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PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SAFETY SCHEMES

EIA Screening Report - Batch 2a

Prepared for:

Cork City Council

Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this EIA Screening Report to Cork City Council for the proposed pedestrian crossing safety schemes across Cork City

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Fehily Timoney and Company (FT) have been commissioned by Cork City Council (CCC) to provide multi-disciplinary consultancy services, including the preparation of this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report, in relation to the design and delivery of a series of 6 no. specific active travel schemes across suburban and peri-urban locations within Cork City Council's administrative area.

The 6 no. schemes included within the scope of this report are as follows:

1. Grange Road at Tramore Valley Park
2. Lower Friars Walk at Loretto Park
3. Ballyhooly Road at Gordons Hill
4. Eglantine Park at Ardfallen Estate
5. Blackrock Road at Churchyard Lane
6. Blackrock Road at Barrington's Avenue

The schemes aim to enhance the safety, accessibility, and quality of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, with a particular emphasis on providing safe carriageway crossings for vulnerable road users. The overarching objective is to improve connectivity and encourage the uptake of active travel modes, especially for users commuting between residential neighbourhoods and nearby amenities such as schools, childcare facilities, local services, and recreational spaces.

The proposal involves minor-scale infrastructure improvements within the existing public road corridor, including the installation of raised zebra crossings, speed tables, and associated footpath and traffic calming works. This report considers the nature and scale of the works, the location and environmental sensitivity of each site, and the potential for cumulative impacts, in order to determine whether the proposed active travel schemes should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The assessment will be based upon the EPA (2022) Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR), in conjunction with other guidance documents as set out in Section 3.4 of this document.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Description of Scheme

The proposed Active Travel Schemes seek to enhance pedestrian safety, support increased active travel uptake and provide safer connections between residential areas and key local destinations such as schools, community centres, public transport links, and sports facilities. Each project involves targeted interventions within the existing public road corridor, including new pedestrian crossings, traffic calming measures, and upgrades to associated footpath infrastructure. A site-specific description for each location is provided below:

1. Grange Road at Tramore Valley Park

The proposed section of road is located on Grange Road (R851), at the access point to Tramore Valley Park and adjacent to the Church of the Incarnation. The proposal introduces pedestrian safety improvements through:

- Footpath reconstruction on both sides of the R851
- Installation of a signal-controlled Toucan crossing across Grange Road
- Upgraded road markings on the approach to the crossing

This scheme enhances accessibility and safe pedestrian movement between residential areas, green spaces, and community facilities.

2. Lower Friars Walk at Loretto Park

The proposed works are located along Lower Friars Walk, between the junctions with Tory Top Road and Loretto Park. The proposal introduces pedestrian safety enhancements through:

- Installation of a raised table with an integrated zebra crossing
- Upgraded road markings on approaches to the crossing

This scheme improves safety for pedestrians travelling between nearby residential areas and local facilities, encouraging safer crossing and reduced vehicle speeds.

3. Ballyhooly Road at Gordons Hill

The proposed site is located at the intersection of Ballyhooly Road and Gordons Hill, near to the Glen River Car Park. The scheme improves safety and connectivity for pedestrians through:

- Installation of a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Ballyhooly Road
- Addition of a raised table with integrated uncontrolled crossing on the approach to Ballyhooly Road
- Tightening of the junction from Gordons Hill to Ballyhooly Road
- Replacement of tactile paving and repair of footpaths to match existing gradients
- Provision of a new green area at the corner of the junction

These enhancements reduce crossing distances and vehicle speeds, while improving pedestrian access to local services and amenities.

4: Eglantine Park at Ardfallen Estate

The Preferred Option includes traffic calming and pedestrian safety enhancements in a school environment including:

- Installation of a raised table across the Eglantine Park / Ardfallen Estate junction
- Provision of pedestrian zebra crossings of Eglantine Park and Ardfallen Estate, located on the raised table
- Junction tightening of the Eglantine Park / Ardfallen Estate junction and footpath widening.
- Installation of bollards along the west side of Eglantine Park to prevent illegal parking.
- Installation of raised tables to slow traffic on Eglantine Park in advance of the Eglantine Park / Ardfallen Estate junction.

This scheme supports safer travel to and from school and enhances pedestrian facilities at the nearby junction.

