CORK CITY TO VIADUCT GREENWAY - TRAMORE ROAD TO EAGLE VALLEY (PHASE 1)

Report to Inform EIA Screening

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1 INTRODUCTION

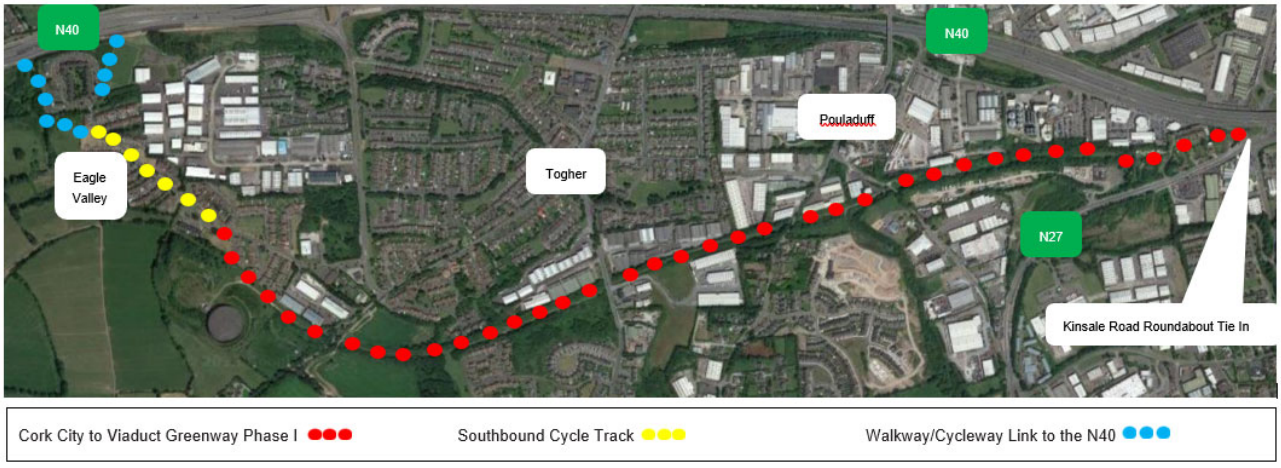
1.1 Overview of the Project

RPS has been appointed by Cork City Council as consultants for the development of the Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I from Eagle Valley to Tramore Road. Following an Options Assessment process, a preferred option emerged which now comprises the proposed development. This consists of a 2.9km long greenway along the section of the former West Cork Railway corridor between Chetwynd Reservoir and Kinsale Road Roundabout and an associated car parking area to the east of Forge Hill. Three short sections of new infrastructure for cyclists / pedestrians will provide links to the Greenway; two sections will connect to Eagle Valley from the N40 via a new cycle track within the housing development itself. The location of the greenway route is shown in **Figure 1-1** below. The drawings of the proposed development are available in **Appendix A**. The total site area for all associated works is 5.68ha.

The proposed development will be a recreational and active travel facility which will be an enhancement of a section of the former West Cork Railway corridor. RPS has been commissioned by Cork City Council to produce this Report to inform Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening. This report considers if the proposed development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) to be undertaken. It considers both mandatory EIAR requirements and the potential for a sub-threshold development EIAR being required.

The site location map is indicated in **Figure 1.1.**

Figure 1-1: Location of Proposed Greenway and Proposed Links



1.2 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to firstly ascertain whether or not there is a legal requirement to undertake a mandatory EIA for the proposed development. Secondly, this report will consider if non-mandatory (discretionary / sub-threshold) EIA is required. This will have regard to the type or class of development proposed, the likely effects of the proposed development on the environment and whether these are likely to be significant. Where the screening exercise determines that the development is likely to have significant effect(s) on the environment it will advise that an EIAR should be prepared. In the event that it determines that significant effect(s) on the environment are not likely, it will recommend that an EIAR is not necessary.

As a local authority project, the obligation to consider the need for EIA and to undertake EIA screening rests with Cork City Council. This report seeks to provide information and a recommendation to assist the local authority in this screening obligation.

This Report to Inform EIA Screening is set out as follows:

- Section 1 – Introduction;
- Section 2 – Screening for Mandatory EIA and Consideration of Need for Non-Mandatory EIA;
- Section 3 – Methodology for EIA Screening for (Sub-Threshold) Non-Mandatory EIA Development;
- Section 4 – EIA Screening Evaluation; and
- Section 5 – Conclusion

1.3 Statement of Authority

This Report to Inform EIA Screening has been prepared by an RPS Environmental Scientist who holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Earth Science and a Masters in Planning and Sustainable Development and has 8 years' experience of preparing EIA screening assessments for a range of small to large-scale projects, including road projects, mixed-use residential developments, renewable energy projects and various other infrastructural projects. The Report has been reviewed by an RPS Director - Planning & Environment who holds a Masters of Regional and Urban Planning and a Diploma in Environmental Impact Assessment Management with over 20 years' experience in EIA and extensive experience of urban development and infrastructure projects throughout Ireland, including various aspects of EIA.

2 SCREENING FOR MANDATORY EIA AND CONSIDERATION OF NEED FOR MANDATORY EIA

2.1 Relevant Legislation

The requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment of certain projects was originally set by the EU Directive (85/337/EEC) as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (known as the 'EIA Directive'). The Directive and amendments were codified and replaced by 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (and as amended in turn by Directive 2014/52/EU).

The EIA Directive requires that certain developments be assessed for likely environmental effects (commonly known as environmental impact assessment (EIA)) before consent can be granted. When submitting an application for consent for such a development, the applicant must also submit an Environmental Impact Assessment Report Statement (EIAR).

The EIA Directive was transposed into Irish legislation by reason of a number of statutory provisions. Having regard to several greenway developments in recent years, the majority were consented through the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended (the 'Planning and Development Act'). However, there are also examples of greenway developments being consented through the Roads Act, 1993 as amended (the 'Roads Act').

This section considers the EIA requirements as set out in both the Roads Act 1993 as amended and the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, and the regulations made under both.

2.2 Mandatory EIA Screening under the Roads Act 1993 as Amended

Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act requires a Road Authority to prepare an EIAR for any proposed road development consisting of (i) the construction of a motorway, (ii) the construction of a busway, (iii) construction of a service area and (iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.

Article 8 of the Roads Regulations identifies the prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of Section 50(1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act as follows:

> *(a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500m or more in length in an urban area;*
>
> *(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100m or more in length.*[1]

[1] The definition of roads development under the roads act is specific and can be differentiated from roads as described for the purposes of Section 179 of the Planning Act.

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Section 2(1) defines a 'public road' as a *"road over which a public right of way exists and the responsibility for the maintenance of which lies on a road authority*". It clarifies a 'road authority' as meaning a "local authority".

Section 68(1) defines a 'cycleway' as a "*public road or proposed public road reserved for the exclusive use of pedal cyclists or pedal cyclists and pedestrians*".

For the proposed development if it is interpreted that a 'cycleway' and 'greenway' are one and the same thing and are provided for in the definition of a public road with reference to Section 68(1) of the Roads Act. This interpretation is in line with the High Court Judicial Review Judgement ([2021] IEHC 459 (2021 No. 20 JR and No. 19 JR)[2]) of Justice Humphreys in respect of the South Kerry Greenway application.

The requirement for EIA should therefore be considered with reference to Section 50 of the Roads Act and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations.

In this regard, it is noted that the proposed development does not comprise:

(i) construction of a motorway,

(ii) construction of a busway,

(iii) construction of a service area,

(iv) a road development comprising 'four or more lanes', or

(v) 'construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length'

It is therefore concluded that mandatory EIA is not required under the Roads Act 1993 as amended and the Regulations made thereunder.

Section 50(1)(c) of the Roads Act expands the circumstances where EIA may be required (other than development to which Section 50(1)(a) applies) to include any proposed road development or the improvement of an existing public road which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This effectively introduces non-mandatory EIA Screening for any proposed road development. Section 4 of this report considers the likely and significant effects of the proposed development to inform a recommendation of whether or not non-mandatory EIA is required in this instance.

2.3 Mandatory EIA Screening under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as Amended

Section 175 of the Planning and Development Act provides that where a local authority, whether in its capacity as a planning authority or any other capacity, proposes to carry out development belonging to a class of development identified for the purposes of Section 176 of the Planning Act, it shall prepare an EIAR, and the development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved the development with or without modifications. The Board must carry out the EIA.

[2] Judgments | The Courts Service of Ireland accessed on https://www.courts.ie/view/judgments/22621800-1d0b-4bf7-b626-67761f4cff4e/3c7e01a1-138d-41a3-bfb8-a595f293de41/2021_IEHC_459.pdf/pdf

The prescribed classes of development for the purposes of section 176 of the Planning and Development Act, are provided in Schedule 5, Part 1 and Part 2 of the Planning Regulations.

A greenway or cycleway is not a class of project specifically prescribed in Schedule 5, Part 1. Neither is a greenway or cycleway a class of project specifically identified in Schedule 5, Part 2. The nearest class is Item 10(dd): "*All private roads which would exceed 2000 metres in length*". However, the subject greenway is not a private road.

The proposed development could potentially be considered to fall within a class of project set out in Schedule 5, Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv): 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*.

There is no definition of urban development in the Planning and Development Act or Regulations or the EIA Directive. The Commission has published some guidance on 'Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive[3]. It notes that the while the Directive provides two examples of what could be considered to fall within the 'urban development' category, i.e., shopping centres and car parks, this is not an exhaustive list of activities covered. The Guidance notes that information on existing practices in Member States shows that interpretations differ regarding the scope of this project category, although Member States have in most cases interpreted this category in a broad sense and indeed advises that in interpreting the scope of this project type the 'wide scope and broad purpose' of the EIA Directive should be borne in mind. Having also had regard to relevant European case law the Guidance document advises,

"To this end, the interpretation of this project category could take account of, inter alia, the following:

(i) Projects with similar characteristics to car parks and shopping centres could be considered to fall under Annex II (10)(b). This could be the case, for example, of bus garages or train depots, which are not explicitly mentioned in the EIA Directive, but have similar characteristics to car parks.

(ii) Construction projects such as housing developments, hospitals, universities, sports stadiums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls and other cultural centres could also be assumed to fall within this category. The underlying principle is that all these project categories are of an urban nature and that they may cause similar types of environmental impact.

(iii) Projects to which the terms 'urban' and 'infrastructure' can relate, such as the construction of sewerage and water supply networks, could also be included in this category

Projects for integrated urban transport schemes (e.g., parallel works at different locations to upgrade bus lanes, tramlines, bus, tram and/or metro stops), could also fall under this project category".

It is considered that the terms 'urban' and 'infrastructure' can reasonably apply to the proposed greenway which runs within an urban area and its function is to serve the commuters and recreational users of the urban areas. Upgrading pedestrian and cycle facilities within the city is also part of the wider objectives of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Scheme. Having regard to all of the foregoing then it is considered

[3] European Commission (2015) Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive.

reasonable that the proposed development would fall within the 'Urban Development' class of project under Schedule 5, Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv).

It is also noted that Cork City Council also concluded similarly in a recent Screening Statement for another greenway project within the City, which identified the project as falling within the class of 'Urban Development' as set out in Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv) of Schedule 5 though not reaching the relevant threshold.

In considering the appropriate threshold of Schedule 5, Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv) to apply to the proposed development, it is noted that the Cork City to Viaduct Phase 1 project is fully within an urban area but is not within a business district. The appropriate threshold to consider then is 10 hectares which applies to other parts of a built-up area outside of the business district.

The site area of the proposed development within which all works will be contained is approximately 5.68ha. Therefore, the proposed development does not require a mandatory EIA.

Section 120(1) of the Planning Regulations advises that where a local authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, it shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size, or location of the development. Section 4 of this report sets out detail on the nature, size and location of the development and considers the likely and significant effects of the proposed development to inform a recommendation of whether or not sub-threshold EIAR is required in this instance.

3 METHODOLOGY FOR EIA SCREENING FOR SUB-THRESHOLD / NON-MANDATORY EIA DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Legislative Basis for Screening Approach

This Screening Report provides an assessment of whether the proposed development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment by addressing the criteria and information set out in Annex III and IIA of the EIA Directive and Schedules 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The information set out in Schedule 7A is equivalent to the information specified in Annex II.A of the EIA Directive.

The Criteria as set out in Schedule 7 are grouped under three headings as follows which are comparable with the criteria set out in Annex III of the EIA Directive:

1. Characteristics of the proposed development;
2. Location of the proposed development; and
3. Characteristics of potential impacts.

The criteria under each of these headings as provided for in the Planning and Development Act and Annex III of the EIA Directive are set out in **Table 3-1** below. The characteristics and location of the proposed development are described in **Sections 4.1** and **4.2** of **Chapter 4** respectively. The characteristics of the potential impacts are considered and presented under **Section 4.3** of **Chapter 4**.

Table 3-1: Criteria for Determining Whether Development Listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment

Characteristics of the Proposed development
The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to: (a) the size and design of the whole proposed development; (b) 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; (c) the nature of any associated demolition works; (d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity; (e) the production of waste; (f) pollution and nuisances; (g) 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; (h) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).
Location of the Proposed development
The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, 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 national legislation, Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directives 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC, (vi) areas in which there has been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation 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.
Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts
The likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in points 1 and 2 of this Annex, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), 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

In the interest of comprehensively examining the Proposed development, this Report to Inform EIA Screening considers the Proposed development against the criteria set in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended and Annex IIA of the EIA Directive:

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."*

3.2 Relevant Guidance Documents

3.2.1 Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2018)

In August 2018, the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government (now Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) published *'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on Carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment'*. These guidelines address key areas introduced by Directive 2014/52/EU including procedures for screening and the introduction of new information

requirements to be provided by the developer (Annex IIA) (Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended)) and revised selection criteria to be used by the competent authority in making a determination (Annex III of Directive) (Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

3.2.2 Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statement – (EPA, 2022)

In May 2022, the EPA published '*Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements*'.

The stated primary objective of the guidelines is to improve "*the quality of EIARs with a view to facilitating compliance (with the Directive). By doing so they contribute to a high level of protection for the environment through better informed decision-making processes*". According to the guidelines the start of the EIA process involves making a decision about whether an EIAR needs to be prepared or not. The guidelines note that the decision-making process begins by examining the regulations and if this does not provide a clear answer then the nature and extent of the project, the site and the types of potential effects are examined.

3.2.3 Other Guidance

This screening assessment was also undertaken with regard to the following guidance:

- European Commission (June 2001), *'Guidance on EIA Screening'*;
- EPA (2003), *'Advice Notes on Current Practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements'*;
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003), *'EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development'*; and
- EPA (September 2015), *'Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements'*, Draft.

3.3 Screening Methodology

Based on the legislative basis and guidance documentation set out in **Sections 3.1** and **3.2** the proposed approach for undertaking this screening assessment is to present information on the proposed development, the location of the development and the type and characteristics of potential environmental impacts of the development with reference to the three headings of Annex III. In presenting this information, we have also had regard to the closely aligned assessment criteria of Annex II A of the Directive.

The 'Characteristics of the Development' identifies the key characteristics of the proposal with reference to its nature, scale and design, its construction requirements and approach, decommissioning and operational aspects of the development, including use of resources, production of wastes and emissions and risks of accidents. We also identify as relevant potential for cumulation of the Proposed development with other existing and / or approved projects.

The 'Location of the Proposed Development' will identify any environmental sensitivities and characteristics of importance within the site and surrounding area potentially affected by the project.

