



**Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council**

**Environmental Impact Assessment
Screening Report
&
Screening Determination**

**Cork Docklands to City Centre Road Network
Improvement Scheme**

December 2024

Executive Summary

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report has been prepared to consider the requirement or otherwise of carrying out an EIA in respect of the Cork Docklands to City Centre Road Network Improvement 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 EIA 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 also the Roads Act 1993 - 2016. It is considered that the proposed road scheme is not one which falls within the scope of this category. It should be noted that mandatory EIA requirements for non-road type development have also been considered and discounted in this instance. As part of this, infrastructure type projects listed in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive as amended were taken into account.

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 or not such development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

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

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

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 amendments.

I/We have carefully reviewed and considered the attached EIA Screening Report prepared by Arup and accept, agree with and adopt the assessment and conclusions therein. These are summarised hereunder:

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Size of Proposed Development	<p>The proposed development will consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conversion of the existing Victoria Road Roundabout to a signalised four-arm junction. • Introduction of an inbound contraflow bus lane on Victoria Road North from the new signalised four-arm junction (replacing the Victoria Road Roundabout) to Albert Quay East, continuing west along Albert Quay East through the Albert Quay/Albert Street/Eamon De Valera Bridge Junction and terminating at the Eglinton Street/Albert Quay West/ Clontarf Bridge Junction. • Introduction of an outbound bus lane on Albert Quay East from the Albert Quay/Albert Street/Eamon De Valera Bridge Junction to the proposed new signalised four-arm junction (replacing the Victoria Road Roundabout). • Introduction of a 2-way cycle track starting at Terence MacSwiney Quay and running along Albert Quay West and Albert Quay East and connecting into Victoria Road North, as far as the new signalised four-arm junction (replacing the Victoria Road Roundabout) where it will continue as single direction cycle tracks for a short distance down Centre Park Road to connect to the existing outbound cycle track and also down Victoria Road South toward Monahan Road to allow for future connectivity; • re-alignment of Monahan Road/Victoria Road Junction to keep the traffic movement between the proposed signalised four-arm junction (replacing the Victoria Road Roundabout) and Monahan Road the priority, with Victoria Road South becoming a minor arm of Monahan Road.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-alignment of the Old Blackrock Road/Victoria Road South Junction. • Public realm improvements to Albert Quay East – this quay will act as the ‘gateway’ to the South Docks from the city centre. This will include a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with planting strips and new trees, raised planting areas with public seating, walkways and bike parking including a public bike sharing docking station. • Regrading of the existing wharf on Albert Quay East • Public realm improvements to Victoria Road North, Albert Road, Monerea Terrace and Marina Terrace including trees, planting, street furniture, public lighting etc; and • creation of a new residential access link between Electric Terrace (Eastville) and Rosefield Terrace (Rosehill). <p>1.32ha of the proposed development is located within an area where the predominant land use is retail or commercial area. This area is zoned in the Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028 as ‘city centre’ and this area is therefore interpreted as a ‘business district’. The proposed development area in the “business district” is less than 2ha. Thus, a mandatory EIA is not required under this class.</p> <p>The remaining area (2.91ha) is located within an area where the predominant land use is not retail nor commercial use. It is zoned in the Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028 as ‘Mixed use Development (0.32ha), “quayside amenity” (0.48ha) and “Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods” (1.72ha), and unzoned lands (0.39ha). It is therefore located in “other parts of a built-up area”. The proposed development area in the “other parts of a built-up area” is less than 10ha. Thus, a mandatory EIA is not required under this class.</p>
<p>Cumulation with other Proposed Development</p>	<p>Three projects were identified which could have a potential cumulative effect along with the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation Hospital • Odlum’s Building • Residential Development Goulding’s Site <p>Full consideration of the potential cumulative effects is included in Section 5.13, the EIA Screening Report prepared by ARUP.</p> <p>Having fully considered the information therein it is clear that due to the minor nature of the works and the minimal environmental effects associated with the proposed development along with the absence of significant environmental effects associated with the aforementioned permitted developments, significant cumulative effects are not envisaged.</p>

Use of Natural Resources	<p>Services such as water and power will be required during the construction phase. Mobile generators will be used during the construction phase whilst a permanent power supply will be required during the operational phase of the proposed development. Construction materials will include natural stone, concrete, support structures, pipework, signage etc.</p> <p>It is not considered that there will be a significant use of these resources as part of the proposed development.</p> <p>An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was prepared for this project. This ruled out likely significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.</p>
Production of Waste	<p>The contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No.291 of 2013).</p> <p>Inert construction waste generated will be removed from the site areas and disposed of at a suitable licensed facility. The production of waste will be managed in accordance with the relevant waste legislation.</p>
Pollution and Nuisances	<p>It is expected that some dust will be emitted during the construction works but this will not be significant. Emissions from construction plant and vehicles will arise during the construction phase but these will be minimal.</p> <p>Standard construction noise is expected during construction activities.</p> <p>No significant rock breaking will likely be required.</p> <p>The extent of the works on land (in a highly urbanised area) is relatively small, excavation works are not significant, and dewatering is not required.</p>
Risk of Accidents	<p>A "Project Supervisor for Construction Stage" will be appointed to manage safety issues during construction.</p>