5: Blackrock Road at Churchyard Lane

Located along Blackrock Road, between Ashcroft and Churchyard Lane, this scheme introduces targeted safety upgrades including:

- Construction of a speed table on Churchyard Lane to slow vehicles approaching the junction
- Installation of a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Blackrock Road immediately west of the Churchyard Lane intersection
- Widening of the footpath along Blackrock Road to improve accessibility

These measures provide safe and structured crossing points while reducing vehicle speeds and improving pedestrian access to local amenities, including a supermarket and bus stop.

6. Blackrock Road at Barrington's Avenue

The proposed intervention is located at the junction of Blackrock Road, Beaumont Avenue, and Barrington’s Avenue. The proposal introduces traffic calming and pedestrian improvements through:

- Provision of a raised table at the junction to reduce vehicle speeds on approach and through the junction
- Installation of uncontrolled pedestrian crossings on the raised table to facilitate safe crossing movements across Blackrock Road, Beaumont Avenue and Barrington's Avenue

This scheme enhances pedestrian safety and crossing opportunities in a busy junction near local amenities and residential areas.

2.2 Existing Arrangements

Across the proposed scheme locations, existing infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists is limited and, in many cases, inadequate to ensure safe, accessible, and comfortable movement. Each site presents specific challenges related to pedestrian safety, crossing provision, and overall connectivity, particularly in areas serving residential communities, educational facilities, parks, and local amenities.

Common issues identified across the sites include:

- Lack of formal pedestrian crossings, particularly along Lower Friars Walk, Blackrock Road, Ballyhooly Road and Eglantine Park, resulting in unsafe informal crossing behaviours.
- Wide junction layouts at Blackrock Road/Barrington's Avenue, Eglantine Park/Ardfallen Estate and Ballyhooly Road/Gordons Hill, facilitating high-speed vehicle movements and presenting difficulties for pedestrians.
- Inadequate or inconsistent footpath provision, particularly on Blackrock Road between Ashcroft and Churchyard Lane, where connectivity between residential areas is poor.
- Limited accessibility features such as dropped kerbs, tactile paving and protected crossings including at Blackrock Road (between Ashcroft & Churchyard Lane), Eglantine Park and Ballyhooly Road.
- Poorly defined pedestrian priority areas, especially near schools, parks, and public transport access points, such as at Grange Road (Tramore Valley Park).

Overall, existing conditions favour vehicular traffic over pedestrian safety and comfort, with insufficient measures in place to encourage active travel across the scheme locations.

2.3 Proposed Scheme

The Active Travel proposals consist of:

- **Raised zebra crossings** to provide safe, visible, and accessible pedestrian crossing points at key locations throughout the scheme.
- **Speed tables** to reduce vehicle speeds, particularly in areas close to schools, residential developments, and parks.
- **Uncontrolled pedestrian crossings with dropped kerbs and tactile paving** to facilitate safe and accessible crossing movements for all users, including those with mobility impairments.
- **Tightened kerb radii** at junctions to slow turning vehicles and enhance safety at crossing points.
- **New signalised pedestrian crossings** to improve safety at high-traffic locations such as university access points, bus stop zones, and primary community routes.
- **Bollards** at strategic locations to prevent illegal parking on footpaths.
- **New footpath extensions** to enhance connectivity between residential areas and key local amenities such as schools, childcare facilities, community centres, and recreational spaces.
- **Upgraded road markings and signage** to increase driver awareness of pedestrian activity and reinforce the presence of pedestrian priority measures.
- **Improved junction layouts and narrowed traffic lanes** to encourage reduced vehicle speeds and create safer, more pedestrian-friendly environments throughout the scheme locations.

These measures aim to improve safety, accessibility, and connectivity across the scheme locations, supporting a shift toward increased active travel and better integration of pedestrian infrastructure into the existing road network.

2.4 Compliance with Design Standards

The width of the footpaths was determined by reference to DMURS Section 4.3.1. The raised table crossings will align with best practices for pedestrian infrastructure and traffic calming. The design requires a desirable minimum footpath width of 1.8m, with widened sections where possible to accommodate higher pedestrian volumes.