Setting out the characteristics of the development (potential impact sources) and identifying sensitivities within the development site and surrounds (potential impact receptors) in turn allows potential impacts of the development and their likely consequent effects on the environment to be identified. The main potential impacts are listed and described with reference to the impact criteria listed in Annex III of the directive. Categorising the potential impacts with regard to these criteria allows for the identification of potential effects on the environment which are likely to be significant.

Where likely significant effects on the environment are identified, the EIA screening process will determine that an EIA of the project is required. Where no likely significant effects on the environment are identified through this screening process, a determination that an EIA is not required will be made.

3.4 Information to Inform the EIA Screening

3.4.1 Baseline Desktop Environmental Information

Baseline information to describe various environmental conditions of the location of the development is drawn primarily from desk studies and supplemented by site visits. The desk study component of the EIA Screening has drawn information from the following sources:

- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage EIA Portal;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) online interactive mapping tools (https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps) and (https://www.catchments.ie/maps/) for water quality data including surface and ground water quality status, and river catchment boundaries;
- Geohive online Environmental Sensitivity Mapping tool (https://airomaps.geohive.ie/ESM);
- Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) Public Data Viewer (https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/Pages/default.aspx)
- Health Safety Authority (HSA) – List of Notified Seveso Establishments;
- Cork City Council – planning search function and general planning homepage (https://planning.corkcity.ie/);
- Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028;
- Mapping of European Site boundaries and Conservation Objectives, available online from the NPWS (https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites);
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH); and
- National Monument Service – Historic Environment Viewer (Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) (https://www.archaeology.ie/).
- RPS (2022), *Cork City to Viaduct Greenway – Tramore Road to Eagle Valley (Phase 1) – Preliminary Appraisal*;
- RPS (2022), *Cork City to Viaduct Greenway – Tramore Road to Eagle Valley (Phase 1) – Detailed Appraisal.*

An EIA site walkover was undertaken by a Project Scientist of RPS, in 2022 in order to inform this report. An ecological site walkover and invasive species site survey was undertaken by a Senior Ecologist, in order to inform the biodiversity aspects of this report specifically.

3.4.2 Supporting Documentation and Assessments

This Report has also been informed by the following sources of information and assessments:

3.4.2.1 Scheme Drawings

The nature and extent of the Proposed development is presented on drawings (in **Appendix A**) prepared by RPS which have informed the screening exercise. These comprise:

Drawing No.	Drawing Name	Scale
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-IX0003-01	Index Sheet	n/a
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001-01	Location Map (Sheet 1 of 2)	1:7500 @A1 Half @A3
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001-02	Proposed Greenway Scheme – Key Plan	n/a
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008-01	Site Location & Proposed Greenway Scheme (Sheet 1 of 2)	1:1000 @A1 Half @3
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008-02	Site Location & Proposed Greenway Scheme (Sheet 2 of 2)	1:1000 @A1 Half@A3

Drawing No.	Drawing Name	Scale
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0009-01	Site Location & Proposed Walkway-Cycleway Links to N40	1:1000 @A1 Half @A3
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-LA0001-01	Landscape Design (Sheet 1 of 3)	1:1000 @A1 Half @A3
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-LA0001-02	Landscape Design (Sheet 2 of 3)	1:1000 @A1 Half @A3
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-LA0001-03	Landscape Design (Sheet 3 of 3)	1:500 @A1 Half @A3

3.4.2.2 Report to Inform AA Screening

A Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening (Greenleaf Ecology, 2023) has been prepared to determine whether, in view of best scientific knowledge and applying the precautionary principle, the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).

The Report to Inform AA Screening concludes that there is not potential for Likely Significant Effects upon European Sites and therefore Appropriate Assessment of the Proposed development is not necessary.

3.4.2.3 Conservation Report

A Conservation Report by JCA Architects was undertaken to identify structures of architectural heritage value within and adjacent to the Proposed development and to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on same.

This report concludes that the proposed greenway will have a beneficial impact on the historic route of the former Cork, Bandon and South Coast railway line, which will continue to be legible with recognition of its character as a former rail route maintained. The Greenway would also maintain the route for the possible reintroduction of a rail line in the future should the demand arise. The proposed repair works to the bridges along the route is also a positive aspect of the Greenway works.

3.4.2.4 St. Bartholomew's Holy Well (C0086-006 – Archaeological Impact Assessment

There is a holy well feature (St. Bartholomew's Holy Well) within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development which is listed on the Sites and Monuments Record. John Cronin & Associates prepared an Archaeological Impact Assessment report to consider the potential impacts of the proposed development on this feature. The report notes that the Archaeological Survey of Ireland inventory description of St. Bartholomew's Well (CO086-006----) records that it was destroyed during the construction of the Cork-Bandon railway in the middle of the 19th century. In addition, no surface traces of the well or any potential associated features, were observed during the site inspection of the area. The report concluded that the proposed greenway project will not result in any predicted impacts on the holy well, but this will need to be confirmed by archaeological supervision of vegetation clearance works within the environs of its recorded location.

4 EIA SCREENING EVALUATION

This section provides information on the proposed development for EIA Screening purposes, provides information to address the requirements of Schedule 7A and considers the criteria in Schedule 7 of the EIA Regulations. The information contained within this section provides for an assessment on whether there are any likely significant impacts arising from the proposed development which would trigger the requirement for an EIA. The assessment has considered the proposed development individually and cumulatively with other projects.

As outlined in Chapter 3 above, the criteria as set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended for determining whether a project should be subject to EIA, are grouped under three headings. We address these headings as follows:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development (**Section 4.1**);
2. Location of the Proposed Development (**Section 4.2**); and
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts (**Section 4.3**).

4.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The EPA Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022) describe the information to be considered under this heading as:

> *'the site location, the size, design and appearance of the proposed project, the cumulation with other proposed projects, the use of natural resources, the production of waste, emissions and nuisances and a description of the risk of accidents – having regard to substances or technologies used'*.

4.1.1 Scale, Size and Design of the Whole of the Proposed Development

4.1.1.1 Overall Scheme

The proposed development consists of a 2.9km long greenway along the section of the former West Cork Railway corridor between Chetwynd Reservoir and Kinsale Road Roundabout and an associated car parking area to the east of Forge Hill. The route of the former railway corridor is largely unoccupied and free of development. There is a Travellers caravan site and yard located on the former railway alignment at Hazelwood Grove to the west of the houses. Parts of the route are currently accessible to the public and have footpaths and tracks of various types and standards. Other areas are overgrown and inaccessible with thick vegetation of briars, gorse and scrub restricting access to some sections, in particular the bridges and the site of a former Travellers' accommodation development at Forge Hill.

The greenway route and car park location are as shown in the drawings in **Appendix A**. The total site area for all associated works is 5.68ha.

The proposed greenway crosses a number of roads as it travels from west to east; Spur Hill, Togher Road (L-2454), Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) and Forge Hill. It crosses under the public road at three of these locations (Spur Hill. Lehenaghmore and Forge Hill) with the roads carried on stone bridges originally constructed to facilitate the roads crossing over the railway line. At Togher Road (L-2454) the greenway will cross at grade via a toucan crossing.

Links to the greenway are also proposed from the existing cycleway/walkway at the edge of the N40 national road, these are located primarily on a disused former residential access road, a track around a former soccer pitch, and along roads and through public open space associated with established residential developments. These links total less than 1km of infrastructure.

The main elements of the proposed greenway development are described in general below. These elements are described in more detail in **section 4.1.2** as they apply to different sections of the greenway.

4.1.1.2 Greenway

The proposed 2.9km greenway will have a width of 4m and a paved surface comprising circa 30mm surface course on a circa 50mm binder course which will be laid on circa 150mm subbase.

4.1.1.3 Car Park

A car park is proposed adjacent to the greenway accessed from Forge Hill. This will accommodate 50 No. parking spaces; bicycle storage and bike stands.

The car park will be circa 2,300m^2 in area and will comprise of a 40mm paved surface course, on a circa 90mm binder course which will be laid on a minimum 150mm subbase. The construction of the new car park will comprise of circa 346m^2 of unbound stone, 207m^3 of base/binder course and 92m^3 of surface course.

4.1.1.4 Links to Greenway

There are three proposed sections of works which are proposed to facilitate links to the Greenway route from existing facilities that are included as part of the proposed development. These include the main spine road within the Eagle Valley housing development where a new cycle track will be provided (shown in yellow on **Figure 1-1**), and two connecting spurs to the N40 from this cycleway which are to be located on lands comprising predominantly of undeveloped lands and land ancillary to established residential developments (shown in blue on **Figure 1-1**).

Link from the N40 to Eagle Valley via Undeveloped Land

It is proposed to provide a 4m wide combined walkway/cycleway over c.305m between the N40 (an existing walkway/cycleway at the edge of the carriageway) and the spine road in Eagle Valley,-via undeveloped lands including along a former residential access road to the derelict Garrane house. The first 170m of this walkway/cycleway from the N40 walkway /cycleway uses this former access road, which comprises elements of disused pavement surfacing and unbound stone material. There are existing mature trees running alongside this access road and heavy/thick vegetation consisting mostly of briars and gorse that overhangs sections of this existing access road. The horizontal alignment of the walkway/cycleway will be curved over the first 50m but will be straight for the next 120m. Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting and to tie into the existing tree lined environment.

The proposed walkway/cycleway then turns sharply to the east of the former residential access and crosses over an open field drainage channel by way of simple single span bridge and crosses an open field towards Eagle Valley. There are associated landscaping works proposed within this open field immediately adjoining the walkway/cycleway so that it can be both physically accommodated at an appropriate gradient as well as visually absorbed into this area. Once within Eagle Valley it will cross an open space area, to the south of No. 271A Eagle Valley and connect to a proposed new cycle track on the opposite side of the spine road, via a raised table crossing. Appropriate levels of landscape screening will be provided adjacent to the properties. Land take of 2,939sqm will be necessary to facilitate the proposed link.

Link from the N40 to Eagle Valley Via Garrane Darra

It is proposed to provide a 4m wide combined walkway/cycleway over c.158m between the N40 (the existing walkway/cycleway at the edge of the carriageway) and the Garrane Darra Residential complex, via an existing gravel walkway along the edge of a disused football field. There are mature trees along the western side of the walkway and there will be a requirement to remove a section of the existing fence to complete the link to the N40. There will be a requirement to reprofile the ground levels in the vicinity of the tie in with the N40 walkway/cycleway to accommodate the new walkway/cycleway. Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting and it will tie into the existing tree lined environment. Land take of 1,765sqm will be required to facilitate this link.

Works along the Eagle Valley Spine Road

It is proposed to resurface c.451m of the spine road within Eagle Valley and provide new traffic lane markings and signage to accommodate a new cycle track on the northern side of the road. The new road markings will indicate two traffic lanes of minimum 3.0m wide and a min 1.5m wide segregated southbound cycle track. A raised table crossing will be provided at the southern extent of the cycle track to safely connect the on-road cycle track to the main Greenway from Eagle Valley to Kinsale Road Roundabout which commences at the existing green open space area on the opposite side of the road.

4.1.1.5 Lighting

New public lighting will be provided along the greenway and the two links from the N40; there is existing lighting along the Eagle Valley spine road. The new lantern fittings will adopt an advanced intelligent light control system which will have automatic dimming and sensor control which will allow increased illumination when pedestrian and cyclists go past but they will dim accordingly when there are no users on the greenway.

4.1.1.6 Vegetation Removal

There will be a requirement to clear circa 22,000m^2 of vegetation (shrubbery and gorse) across the extent of the proposed development.

4.1.1.7 Landscaping and Biodiversity

A significant part of the works will be the landscaping and development of focal points and open spaces along the scheme to provide enhanced recreational and community value in line with the recommendations stated in the Greenway and Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines.

The core environmental aim of the proposed greenway is *"To ensure the Greenway functions as a biodiversity/wildlife corridor and to enhance the ecological, environmental, cultural and built heritage resources of the route."* Landscaping will seek to achieve an improved public realm while maintaining and protecting existing biodiversity features and identify areas which would benefit from enhancement.

Landscaping is proposed along the route. The general strategy for landscaping is to minimise removal of existing vegetation along the route and to provide new planting alongside the greenway to tie-in with the existing surrounding vegetation. There are a number of areas along the route where more extensive landscaping is appropriate to create enhanced amenity areas and / or as mitigation.

4.1.1.8 Earthworks

Table 4-1 sets out the approximate earthwork volumes required for the greenway track works. The final volumes will be subject to detailed design.

Table 4-1: Approximate Earthworks Volumes Required for the Greenway Track Works

Section	Material to be Excavated	Material to be Reused Onsite	Material to be Removed Offsite
Kinsale Road Roundabout to Forge Hill	1,200m^3	50m^3	1,150m^3
Forge Hill to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455)	650m^3	20m^3	630m^3
Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) to Togher Road (L-2454)	650m^3	30m	620m^3
Togher Road (L-2454) to Spur Hill	640m^3	50m^3	590m^3
Spur Hill to Eagle Valley	460m^3	60m^3	390m^3
Total	**3600m^3**	**210m^3**	**3380m^3**

Additional earthworks will be required to remove a number of existing earth mounds blocking movement below bridges. There will also be some modest earthworks required for landscaping.

4.1.1.9 Signage and Markings

It is planned that there will be a detailed signage and markings strategy drawn up for the proposed Greenway to include:

- Guidance on Greenway etiquette
- Wayfinding information
- Information on the biodiversity of the area
- Heritage information
- Anti-litter notices

General signage identifying the walkways/cycleways will be provided for each of the two links from the N40.

4.1.1.10 Drainage

The proposed drainage will be over the edge drainage, where the design level crossfall will result in all surface water running off into the adjacent verges. There will a gully and carrier pipe drainage at the new car park to the east of Forge Hill. Surface water run-off from the new car park will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharge to the existing surface water network at Forge Hill.

4.1.1.11 Other Measures

Other ancillary elements of the development include:

- Realigned boundary walls.
- Seating and viewing point areas.
- Relocation of two ESB overground poles and wires.
- Any potential future SI works.
- Removal and treatment of isolated areas of Japanese knotweed and other invasive species.
- A single line of demountable bollards and yield markings will be provided at the access points at Kinsale Road Roundabout, Hazelwood Grove, Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455), Togher Road (L-2454) and Eagle Valley.

4.1.2 Route Sections of Proposed Greenway

For the purpose of describing the proposed development in more site-specific detail, it is split into five sections between road crossings or links:

- Eagle Valley to Spur Hill
- Spur Hill to Togher Road (L-2454)
- Togher Road (L-2454) to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455)
- Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) to Forge Hill
- Forge Hill to Kinsale Road Roundabout

4.1.2.1 Eagle Valley to Spur Hill

The greenway commences within an open space area of Eagle Valley adjacent to the main spine road and to the cul-de-sac which accommodates house numbers 43 – 54. The greenway will form a junction with the main spine road and associated footpaths, thereby providing direct access for cyclists and pedestrians. From here the greenway travels south through part of the current open space area to enter the adjoining Irish Water Chetwynd reservoir site. There are associated site development and landscaping works proposed within the open space immediately adjoining the greenway so that it can be both physically accommodated at an appropriate gradient as well as visually absorbed into this area.

Within the reservoir site the greenway will pass under electricity overhead lines, traverse an area of open space and cross over an existing 4m wide concrete access road serving the Chetwynd reservoir. The greenway will run eastwards parallel with, and on the southern side of, the access road towards Spur Hill. Before Spur Hill the greenway will deviate from the access road. The greenway continues eastwards to cross under the Spur Hill railway bridge. The reservoir access road will continue to join with Spur Hill approximately 40m to the north at its current location. No structural works are required at the bridge, but the stonework will be cleaned and repaired.

To accommodate the section of greenway and the access road running parallel, it is necessary to move the access road approximately 1.7m northwards for a distance of circa 300m.

