of the watercourse from run-off during the proposed works. Given that the closest SAC is the Great Island Channel SAC, which is located ca. 4.5km away, any pollution that accidentally enters the watercourse during the proposed works will be diluted and dispersed within the estuary prior to having negligible effects on this SAC. The zone of impact for accidental pollution from the proposed works is taken to be ca. 500m, therefore, this SAC is not considered further for potential impacts as a result of the proposed works. Given the location of Cork Harbour SPA to the proposed works, this SPA is located within the zone of impact for disturbance impacts, from the proposed works.'*

There are 2no. European sites within the potential zone of influence (Zoi) of the proposed scheme; Cork Harbour SPA (side code: 004030) and Great Island Channel SAC (site code: 001058). These international designated conservation areas are aligned along the Cork Harbour and the Great Island Channel, which are located to the south and east of the proposed scheme, respectively. The proposed scheme does not lie within these European sites however, the easternmost end of the scheme is adjacent to Cork Harbour SPA at Dunkettle / Mahon and both European sites are located downstream of the scheme. As identified within the AA Screening (Atkins, 2023) *'there is potential for accidental pollution of the watercourse from run-off during the proposed works. Given that the closest SAC is the Great Island Channel SAC, which is located ca. 4.5km away, any pollution that accidentally enters the watercourse during the proposed works will be diluted and dispersed within the estuary prior to having negligible effects on this SAC. The zone of impact for accidental pollution from the proposed works is taken to be ca. 500m, therefore, this SAC is not considered further for potential impacts as a result of the proposed works. Given the location of Cork Harbour SPA to the proposed works, this SPA is located within the zone of impact for disturbance impacts, from the proposed works.'*

There will be no land take from any of the designated sites within 15km of the proposed project and, based on the findings of the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening report (Atkins, 2023) there will be no potential significant adverse effects to European sites arising from the proposed project.

There are no Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within the proposed scheme. There is 1no. proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) within the boundary of the proposed scheme and a further 6no. pNHAs within 5km of the scheme, as follows:

- Dunkettle Shore pNHA (001082) – within boundary of scheme;
- Lee Valley pNHA (000094) – ca. 4km upstream of the scheme;
- Great Island Channel pNHA (001058) – ca. 3km downstream of the scheme;
- Cork Lough pNHA (001081) – ca. 1.5km southwest of the scheme;
- Douglas River Estuary pNHA (001046) – ca. 0.5km downstream of the scheme;
- Glanmire Wood pNHA (001054) – ca. 0.5km upstream of the scheme; and
- Rockfarm Quarry, Little Island pNHA (001074) – ca. 3km downstream of the scheme.

Where the proposed scheme lies within Dunkettle Shore pNHA, works will take place within existing areas of road, footpath and amenity grassland. There would be no instream works or works in areas supporting habitats for which the pNHA has been designated. There is potential indirect hydrological connectivity between the proposed scheme and 5no. of the pNHAs identified above.

Hydrogeology

There is 1no. well of unknown use reported within the docklands in the northwest section of the proposed scheme (GSI, 2023). There are no designated Public or Group Drinking Water Supply Source Protection Zones within 10km of the proposed scheme.

The bedrock aquifer beneath the proposed scheme is classified as a locally important bedrock aquifer which is generally moderately productive in local zones. 2no. Gravel aquifers; Lee Valley Gravel Aquifer and Little Island Gravel Aquifer, are located beneath small portions of the proposed scheme.

Groundwater vulnerability beneath the proposed scheme is predominantly classified as 'High' and 'Extreme' vulnerability rating with portions of 'Rock at or near Surface or Karst' and 'Moderate' ratings reported within the proposed scheme and its vicinity (GSI, 2023). The proposed scheme is located within 2no. Groundwater Bodies (GWB); Lee Valley Gravels GWB (EPA Code: IE_SW_G_094) in the west and the Ballincollig GWB (EPA Code: IE_SW_G_002) in the east.

Geology

The proposed scheme is underlain predominantly by sandstone with mudstone and siltstone of the Glyeen Formation (GSI, 2023). The western portion of the scheme is underlain by flaser-bedded sandstone and mudstone of the Cuskinny Member (Kinsale Formation) and dark muddy limestone, shale of the Ballysteen Formation (GSI, 2023). A number of small areas of bedrock outcrop have been identified within the footprint of the proposed scheme.

There are no karst features within the vicinity of the proposed project (GSI, 2022). The closest karst feature is a cave located ca. 1.3km south of the proposed scheme. There are no recorded landslide events in the vicinity of the site, however, portions of lands to the north of the proposed scheme are reported as having '*moderately high*' and '*high*' landslide susceptibility classification (GSI, 2023). There are no historic mines reported within the vicinity of the proposed project (GSI, 2023).