All pedestrian crossings will feature tactile paving and appropriate signage to enhance visibility and accessibility. The raised table zebra crossings and speed tables have been designed to encourage drivers to approach cautiously, reducing vehicle speeds in areas of higher footfall.

Overall, the proposed improvements align with the project objectives of enhancing pedestrian safety and traffic management, particularly for school children and local residents.

2.5 Proposed Typical Cross Sections

The proposed Active Travel Schemes across the 6 no. sites in Cork City have been designed in accordance with the principles set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), particularly Section 4.3.1, which guides the dimensions and layout of pedestrian facilities to ensure safety, accessibility, and consistency.

At Lower Friars Walk, the works include a raised table with integrated zebra crossing connecting to existing footpaths on both sides of the road. At the junction of Blackrock Road and Barrington's Avenue, a raised table will be constructed across the junction with uncontrolled pedestrian crossings at each of the 4 approaches with appropriate tactile paving.

On Grange Road (R851) at the access to Tramore Valley Park, footpaths will be reconstructed on both sides of the road with an associated signal-controlled pedestrian crossing. At Ballyhooly Road and Gordons Hill, a signal-controlled crossing will be provided across Ballyhooly Road, supported by junction tightening works and a raised table uncontrolled crossings of Gordon's Hill to facilitate safe pedestrian movement.

At Eglantine Park, a new raised table will be constructed across the junction of Eglantine Park and Ardfallen Estate and the junction itself will be tightened in order to slow turning traffic. Two new zebra crossings will be provided on the raised table and new linemarking and signage will further improve safety at the junction. Two additional speed tables will be installed on Eglantine Park to slow traffic on approach to Scoil Bhride Eglantine. Along Blackrock Road between Ashcroft and Churchyard Lane, the proposals involve the installation of a raised uncontrolled crossing of Churchyard Lane and a new signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Blackrock Road, along with footpath widening to improve accessibility and safety.

All pedestrian crossings, whether raised or signal-controlled, will include tactile paving and appropriate signage. New footpaths, narrowed lanes, and tightened junction radii are integrated throughout the schemes to reduce vehicle speeds and enhance pedestrian priority, while new bollards will be installed at sensitive locations to visually reinforce pedestrian areas, particularly around schools and recreational facilities.

The design approach applied across all six sites prioritises pedestrian safety and active travel uptake, ensuring a consistent and high-quality urban environment in line with national guidance and Cork City Council's Active Travel objectives.

3. EIA LEGISLATION

3.1 EIA Legislative Background

The first test is to examine whether the project is a type that is prescribed in the EIA Directive, as transposed into Irish law via the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) ('the Regulations'). If a project is not of a type that is included in the Regulations, then there is no statutory requirement for it to be the subject of an EIA.

The European Union Directive 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, requires member states to ensure that a competent authority carries out an assessment of the environmental impacts of certain types of projects, as listed in the Directive, prior to development consent being given for the project.

The EIA Directive requires that:

> *"in order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures and EIA assessments should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including where relevant, its subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and, where relevant demolition phases."*

The requirements for the EIA of various types of development are transposed into Irish legislation under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), and the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

Schedule 5, Part 1 of the Planning Regulations includes a list of projects which are subject to EIA based on their type. Part 2 of the same schedule includes a list of projects which by reason of scale also fall into the EIA category, for example under Part 10 - Infrastructure Projects 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 fall into Part 2.

Schedule 5: Part 2 of the P&D Regulations includes a section relating to 'sub-threshold' (discretionary) EIA:

> *"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."*

Any project listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit (e.g. 10 hectares of a built-up area), should be subject to EIA where the project would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

3.2 Establishing if the proposal is 'Sub-threshold development'

We reviewed the proposed schemes against the infrastructure categories contained in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001. The only category listed under Part 10 'Infrastructure' of relevance to these schemes is set out below.

Category	Assessment
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.)*	The proposed sites identified as part of the Active Travel Scheme fall below the 10 hectares threshold relating to built-up areas. It is therefore concluded, that if one were to screen the proposals against the criteria set out in the 'Planning and Development (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2023', the entire project is well below the threshold identified and therefore does not require mandatory EIA.