2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Existing Land Use	<p>The land use across the area of the proposed development is generally classified as 'artificial surfaces' according to the EPA Corine (Coordination of Information on the Environment) land cover classification.</p> <p>There will be no major change of land use within the red line boundary with the exception of a small area of disused land (172m²) which will be required to construct a new residential access link between Rosefield Terrace (Rosehill) and Electric Terrace (Eastville). Small areas of a private residential gardens will also be acquired to facilitate the re-alignment of the Old Blackrock Road/Victoria Road Junction, 97.4m² will be required at the residence on the western side of the Blackrock Road Junction while 30.1m² and 13m² will be required at two residences on the eastern side of the Blackrock Road Junction.</p>

2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Relative Abundance, Quality and regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources in the Area	The extent of the works within a highly urbanised environment are relatively small. Thus, significant effects on the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area are not predicted.
Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	The works associated with this development are minor and construction work is frequent throughout the development area. This, along with the fact that the development area is not of significant ecological importance means the absorption capacity of this environment is high, making it less sensitive to works of this kind.

The EC Guidance on EIA Screening (EC, 2017) provides a checklist to help users decide whether EIA is required based on the characteristics of a project and its environment. This screening checklist is included in **Table 3** below.

Screening Checklist to determine if EIA is required based on the characteristics of a project and its environment

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No - Why
<p>1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No. There will be no major change of land use within the red line boundary with the exception of a small area of disused land (172m²) which will be required to construct a new residential access link between Rosefield Terrace (Rosehill) and Electric Terrace (Eastville). Small areas of a private residential gardens will also be acquired to facilitate the re-alignment of the Old Blackrock Road/Victoria Road Junction, 97.4m² will be required at the residence on the western side of the Blackrock Road Junction while 30.1m² and 13m² will be required at two residences on the eastern side of the Blackrock Road Junction.</p>
<p>2. Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No Services such as water and power will be required during the construction phase. Mobile generators will be used during the construction phase whilst a permanent power supply will be required during the operational phase of the proposed development. Construction materials will include natural stone, concrete, support structures, pipework, signage etc. It is not considered that there will be a significant use of these resources as part of the proposed development. A Report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment was prepared by Arup. It is the opinion of Arup that it is possible to rule out likely significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites</p>
<p>3. Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No Standard construction materials will be used throughout, the use of which is well understood and subject to standard controls and protocols to minimise any risk to the surrounding environment. The contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 291 of 2013). It is envisaged</p>

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No - Why
		<p>that the risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used is very low and therefore will not result in significant environmental effects. It is not considered that there will be a significant use of these resources as part of the proposed development.</p> <p>A Report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment was prepared by Arup. It is the opinion of Arup that it is possible to rule out likely significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.</p>
4. Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	<p>No.</p> <p>Inert construction waste generated will be removed from the site areas and disposed of at a suitable licensed facility. The production of waste will be managed in accordance with the relevant waste legislation.</p>
5. Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC?	No	<p>No.</p> <p>It is expected that dust will be emitted during the construction works. Emissions from construction plant and vehicles will arise during the construction phase, but these will be minimal.</p>
6. Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes.	<p>No.</p> <p>Standard construction noise is expected during construction activities.</p> <p>No significant rock breaking will likely be required.</p>
7. Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes.	<p>No.</p> <p>The extent of the works on land are relatively small, excavations are not significant with a maximum depth of 1,200mm required for the installation of storm drainage systems and a maximum of 100mm depth encountered when milling the road surface. Any construction runoff will enter the existing surface water drainage system and will be diluted before entering the River Lee. During the regrading of the wharf and increase in height of quay wall, there is potential for minor concrete spills to occur. However, due to the nature of the works, the limited potential for a significant spill and the extent of the River Lee and tidal flows, any minor spillage will be diluted quickly.</p>
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the project which could affect human health or the environment?	Yes.	<p>No.</p> <p>A "Project Supervisor for the Construction Stage" will be appointed to manage safety issues during construction.</p>