In order to maintain security within the reservoir site it is necessary to control public access from the greenway. This requires 2m high palisade fencing to be introduced. For most of the route within the

reservoir site the fence is required on the southern side of the greenway only, with open access to the access road on its northern side. At the western part of the greenway within the reservoir site the fence is necessary on both sides of greenway separating it from the access road and the various reservoir infrastructure. To facilitate this security arrangement the existing gate to the reservoir at Spur Hill will be removed and a new gate introduced where the fencing on both sides of the greenway commences. In addition, there will be gates provided on either side of the greenway where it crosses the access road. There will be a need to clear circa 600m^2 of shrubbery and gorse within the Chetwynd Reservoir site.

At Eagle Valley, the greenway will be set within an area of new landscaping. Landscaping will be limited within the Chetwynd Reservoir site due to space limitations.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 460m^3 of earth for the construction of the track but approximately 60m^3 of this material will be reused for fill material. This leaves a net volume of circa 390m^3 that will need to be transported off site.

The realignment of the access road northwards will require the construction of approx. 510m^2. of concrete road.

A large mound of earth is located underneath Spur Hill Bridge, as shown in **Image 4-1**, with vegetation also growing at the eastern entrance to the bridge. On the western side of the bridge the mound of earth extends out from the bridge as shown in **Image 4-2**. The removal of this earth mound will be necessary.

This bridge is not currently accessible to the public due to the gated access to Chetwynd reservoir.

Image 4-1: Spur Hill Bridge from the East

Image 4-2: Spur Hill Bridge and mound from the West

4.1.2.2 Spur Hill to Togher Road (L-2454)

After crossing under Spur Hill bridge the proposed greenway will continue eastwards along the route of the former railway line to Togher Road (L-2454) which it will meet at grade. The part of the route is currently largely overgrown with an existing dirt track. There is heavy/thick vegetation consisting mostly of briars and gorse on both sides of an existing track as shown in **Image 4-3**. There will therefore be a need for clearance of gorse and scrub.

The horizontal alignment initially from Spur Hill heading east will have a prolonged curve until it reaches the point with Fernwood Crescent to the south. The remainder of the section up to Togher Road (L-2454) being straight.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting and it will tie into the existing shrubbery/vegetation and open space areas to the northwest of Fernwood Crescent. The greenway will run to the north of Fernwood Crescent but at a lower level with a tree lined boundary and this should result in no impact on vista views northwards from properties backing onto the greenway. The greenway will pass immediately adjacent to a public open space area of Fernwood Crescent from which access onto to the greenway will be possible.

The terrain from Spur Hill to Togher Road (L-2454) is uneven and undulating, with steep localized slopes as shown in **Image 4-4**. This will require reprofiling along a significant proportion of this section of the greenway to get an adequate standard of longitudinal profile for the proposed greenway.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 640m^3 of earth for the construction of the track but 50m^3 of this material will be reused for fill material for reprofiling the embankments. This leaves a net volume of circa 590m^3 that will need to be transported off site.

Image 4-3: Heavy Vegetation on the sides of track

Image 4-4: Undulation

4.1.2.3 Togher Road (L-2454) to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455)

The greenway will cross Togher Road (L-2454) via a new toucan crossing, which will have all necessary associated warning signage, lining and traffic lights.

From Togher Road (L-2454) to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) the proposed greenway works will comprise the replacement and widening of an existing substandard paved walkway. The horizontal alignment of this section of the greenway will be predominately straight.

The greenway will cross beneath Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) bridge. This bridge will not be altered but the stonework will be cleaned and repaired. A 3m pedestrian and cyclists' access path will be provided to the western side of Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) on the southern side of the greenway. This access path is already approved and will be provided as part of the approved Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) Improvement Scheme by Cork City Council.

Generally, there will be 0.75m to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting provided that will integrate with existing shrubbery/vegetation on the edges of the former railway corridor. Proposed planting will be limited initially after Togher Road (L-2454) due to the presence of steep embankments on the northern side of the greenway and a boundary wall and fencing to the Westgate Business Park on the southern side of the greenway.

A large mound of earth is located underneath the Lehenaghmore Road Bridge, as shown in Image 4-3, with 0.7m clearance between the top of the mound and the bottom of the bridge, which will require removal. On the eastern side of the bridge there is a 1.5m T.M post outlining that the watermain is travelling under the bridge as shown in **Image 4-4**.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 650m^3 of earth for the construction of the track but 30m^3 of this material will be reused for fill material for reprofiling the embankments. This leaves a net volume of circa 620m^3 that will need to be transported off site.

There will be a requirement to deconstruct a small area of existing wall / pillars and 1m high fencing to the south side of the entrance to the Westgate Business Park and reconstruct the pillar to the south of the new greenway.

Image 4-5: Earth mound blocking the corridor

Image 4-6: Watermain going under the bridge

4.1.2.4 Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) to Forge Hill

From Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) the greenway runs eastwards to Forge Hill where it will pass under the railway bridge and road. A 3m pedestrian and cyclists' access path will be provided to the eastern side of Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) on the southern side of the greenway. As with the access path on the western side of Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455), this is already approved and will be provided as part of the approved Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) Improvement Scheme by Cork City Council.

At the western half of this section of the route the greenway will replace a dirt track. At the eastern part from Farm Lawn housing estate, the greenway will be accommodated along the route of an existing paved service access road. The existing service access road provides gated / fenced access to Farm Lane. This access will remain gated.

The Forge Hill bridge will not be altered but the stonework will be cleaned and repaired. No pedestrian or cycle access is proposed from Forge Hill.

The horizontal alignment will be predominately straight except for two slight curves in the alignment to the west of the Forge Hill railway bridge.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting, which will tie in with the existing trees and shrubbery on the periphery of the former West Cork Railway corridor.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 650m^3 of earth for the construction of the track but circa 20m^3 of this material will be reused for fill material for reprofiling the embankments. This leaves a net volume of circa 630m^3 that will need to be transported off site.

Thick vegetation, consisting mainly of briars and gorse, restricts access to the Forge Hill Bridge and disconnects the existing corridor. The western side of the bridge (shown in **Image 4-5**) is accessible through the vegetation. However, the vegetation on the eastern side (**Image 4-6**) is much thicker and impenetrable. The vegetation will be removed to accommodate the greenway.

Image 4-7: Western Side – Limited Accessibility

Image 4-8: Eastern Side – No Accessibility

4.1.2.5 Forge Hill to Kinsale Road Roundabout

The section of greenway from Forge Hill to Kinsale Road roundabout runs through a number of different landscape types. Travelling east from Forge Hill its passes firstly through the site of a former Travellers residential scheme, onward through an overgrown stretch of the former railway alignment, to the south of an existing Travellers accommodation and yard site, crossing Hazelwood Grove access road before running to the south of Hazelwood Grove residential properties and eventually meeting with Kinsale Road roundabout.

Immediately to the east of Forge Hill Road is the site of the former Travellers' residential scheme. While largely demolished and partially cleared there are significant amounts of construction and demolition waste present on this site along with parts of former buildings still intact and significant areas of hardstand. There will be a need for site clearance of gorse and vegetation and the removal of existing hardstanding areas associated with the remains of abandoned accommodation units.

When cleared, this area will accommodate both the greenway and a new 50 space car park on the northern side of the greenway. Vehicular access will be provided by upgrading an existing access to Forge Hill which previously served the Travellers residential scheme. Bike parking and bicycle repair facilities will be provided at this car park.

Public realm/landscape measures will be included at this car park location.

From the car park, the greenway will continue east in a predominantly straight horizontal alignment along the former railway corridor firstly through an overgrown area and then to the south of a Travellers accommodation and yard site. To ensure the privacy and security of the residents of this site, post and panel fencing and associated landscaping are proposed. From here the greenway crosses the access road to Hazelwood Grove and runs through the open space area to the south of No. 1 to No. 8 Hazelwood Grove. It will be necessary to acquire approx. 25m^2 of land from the rear garden of No. 4 Kinsale Road. A new boundary wall will be built along the new setback boundary. At the eastern end of Hazelwood Grove, it runs alongside the boundary of the rear garden of the 'The Cottage', property. The horizontal alignment of the Greenway will be curved over the last circa 75m, in the vicinity of the 'The Cottage' on approach to Kinsale Road Roundabout. In this area the route is mainly accommodated within a public green space area facing the South Link slip road and roundabout. To achieve appropriate vertical alignment however, and to allow safe tie-in to the pedestrian footpath at the Kinsale Road roundabout, it will be necessary to acquire circa 200m^2 of land from the rear garden of 'The Cottage' property. A new boundary wall be built along the new setback boundary.

The proposed development terminates at the existing signalised pedestrian/cyclist crossing, which crosses the N40 westbound on-slip at the junction with the N27/R851 Frankfield Road.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers, ornamental planting and low grass planting along the greenway between Forge Hill and Kinsale Road roundabout.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 1,200m^3 of earth for the construction of the track, but 50m^3 of this material will be reused for fill material. This leaves a net volume of circa 1,150m^3 that will need to be transported off site.

4.1.3 Construction Works

4.1.3.1 Construction Programme and Duration

It is estimated that the construction of the Greenway will take approximately 10 months. The likely typical sequence of the works is set out below. This may vary however due to Contractor requirements:

- **Week 1-5: Crew 1/2**
  - Site Clearance of Gorse/Shrubbery and demolition works along the full route from Chetwynd Reservoir and Hazelwood Grove and along the links to the N40.
- **Week 6-9: Crew 1/2**
  - Ground Works on the links to the N40, within Eagle Valley and within Chetwynd Reservoir site adjacent to the access road.
- **Week 10-13 Crew 1**
  - Ground Works between Spur Hill and Togher Road (L-2454).
- **Week 10-14: Crew 2**
  - Pavement and public lighting works on the links to the N40, on the section of the Greenway at Eagle Valley and Chetwynd Reservoir. Resurfacing works and road markings along the Spine Road within Eagle Valley.
- **Week 14-15: Crew 1**
  - Ground Works between Togher Road (L-2454) and Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455).
- **Week 15-19: Crew 2**
  - Pavement and public lighting works on the section of the Greenway between Spur Hill and Togher Road (L-2454).
- **Week 16-18: Crew 1**
  - Ground Works between Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) and Forge Hill.
- **Week 20-21: Crew 2**
  - Pavement and public lighting works on the section of the Greenway between Togher Road (L-2454) and Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455).
- **Week 19-23: Crew 1**
  - Ground Works between Forge Hill and Kinsale Road Roundabout.
- **Week 22-24: Crew 2**
  - Pavement and public lighting works on the section of the Greenway between Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) and Forge Hill.
- **Week 24-30: Crew 1/Crew 2**
  - Pavement and public lighting works on the section of the Forge Hill and Kinsale Road Roundabout.
  - Repoint work and Remedial Works on the former railway bridges
- **Week 31-34: Crew 1/2**
  - All works associated with the construction of Forge Hill Car Park and Cycling Hub.
- **Week 35-38: Crew 1/2**

  - All works associated with the seating areas and hardscaping along the route.

- **Week 39-42**
  - Profiling and landscaping of the open spaces and focal points (seasonal depending).

In order to reduce impacts on local communities and residents adjacent to the proposed development, it is proposed that:

- The Contractor will be required to liaise with the management of other construction projects and the local authorities to co-ordinate deliveries.
- The Contractor will be required to schedule deliveries in such a way that construction activities and delivery activities do not run concurrently e.g., avoiding the laying of surfacing on the same day as material deliveries in order to reduce the possibility of numbers of construction delivery vehicles arriving simultaneously, resulting in build-up of traffic on the road network.
- The Contractor will be required to schedule deliveries to and from the proposed construction compounds such that traffic volumes on the surrounding road network are kept to a minimum.
- A construction phase programme of works shall be developed by the Contractor in liaison with CCC, specifically considering potential road repair works that are included in the local authority's road works schedule. In particular, works should be programmed where possible such that any road works are carried out following the presence of construction traffic for the proposed development.
- Specific construction moratoria (for example, certain busy periods) as indicated by CCC will be respected and incorporated into the construction programme.
- The Contractor will be required to interact with members of the local community to ensure that deliveries will not conflict with sensitive events such as funerals. The contractor shall also programme the works at Eagle Valley in a manner which reduces disruption to local residents.
- The Contractor will adopt best practice construction site management measures. In this regard the Contractor will be required to adhere to the requirements of the best practice guidelines of CIRIA[4] or comparable.

4.1.3.2 Construction Hours

It is proposed that standard construction working hours will apply as follows: Monday to Friday: 08:00 to 19:00; Saturdays: 08:00 to 14:00; Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the local authority.

4.1.3.3 Construction Access

Full access to all properties will be maintained during the works.

4 Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects. CIRIA C648. (CIRIA, 2006)

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There will be a requirement to operate a short-term traffic management plan on the Togher Road and at Forge Hill, where there will be a need for single lane traffic management but no requirement for road closures. There will be a need for a stop-go system to facilitate the resurfacing and relining works within Eagle Valley to provide the new cycleway along the spine road. Restricted access to the construction compounds and along the corridor will be provided from Chetwynd Reservoir private road, from the following public roads:

- Eagle Valley,
- from the east and west of the L-2454 Togher Road (at Westgate Business Park),
- from the east and west of Forge Hill,
- from Hazelwood Grove.

4.1.3.4 Construction Compound

A construction compound will be located to the east of Forge Hill within the proposed car park area. This will serve as the main compound for all of the construction works. The car park construction will be final element of the scheme to be constructed.

4.1.3.5 Ground Clearance

There will be a requirement to clear circa 22,000m^2 of vegetation (shrubbery and gorse) across the extent of the scheme.

There will be a requirement to move three mounds of soil that are located under the former railway bridges at Spur Hill, L-2455 Lehenaghmore Road and Forge Hill.

There will be a requirement to treat limited Japanese knotweed to the east of Forge Hill.

4.1.3.6 Demolition works

The following elements of the Proposed Development will require demolition works:

Former Travellers' Accommodation Site, Forge Hill: Immediately to the east of Forge Hill is the site of a former Travellers' accommodation site. While largely demolished and partially cleared there are significant amounts of construction and demolition waste present on this site along with parts of former buildings still intact and significant areas of hardstand. There will be removal of circa 1,360m^2 of hard standing area associated with the former accommodation units.

Boundary Walls/Fences: There is a need to deconstruct circa 27m^2 of existing walls / pillars and 1m high fencing to the south side of the entrance to the Westgate Business Park.

Chetwynd Reservoir Concrete Road: Within the Chetwynd Reservoir site and to the west of Spur Hill there is a need to break up and reuse and/or remove circa 510m^2 of the southern side of the existing concrete road.

N40 Links: Some small sections of fencing will need to be removed to facilitate the connection to the existing cycleway/walkway along the N40.

4.1.4 Land Take Requirements

As identified in **section 4.1.2.5** above, there will be land take from two residential properties between Hazelwood Grove and Kinsale Road Roundabout. This affects small portions of rear gardens in each case. Parts of the existing rear boundary walls of these gardens will need to be removed and new walls constructed at the new set back boundary line.

A small area of land is required at the Westgate Business Park to accommodate the necessary revisions to the entrance wall / piers as noted above.

Land will need to be acquired to the east of Spur Hill where the greenway travels through private lands with agricultural use on both sides.

Land take to accommodate the links from the N40 will be required from the property associated with the derelict house at Garrane, and from the property that includes the former soccer pitch and existing paths at the opposite side of Garrane Darra.