Taking the above information into account, it is evident that the proposed Active Travel Schemes are significantly below the threshold for mandatory EIA, however these projects fall into the EIAR category for sub-threshold assessment pursuant to Part 15 of the Regulations, and therefore we have carried out a Schedule 7 Assessment on these developments.

3.3 Sub-threshold EIA Screening

The following criteria are laid down in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the purposes of assessing if a proposed development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. These criteria have been updated in accordance with Annex III of the 2014 Directive 2014/52/EU:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed scheme

The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:

a) the size and design of the whole project;
b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;
c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
d) the production of waste;
e) pollution and nuisances;
f) 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;
g) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location of the Proposed scheme

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:

a) the existing and approved land use,

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

c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:

i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;
iii) mountain and forest areas;
iv) nature reserves and parks;
v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;
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;
vii) densely populated areas;
viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

3. Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section171A of the Act, taking into account:

a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the affected population likely to be affected);

b) the nature of the impact;

c) the transboundary nature of the impact;

d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;

e) the probability of the impact;

f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;

g) 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, and;

h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

3.4 EIA Screening Guidelines

In order to assist the Competent Authority in their assessment, this report has been structured so as to present the information required under Schedule 7A against the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

This assessment was undertaken having regard to the following guidance:

- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR) (EPA, 2022);
- Guidance on EIA Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU), European Commission, 2017;
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development DEHLG (updated December 2020);
- Environmental Impact Assessment of National Road Schemes – A Practical Guide (NRA, 2008);
- Office of the Planning Regulator Practice Note (PN02) 'Environmental Impact Assessment Screening' (OPR, 2021); and
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009 (revised 2010).

3.5 Receiving Environment

Section 171A of the Planning and Development Act outlines the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed scheme, which must be considered in EIA. These are:

- population and human health;
- biodiversity and land;
- soil and water;
- air and climate;
- material assets; and
- cultural heritage and landscape.

A summary of each of the above topics as they relate to the receiving environment is provided below.

3.5.1 Population and Human Health

Each of the 6 no. sites seek to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility, especially near schools and residential areas. Key considerations include:

Grange Road at Tramore Valley Park

- Reconstructed footpaths on both sides of the road
- Installation of a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing
- Upgraded road markings

Lower Friars Walk at Loretto Park

- Installation of a raised table with integrated zebra crossing
- Upgraded road markings

Ballyhooly Road at Gordons Hill

- Signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Ballyhooly Road
- Uncontrolled crossing and raised table on Gordon's Hill
- Tightened junction geometry
- Tactile paving and footpath repairs
- Provision of a new green area at the junction corner

Eglantine Park at Ardfallen Estate

- Raised table across the junction to reduce vehicle speeds
- Installation of zebra crossings on Eglantine Park and Ardfallen Estate
- Tightened junction geometry and footpath widening
- Two new speed tables to reduce traffic approaching Scoil Bhride Eglantine

Blackrock Road at Churchyard Lane

- Raised uncontrolled pedestrian crossing on Churchyard Lane
- Signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Blackrock Road
- Footpath widening to improve accessibility

Blackrock Road at Barrington's Avenue

- Raised table across the junction to reduce vehicle speeds
- Installation of uncontrolled pedestrian crossings on all four crossing points

3.5.2 Biodiversity and Land

All of the proposed sites are located within existing road corridors in suburban Cork City. As such, existing ecological value is low in most cases, and works are restricted to previously developed or maintained public lands.

- No Natura 2000 sites are located in or adjacent to the project areas.
- No trees or habitats of high ecological value are affected at any of the six locations.

All the proposed schemes do not require any removal of vegetation.

3.5.3 Soil and Water

All six schemes involve minor surface interventions (e.g. kerbing, signage, path construction) with no major excavation or greenfield development. Most of the sites have moderate to high groundwater vulnerability.

No watercourses are located near any of the six locations. Construction methods will follow best practice guidance, including pollution prevention and erosion control measures where applicable, in line with CIRIA guidance. Impacts to soil and water are expected to be minimal and temporary.