There are no Geological Heritage Sites within the proposed scheme, with the closest such Site; Blackrock Diamond Quarry (Site Code: CC003) located ca. 0.7km south of the proposed scheme.

Flooding

A review of OPW Flood Maps (2023) identified a high probability of coastal flooding along the River Lee and Glashaboy River, with the proposed scheme being within areas identified as having Medium and Low probability of coastal flooding. Based on the nature of the proposed cycle route, it is identified as being a water compatible development (Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines, DOEHLG 2009) which can be located within areas at risk of flooding. In the absence of flood defence in the area currently, the management plan will be the closure of the cycle/footpath along with the N8 if flooded, similar to what happens currently when the road floods. Additionally, as the area along which the proposed scheme is located is identified an area prone to a high probability of coastal flooding, it may be subject to future flood defence schemes initiated for Cork City.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

There are 17no. reported National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) sites within or adjacent to the proposed scheme as follows;

- Penrose House: Office – Reg No. 20506339;
- Horgan’s Quay/Wharf – Reg No. 20506358;
- Railway Bridge – Reg No. 20507082;
- 11 Lower Glanmire Road – Reg No. 20507165;
- Harbour Commissioners: Workshop – Reg No. 20507163;
- Footbridge – Reg No. 20863155;
- Footbridge – Reg No. 20863156;
- Footbridge – Reg No. 20863164;
- St Laurence Cheshire Home: gates / railings / walls – Reg No. 20864022;
- Lotamore: gate lodge – Reg No. 20864012;
- Post-box – Reg No. 20864008;
- Tivoli Gardens – Reg No. 20864029;
- Belvedere Lodge – Reg No. 20864009;
- Lotabeg: demesne walls / gates / railings – Reg No. 20864013;
- Lotabeg: gate lodge – Reg No. 20864012;
- Steps – Reg No. 20507128; and
- Locomotive Shed – Reg No. 20507180

There are 7no. Records of Protected Structures within or directly adjacent to the proposed scheme as follows;

- City of Cork Steam Packets Office – Ref. No. PS281;
- Patent Slipway, Former Port of Cork dockyard – Ref. No. PS923;
- Former Harbour Master’s House – Ref. No. PS922;
- Old Harbour Commission House – Ref. No. PS933;
- Pedestrian Bridge at Carrig House – Ref. No. PS741;
- Pedestrian Bridge at Bellevue Villas – Ref. No. PS743; and
- Pedestrian Bridge at Woodhill Villas – Ref. No. PS742.

The proposed scheme lies within the Zone of Notification (ZoN) of 2no. SMR features, one near the footbridge on Lower Glanmire Road (reg. no. 20863155) and one near the gateway and walls around the Lotabeg area (Reg. no. 20864013).

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development are evaluated further within Section 3.3.2 of this report (*‘Location of proposed development - The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development’*) as required under Schedule 7 of the relevant regulations.

3.4.1. Description of Aspects of the Environment Likely to be Significantly affected by the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (2)).

The proposed scheme does not lie within any European sites or nature reserves. There are 2no. European sites within the potential zone of influence of the proposed scheme. A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has also been prepared (Atkins, 2023). ‘The AA Screening report states that *‘it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not give rise to any impacts which would constitute significant effects on Cork Harbour SPA (site code:004030) or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the authors of this report that Cork City Council, as the competent authority in this case may determine that Appropriate Assessment is not required in respect of the proposed works for the Cycle Route. Should the scope of the proposed works change, a new Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and final determination will be required.’*

A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment was prepared by John Cronin & Associates (2023) which concluded that *‘the proposed scheme will not result in any predicted impacts on the known archaeological resource...’*. However, a number of architectural heritage constraints have been identified within the scheme boundary and therefore, *‘it is recommended that a built heritage specialist be appointed to supervise construction phase works in these*

areas. *The appointed specialist should also carry out a detailed written and photographic record of the existing streetscape along the extent of the scheme in advance of the commencement of the construction phase, and this should include a written, drawn and photographic record.....'*

It will be the responsibility of the Contractor to determine a suitable location for the site compound within the proposed development area away from any identified environmental sensitive receptors (watercourses etc) so as to avoid potential impacts to the environment and the general public. The final proposed site compound location will be subject to Client approval.

The other relevant aspects of the environment (including human health), which could potentially be significantly affected by the proposed project are receiving groundwater environment, surface water environment, air quality environment, the receiving noise and vibration environment, and the receiving traffic environment, during the construction phase.