4.1.5 Operational Phase

The greenway will serve as both a recreation and a commuter function for cyclists and pedestrians. It will be accessible for pedestrians and cyclists from surrounding areas at Eagle Valley, Spur Hill, Fernwood Crescent, Togher Road, Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455), Hazelwood Grove and Kinsale Road roundabout. Those wishing to travel to the greenway by car and then use it for walking or cycling can access at Forge Hill where there is a proposed 50 space car park. Secure bicycle storage facilities and bicycle stands are proposed here to facilitate modal transfer between cars, bicycles and walking for both recreation and commuting purposes. Infrastructure will also be provided to link to the Greenway from the N40 including a connection via Garrane Darra.

The greenway itself will generally be accessible by cyclists and pedestrians only. Demountable bollards will be provided at appropriate locations to prohibit vehicles accessing the route. These bollards can be temporarily moved to allow access for maintenance vehicles as necessary. Only maintenance vehicles will be allowed to access the greenway. This will be on a regular basis for waste collection and landscaping at appropriate frequency. Access will also be provided as required for repair or upgrade works.

- **Bridge Inspections:** Inspections will be undertaken at set periods post construction, on the Spur Hill, Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) and Forge Hill railway bridges.
- **Wate Collection:** Bin collection will be undertaken by Cork City Council at regular intervals. This will comprise small team works, and light vehicles required for transporting vegetation.
- **Landscaping:** Seasonal landscaping works will be undertaken at regular intervals along the greenway.

The entire scheme will have public lighting to enhance the quality of the routes from a security perspective. The new lantern fittings will adopt an advanced intelligent light control system which will have automatic dimming and sensor control which will allow increased illumination when pedestrian and cyclists go past but they will dim accordingly when there are no users on the greenway.

4.1.6 The Use of Natural Resources (in particular Land, Soil, Water and Biodiversity)

The use of natural resources is considered hereunder in respect of land, soil, water, biodiversity and natural resources.

Land – The majority of the land required for the greenway is either unused or underutilised. Much of the former railway line is overgrown and unused while those parts with some form of existing pathway have very low levels of usage. The proposed greenway which will restore an active use to the former railway line will comprise a positive use of land.

As noted in **section 4.1.2**, it is necessary to acquire land from two residential properties. The areas of land required are currently in use as private back garden amenity open space. The areas required comprise only a small proportion of the open space of both properties with no significant impacts arising for the continued private open space use of the remaining garden areas. Other land take relates to a small section of commercial area for boundary treatment works and otherwise land to be acquired is currently disused or under existing pathway use.

Soil - The construction of the proposed development will involve some excavation and earthworks. Excavation estimates for track construction works are set out in **section 4.1.1.8** above. Excavated material will be stockpiled and used for the landscaping on site where suitable or alternatively will be removed off-site to an appropriately licensed facility where it cannot be reused on site. Much of the soil material to be removed currently forms earth mounds to block access beneath a number of the former railway bridges. It is assumed that this material was itself previously imported to the site. The net loss of original soil material from the site is not significant.

Water – The construction works for the greenway will require some usage of water, but in small quantities. Once operational, the pedestrian and cycle usage will not generate water use. There will be a requirement for water usage however, for landscaping maintenance.

The proposed development will have minimal impact on groundwater resources with only one part of the development diverting surface water to the city's surface water drainage network. Generally, the surface water drainage proposed for the greenway is over the edge drainage. At the new car park to the east of Forge Hill however, there will be gully and carrier pipe drainage. The collected water will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharge to the existing surface water network at Forge Hill.

No culvert works or bridge works are proposed as part of the proposed development other than a minor intervention to accommodate a small field drainage channel at the western end of the scheme where one of the links to the N40 is proposed to be provided. Given the scale of the latter, the development will not impact on existing water courses running within or in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Biodiversity - There will be some vegetation and soil stripping required as part of the site clearance. The vegetation to be removed will generally consist of dry meadows and grassy verges and scrub (species including Ash, Sycamore, Willow, Elder, Larch, Gorse, Butterfly Bush and Bramble). These habitats do not correspond to Annex I habitat. The grassland within this route option is predominantly species poor and is of local conservation interest. The scrub provides habitat for birds, small mammals and commuting and foraging bats and is of local conservation interest.

The majority of existing trees along the greenway are to be retained but a small number of trees will possibly need to be removed.

There is some Japanese Knotweed identified to the west and east of Forge Hill. This will be treated as part of the current scheme which will have a positive impact on native existing surrounding vegetation which would otherwise be under threat.

Non-renewable resources - The construction phase will likely give rise to the use of energy and construction materials such as concrete, etc., some of which are characterised as non-renewable resources. No resources that are in short supply will be required.

At operational phase minimal natural resources from the area will be required for maintenance of the proposed development.

4.1.7 Production of Waste

The proposed construction phase works will involve various excavation/earthworks, removal of demolition material, vegetation and those from welfare facilities. The operational phase will generate litter from the users of the Greenway.

Excavations: Excavated material at the site from track construction will amount to circa 3,605m^3. Material excavated on-site will be reused on-site where possible or removed off-site to an appropriately licensed facility if unsuitable for reuse. Based on current estimates it is likely that approx. 3,400m^3 will need to be removed from site

Demolition Material: There will be a requirement to break up and transport offsite hand standing area associated with the former accommodation units at Forge Hill. There will be a requirement to break up and remove some of the existing concrete road section within the Chetwynd Reservoir site. There will be a requirement to deconstruct a small area of existing wall / pillars at the Westgate Business Park and at the rear gardens of two residences at Kinsale Road and also small sections of fencing to facilitate the links to the N40.

Vegetation: Vegetation removal will consist of dry meadows and grassy verges and scrub (species including Ash, Sycamore, Willow, Elder, Larch, Gorse, Butterfly Bush and Bramble). There is also a need to manage, treat and remove some Japanese Knotweed. Removal will be off-site to an appropriately licensed facility.

Welfare Facilities: Waste will be generated by the construction staff from the welfare facilities within the construction compound.

Waste where it arises will be source segregated to accommodate re-use and recycling. Sanitary waste and general construction waste will be managed in accordance with the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended).

Operational Phase Litter: To prevent any pollution from waste generated by users of the greenway, bins will be provided for. There will also be a requirement to facilitate deliveries and refuse collection of these bins which should not interfere with the existing residential population or the users of the greenway.

4.1.8 Pollution and Nuisances

The main potential sources of pollution arising from the construction phase of the development relate to air quality (dust), sediment runoff and noise. In terms of noise, the following are the aspects of the works that are likely to generate noise: earthworks, drainage works at the proposed Forge Hill Car Park, planing of the existing walkway between Togher Road (L-2454) and Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) and breaking out hard material.

4.1.8.1 Dust

There is potential for dust generation during the construction phase from plant and construction traffic. There is also potential for material in temporary exposed soil/stockpiles to become airborne and impact on human health.

4.1.8.2 Sediment Runoff

The site is located c.2.6km to the west of Cork Harbour SPA and crosses two small 1st order streams that flow into Cork Harbour SPA c.4.1km downstream at its closest point. A small drainage channel will be crossed by one of the links to the N40. There is potential for water pollution during the construction phase due to the potential release of sediment or accidental spillages to the water. However, there is no requirement for the installation of culverts, bridges or instream works along the main greenway route and the drainage channel intersecting the westernmost N40 link is small in nature and can readily be managed using simple and standard construction techniques so the risk of pollution is very low.

4.1.8.3 Noise

The construction phase will give rise to limited noise as a result of the operation of plant machinery and construction traffic.

4.1.9 Traffic

During the construction period there will be an increase in traffic volumes as a result of employees travelling to and from the site and for the delivery and disposal of construction related materials.

Movement of plant, vehicles and associated human activity will be required for the maintenance of the Proposed development.

There will be a requirement to operate a short-term traffic management plan on Togher Road (L-2454) and at Forge Hill, where there will be a need for single lane traffic management but no requirement for road closures. Likewise a stop-go system can be employed within Eagle Valley during the cycleway works.

During the operational phase there will be an increase in vehicular activity with additional users of the Proposed development which will have the potential to impact on the local residents.

4.1.10 Odour

No odour is anticipated from the construction or operation of the Proposed development. It is proposed that bins will be provided along the route.

4.1.11 The Risk of Major Accidents and/or Disasters (including those Caused by Climate Change)

A major emergency is defined by the EPA as an event which, usually occurs with little or no warning, causes or threatens death or injury, serious disruption of essential services, or damage to property, the environment

or infrastructure beyond the normal capabilities of the principal emergency services in the area in which the event occurs and requiring the activation of specific additional procedures to ensure an effective, co-ordinated response.

The proposed development will be constructed in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 as amended and the requirements of the Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 and 2019 (SI No. 291 of 2013 and SI No. 129/2019) and any other relevant Health and Safety legislation.

The nature of the type of construction for the proposed development and associated works are considered standard, with no novel construction methodologies and is not particularly complex. Construction methods have been formulated in line with best practice standards that will seek to reduce potential for sediment or soil loss and hydrocarbon / polluting substance release.

4.1.12 Risk to Human Health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution, etc.)

As outlined above, any potential for air, odour or noise pollution during the construction phase will be temporary and localised. No significant risk factors for Human Health are identified for the construction phase.

One of the objectives of the Greenway is '*To develop a safe Greenway corridor for both pedestrian and cyclists' users and for the local residents living in the vicinity of the corridor'.* It is considered that during the operational phase the new greenway will provide a safer route for cyclists and pedestrians than the existing situation. The greenway and its links will encourage active travel and increased recreational activity which will have positive benefits for human health.

4.1.13 Other Existing and / or Permitted Development in the Vicinity of the Site with Potential for Interaction with the Proposed Development

For the purposes of EIA Screening, it is necessary to consider if the proposed development in combination with any other existing or permitted plans or projects could likely give rise to significant effects on the environment. To inform this aspect of the screening all planning permissions granted within 1km of the Proposed development in the past 2 no. years were identified. The more significant of these developments with possible potential for in combination impacts with the proposed development were reviewed to determine if they were likely to have significant effects on the environment in the first instance and thereafter if they were likely to have potential for cumulative impacts with the proposed development.

In addition, other notable transport related projects in the vicinity of the proposed development subject of other statutory procedures were also identified and reviewed.

These developments were identified with reference to data sources including the Cork City Council website, An Bord Pleanála online planning search function, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's online EIA Portal, the EPA website, Health and Safety Authority (HSA) website (for nearby Tier 1 and Tier 2 Seveso sites) and Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.

The online planning system for Cork City Council was consulted on 4th April 2023 for the area within the vicinity of the proposed development. Projects granted planning permission in the vicinity of the proposed development broadly relate to small scale extensions, industrial development, residential modifications, site access works and residential extensions. The larger scale projects within 1km are set out in **Table 4-2**. Projects which have been subject of Part 8 approval procedures, and which are within the vicinity of the proposed development, are also set out in **Table 4-2**.

The Strategic Housing Development (SHD) process allowed for direct applications to An Bord Pleanála for planning permission in the case of large-scale housing developments. **Table 4-3** shows the relevant permitted SHD in the vicinity of the Proposed development. The EIA Portal (accessed on 21st October 2022 https://housinggovie.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/) shows applications for development consent accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report – only one of which was identified within 1km of the proposed development. This is the SHD development identified in **Table 4-3**.

Table 4-2: Permitted Planning Applications Submitted to Cork City Council over Past 24 Months within 1km buffer of the Proposed Development

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
2140361	Grant Date: 25/10/2021	8 The Hedgerows, Eagle Valley, Wilton, located 26m to the south west of the Proposed development.	Sean O Brien: Permission for alterations and a 2 storey extension to the side of an existing dwelling and all associated site works.	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, scale and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.*
2241271	Grant Date: 24/10/2022	Bishopstown Court Shopping Centre, Bandon Road, Ardrostig Bishopstown, located 0.2km to the west of the Proposed development.	Better Value Unlimited Company: Permission for development at Bishopstown Court Shopping Centre, Bandon Road, Garranedarragh, Bishopstown, Cork. The development will consist of: A change of use of the shopping centre's bedroom textile area from retail to an off-licence use (233 sq.m) modifying Reg. Ref: 21/40291. This change of use is only temporary (6 months max), after which work will commence to integrate the space with the centre's existing cafe seating area to create 3 no. shop units granted under Reg. Ref: 21/40291.	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, scale and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.*
2140291	Grant Date: 15/11/2021	Bishopstown Court Shopping, Centre Bandon Road, Garranedarra	Better Value Unlimited Company: Permission for alterations to and extension of Bishopstown Court Shopping Centre including all ancillary site development works. The proposed development will	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed*

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
		gh Ardarostig, located 15m to the west of the Proposed development.	provide for the demolition of the existing western entrance lobby and extensions to the existing store of 2,048 sq. m Gross Floor Area (959 sq. m Net Sales Area). The proposed extensions will accommodate a new western lobby entrance, retail stock room areas, new restaurant seating area, 3 no. retail units. The proposed development provides for a change of use of existing restaurant seating to retail use to facilitate an extension of textile sales area. The proposed development will also include upgrades to existing building facades and elevational signage to include overhang canopies on western, northern and eastern elevations, reconfiguration of delivery set down area permitted under Cork County Council Planning Ref: 19/5412, reconfiguration of car park areas, works to facilitate a pedestrian connection to lands south of the Shopping centre, rooftop PV and plant. The proposed extension will require the diversion of the Glasheen River Culvert and upgrade works to the culvert inlet area. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared and will be submitted to the Planning Authority with the application.	*development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The application included a Natura Impact Statement dated June 2021 re the proposed extension and culvert diversion at this site. The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Works are proposed to an existing culvert within the site. Storm water disposal is via a public sewer/drain. Further information is required on the drainage.* Following receipt of further information re drainage the council concluded the following: *It is considered that the project as proposed, following the implementation of the mitigation measures, would not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the relevant European Sites, in light of their conservation objectives and best scientific evidence.*
2140415	Grant Date: 13/1/2022	Circle K, Bishopstown Service Station,	BIGbin Waste Tech Ltd: Permission for placement of a portable, pay-to-use waste compactor for the acceptance of residual and food	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following*

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
		Ardrostig Bishopstown located 0.5km to the west of the Proposed development.	waste and a portable, pay-to-use compactor for mixed recyclables at Circle K, Bishopstown Service Station, Ardrostig, Bishopstown, Cork, T12AYF8 by BIGbin Waste Tech Ltd. This activity requires the developers to possess a waste collection permit/certificate of registration.	*a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, scale and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.*
2240835	Grant Date: 22/11/2022	Heiton Steel, Ardrostig, Bishopstown located 0.6km to the west of the Proposed development.	Chadwicks Group Ltd.: Permission for the development of an extension to an existing storage warehouse and the construction of an associated office building located in Heiton Steel, Ardrostig, Bishopstown, Cork. The proposed office building will contain a small office area, staff facilities and a trade counter for the existing steel business to replace the existing temporary accommodation cabins which provide the existing staff accommodation and trade counter. It is proposed to remove the existing temporary accommodation cabins. The application also includes an extension to the existing storage yard to keep stock lengths of steel reinforcing bars and mild steel rolled sections.	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.*
2240906	Grant Date: 21/9/2022	Former CMP Dairies site, known as Creamfields, at Kinsale Road and Tramore Road.	Watfore Limited: A Primary Care Centre (c. 7,767m^2), of principally 4 storeys and part 7-storeys in height above ground, at the c. 1.37ha former CMP Dairies site, known as Creamfields, at Kinsale Road and Tramore Road, Cork. A Natura Impact Statement will be submitted to	Cork City Council's Planning Report notes the following in respect of Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment: EIA: *The Planning Authority has reviewed the submitted Report to Inform EIA Screening and would concur with the conclusion of this report. It is considered that, having regard to the nature and scale of the development, the location and context of the development site and the nature of the use of the site, the development would not likely have significant effects on*