3.5.4 Air and Climate

Construction of the proposed schemes may result in minor, short-term air quality impacts, primarily through dust generation and emissions from construction machinery. However, these impacts will be temporary and localised and will be effectively mitigated through standard environmental controls. In the long term, the schemes are expected to contribute positively to air quality and climate change by encouraging active travel and reducing dependency on private car use.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) operates several air quality monitoring stations in Cork City. Relevant stations include:

- South Link Road – Station 056, which monitors PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, NO_2, and ozone. The station has recorded consistently "Good" Air Quality Index for Health readings, with data available up to April 2024.
- University College Cork – Station 021, which also indicates a "Good" Air Quality Index for Health.
- Bishopstown MTU – Station 110, located southwest of the city, provides additional air quality data and supports the assessment of air conditions in the western suburbs of Cork City as recordings are shown to be "Good" in the Air Quality Index for Health readings.

All three stations confirm that air quality in the city remains within safe thresholds under the Air Quality Standards Regulations.

3.5.5 Material Assets

The schemes will improve and upgrade existing public infrastructure, there will be no significant new land acquisition required, apart from a minor area at Greenhills Estate. Relevant considerations include:

- All works are located on existing roads and footpaths within public lands.
- Underground services such as gas, water, electricity, telecoms, and sewerage are present and will be identified through utility surveys prior to construction.
- Any necessary adjustments to underground infrastructure will be coordinated with relevant utility providers to avoid service disruption.

3.5.6 Cultural Heritage

There are no significant direct impacts on cultural heritage assets anticipated as a result of the proposed Active Travel Schemes. All works are confined to the existing public road corridor and involve minor, surface-level interventions such as new crossings, kerbing, signage, and footpaths. No excavation near sensitive heritage features is proposed.

However, a total of 3 no. schemes are within proximity (within 100m) to NIAH-listed structures:

- **Grange Road at Tramore Valley Park:** Within 100 metres of Church of the Incarnation Roman Catholic Church (Reg. No. 20908621). The proposed footpath reconstruction and raised crossing occur across the road from the church and have no physical or visual impact on the protected structure.

- **Blackrock Road at Churchyard Lane:** Within 100 metres of several NIAH-listed villas and cottages. Proposed works—signalised crossings, footpath widening, and traffic calming—are minor and located within the existing roadway, posing no heritage risk. The heritage structures are set out below:
  - Homelea and Sunlea (Reg. No. 20867050)
  - Wilton (Reg. No. 20867049)
  - Madore (Reg. No. 20867048)
  - Bunclody (Reg. No. 20867047)
  - Dunowen (Reg. No. 20867046)
  - Willowgrove (Reg. No. 20867045)
  - Ivyville (Reg. No. 20867043)
  - Laurelville (Reg. No. 20867042)
  - Oakville (Reg. No. 20867041)
  - Gleann Lar and Greenways (Reg. No. 20867023)

- **Blackrock Road at Barrington's Avenue:** Within 100 metres of several NIAH-listed historic homes. The proposed scheme involves raised tables and pedestrian crossings entirely within the road corridor and does not interfere with the structures or their curtilage. The heritage structures are set out below:
  - Lisnalee (Reg. No. 20868004)
  - Ballintemple House (Reg. No. 20868119)
  - Munster House (Reg. No. 20868118)
  - Almaville (Reg. No. 20868117)
  - Culgreine (Reg. No. 20868116)
  - Moseley Villa (Reg. No. 20868115)
  - Lichfield Cottage (Reg. No. 20868114)
  - Rossmoyne (Reg. No. 20868008)
  - El Dorado / El Oro (Reg. Nos. 20868009)

In conclusion, no excavation or construction works will affect any of these structures, or their settings. All schemes are confined to the existing road corridor and pose no direct impacts to cultural or archaeological heritage.

4. ASSESSMENT AGAINST SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA

Having considered the above environmental factors, the aim of the next section is to address likely impacts on the environment by the implementation of the proposed scheme. A brief overview of the sensitivities and impacts are highlighted. Whether an EIA would be deemed relevant to the scale of the project and the environment is determined. The following sections present the EIA Screening based on the criteria contained in Schedule 7 of the P&D Regulations and are grouped under the following headings:

- Characteristics of the Proposed scheme -
- Table 4-1
- Location of the Proposed scheme -
- Table 4-2
- Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact - Table 4-3
- EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions – Table 4-4