Limited amount of excavation works will be occurring for the proposed project. The works will mainly involve excavations to a maximum depth of 0.2m below ground level (bgl) along the existing road networks, with localised areas requiring excavations of up to 1m bgl e.g. for railway bridge reinforcements and concrete piling at Tivoli Ramp. Given the shallow and localised nature of excavation depths proposed it is unlikely that groundwater will be intercepted and accordingly no significant adverse impacts are anticipated with respect to groundwater quality, resources or flow.

The proposed project will tie into the existing drainage system on the existing road network. Where this cannot occur, new gullies will be installed and tied into the existing drainage system. Due to the nature and scale of the project and existing drainage infrastructure it is anticipated that the construction and operation of the proposed development will not have a significant impact on surface water quality. Accordingly, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated with respect to surface quality, levels or flow.

There is potential indirect connectivity from the proposed scheme to 2no. European sites. The eastern portion of the proposed scheme is adjacent to Cork Harbour SPA and both Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC are located downstream of the scheme. There is therefore potential hydrological connectivity between these sites and the proposed scheme. Construction activities will be carried out within existing roadways, footpaths and amenity grassland with no in-stream or bankside works. Therefore, there is no potential for works activities to result in a deterioration in water quality within the River Lee or Glashaboy River. Given the location, nature and scale of the works and given that there is no potential for works in the area of the surface water features to result in water quality impacts, there will be no likely significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence of the proposed scheme. The AA screening Report (Atkins, 2023) states that *'it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not give rise to any impacts which would constitute significant effects on Cork Harbour SPA (site code:004030) or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the authors of this report that Cork City Council, as the competent authority in this case may determine that Appropriate Assessment is not required in respect of the proposed works for the Cycle Route. Should the scope of the proposed works change, a new Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and final determination will be required.'*

The proposed project lies within a built up area and there are sensitive receptors adjacent to the scheme i.e., residential properties along the proposed scheme. Dust may be generated during the construction phase. Construction will require the use of machinery such as dump trucks, mechanic excavators etc. The presence of such machines may result in a temporary increase in noise and dust. Regional air quality in the vicinity of the proposed project is 'good' (EPA, 2023). However, management of dust will be in line with relevant best practice measures such as those set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2011). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is anticipated that the construction works will not have a significant impact on air quality. It is anticipated that the operational phase will likely have a positive impact on air quality.

Noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2014). It is anticipated that the works will be scheduled during day-time hours. Construction contractors will be required to comply with the requirements of the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations, 1988 as amended in 1990 and 1996 (S.I. No. 320 of 1988, S.I. No. 297 of 1990 and S.I. No. 359 of 1996), and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 371 of 2006). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is anticipated that the construction works, and operation of the proposed project will not have a significant impact with regards to noise.

Excavation works will be monitored and in the unlikely event that contaminated materials are encountered these will need to be segregated from all uncontaminated soils, temporarily stored (any stockpiles should be lined and

covered by heavy duty 1000-gauge plastic), sampled and analysed for relevant parameters (Waste Acceptance Criteria suite e.g., Rilta Disposal Suite). Any contaminated soils must be characterised as per the requirements of the relevant Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) under the relevant European Communities Council Decision (EC) (92003/33/EC) and classified in accordance with the requirements of the EPA as set out in the following documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018). Any contaminated soils must be transported by appropriately permitted hauliers and disposed of to an appropriate EPA licensed Waste Facility in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation.

Due to the scale and nature of the proposed project it is anticipated that there may be impacts on traffic volumes during the construction phase of the project. An appropriate traffic management system will be put in place so it is expected that there will be no significant impact associated with traffic due to the proposed project.

3.4.2. A Description of Any Likely Significant Effects (To the Extent of The Information Available on Such Effects) of The Proposed Development on The Environment (Schedule 7A(3)).

The Expected Residues and Emissions and the Production of Waste where relevant (Schedule 7A (3)(a)).

The proposed scheme may give rise to air, noise, water emissions and waste. However, the proposed project will be designed in order to minimise any potential impacts as a result of these emissions during the operational phase. Standard mitigation measures will be implemented by the Contractor to address potential air and noise emissions during the construction phase. The Contractor will ensure that onsite storm water management during the construction phase is carried out in accordance with relevant best practice measures as set out in Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) guidance 'C532 - Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites'.