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No - Why
9. Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes.	No. The proposed development will have a positive effect on people living, working and visiting the area as there will be improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and improved access between the South Docks and Cork City Centre.
10. Are there any other factors which should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes.	No. Refer to section 5.3 of the EIA Screening Report by Arup.
11. Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. The proposed development is partially located within the River Lee which is designated as a salmonid watercourse under S.I. No. 293/1988 – European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988. As there will be no significant effects on water quality during the proposed development, there will be no significant negative effects on salmon species within the river. It is also located upstream of both Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC. A Report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment was prepared by Arup. It is the opinion of Arup that it is possible to rule out likely significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.
12. Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	No.	No.
13. Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	No	No. The River Lee and Bride host a variety of flora and fauna but significant impacts as described previously will not arise.
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. The extent of the works on land are relatively small, excavations are not significant with a maximum depth of approximately 1.200mm required for the installation of storm drainage systems

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No - Why
		and a maximum of 100mm depth encountered when milling the road surface. Any construction run off will enter the existing surface water drainage system and will be diluted before entering the River Lee. During the regrading of the wharf there is potential for minor concrete spills to occur. However, due to the nature of the works, the limited potential for a significant spill and the extent of the River Lee and tidal flows, any minor spillage will be diluted quickly.
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	No.
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be implemented for the duration of the construction works in order to minimise any disruption to traffic flow on the road network at and surrounding the proposed development areas.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be implemented for the duration of the construction works in order to minimise any disruption to traffic flow on the road network at and surrounding the proposed development areas.
18. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes.	No The proposed development is concerned with the reconfiguration of a road and therefore there will be no structures of significant height and therefore will not be visible. The only above ground structures to be installed are new traffic lights, street lighting columns and benches.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. There are two protected structures listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) within the development boundary – inscribed mooring posts on Albert Quay and a limestone quay wall and timber wharf extension. Neither of these structures are listed under the List of Protected Structures in the <i>Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028</i> . The mooring posts will be

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No - Why
		carefully removed and stored during the construction phase and appropriately reinstated following completion of the works. The protected limestone quay wall/wharf in question has already been reconstructed in 1986 and therefore will not be affected in any way by the proposed development works.
20. Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	No.	No There will be no major change of land use within the red line boundary with the exception of a small area of disused land (172m ²) which will be required to construct a new residential access link between Rosefield Terrace (Rosehill) and Electric Terrace (Eastville). Small areas of a private residential gardens will also be acquired to facilitate the re-alignment of the Old Blackrock Road/Victoria Road Junction, 97.4m ² will be required at the residence on the western side of the Blackrock Road Junction while 30.1m ² and 13m ² will be required at two residences on the eastern side of the Blackrock Road Junction.
21. Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No. There are a number of facilities in close proximity to the proposed development including One Albert Quay, Navigation Square and a number of residential dwellings. Access to these facilities will be maintained during the construction phase. Air emissions will be generated during the construction phase however these will be minimal. The proposed development is already located in a built – up busy environment and therefore, noise emissions are not expected to be significant.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	No.
23. Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No There are a number of facilities in close proximity to the proposed development including One Albert Quay, Navigation Square and a number of residential dwellings. Access to these facilities will be maintained during the construction phase. Air emissions will be generated during the construction phase however these will be minimal.

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No - Why
		The proposed development is already located in a built – up busy environment and therefore, noise emissions are not expected to be significant.
24. Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No.
25. Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.	No The extent of the works on land are relatively small, excavations are not significant with a maximum depth of approximately 1,200mm required for the installation of storm drainage systems and a maximum of 100mm depth encountered when milling the road surface. Any construction run off will enter the existing surface water drainage system and will be diluted before entering the River Lee. During the regrading of the wharf there is potential for minor concrete spills to occur. However, due to the nature of the works, the limited potential for a significant spill and the extent of the River Lee and tidal flows, any minor spillage will be diluted quickly.
26. Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No.	No.
27. Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes	No The River Lee upstream of the proposed development area has been subject to flooding in the past. The proposed development is being protected to a flood height of 3.5m. The flood height will mitigate against current flood events and will be future proofed to allow the flood level to be raised to allow for climate change and rising sea levels in the future


SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT

The prescribed classes of development and thresholds that trigger a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended. A review of the project types listed in the aforementioned Schedule 5, as amended has been carried out.

The proposed development is a type set out in Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv) of Schedule 5 as described previously but it does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part. Therefore, it is a sub-threshold development and has been screened for EIA.

The information provided in this report and the EIA Screening Report prepared by Arup on behalf of Cork City Council provides details on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects (if any) on the environment. It also provides the relevant details under each of the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

Based on the information provided in this report, and the attached EIA Screening Report prepared by Arup on behalf of Cork City Council, it is determined that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required.

Name:	
Position:	Director of Services, Infrastructure Development on behalf of Cork City Council.
Date:	18/12/27