Table 4-1: Characteristics of the Proposed Scheme

Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent):
The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (including any demolition works).	Each of the 6 no. schemes involves minor-scale interventions within existing road corridors. Measures include raised zebra and signal-controlled crossings, speed tables, footpath reconstruction, kerb tightening, tactile paving, new signage, lighting improvements, and visual cues like roadside bollards. No demolition is required, and each scheme applies to a short section of road in a suburban setting.
Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects:	While minor temporary construction works may overlap temporally with other local maintenance activities, the schemes are spatially separate and of such small scale that no cumulative effects are expected.
Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity: Will construction or the operation of the proposal use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	The scheme will involve minimal use of materials such as concrete, asphalt, tactile paving, and signage. All schemes are within existing hardscapes. No significant consumption of natural resources is anticipated.
Production of waste: Will the proposal produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?	Some construction-related waste (e.g. surfacing material, blockwork, packaging) will be generated but will be small in volume. Waste will be reused, recycled, or disposed of in accordance with authorised procedures and site-specific waste management plans.

Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent):
Pollution and nuisances: Will the proposal release pollutants to ground or surface water, or air (including noise and vibrations) or water, or lead to exceeding environmental standards set out in other Directives?	Temporary, localised nuisance is likely during the construction of the proposed schemes, which can be minimised and effectively managed through the implementation of standard environmental and construction best practice measures. These include dust suppression (e.g. dampening and road sweeping), the use of silt fences, noise reduction measures such as mufflers or acoustic barriers, and restrictions on working hours to limit disturbance to nearby residents and road users. Given that all works are confined to existing road corridors and do not involve greenfield development, interaction with natural soils and groundwater is unlikely. In most locations, groundwater vulnerability is moderate or high, and the risk of contamination can be mitigated through adherence to best practice guidance, including the CIRIA series on the 'Control of Water Pollution'. Drainage in all locations will tie into existing piped municipal drainage networks. Due to the small scale and urban context of each scheme, and the absence of nearby surface water features, there is no potential for direct interaction with surface waters. Any run-off during construction will be managed via existing infrastructure, with pollution risks minimised through effective site management and mitigation practices. No significant pollution or nuisance is expected during the operational phase of the schemes. While construction activities may result in short-term impacts such as dust and noise, these are temporary and manageable. In the long term, the proposed schemes will have a positive effect on the environment by enhancing pedestrian safety, promoting active travel, and contributing to reduced vehicle emissions.
Major accidents and disasters: In accordance with scientific knowledge, is there a risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?	There is significant industry experience in Ireland in the construction of roads schemes such that it is not considered likely that the construction or operational phases of the proposed scheme could be considered as presenting a significant accident risk. All of the proposed schemes are not located within lands identified as being at flood risk. Risks associated with climate change are not envisaged.
Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution:	No significant risks to human health are anticipated. Construction will follow pollution prevention protocols. In operation, schemes will enhance pedestrian safety and promote healthier travel behaviours, delivering long-term health benefits.

Table 4-2: Location of the Proposed Scheme

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development:	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):
The existing and approved land use	All proposed schemes are located within the suburban fabric of Cork City. The surrounding land use at each site is predominantly residential, interspersed with schools, parks, community facilities, and local retail units. Works are confined to existing public road and footpath corridors. No change in land use is proposed, and the schemes support enhanced access between residential areas and local amenities.
The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.	The works are confined to existing built-up areas. Natural resources such as soil and groundwater will not be significantly impacted as construction will primarily affect hard surfaces. Surface water features are not present in close proximity to any of the sites. Groundwater vulnerability ranges from moderate to high across the project area. While groundwater vulnerability is rated moderate to high in most areas, impacts are negligible and managed through best practice construction protocols. Potential impacts will be managed using best-practice construction methods (e.g. CIRIA guidelines).
The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment; (iii) mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and; (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 schemes are all located in developed suburban areas with no overlap with environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian zones, coastal or marine environments, or mountain and forest areas. No Natura 2000 or nationally designated nature conservation sites are located within or adjacent to the proposed works. The nearest European site (Cork Harbour SPA) is located more than 500m from any of the schemes and will not be affected. A total of 3 no. sites are located within 100m to NIAH-listed structures, however all works remain within the road corridor and do not affect the setting or fabric of any heritage assets. No sites lie within designated scenic views or protected landscapes.