Given the scale and nature of the proposed development any waste is likely to be generated in very minor volumes. During the demolition phase a minor volume of concrete waste will be generated. During the construction phase the following waste streams will be generated: construction and demolition (C&D) waste including footways and asphalt / road surface, mixed municipal waste (MMW), recyclables such as plastic wrapping, wooden pallets and paper. All waste will be removed on a regular basis to a designated area in the proposed site compound where it will be segregated and temporarily stored before being recycled or disposed of by the Contractor to an appropriately licenced waste recovery or waste disposal facility. All waste generated will be disposed of by the Contractor in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation. The Contractor will be responsible for segregating each waste type as per the relevant List of Waste (LoW) (also referred to European Waste Catalogue (EWC) code). All waste materials must be removed offsite by a suitably permitted waste haulage contractor who holds a current valid waste collection permit issued by the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO).

The relevant Waste Management policies and objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 are as follows:

'Objective 5.13: Waste Management Construction and Operation of Development

All development proposals should minimise waste and maximise the recycling and re-use opportunities during the construction and operation phases.

Objective 9.12: Waste Management

- a) *To support the sustainable management of waste in line with the objectives of the South Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (NWMPE) when published, which will replace the existing Regional Waste Management Plans.*
- b) *To facilitate the transition to a circular economy facilitating the value recovery and recirculation of resources in order to generate minimal waste.*
- c) *Continue to fulfil duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 524 of 2008), including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills.*
- d) *To encourage the recycling of construction and demolition waste and the reuse of aggregate and other materials in future construction projects. Applications for large infrastructure projects shall be accompanied by a Construction and Environmental Management Plan that includes details of how construction and demolition waste generated is to be managed and, where reuse/recycling is not practicable, disposed of, in line with legislative requirements.*

These policies and objectives will be implemented during the construction and operation of the proposed development.

Excavation works will be monitored and in the unlikely event that contaminated materials are encountered these will need to be segregated from all uncontaminated soils, temporarily stored (any stockpiles should be lined and covered by heavy duty 1000-gauge plastic), sampled and analysed for relevant parameters (Waste Acceptance Criteria suite e.g., Rilta Disposal Suite). Any contaminated soils must be characterised as per the requirements of the relevant Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) under the relevant European Communities Council Decision (EC) (92003/33/EC) and classified in accordance with the requirements of the EPA as set out in the following documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018). Any contaminated soils must be transported by appropriately permitted hauliers and disposed of to an appropriate EPA licensed Waste Facility in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation. There will be no likely significant emissions or residues and no significant impact from the production of waste.

The operational phase of the project should be accompanied by an increase in cyclists and an associated reduction in vehicular traffic. The proposed scheme is not likely to have a significant environmental effect with regard to expected residues and emissions and the production of waste.

[The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water, and biodiversity \(Schedule 7A \(3\)\(b\)\).](#)

Natural resources in the area will not be required to facilitate the development. As previously noted, the majority of the site is already hardstanding.

The project is not located within any European site. The maximum excavation depth for the removal of the existing hardcore material will be ca. 1m bgl. The material that will require disposal offsite will require waste classification in accordance with EPA requirements as set out in the documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2015), and 'Determining if waste is hazardous or non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018), and all relevant waste management legislation. In addition to screening against relevant WAC, the preparation of a waste classification tool (hazwaste online / EPA paper tool or similar etc.) will be required to be carried out in order to determine the relevant LoW / EWC code for the transport of any waste soils which require offsite removal and disposal.

Construction waste generation will be minimised during the proposed construction works.

Therefore, based on the environmental setting, and taking account of the nature, scale and location of the proposed project other than standard construction materials, the proposed project (during both construction and operational phases) will not have a significant impact on natural resources.

[3.4.3. The Compilation of The Information at Paragraphs 1 To 3 Shall Take into Account, where Relevant, the Criteria set out in Schedule 7 \(Schedule 7A\(4\)\).](#)

All relevant criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations is presented in Section 3.2 (*'Criteria for Determining Whether Development Listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 Should be subject to an EIA'*) of this screening report.

During the preparation of Sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 (i.e. Schedule 7A (1) to (3)) all pertinent Schedule 7 information has been taken account of as required, with specific details presented in the following section of this report (Section 3.3 and 3.4).

[3.5. Criteria for Determining Whether Development Listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 Should be subject to an EIA](#)

[3.5.1. Characteristics of proposed development \(Schedule 7\(1\)\)](#)

[The size and design of the whole of the proposed development \(Schedule 7\(1\)\(a\)\)](#)

Refer to Section 3.2.1 under '*A description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Proposed Development and Where Relevant of Demolition Works (Schedule 7A (1) (a))*'.

[Cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172\(1A\)\(b\) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment \(Schedule 7\(1\) \(b\)\)](#)

[Committed Development](#)

The proposed scheme will go through a Part 8 planning application.