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
		Located approx. 0.5km north of the Proposed development. Note – there is an SHD application relating to the wider site. See **Table 4-3** below.	the Planning Authority with the application.	*the environment. Consequently, it is considered that environmental impact assessment is not required.* AA: Cork City Council *consider it reasonable to conclude based on the information submitted in the NIS, adequate in order to carry out a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment and that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, and subject to the mitigation measures being implemented in full, would not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA, in view of the Conservation Objectives for the sites.* From the foregoing, no significant environmental impacts are considered likely as a result of the permitted development at the CMP Dairies site. Given the nature of the Primary Care use and its distance from the Proposed development no potential for significant cumulative impacts is identified.
2140353	Decision Date: 16/6/2022. Decision to Grant appealed to An Bord Pleanála Appeal Ref. Number ABP-314025-22. Case is due for decision by 09/11/2022 but no decision as of yet.	Kinsale Road, Ballycurreen, Cork. Located approx. 0.1km south of the Proposed development.	Denis McBarron: Demolition and removal of an existing dwelling and ancillary structures and the construction of a mixed-use residential and commercial development in 13 no. blocks comprising: 134 no. residential units, neighbourhood centre building which includes a restaurant/take-away, convenience retail, gym, dentist, physio, hairdressers and outdoor amenity at roof level; a creche; a 158 no. bed hotel, a new entrance/signalised junction and improvements to the N27 including 2 no. bus stops, cycle lane and footpaths, car and bicycle parking.	Cork City Council's Planning Report notes the following in respect of Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The applicant has submitted an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report in respect of the proposed development. The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European site and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.* While not yet considered by An Bord Pleanála, from the foregoing, it is considered likely that there will be no significant environmental impacts are as a result of the proposed development at Kinsale Road.
2140073	Grant Date: 13/7/2021	West Link, Togher Industrial	Cork Builders Providers: A 666sq.m. external hard surfaced yard for external storage of bulk sands and	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts:

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
		Estate, Ballycurreen, Located adjacent to the Proposed development.	gravels which will be bagged along with precast concrete products.	EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.* From the foregoing, no significant environmental impacts are considered likely as a result of the permitted development at West Link. Given the nature of the sand and gravel storage and bagging activity use it may have potential to give rise to dust arisings. The construction activity for the proposed Greenway at Forge Hill may also result in dust emissions. These will be temporary only however, with no sensitive receptors in the immediate environment. No potential for significant cumulative impacts is therefore identified.
2140483	Grant Date: 14/2/2022	Unit 16A , Togher Industrial Estate, Ballycurreen Togher. Located approx. 0.03km north of the Proposed development.	Light industrial building and all ancillary car parking, fencing and site development works to the rear.	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058) and a proposed NHA, namely the Douglas River Estuary (Site Code: 001046). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.* From the foregoing, no significant environmental impacts are considered likely as a result of the permitted development at Togher Industrial Estate. While future employees of the light industrial development may make use of the Greenway for recreational and / or commuting

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
				purposes, given the scale and nature of the proposal no potential for significant cumulative impacts is identified.
2139831	Grant Date: 20/4/2021	Unit 1 2 and 3, University Hall Industrial Estate, Sarsfield Road Doughcloyne. Located adjacent to the Proposed development.	Blackwater Motors Commercial Centre Ltd: Change of use of part of existing industrial unit to vehicle showroom (384sqmts).	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: EIA: *Pursuant to article 103(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and following a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, and it is consequently concluded that EIA is not required.* AA: *The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.* On this basis, no significant environmental impacts are considered likely as a result of the permitted change of use at University Hall Industrial Estate. No potential for cumulative impacts with the proposed Greenway project is identified either.
Part 8 Proposal	Part 8 Planning – open for submissions until 12th May 2023	Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Link - Connection from Alden Grove	Cork City Council: It is proposed to provide a new pedestrian and cycleway connecting the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Pedestrian and Cycle Link to Alden Grove. Involves the following works: The construction of approximately 35m of new 3m wide pedestrian and cycleway connecting the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Pedestrian and Cycle Link to Alden Grove with associated earthworks. The construction of approximately 23m of new 3m wide footway within Alden Grove.	In accordance with the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been carried out for the project, in relation to any potential impacts upon the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area [Site No. 004030] and the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation [Site No. 001058]. The findings of the AA screening concluded that no significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites is likely and it was not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process. In addition, the proposed project has been screened to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required and it has been concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effect on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact report is not therefore required.

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
Part 8 Proposal	Part 8 Planning was determined in February 2021	Lehenaghmore Road, the Proposed development will intersect the red line boundary of the Lehenaghmore Road Improvement Scheme.	Cork City Council: Lehenaghmore Road Improvement Scheme	Cork City Council made a determination to proceed with his proposal and concluded that "*the Proposed development is unlikely to have an effect on the environment….and therefore determined a that an Environmental Assessment would not be required.*" On this basis, no significant environmental impacts are considered likely as a result of the Lehenaghmore Road improvement scheme. The Lehenaghmore Scheme incorporates pedestrian / cyclist access ramps onto the proposed Greenway. This provision will have positive implications for the operational use of the Greenway. The works associated with the ramps are of a modest nature. Even if undertaken at the same time as the proposed Greenway development works in this area, the combined impacts are not considered likely to be significant.
S38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994	Notification requirements and observation period concluded	N27 Kinsale Road, adjacent to the Proposed development.	Cork City Council: N27 Kinsale Road (Airport Hill) Phase 2 Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme: • Upgrade to pedestrian crossing facilities at Frankfield Junction. • Upgrade to pedestrian and cyclist facilities from Frankfield Junction to the Ballycurreen Junction. • Construction of a new pedestrian footpath along Ballycurreen Road. • Construction of a new pedestrian footpath along Forge Hill Road. • Upgrade to all pedestrian crossing facilities at Ballycurreen Junction. • Provision of segregated on-line cycleway along both sides of the road, from Ballycurreen Junction to the Airport Roundabout. • Upgrade to pedestrian and cyclist facilities at the Airport Roundabout.	Cork City Council undertook a determination and concluded that "*the Proposed development is unlikely to have an effect on the environment….and therefore determined a that an Environmental Assessment would not be required.*" The works proposed in this scheme finish at the Kinsale Road roundabout at the foot path which incorporates the final connection point of the proposed City Centre to Greenway project. No conflict arises and no potential for cumulative impact identified.

Planning Reg. Ref. / Approval Route	Grant / Decision Date	Location	Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
S38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994	Notification requirements and observation period concluded	Frankfield Road from Kinsale Road roundabout to Curraghwoods Estate	The main elements of the proposed works in this location are: • Installation of kerbs to segregate cycle facilities along Frankfield Road • Widening of footpaths from 1.5m to 2m throughout. • Installation of raise tables at each junction/entrance along the scheme. • New kerbs to be installed at wide junctions to calm traffic and reduce distances that pedestrians need to traverse to cross the road. • Modifications to the existing Toucan crossing the at the junction with the Kinsale Rd. • Installation of a signalised pedestrian crossing on Frankfield Road to aid pedestrian connectivity. • Installation of a signalised bicycle crossing on Frankfield Road to aid cyclist connectivity. • Provision of additional green space that can be used for planting & biodiversity. • Realignment of road markings to improve vehicle safety • New road marking and signage • Other necessary associated works.	The works proposed in this scheme finish at the Kinsale Road roundabout opposite the foot path which incorporates the final connection point of the proposed City Centre to Greenway project. No conflict arises and no potential for cumulative impact is identified.

Table 4-3: Relevant SHD Applications

Planning Reg. Ref.	Decision Date	Location	Basic Description	Predicted Likely Impacts and Potential for Cumulative Impact
ABP-312866-22 EIA Portal ID: 2022020	Grant Date: 07/06/22	The Former CMP Dairies Site Kinsale Road and Tramore Road Cork. Located approx. 0.6km north of the Proposed development.	Strategic Housing Development of 609 no. dwellings in 12 no. buildings of between 1-15 storeys in height over ground, to include a coffee kiosk; gym; café; retail use; creche and community hub; public square, car and cycle parking; and all associated works.	Board Order ABP-312866-22 notes the following: EIA: *The Bord completed an environmental impact assessment in relation to the proposed development and concluded that, subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures set out in the environmental impact assessment report, and subject to compliance with the conditions set out below (in the Board Order), the effects on the environmental of the proposed development, by itself and in combination with other development in the vicinity, would be acceptable. In doing so, the Board adopted the report and conclusions of the Inspector.* AA: *The Bord completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on European Sites…. The Board agreed with and adopted the report of the Inspector that, by itself or in combination with other development, plans and projects in the vicinity, the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European Site in view of the Conservation Objectives of such sites, and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not, therefore, required notwithstanding the fact that a Natura impact assessment was submitted by the applicant.* From the foregoing, no significant environmental impacts are considered likely as a result of the permitted development at former CMP Dairies site. While future residents of this development may make use of the Greenway for recreational and / or commuting purposes, given the nature of the proposal and the distance to the Greenway site, no potential for significant cumulative impacts is identified.

There are a number of EPA licenced facilities within 2km of the Proposed development, details of which are set out in **Table 4-4**. While the employees of these facilities may utilise the Greenway, given the nature of the Greenway and the nature of these activities no potential for significant cumulative environmental impacts is identified.

Table 4-4: EPA Licenced Facilities within 2km of the Proposed Development

Code – Licence Type	Name	Location
W0291 Industrial Emissions Licence	Forge Hill Recycling Unlimited Company	Forge Hill Waste Transfer Station, Forge Hill. Located 0.22km south of the Proposed development.
P0343 Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence	Brooks Haughton Limited.	Pouladuff Industrial Estate, Togher. Located 0.26km north of the Proposed development.
P0391 Industrial Emissions Licence and P0391-01 and Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence	Galco (Cork) Limited	Tramore Road, Cork. Located 0.32km north of the Proposed development.
P0407 Industrial Emissions Licence and Integrated	Irish Pioneer Works	Kinsale Road, Cork. Located 0.37km north of the Proposed development.

Code – Licence Type	Name	Location
Pollution Prevention Control Licence	(Fabricators) Limited	
W0012 Industrial Emissions Licence	Kinsale Road Landfill	Ballyphehane, Curraghconway, Inchisarsfield, South City Link Road. Located 0.56km north east of the Proposed development.
P0059 Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence	Fronville Limited	Kinsale Road. Located 1.0.km north of the Proposed development.
P0348 Industrial Emissions Licence	Heiton Buckley Limited	Ardarostig, Bishopstown. Located 1.4km west of the Proposed development.
P0070 Industrial Emissions Licence	Irish Oxygen Co. Limited	Waterfall Road. Located 1.4km west of the Proposed development.

There is 1 no. Lower Tier Seveso site located within 2km of the proposed development, Irish Oxygen Co. Ltd, in Waterfall, which is approx. 1.4km from the proposed development. There are no Upper Tier Seveso sites located within 2km of the proposed development.

In summary, no existing or permitted developments within the wider study are considered likely to have potential for significant cumulative impacts with the proposed development.

4.2 Location of the Proposed Development

According to Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Act and Annex III of the EIA Directive, the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to the following criteria:

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 there is such a failure;*
    vii. *densely populated areas; and*
    viii. *landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.*

The location of the proposed development is described and considered with reference to each of these criteria hereunder.

4.2.1 Existing and Approved Land Use

4.2.1.1 Existing Land Use

Overall Route

The proposed greenway is along a section of the former West Cork Railway corridor and is intersected by a number of roads, Spur Hill, Togher Road (L-2454), Lehenaghmore Road (L2455) and Forge Hill. The proposed development travels through existing built up areas of the city predominantly. To the east of Spur Hill, the proposed development runs along the edge of the existing built-up extent of the city with a more rural setting to the south.

Lands in the vicinity of the greenway generally comprise residential, industrial and commercial development with some rural and infrastructural uses to the south at its western extent. Commercial/Industrial areas include University Industrial Estate near Chetwynd Reservoir, Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate on Togher Road, Southside Industrial Estate, Sitecast Industrial Estate, Pouladuff Industrial Estate, Togher Industrial Estate, South Ring Business Park and Kinsale Road Commercial Centre. The neighbourhood centre anchored by Dunnes Stores off the Bandon Road roundabout is located just west of the proposed links from the N40 to the Greenway.

Residential uses are mainly in the vicinity of Chetwynd Reservoir and Spur Hill, including Eagle Valley. Hazelwood Grove is immediately adjacent to the proposed greenway at its eastern end close to Kinsale Road roundabout. The proposed links to the Greenway are located adjacent to and one partially within, Garrane Darra. Schools, churches and community facilities are concentrated in the village of Togher.

Chetwynd Reservoir, through which the Greenway runs at its western end, is a significant element of infrastructure serving the city.

The following sections detail the main existing land uses surrounding the proposed greenway along its 5 different sections defined by its intersections with public roads, and also at the locations of the proposed links to the Greenway from the N40.

Eagle Valley to Spur Hill

The greenway commences within a public open space area of the residential estate of Eagle Valley. Eagle Valley is a large well established residential area. Close to its entrance from Sarsfields Road, further residential development has recently been added at Sarsfield Heights. From Eagle Valley the greenway enters into and traverses the Chetwynd Reservoir site before crossing under Spur Hill. Approaching Spur Hill, the reservoir site is bounded to the north by University Hall Industrial Estate which is accessed through Eagle Valley.

To the south of the greenway at Spur Hill the area becomes more rural with one-off housing located along Spur Hill to the south with farmland surrounding.

Spur Hill to Togher Road (L-2454)

From Spur Hill heading eastwards, the greenway route is surrounded initially by agricultural lands on both sides. The residential area of Fernwood to the north (accessed from Spur Hill) is initially separated from the greenway route by an agricultural field but has houses backing onto the route further east. At this point the residential area of Fernwood Crescent and its open space area adjoins the greenway route to the south. Closer to Togher Road (L-2454) lies Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate to the north, and an area of undeveloped land to the south, beyond which is the Ashbrook Heights residential estate.

Togher Road (L-2454) to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455)

Between Togher Road (L-2454) and Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) the greenway route is bounded primarily by industrial and commercial uses. On its northern side, accessed from Togher Road (L-2454) is the Colso Temperature Controlled Storage and Logistics site, and accessed from Lehenaghmore Road are the Southside Industrial Estate and the Swans Nest Business Park. To the north of Colso, the land use reverts to residential within the Togher area. To the north of the Southside Industrial Estate, the industrial uses continue along Lehenaghmore Road and Pouladuff Road.

On its southern side from Togher Road (L-2454) the proposed greenway is bounded by the Route Fourteen Bar and Restaurant, Lehenaghmore Business Park and Westgate Business Park. As it approaches Lehenaghmore Road, to the south are long established one-off housing.

Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) to Forge Hill

On the eastern side of Lehenaghmore Road the greenway is also bounded to the south by well-established on-off housing. Further east is the recently constructed Farm Lawn housing estate. Closer to Forge Hill the route is bounded to the south by a residential use.

From Lehenaghmore Road to Forge Hill the main uses on the northern side of the Greenway are commercial / retail warehousing units.

Forge Hill to Kinsale Road Roundabout

The greenway continues east within the former railway corridor and runs south of an area of accommodation units (which will be screened from the greenway through the provision of a fence and landscaping). From here the greenway crosses the access road to Hazelwood Grove and runs along the southern boundary of No. 1 to No. 8 Hazelwood Grove and follows the north-eastern boundary of the 'The Cottage', property. The proposed development terminates at the existing signalised pedestrian/cyclist crossing, which crosses the N40 westbound on-slip at the junction with the N27/R851 Frankfield Road.