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development:	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):
(vii) densely populated areas; (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	

For criteria 3 'Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact' the Regulations require that the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed scheme (in relation to criteria set out under 'Characteristics of the Proposed Development' and 'Location of the Proposed Development') are assessed for the environmental topics set out in section 171A of the Planning and Development Act (i.e. population and human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air and climate, material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape) taking into account—

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

(b) the nature of the impact,

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact,

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,

(e) the probability of the impact,

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,

(g) 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, and

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

Table 4-3: Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact

Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below. (including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
Population & Human Health	Minor, temporary disruption during construction may affect residents, school users, and local businesses due to noise, dust, and limited road/footpath access. In the long term, the schemes will significantly improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, promote active travel, and reduce vehicle reliance.	Construction activities will be limited to daytime hours, with dust suppression and traffic management measures in place. Signage and public notices will inform residents of works. Post-construction, the infrastructure will be maintained in line with road safety standards.	Temporary slight negative, Long-term positive.
Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive: *	All schemes are located within existing built-up areas and road corridors with low ecological value. No designated sites or sensitive habitats are located within or near the project boundaries.	Standard site management during works to avoid any accidental disturbance. No vegetation or habitat clearance is required	No significant effect.
Land, soil, water, air and climate	Minimal soil disturbance expected as works are confined to existing hard surfaces. No nearby watercourses. Slight potential for localised surface runoff or dust emissions during works. Groundwater vulnerability varies, but is generally low-moderate.	Implementation of best practice construction methods (e.g. CIRIA Control of Water Pollution guidance). Dust suppression and sediment control measures to be used. No major cut/fill expected.	No. Slight temporary effects during works; long-term benefit to environmental quality.

Criterion	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below. (including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
Air and climate	Minor, short-term emissions from machinery and potential for dust generation during construction. Long-term benefits include reduced car dependency, improved air quality, and lower emissions.	Dust suppression and equipment maintenance will reduce construction emissions. Promotion of active travel will help reduce traffic-related emissions over time and contribute to improved air quality.	No. Short-term impacts are manageable; long-term outcomes are positive for air quality and climate action.
Material assets, Cultural heritage and the landscape	Potential minor, short-term risk of disruption to buried services. No significant interaction with surface utilities or assets anticipated. A total of 3 no. NIAH-listed structures fall within 100m of the scheme, but all works are non-intrusive and within the road corridor.	Pre-construction utility detection surveys. No excavation near cultural heritage assets. Visual impacts will be negligible.	No. No significant effect on utilities, heritage, or visual landscape.
Cumulative Effects	Minimal potential for cumulative construction nuisance if multiple schemes are built simultaneously. However, each site is spatially separate and of minor scale.	Construction scheduling will be coordinated with Cork City Council to avoid overlap and minimise disruption.	No. Cumulative impacts are considered negligible.
Transboundary Effects	The schemes are all within Cork City and are not near national boundaries.	Not applicable.	No. There are no transboundary considerations.

Table 4-4: EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions

	EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
1	Will construction, operation, decommissioning, or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	All works are confined to existing roads and footpaths. No changes to land use or topography. No impacts on waterbodies.	No. Minor and temporary physical works within the road corridor or the small area of acquired land will not alter land use or local hydrology.
2	Will construction or the operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	Minor quantities of concrete, asphalt, signage, lighting, and energy for machinery use.	No. Use of resources is minimal and consistent with small-scale urban infrastructure works.
3	Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Only standard construction materials will be used.	No. There is no handling of hazardous substances.
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Minor construction waste (e.g. surfacing materials, blockwork, packaging).	No. Waste will be minimal and managed through licensed facilities.
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?	Minor dust and emissions may occur during construction.	No. Impacts are temporary, localised, and will be mitigated through best practice.

	EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Temporary construction-related noise and limited lighting installation.	No. Effects are localised and short-term. Mitigation will reduce impacts.
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?	Works are on hard surfaces with no excavation near watercourses.	No. Good construction practice will prevent runoff or contamination.
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project that could affect human health or the environment?	Standard safety procedures in place for road works.	No. Works are routine in nature and well managed.
9	Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Schemes will promote safer pedestrian access and support modal shift toward active travel.	Yes – positive. Encourages modal shift to walking and cycling.
10	Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Schemes are small and spatially dispersed. If built simultaneously, some short-term overlap in construction impacts could occur.	No. Cumulative effects are negligible due to scale and separation.
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?	All schemes are distant from Natura 2000 or sensitive sites.	No. No interaction with protected features.
12	Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g., wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the Project	All works are in urban settings on modified land.	No. No sensitive features nearby.

	EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
13	Are there any areas on or around the location that 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?	Urban locations with low ecological value.	No. No relevant habitat present.
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?	No watercourses are present at any scheme location.	No. No risk of impact on aquatic environments.
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?	None of the schemes are located in protected landscapes or scenic routes.	No. No landscape effects expected.
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?	Traffic associated with the construction of the proposal will utilise local roads, and temporary disruption to access is possible. The schemes at Tramore Valley Park and Eglantine Park will temporarily affect local access.	No. Long-term effect is positive – improved access and safety.
17	Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion, or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	Short-term traffic disruption during construction. Schemes aim to reduce congestion and improve pedestrian priority.	No. Positive contribution expected to transport and environment.
18	Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Schemes will be visible in public space but limited to existing infrastructure.	No. Works are minor and integrate with existing streetscape.

	EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
19	Are there any areas or features of closed or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	3 schemes are near NIAH-listed structures.	No. Works remain within road corridor and pose no direct or indirect impact on heritage features.
20	Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be a loss of greenfield land?	All works are within existing roads or paths.	No. Impact is negligible and involves previously modified land.
21	Are there existing land uses within 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 that could be affected by the Project?	Temporary construction disruption near residences and amenities.	No. Impacts are localised and well-managed. Long-term benefits expected.
22	Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	No known future land use plans will be affected.	No.
23	Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the Project?	All six sites are in suburban Cork.	No. Works will be scheduled and managed to reduce inconvenience.
24	Are there any areas within or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g., hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, that could be affected by the Project?	Several sites are adjacent to schools, churches, parks, or playgrounds.	No. Short-term construction will be managed; schemes will enhance safety near these facilities.

	EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist Questions	Yes/No/Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes/No/Why?
25	Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g., groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be Affected by the Project?	No forestry, fisheries, minerals, or water resources will be impacted.	No.
26	Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g., where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, that could be affected by the Project?	EPA data shows good air quality. No sensitive receptors.	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?	None of the sites lie in flood zones or geohazard areas.	No. No risk posed.

5. CONCLUSION

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report has considered the likely significant effects on the environment arising from the implementation of 6 no. Active Travel Schemes across suburban and peri-urban locations within Cork City. The assessment was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), having regard to Schedule 7 criteria and relevant guidance issued by the EPA and European Commission.

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 Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5). 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.

The proposed scheme involves targeted pedestrian and traffic calming enhancements including raised and signalised crossings, speed tables, footpath reconstructions, kerb tightening, tactile paving, signage improvements, and safety features such as bollards. These works are all located within the existing road corridor and do not involve greenfield development, land take, or significant alteration of the built environment. Each scheme is small in scale and confined to short sections of existing roadway. The nature and extent of the works are consistent with urban infrastructure upgrades that are routine in scale and impact. The schemes do not intersect with sensitive environmental receptors such as Natura 2000 sites, protected landscapes, or high-value habitats, and no significant use of natural resources, generation of waste, or risk of pollution is anticipated. Temporary impacts during construction—such as noise, dust, and traffic disruption—will be localised and short-lived, and can be effectively managed through standard environmental and construction best practices. Cumulatively, the schemes are spatially discrete and unlikely to result in significant combined environmental effects. No transboundary, long-term, or irreversible impacts are predicted. In contrast, the operational phase of the schemes is expected to deliver lasting positive benefits, including improved pedestrian safety, enhanced accessibility, and support for a modal shift toward sustainable and active travel modes.

In summary, no significant adverse impacts to the receiving environment are likely to arise from the proposed Active Travel Scheme. It is therefore submitted that sub-threshold EIA is not required for the project due to the project's limited impact on the receiving environment with respect to Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), Annex II of the EIA Directive and the screening checklist provided in the EC guidance document for EIA Screening, as set out in this document.

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