A search of Cork City Planning records has been undertaken for the applications submitted within the past 5 years in the vicinity of the proposed scheme (last reviewed 18/12/2023). Some of the granted applications have already been completed and of those which are not completed, most are generally small scale in nature (i.e., residential extension works, or property improvement works). Completed or granted applications of such small

scale (such as residential improvements) have not been considered further in terms of potential for cumulative impacts.

15no. projects are committed developments, which have not yet been built or are currently under construction. These developments have been further evaluated for the potential of cumulative impacts and are presented below:

- Flood Relief Scheme for Glanmire/Sallybrook, Cork involving the construction of direct flood defences and conveyance improvement measures along the Glashaboy River and its tributaries in Glanmire, County Cork.
- Permission for development at Kent (Cheannt) Station, Lower Glanmire Road, Cork City, County Cork, T23E6TD. The proposed upgrade works, at Kent Station, comprises extension and alterations to the existing station, across approximately 13,725.8m². The proposed development works to the Protected Structure of Kent Station to facilitate the through running of commuter services comprise: (A) Doubled sided 220m long , 6m wide extension to existing Platform 5 to create an extended platform 5 and new platform 6. (B) A Y-shaped, steel canopy (on the extended platform), c.3.5m in height and c.6m wide. (C) A new 113m long retaining wall structure, between 0.5m-2.1m in height, with a 1m handrail atop, between the existing mainline and the adjoining depot sidings. (D) The removal of 945m and reinstatement of approximately 1,110m of track. (E) Reinstatement of the disused eastern access subway to the existing station subway from Platform 5, via the construction of a new staircase. (F) Extension of existing stormwater (SW) network. (G) Removal of redundant signal cabin adjacent to existing track 6 and demolition of c.30m of existing platform 5. (H) Installation of lighting and platform furniture. (I) All associated enabling and ancillary works including site investigations and temporary c. 800m² construction compound. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been completed for the proposed development and will be submitted to the planning authority with the application.
- The Proposed Development involves the construction of a 5m wide pedestrian and cycle crossing from Little Island train station and the L3004 Glounthaune Road to the Eastgate Business Park and surrounds. The crossing length is approximately 460m in total.
- Permission for a Strategic Housing Development at the Former Ford Distribution Site, Centre Park Road, Cork, comprising demolition of existing structures and construction of a mixed-use development including apartments, commercial and community facilities at a Former Food Distribution Site, Centre Park Road, County Cork.
- The demolition of existing structures and the construction of a strategic housing development of 823 no. apartments in 6 no. buildings ranging in height from part-1 to part-35 no. storeys over lower ground floor level at Former Tedcastles Yard, Centre Park Road and the Marina, County Cork.
- Proposal for a Large-Scale Residential Development will consist of the demolition of the existing on-site buildings and structures and site clearance and the construction of 1325 no. residential units including apartments and duplexes in 10 no. buildings at Goulding's Site Centre Park Road and Monahan Road, Cork City.
- 3.1426 Ha at Kennedy Quay & Marina Walk, South Docks, Cork City. Mixed Use- residential, office, entertainment, food & beverage, cinema, retail and public open space including Odlums Building (RPS ref. PS856) and rehabilitation hospital, all over double basement, County Cork.
- A Strategic Housing Development of 201no. Build to Rent apartments in a building that ranges in height from 8 to 11 to 24 storeys over ground floor, ancillary resident & communal facilities; cafe; private rented office; public bar/restaurant; basement, Albert Quay, Cork City.
- Refurbishment of the existing buildings on site including the Custom House and Bonded Warehouses, construction of a 34-storey tower c.140m over the Revenue Building, a distillery, remedial works to quay walls, and the provision of a new public realm in County Cork.
- Flood Relief Scheme for Blackpool, Cork involving the construction of direct flood defences and conveyance improvement measures along a stretch of the River Bride and its tributaries in Blackpool, Cork.

- Morrison’s Island Public Realm and Flood Defence Project, Cork comprising ‘*upgrades along Morrison’s Quay and Fr Matthew Quay between Parliament Bridge and Parnell Bridge, including upgraded streetscape incorporating a wide riverside promenade, a much-improved setting for Holy Trinity Church, a plaza at the eastern end of the South Mall and a redesigned Trinity Bridge*’ as well as ‘*Provision of integrated flood gates at Trinity Bridge (north and south) and Parnell Plaza*’ (CCC, 2024).
- The demolition of 10 no. existing agricultural buildings/sheds and log cabin residential structure and the construction of a residential development of 140 no. apartment units, resident amenity facilities, crèche, and all ancillary site development works, Bessborough, Ballinure, Blackrock, County Cork.
- Facilities, café, crèche, and all ancillary site development works, Bessborough, Ballinure, Blackrock, County Cork.
- The development will consist of the construction of 489 no. apartments, creche and offices in 5 no. buildings ranging in height from part-1 to part-8 no. storeys over lower ground and semi-basement podium levels, Jacobs Island, Ballinure, Mahon, County Cork.
- Construction of a new single-storey extension for the surface treatment (anodising) of aluminium sections, underground services and associated site works at Wallingstown, Little Island, County Cork.
- Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 1) - Provision of segregated footpaths on both sides of the roadway along the entire length of the scheme (1.4km). Minimum footpath widths of 1.80m, Dunkettle, County Cork.