Links to the Proposed Greenway from the N40

A new cycle track will be provided along one side of the residential spine road in Eagle Valley along part of the current road space. Further detail on the existing and use of the locations of the two link that extend to the edge of the N40 are provided below:

- A connection from the N40 national primary road to the spine road at Eagle Valley will be provided. The first 170m of this linkage will be located along a former residential access road to a derelict dwelling (Garrane) which comprises elements of disused pavement surfacing and unbound stone material. There are existing mature trees running alongside this access road and heavy/thick vegetation consisting mostly of briars and gorse overhangs sections of it. The route then turns sharply to the east of the former residential access and crosses over an open drainage channel (associated with the adjacent field) before traversing an open field towards Eagle Valley. Within Eagle Valley the route crosses an area of public open space to the south of No. 271A Eagle Valley and the spine road, to reach the afore-mentioned new cycle track location. The retail premises / neighbourhood centre anchored by Dunnes Stores at Bandon Road and its associated car park is located just over 100m to the west of this proposed connection to the Greenway.
- A connection between an existing path / cycle track that runs adjacent the N40 and the Garrane Darra residential complex will also be provided. This area of the site currently comprises of an existing gravel walkway along the edge of a disused football field, formerly the grounds of Richmond AFC. There are mature trees along the western side of the walkway and there is also a fence across part of the site.

4.2.1.2 Approved Land Use

Future lands use in the vicinity of the greenway will be influenced by the approved land use zoning objectives set out in the relevant statutory development plan. The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040 (CMATS) also sets out planned transport and transportation services and infrastructure for the city region.

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 was adopted in August 2022 and contains zoning objectives for lands within the vicinity of the proposed development.

The proposed development is predominantly within the Built Up Area of the city which is subject of active land use zoning objectives. The section of the greenway within the Chetwynd Reservoir site lies within the 'Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt' designation and is zoned 'City Hinterland'. **Figures 4-1** to **4-3** present land use zoning maps 15, 08 and 07 respectively of the Cork City Development Plan showing the areas of the city through which the proposed Greenway passes. The zoning objectives in the vicinity of the proposed Greenway generally reflect the existing land uses along the route with existing residential uses generally zoned objective ZO 01 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods and industrial / commercial uses generally zoned objective ZO 09 Light Industry and Related Uses. There are a number of specific zoning objectives attached to land parcels adjoining the Greenway route which are of note, and which indicate likely future uses different to their current uses. These are as follows:

- Field on northern side of Greenway to east of Spur Hill adjacent to Fernwood housing estate: This is currently in agricultural use but is zoned objective ZO 02 New Residential Neighbourhoods – *To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.*
- Field between Eagle Valley and the former access road to 'Garrane': Currently disused but zoned also for ZO 02 New Residential Neighbourhoods as per above.
- Undeveloped land on southern side of Greenway to west of Togher Road (L-2454): This currently vacant land is zoned objective ZO 12 Education – to provide for schools and educational facilities and related development.
- An area west of Fernwood is zoned ZO 15 Public Open Space, which includes some of the grassed area within the development which was formerly zoned for sustainable residential neighbourhoods and adjacent lands including a wooded area. The objective seeks *to protect, retain and provide for passive and active recreational uses, open space, green networks, natural areas and amenity facilities.*
- The area forming part of the former Richmond AFC soccer pitch is also zoned ZO 15 Public Open Space.

An Objective termed Walkways and Cycleways is shown as a black and white line along the proposed Greenway route from Spur Hill to Forge Hill, which is also visible in in **Figures 4-1** to **4-3**.

With respect to links proposed, the Neighbourhood and Local Centre zoning objective at the Dunnes Stores premises at the Bandon Road roundabout is notable.

Figure 4-1: Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 Mapped Objectives – Map 15

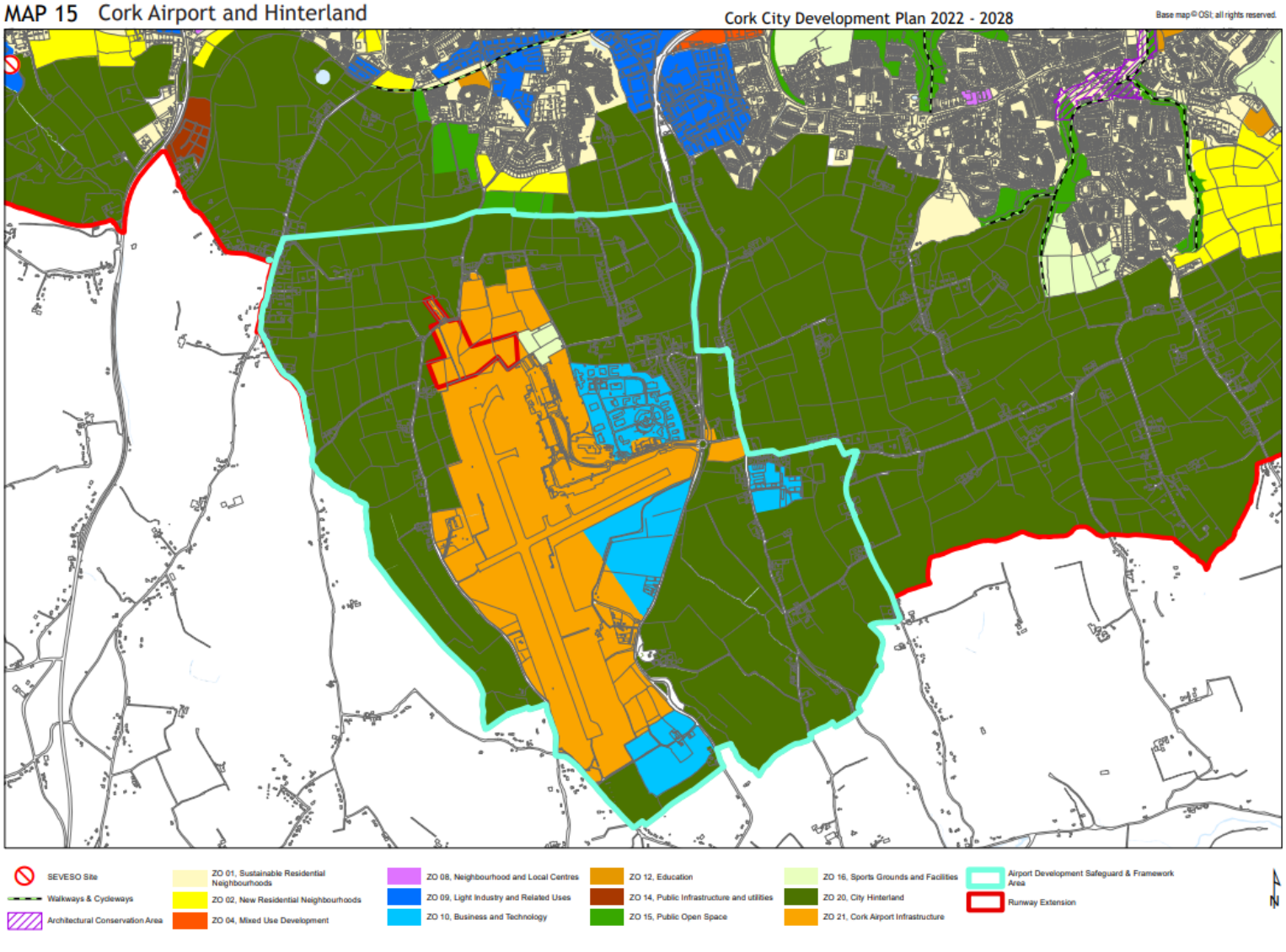


Figure 4-2: Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 Mapped Objectives – Map 08

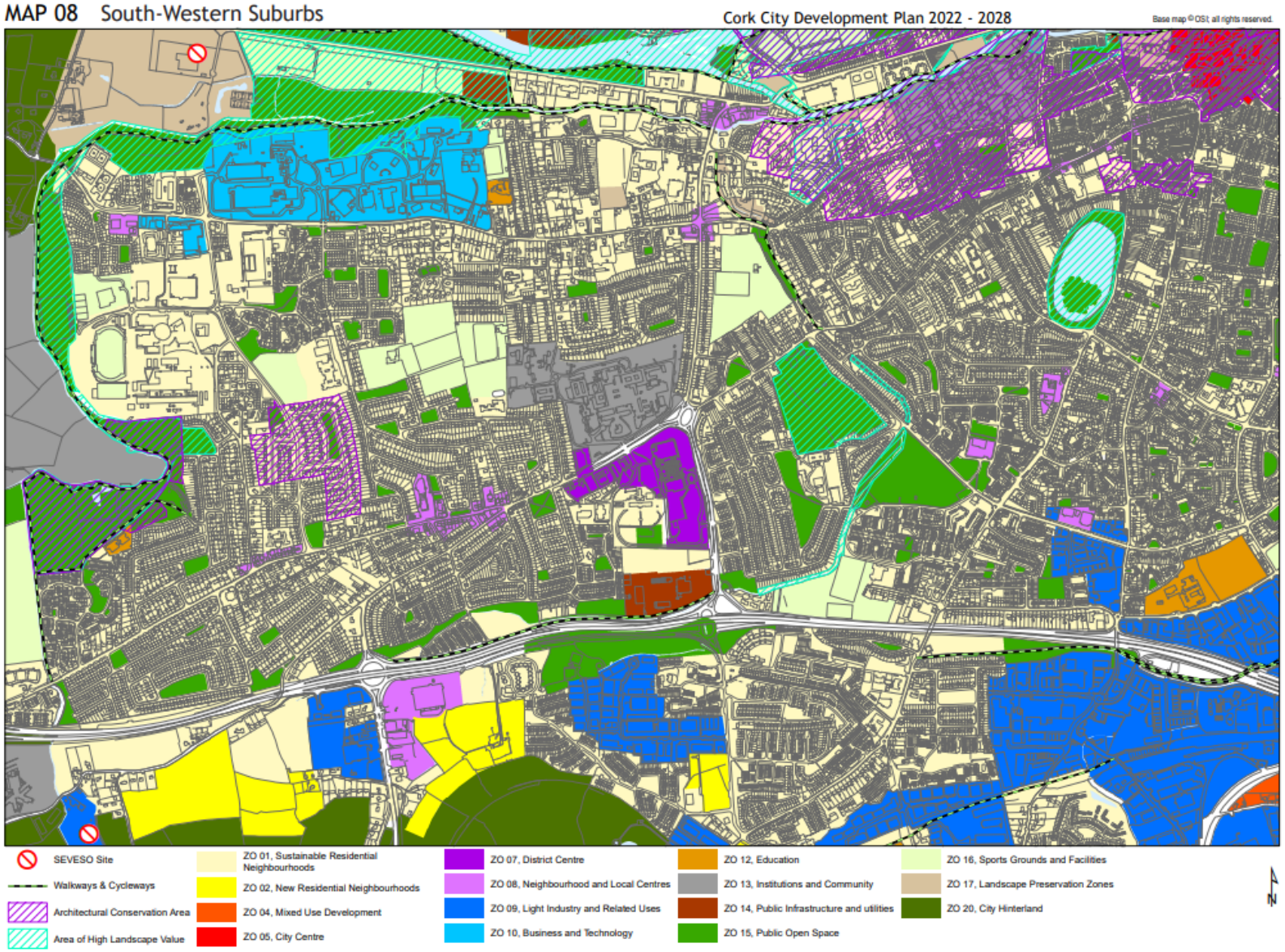
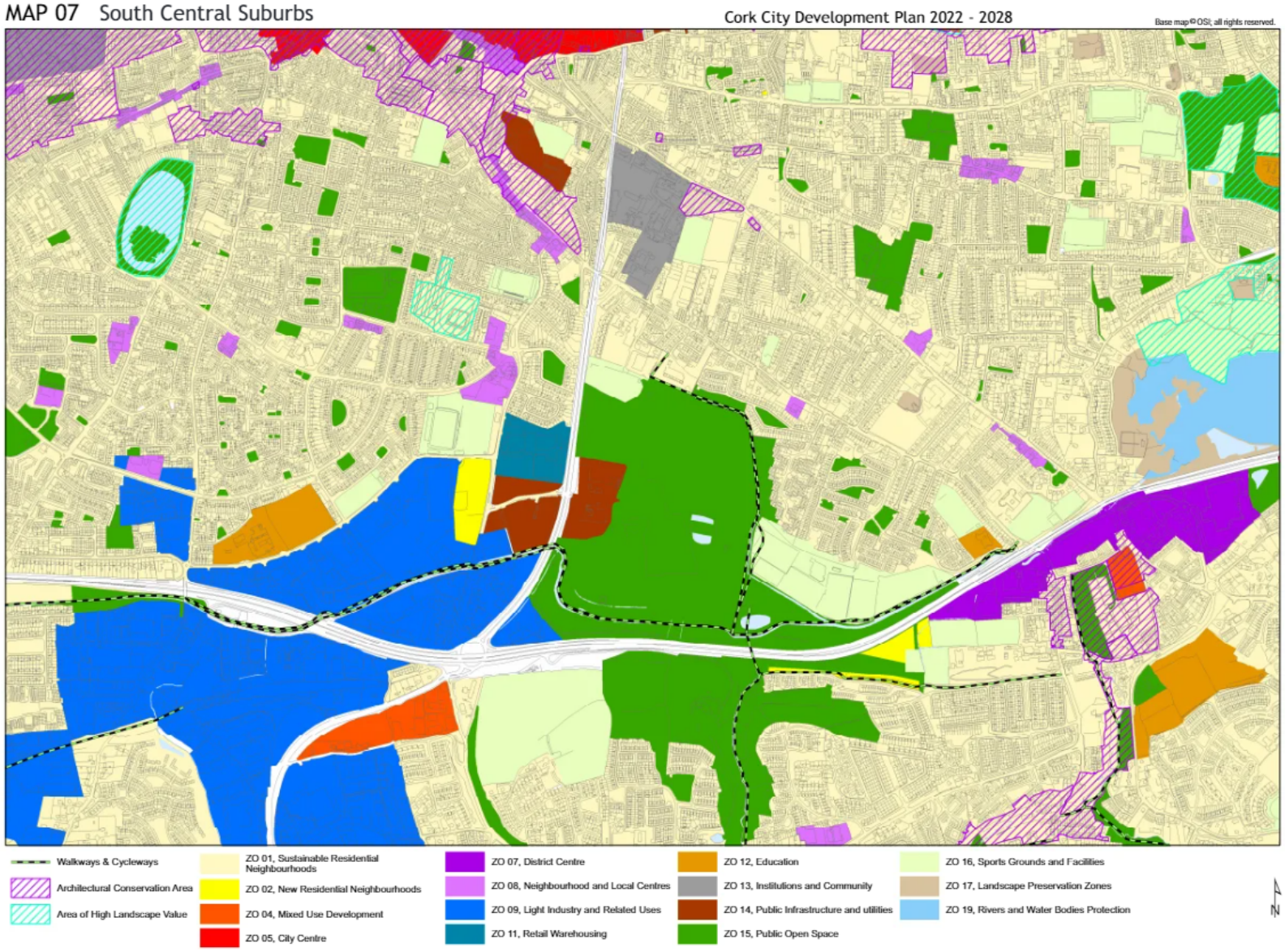