Dunkettle Interchange Improvement Scheme is currently under construction to the east of the proposed Cycle Route. Construction of the improvement scheme has been mostly completed and as such there will be no construction overlap with this project and the proposed cycle route.

Given the nature, scale and location of these granted developments and the proposed project no significant impacts are anticipated. It is considered the proposed scheme will not act in combination to give rise to any cumulative impacts.

3.5.1.1. The nature of any associated demolition works (Schedule 7(1)(c))

Refer to Section 3.2.1 under ‘*A description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Proposed Development and Where Relevant of Demolition Works (Schedule 7A (1) (a))*’.

3.5.1.2. The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity (Schedule 7(1)(d))

Refer to Section 3.2.3 under ‘*The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity (Schedule 7A (3)(b))*’.

3.5.1.3. The production of waste (Schedule 7(1)(e))

Refer to Section 3.2.3 under ‘*The Expected Residues and Emissions and the Production of Waste where relevant (Schedule 7A (3)(a))*.’ The proposed project is not likely to have a significant environmental effect with regard to the production of waste. All waste will be removed to an appropriately licenced/ permitted waste disposal/ recovery facility.

3.5.1.4. Pollution and nuisances (Schedule 7(1)(f))

Refer to Section 3.2.2 under ‘*Description of Aspects of the Environment Likely to be Significantly affected by the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (2))*’.

During the demolition phase a small volume of concrete will be generated. The construction phase of the project may generate waste such as metals, asphalt, construction and demolition waste, plastic wrapping, wooden pallets or soil arisings. As outlined previously (under ‘*The production of waste (Schedule 7(1)(e))*’), appropriately robust waste management procedures will be implemented by the Contractor to ensure that any minimal volumes of waste which will be generated during the construction phase do not pose a pollution / nuisance risk to the receiving environment.

In the event that any excavated soils need to be disposed of offsite as part of the proposed project, such soils/waste material will require waste classification in accordance with EPA requirements as set out in the documents ‘*Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous*’ (EPA, 2015), and ‘*Determining if waste is hazardous or non-hazardous*’ (EPA, 2018), and all relevant waste management legislations. In addition to screening against relevant WAC, the preparation of a waste classification

tool (hazwaste online / EPA paper tool or similar etc.) will be required to be carried out in order to determine the relevant LoW / EWC code for the transport of any waste soils/material which require offsite removal and disposal.

There are numerous dwellings located along the proposed project, which would be considered sensitive receptors in terms of potential dust or noise nuisance. Dust may be generated during the construction phase. However, management of dust will be in line with best practice such as that set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2011).

Construction will require the use of machinery such as excavators etc. and the presence of such machines may result in a temporary increase of noise. The contractor will be required to avoid leaving machinery idling and required to change reverse indicators beepers. Noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2014). The majority of the works will be carried out during daytime hours.

No significant impacts from pollution or nuisances are anticipated from the proposed project.

3.5.1.5. The risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge (Schedule 7(1)(g))

There are 18no. Upper Tier and 14no. Lower Tier Seveso (Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (COMAH)) establishments within Cork County area, the closest sites to the proposed scheme are; Calor Teoranta, an Upper Tier Site located ca.43m south of the proposed scheme, Flogas Ireland Ltd., an Upper Tier Site located ca. 116m south of the scheme, Chemical Bulk Storage Ltd., a Lower Tier Site located ca. 300m from the scheme and, Goulding Chemicals Ltd., a Lower Tier Site located ca. 410m from the proposed scheme. Due to the proximity of these Seveso sites from the proposed scheme, there could be a potential risk of major accidents and / or disasters, however each Seveso site is required to operate under strict requirements as set out by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), and given the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that no significant risks are likely to arise with respect to major accidents and / or disasters.