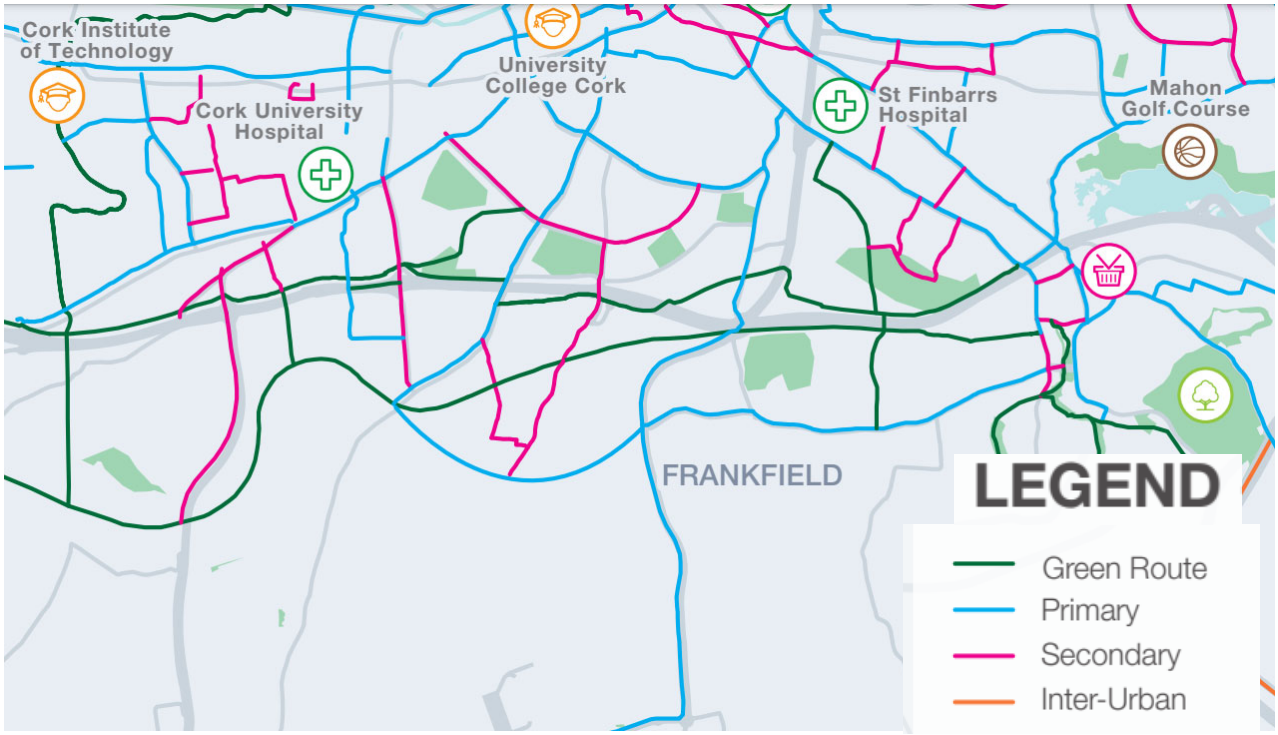
Figure 4-3: Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 Mapped Objectives – Map 07



Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2040 sets out a framework for planning and delivery of transport infrastructure, including Cork's Greenway Network to support the Cork Metropolitan Area's development in the period up to 2040. **Figure 4-4** shows the CMATS proposed Cycle Network which identifies the route of the former West Cork Railway incorporating the Chetwynd Viaduct as a 'Green Route'. This proposed 'Green Route' incorporates the full extent of the proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1 as well as continuing westwards from Chetwynd Reservoir and eastwards from Kinsale Road roundabout.

Figure 4-4: Cycle Network Map Extracted from CMATS –



Source: Cork City Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040 (Cork City Council and Cork County Council, TII and NTA)

4.2.2 Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources

The proposed development is largely a new pathway within the former West Cork Railway Corridor and further uses existing routes along a housing estate access road, a former residential access and tracks along a former soccer pitch where links are proposed. The proposed works will involve various excavation and earthworks activities.

The following section sets out the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources within the vicinity of the Proposed development. It addresses Soils, Lands, Water and Biodiversity.

4.2.2.1 Soils

The proposed development comprises areas mapped as AminDW – Deep Well Drained Acid Brown Earths/Brown Podzolics with smaller sections mapped as Made Ground and Shallow Well Drained AdminSW - Lithosols Regosols. The main characteristic of these soils which is identified as having potential for the proposed greenway is that within the Made Ground designation there is potential for encountering waste/contaminated material.

Subsoils: Much of the proposed development is underlain by Till derived from Sandstone till (Devonian)(TDSs) with smaller sections comprising man-made artificial ground (Urban) and Bedrock at the surface (Rock). There are no obvious constraints with Till, being for the most part well drained and the most

common subsoil in the country. Areas where rock is mapped as being at surface or close to the surface pose a potential constraint for the proposed greenway in terms of construction if final design requires cut below the existing ground level.

4.2.2.2 Land

The proposed greenway is along a section of the former West Cork Railway corridor that is largely vacant or comprising underutilised walkways of varying standard. Most of the former railway corridor is currently available for development of a greenway. Likewise with the proposed links, these predominantly follow the path of a disused access road and a gravel path alongside an unused sports field.

There is existing development within the former rail corridor at a number of locations. The first is at Hazelwood Grove in the form of a Travellers Accommodation and Yard site. The proposed greenway therefore is proposed to the south of this site through a currently vacant area of land.

The second part of the route which supports an active use other than as a pathway is within the boundary of the Chetwynd Reservoir site. The parts of the reservoir site affected however are an access road and open space only.

The connection through Eagle Valley is already in transport use as part of the main spine road for this residential estate and minimal sections of cycleway/walkway will be routed across public open space whereby it minimises the impact on the functionality of this amenity space. The section of link cycleway / walkway through the former soccer pitch already accommodates pathways used by the public.

Finally, land which is currently in private garden use is required from two residential properties to the west of Kinsale Road. The extent of land take is relatively small. While it will be a permanent loss of amenity space, both properties will retain generous private garden areas.

4.2.2.3 Water (Surface Water)

The proposed development is within the WFD Catchment 19 of Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay. This catchment includes the area drained by the River Lee and all streams entering tidal water in Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay and those streams entering tidal waters between Knockaverry and Templebreedy Battery, Co. Cork, draining a total area of 2,153km². There is one main river waterbody within the vicinity, namely that of the Moneygurney_010 (WFD Name) or Douglas (Lee). The WFD Status of the Moneygurney_010 is Good for the monitoring period of 2016-2021. The WFD Status was Moderate for the monitoring period of 2013-2018. The proposed greenway crosses the Douglas (Lee) 1st order stream over an existing culvert to the east of Spur Hill. It is a 1st order stream at this location, originating west of Cork Airport and flowing from south to north towards Togher where it changes direction and becomes a 2nd order Stream. The Douglas (Lee) then flows into the Transitional Waterbody of Lough Mahon c.5.5km downstream. The proposed greenway crosses the Lehenagh Beg 1st order stream over an existing culvert to the west of Forge Hill; this watercourse flows into Lough Mahon via the Douglas Lee c.4.1km downstream.

The EPA online mapping and River Quality Monitoring dataset (River Q Values 1971-2020)[5] indicates that there has been no historical recording of water quality on the Moneygurney/Hop Island Stream.

[5] https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/ Accessed: November 2022

IE000205_RPS-00-RP-C-RP00015 | Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Tramore Road to Eagle Valley (Phase 1) | A1 C02 | 21 April 2023
rpsgroup.com

The WFD Status of the Lough Mahon waterbody is Moderate for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018. Lough Mahon is “at Risk” of failing to meet its WFD objectives by 2027. Lough Mahon flows into the Coastal Waters of Cork Harbour which is assigned a Moderate WFD Status for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018 and is also “at Risk” of failing to meet its WFD objectives by 2027.

The waterbody Glasheen (Cork city) flows north in a culvert beneath the Dunnes Stores property and underneath the South Ring Road (N40) and then flows east. The WFD Status of this waterbody is Poor for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018. There is a further unnamed small stream (open channel) which flows in the field west of Garrane Darra in a northerly direction. This stream is culverted under the laneway which the proposed walkway/cycleway will traverse. This stream is not mapped or monitored by the EPA.

Figure 4-5: Surface Water within the vicinity of the Proposed Development

The former West Cork Railway corridor crosses the Moneygurney_010 waterbody at the following locations:

- Section between Spur Hill and L-2454 Togher Road crosses the Moneygurney_010 (EPA name Douglas (Lee)) over culvert.
- Section between L-2455 Lehenaghmore Road and Forge Hill crosses the Moneygurney_010 (EPA name Lehenagh Beg) over culvert.

In addition the cycleway/walkway will cross the unnamed small stream flowing west of Garrane Darra via an existing culvert.

These waterbodies will not be impacted by the works.

4.2.2.4 Water (Groundwater)

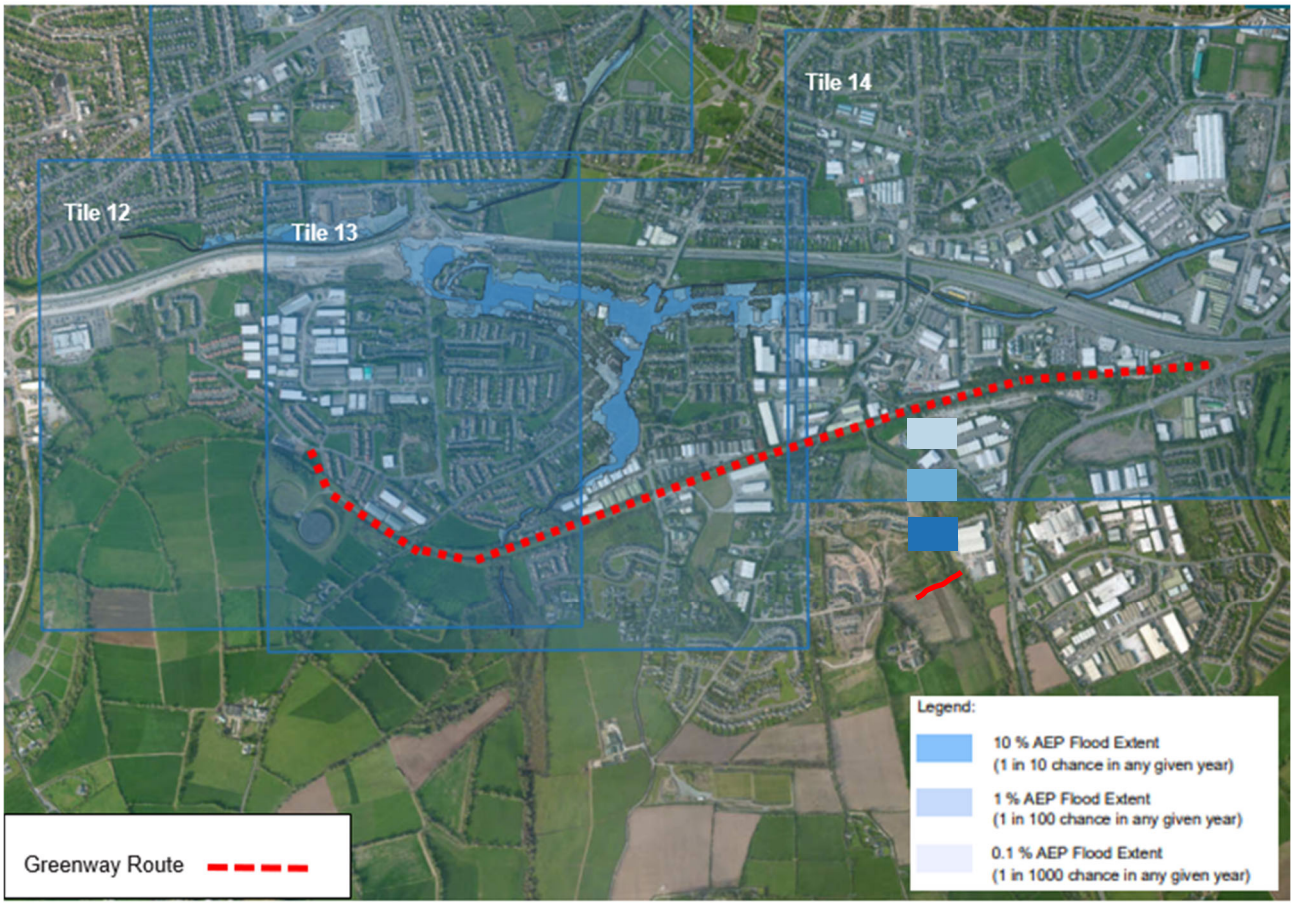
The proposed development is underlain by the Ballinhassig East GWB which occupies the uplands of the WDF Catchment 19 of Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay, and which in terms of groundwater resources is classified as poorly productive. The WFD Status of the Ballinahassig East GWB is Good for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018. In terms of groundwater vulnerability, the proposed development is dominated by 'Extreme' groundwater vulnerability, with shorter sections mapped as 'High' groundwater vulnerability. Rock at or near Surface or Karst, 'X' is present at Chetwynd Reservoir and from Forge Hill to Kinsale Road Roundabout and also the eastern link at Garrane Darra. Areas with 'rock at or close to the surface' are more vulnerable to pollution from runoff owing to a lack of protective overburden. The former West Cork Railway corridor is within LI - Locally Important Aquifer, bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones.

4.2.2.5 Water (Flooding)

The CFRAM River Flood Extents mapping notes that the proposed development crosses an area mapped as of being High probability (AEP 10%) at Spur Hill. A risk of pluvial flooding is identified within the Garrane Darra housing development; the scheme route does not intersect this area and existing surface water drainage infrastructure is in place. Minimal additional hard surfacing will be provided in this area.

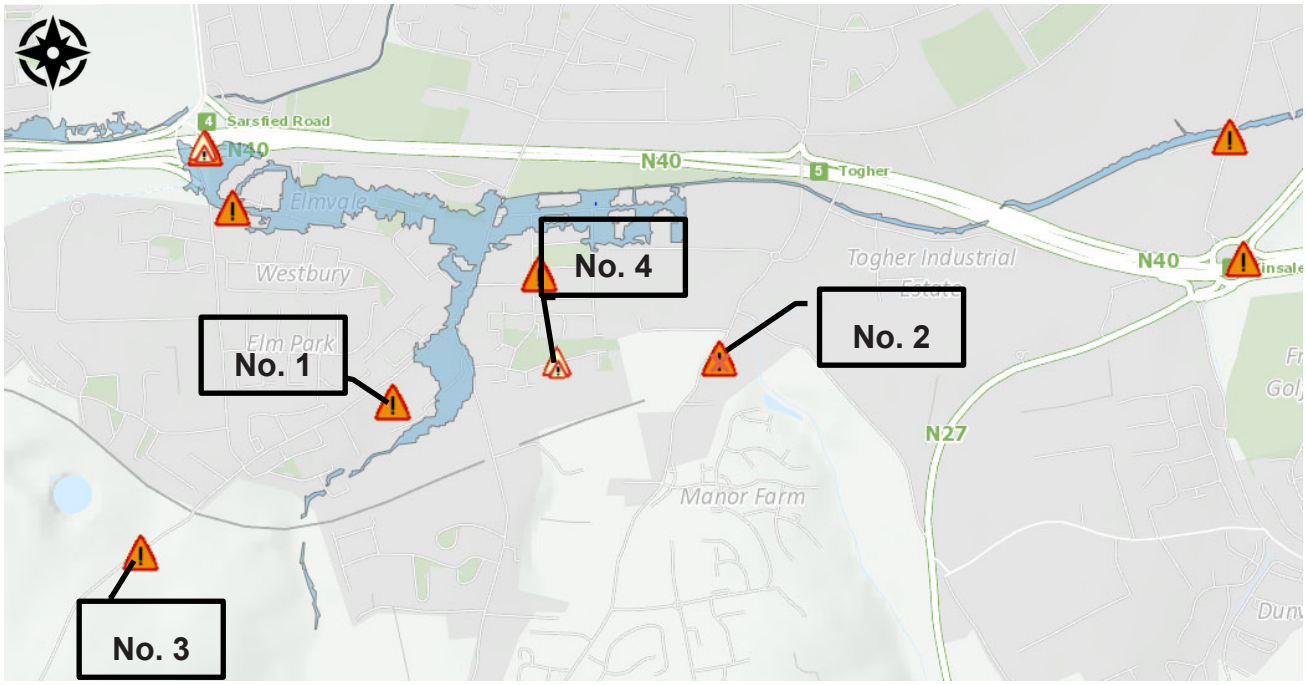
As can be seen Togher Village to the north of the proposed greenway is at risk of flooding. The Draft Catchment Flood Risk Management Plan, published in February 2010, recommended flood relief measures for the Togher area. Currently Cork City Council are carrying out such works as part of the Togher Flood Relief and Public Realm Enhancement Works. A new culvert has been installed between Togher Community Centre and Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate. Other flood alleviation works include the addition of a trash screen at the rear of Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate which has been recently installed. These works will alleviate the risk of flooding within the village.