With reference to the OPW CFRAM flood mapping and Cork City Council Development Plan (2022-2028) flood mapping for the relevant area, the proposed development predominantly lies within Flood Zone A, 'where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding)' (OPW, 2021). The eastern portion of the proposed scheme lies within Flood Zone B, where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderated (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 year for coastal flooding). Based on the nature of the proposed cycle route, it is identified as being a water compatible development (Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines, DOEHLG 2009) which can be located within areas at risk of flooding. In the absence of flood defence in the area currently, the management plan will be the closure of the cycle/footpath along with the N8 if flooded, similar to what happens currently when the road floods. Additionally, as the area along which the proposed scheme is located is identified an area prone to a high probability of coastal flooding, it may be subject to future flood defence schemes initiated for Cork City. The contractor will be required to design and implement traffic plans as required in accordance with the 'Guidance for the Control and Management of Traffic at Road Works' (TII, 2010).

Due to the nature and scale of the works and the site setting of the proposed project, it is considered that the overall risk of major accidents and / or disasters associated with the proposed project is extremely low and does not warrant further consideration.

3.5.1.6. The risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air (Schedule 7(1)(h)) pollution)

Refer to section 3.3.2 *Description of Aspects of the Environment Likely to be Significantly affected by the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (2))*.

There are no reported public drinking water supplies within a 2km radius of the development (GSI, 2023). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is not anticipated to have a significant impact on groundwater. Given the location, nature and scale of the proposed project, the overall risk to human health is very low.

3.5.2. Location of proposed development – The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development (Schedule 7(2))

The existing and approved land use (Schedule 7(2)(a))

The project will be constructed within an urban setting of Cork City. The location of the proposed project has been detailed previously in Section 3.3.1 under Schedule 7A (1)(a).

The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground (Schedule 7(2)(b))

Refer to Section 3.2.3 under *The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity (Schedule 7A (3)(b))*.

- (i) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas (Schedule 7(2)(i)) Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths

The closest wetlands to the proposed scheme are; locally important Atlantic Pond (site code: WMI_CO281) ca. 200m south of the scheme and, internationally important Dunkettle Shore-Cork Harbour SPA (site code: WMI_CO86) within the eastern portion of the scheme.

- (ii) Coastal zones and the marine environment

The proposed project is located adjacent to transitional waters. Therefore, there is potential for the proposed development to have an impact on coastal environments.

- (iii) Mountain and forest areas

There are no mountain or forest areas within 2km of the proposed project and therefore no impacts on this habitat type.

- (iv) Nature reserves and parks

The proposed scheme is not located within any nature reserves or parks.

- (v) Areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive

Refer to Section 3.3.3 under '*The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity (Schedule 7A (3)(b))*' A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has also been prepared (Atkins, 2023). The AA Screening report (Atkins, 2023) concluded that '*it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not give rise to any impacts which would constitute significant effects on Cork Harbour SPA (site code:004030) or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives*'.

It is considered that due to the nature and scale of the works there will be no significant impact on areas classified or protected under legislation from the proposed development.

- (vi) Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.

The proposed scheme lies within the Lee Valley groundwater body (GWB) (EPA Code: IE_SW_G_094) and Ballincollig GWB (EPA Code: IE_SW_G_002) both of which have 'good' water quality status for the period of 2016-2021 (EPA, 2023) and are currently '*Not at Risk*' of failing to meet relevant WFD objectives. Due to the nature and scale of the works the proposed project is not anticipated to significantly impact groundwater quality.

The proposed scheme is within Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment area and the Kiln sub-catchment area with the Glashaboy (L. Mahon) sub-catchment area bordering the east of the proposed scheme. The River Lee is adjacent to the south for the majority of the scheme's length with the Glashaboy River located to the east of the proposed scheme. These downstream stretches of the River Lee and Glashaboy River form part of the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and have been assigned '*moderate*' WFD status for the 2016-2021 monitoring period and is '*at risk*' of failing to achieve relevant WFD objectives by 2027 (EPA, 2023).

It is considered that due to the nature and scale of the project the works will not have a significant impact on baseline surface water quality.

Regional air quality in the area is reported as '*good*' (EPA, 2023). Dust may be generated during the construction phase which has the potential to impact on human health. However, management of

dust will be in line with best practice such as that set out in ‘*Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Schemes*’ (NRA, 2011). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is anticipated that there will be no significant impact on air quality.

It is anticipated that during construction there may be an increase in noise volumes. Noise levels shall not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in a rural environment as set out in the TII guidance ‘*Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes*’ (TII, 2014).

It is considered that due to the nature and scale of the works there will be no significant impact on baseline air and water quality from the proposed project.

(vii) **Densely populated areas**

The proposed project is within Cork city which is a densely populated area. Cork City had a population of 224,004 in 2022 (CSO, 2022). It is anticipated that there will be no significant negative impact on densely populated areas during construction. The creation of the cycle scheme will reduce the volume of vehicular traffic using the routes. The proposed project will provide additional social and recreational infrastructure within the city. It is considered therefore that the proposed scheme will potentially have a positive impact on this densely populated area during the operational phase.

(viii) **Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance**

Refer to Section 3.1 under ‘*A Description of the Location of the Proposed Development, with Particular Regard to the Environmental Sensitivity of Geographical Areas Likely to be Affected (Schedule 7A(1)(b)).*’

A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by John Cronin & Associates (2023) concluded that ‘*the proposed scheme will not result in any predicted impacts on the known archaeological resource...*’. However, a number of architectural heritage constraints have been identified within the scheme boundary and therefore, ‘*it is recommended that a built heritage specialist be appointed to supervise construction phase works in these areas. The appointed specialist should also carry out a detailed written and photographic record of the existing streetscape along the extent of the scheme in advance of the commencement of the construction phase, and this should include a written, drawn and photographic record.....*’

It is considered that due to the nature and scale of the works, and the fact that a cultural heritage specialist will be appointed to supervise the construction works, there will be no significant impact on landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance from the proposed development.

3.5.3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Schedule 7(3))

The likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed project have been evaluated taking into account the following specific criteria.

The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) (Schedule 7(3)(a))

The spatial extent of potential impacts is limited to the localised footprint of the proposed project (refer to Figure 1-1). Based on the location, current site setting, and the nature of the proposed project, any potential impacts (during the construction and operational phases) are not likely to be significant in magnitude.

The nature of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(b))

There will be no significant impact on the receiving environment arising from the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases).

The transboundary nature of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(c))

There is no potential for transboundary impacts as a result of the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases).

The intensity and complexity of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(d))

There will be no significant impact on the receiving environment arising from the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases).

The probability of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(e))

The probability of impacts on the receiving environment is low given the following considerations:

- The receiving environment is not considered to be at risk of significant impact due to the nature and scale of the proposed project; and,
- The Contractor will be obliged to implement standard best practice procedures prior to commencement of the proposed project including all environmental control measures for the onsite management of any pollution / nuisance issues which could arise during the construction phase.

The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(f))

The probability of impacts on the receiving environment is considered to be low, as previously outlined. Therefore, there shall be no requirement for the reversibility of the impacts caused by this project (during the construction or operational phases).

The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment (Schedule 7(3)(g))

As previously detailed no significant cumulative impacts associated with the project (during the construction or operational phases) have been identified, arising from other existing and/or approved projects. Refer to Section 3.3.1 under '*Cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment (Schedule 7(1) (b)).*

The possibility of effectively reducing the impact (Schedule 7(3)(h))

Significant effects on the receiving environment are not anticipated as a result of the provision of the proposed scheme (during the construction or operational phases).

3.6. Potential for Significant Effects on the Receiving Environment

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7A has been provided on behalf of Cork City Council and is presented within Section 3.2 of this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2023) (Schedule 7), as presented within Section 3.2 of this screening report.

Based on the information provided within Section 3.2 and 3.3 of this report, and summarised below, it is considered that due to the size, nature, and characteristics of the proposed development, no significant effects on the receiving environment are expected; hence the preparation of a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

3.7. Screening Conclusion

This EIA screening report has been carried out in accordance with Section 176B and 177 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, the European Union, the Planning and Development (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, and the Planning and Development Regulations as amended 2001- 2023 (which give effect to the provisions of EU Directive 2014/52/EU). The report assessed the impact of the proposed Scheme in conjunction with committed developments in the surrounding area.

Based on all available information, and taking account of the scale, nature and location of the proposed project it is our opinion that the preparation of an EIAR is not a mandatory requirement (under Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The project is deemed a sub-threshold development; hence the potential for significant environmental effects arising as a result of the proposed project has been evaluated, in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Acts 2001-2023.

Key findings are summarised as follows;

- Due to the limited nature of the works, it is considered that there will be no significant cumulative impacts with other developments in the general area;
- Limited noise, vibration and dust emissions may be generated during construction; however, this is anticipated to be minimal in effect and will cause no significant impacts;
- There will be no significant impact on biodiversity, groundwater, surface water or traffic;
- Based on the AA Screening the proposed development is unlikely to have an effect on the environment, including the Cork Harbour SPA (004030) and,
- There will be no significant impacts on recorded monuments or historic features.

In summary, no significant adverse impacts to the receiving environment will arise as a result of the proposed project.

Accordingly, we consider that the preparation of an EIAR is not required for the proposed Glanmire to City Cycle Route (Phase 2). However, the competent authority will ultimately determine whether an EIA is required or not.

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