Figure 4-6: Flooding Probability



Source: Flood Maps website (https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/)

Figure 4-7: Past Flood Events (Source: https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/)



A review of the Office of Public Works (OPW) Flood Maps (www.floodinfo.ie), extract seen in **Figure 4-7** reveals no past flood events are recorded along the route of the Proposed development. The nearest past flood events are shown in **Figure 4-7** and detailed in Table 4-5 below.

Table 4-5: Nearby Past Flood Events

Ref.	Waterbody	Flood Location	Date	Distance from Proposed development	Source of Flooding
1.	Moneygureny_010 (Douglas (Lee)	North of Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate	05/11/2002	95m from the section of the Proposed Greenway between Togher Road and Spur Hill.	Heavy rainfall caused stream to overtop where it enters the culvert.
2.	Moneygureny_010 (Lehenagh_Beg)	Pouladuff Road	20/11/2002	100m south of the Proposed development at Forge Hill.	Land and road flooding due to blockage in stream caused by cable drums.
3.	n/a Pluvial	Spur Hill LP2454	27/11/2002	Adjacent to the Proposed development. Spur Hill Bridge on Spur Hill and road to the south.	Downpours caused surface water to flow along the road. Records of potholes and loose gravel on the Spur Hill road.
4.	n/a Pluvial	Palmbury Estate Togher	Reoccurring (20/21/27/11/2002)	Located 150m to the south of the Proposed development.	Surface water drainage is affected through soakaways, heavy rainfall caused localised flooding in estate.

4.2.2.6 Biodiversity

4.2.2.6.1 Proposed Greenway Corridor

The existing baseline Biodiversity characteristics of the proposed greenway site have been established though a combination of desktop review and site survey work. Surveys undertaken to inform this EIA screening are habitat surveys, breeding bird surveys, bat surveys, mammal activity surveys and invasive alien plant species surveys.

Habitats

A search using Environmental Sensitivity Mapping and Heritage Mapping (available on-line) was conducted for Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats within 2km of the proposed development. No QI habitats are located within 2km of the proposed development.

Ecological walkovers were undertaken by an ecologist between February 2022 and March 2023.

The general findings are that the proposed greenway is located along an old railway corridor which has recolonised with habitats including dry meadows and grassy verges, scrub and broadleaved woodland; these habitats are of local conservation value. Also present are a treeline, dry drainage ditch and improved agricultural grassland. Buildings and artificial surfaces of negligible conservation value are also present.

Birds

A search of the NBDC mapping returned records for 17 SCI bird species and 3 Annex I bird species from the preceding 10 years, within 2km of the proposed greenway.

The closest European site that contains SCI bird species is Cork Harbour SPA which is located c.2.6km east of the proposed works area. No SCI species for Cork Harbour SPA or Annex I bird species were recorded during the site surveys.

A range of common and widespread bird species were recorded along the proposed greenway.

Bats

The woodland habitats fringing the proposed greenway provide limited roosting opportunities for bats. A total of two trees adjacent to the proposed link to the greenway from the N40 to Eagle Valley via undeveloped lands were categorised as being of moderate suitability for roosting bats as they contained one or more potential roost features, but none are suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis due to their size and lack of protected, sheltered conditions. No bat roosts were recorded at the proposed greenway. However, five species of bat commute to the site to forage along scrub and woodland habitats.

Badgers

No evidence of badger activity was recorded at the proposed site during recent survey work.

Otters

No evidence of otter was recorded at the proposed greenway during the site surveys and the streams crossed by the proposed greenway are not suitable to support a sustained foraging resource for otter.

Third Schedule Invasive Species

A search of the NBDC online database was conducted for records of invasive species listed on the Third Schedule to the EC Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011[6], as amended. These species are referred to as 'Third schedule' species. Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) has been recorded alongside the Douglas (Lee) watercourse at Black Ash and Togher. The Medium Impact species Three-cornered Garlic (*Allium triquetum*) has been recorded along the Douglas (Lee) watercourse. A number of other non-Third Schedule listed invasive plant species have also been recorded within 2km of the Proposed Development: Traveller's Joy (*Clematis vitalba*), Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja davidii*), Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria Formosa*) and Traveller's Joy (*Clematis vitalba*).

As part of the and 2023 ecology surveys, any Invasive Alien Plant Species (IAPS) within the study area were noted. One plant species listed in the Third Schedule within the EU Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011, as amended, was recorded during field surveys within the proposed works area: Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) was present to the west and east of Forge Hill. A number of non-Third schedule listed invasive plant species were also recorded from the survey area including butterfly-bush (*Buddleia davidii*) and Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*), both of which were recorded scattered throughout the proposed greenway route; and bamboo (*Pseudosasa japonica*), which was recorded to the west of Togher Road.

4.2.2.6.2 Natura 2000 Sites and Appropriate Assessment

The proposed greenway is located c.2.6km to the west of Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and c.9.2km west of Great Island Channel SAC (Site Code 001058) (measurements as the crow flies). There is potential remote and indirect connectivity from the proposed greenway site to these two sites via the crossing by the greenway of two watercourses which flow into Cork Harbour SPA c.4.1km downstream at its closest point and the SAC which is located a further 6.1km along the coast.

4.2.3 Absorption Capacity of Natural Environment

The absorption capacity of the natural environment is considered to be the measure of the ability of the proposed development to 'fit in' with the receiving environment. As such, as per the requirements of Annex III Location of Projects, details deriving from Schedule 7(2) of the Act, are explored below.

(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths

The subject site is not located within an area described as wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths.

(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment

The subject site is not located adjacent to a coastal zone or a marine environment.

(iii) mountains and forest areas

There are no mountain and forest areas in proximity to the proposed development.

(iv) nature reserves and parks

[6] Legislation relating to the control of invasive species includes the European Communities Birds and Habitats Regulations (S.I. 477 of 2011). Section 49 of these regulations describe the circumstances which constitute an offence in relation to the improper treatment of invasive species. Species covered in Section 49 are listed in the 'Third Schedule'.

There are no designated nature reserves or parks in proximity to the proposed development according to NPWS and EPA databases.

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

This EIA screening process has been carried out in conjunction with an Appropriate Assessment screening process. This allows for an early indication of the potential environmental effects likely to occur as a result of the implementation of the proposed development.

As noted above, and in the Report to Inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Greenleaf Ecology, 2022) there are two European Sites located within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the proposed works, these are: Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030) approximately 2.6km east of the proposed works and Great Island Channel SAC (Site Code: 001058) approximately 9.2km east of the proposed works.

There is potential indirect connectivity between the study area and the Cork Harbour SPA. The proposed greenway crosses two small streams (Douglas (Lee) and Lehenagh Beg (EPA names)) which flow into Lough Mahon and Cork Harbour SPA c.4.1km downstream at its closest point. However, there is no requirement for culverts or instream works for the proposed greenway and, in view of the nature scale and location of the proposed works, there is no potential for likely significant effects on Cork Harbour SPA as a result of the proposed development.

The Great Island Channel SAC is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay (IE_SW_19) WFD catchment and is located within the Lough Mahon transitional waterbody. There is, therefore, potential for hydrological connectivity between the SAC and study area. However, as noted previously, there is no requirement for culverts or instream works for the proposed greenway and, in view of the nature scale and location of the proposed works, there is no potential for likely significant effects on Great Island Channel SAC as a result of the proposed development.

The Report to Inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment concluded that the proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1, either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

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

There is one river waterbody within the vicinity, namely that of the Moneygurney_010 (WFD Name). The proposed greenway crosses the waterbody at two locations and the status of the waterbody is set out in **Section 4.2.2.3**.

(vii) densely populated areas

The proposed development is located within the jurisdiction of Cork City Council. The route of the proposed development is the former West Cork Railway corridor within the built-up suburban area dominated with low density residential, commercial/industrial premises. A number of new housing developments have commenced lately within the vicinity. New housing developments include a housing development of 73 no. houses accessed via the Eagle Valley Road.

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

Landscape:

All of the proposed development is within Landscape Character Type City Harbour and Estuary which is rated as a High Value Landscape. The section of the route within Chetwynd Reservoir is within the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt Area and zoned as ZO 20 City Hinterland as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. Section 10.347 of the Cork City Development Plan notes the following:

> *The primary objective of this area is to preserve the character of the City Hinterland generally for use as agriculture, rural amenity, open space, recreational uses, green and blue infrastructure and to protect and enhance biodiversity*.

Scenic Route Ref. HVP7 is referenced in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 as the Road between Frankfield and Ballygarvan Townland. This route runs along the N27 Kinsale Road and is adjacent to the eastern end of the proposed development.

Cultural and Architectural Heritage:

Table 4-6 summarises the cultural heritage features within the vicinity of the Proposed development.

JCA Architects visited the site in February 2022 and together with a desk top study subsequently prepared a Conservation Report for the Proposed development. The report sets out the Methodology and Specifications for the conservation bridge works.

Record of Protected Structures (RPS) / National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

The report notes that the proposed development passes under three old railway bridges at the following locations, each of the bridges is included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage:

- Spur Hill Bridge: Registration number 20908608.
- Lehenaghmore Bridge: Registration Number 20908609.
- Forge Hill Bridge: Registration Number 20908610.

There are no Protected Structures on the site or in the vicinity of the site. The site is not located in an Architectural Conservation Area.

Archaeology

There is a holy well approx. 20m to the east of Spur Hill recorded on the Record of Monuments & Places (CO086-006). This is within the footprint of the carriageway of the former West Cork Railway corridor. John Cronin and Associates Archaeology visited the site of the holy well in October 2022 and subsequently prepared an Archaeological Impact Assessment of the Holy Well, known as St. Bartholomew's Holy Well. The report notes that "*no traces of the holy well or any potential associated features are visible"* it is also noted that the "*inspection was hindered by the presence of thick overgrowth within the footprint of the former railway line*". The report notes that "*Archaeological Survey of Ireland inventory description of St. Bartholomew's Well (CO086-006----) records that it was destroyed during the construction of the Cork-Bandon railway in the middle of the 19th century*"

Table 4-6: Cultural Heritage Features along the route of the Proposed Development

Name	Reg No. (NIAH) / ID No. (RPS), Monument Identifier (National Monument)	Architectural Conservation	Archaeological Conservation	Location Relative to Proposed development
Bridge - Forge Hill	20908610	NIAH	n/a	Forge Hill. Located on the former West Cork Railway corridor – bottom of Forge Hill. The proposed Greenway will pass under this bridge.
Bridge - Lehenaghmore Road	20908609	NIAH	n/a	Lehenaghmore Road. Located on the former West Cork Railway corridor – near Southside Industrial Estate. The proposed Greenway will pass under this bridge.
Bridge - Spur Hill	20908608	NIAH	n/a	Spur Hill. Located on the former West Cork Railway corridor – east of Chetwynd Reservoir. The proposed Greenway will pass under this bridge.
Ritual site - holy well	CO086-006----		RMP	Spur Hill. Located within the footprint of the former West Cork Railway corridor - east of Chetwynd Reservoir.The proposed Greenway is wihtin the Zone of Notificaiton of CO086-006----.

The National Excavations Database 1970-2016 (www.excavations.ie) indicates that one archaeological excavation took place in the vicinity of the Proposed development. This excavation relates to a programme of monitoring and test-trenching carried out in 2002 and 2003 to the east and west of the existing N25/Kinsale Road Roundabout before planned infrastructural development works in the area. The excavation location was approx. 70m from the Proposed development. No finds or features of archaeological interest were found.

4.3 Characteristics of the Potential Impacts

Having identified the significant aspects of the proposed development and the environmental sensitivities of the site and surrounding area in **Section 4.1** and **Section 4.2** above, we set out hereunder a consideration of the likely significant effects on the environment due to the proposed development on a range of environmental topics set out in Article 3(1) of the EIA Directive. This is undertaken in accordance with Article 3(1). These environmental aspects are:

a. Population and human health;

b. Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;

c. Land, soil, water, air and climate;

d. Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; and

e. The interaction between the factors referred to in points (a) to (d).

The likely significant effects identified in respect of these various environmental aspects are described below taking into account as relevant the following:

- The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact.
- The nature of the impact.
- The transboundary nature of the impact.
- The intensity and complexity of the impact.

- The probability of the impact.
- The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact.
- The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing or permitted development; and
- The possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

It is noted that in the case of the current proposed development, there is no potential for transboundary impacts given its location and the nature of the proposed development.

In considering the potential for environmental impact arising from the proposed development in combination with other plans or projects within the area, no potential for cumulative effects is identified having identified and considered relevant existing and permitted plans and projects as set out in **Section 4.1.13**.

4.3.1 Population and Human Health

Having regard to the *'Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental impact Assessment Reports'*, the potential for impacts on population and human health from the proposed greenway is considered with reference to the following headings:

- Employment and Economy
- Demography
- General Population
- Residential Amenity
- Land Use
- Recreation and Amenity
- Community
- Human Health

4.3.1.1 Construction Phase

Employment and Economy

The construction of the greenway will generate some direct employment with workers likely drawn from the local Cork labour force. This will have a positive local impact for the duration of the construction works. Given the nature of the development however, the number of people employed will be relatively low. Combined with the relatively short, estimated construction period of 10 months the overall impacts are considered to be temporary, slight, positive and local.

The construction phase is also likely to generate demand for ancillary support services at a local and regional level in the building supply services, technical professions and the local service and retail businesses close to the construction site. Again, given the scale and duration of the construction phase these impacts are considered to be slight. Overall, this impact is considered to be a temporary, slight. positive indirect effect on the local population.

The construction will generate construction associated traffic on the local road network, which could have potential to cause some disruption to traffic and associated slight inconvenience to local businesses by delaying access to businesses.

In particular there will be a requirement to operate a short-term traffic management plan on Togher Road (L-2454) and at Forge Hill, where there will be a need for single lane traffic management, and there will also be a need to manage traffic within Eagle Valley while works are carried out on the spine road. There is a significant number of commercial businesses located along each of these roads. However, access to all properties will be maintained and given the temporary nature of the disruptions combined with the relatively low level of associated construction traffic, the overall negative impacts arising are considered to likely be slight only and short term.

Demography

The construction phase of the development will not give rise to any effects which will impact on demographic trends.

General Population

The local traffic disruptions which will arise from construction traffic access and management requirements noted above with reference to local businesses will also cause some inconvenience for local residents. As with businesses however, access to all residential properties will be maintained, and the duration of the impacts will be short term and temporary. Overall, this will likely be a slight, negative and temporary inconvenience only.

Residential Amenity

The construction phase is likely to give rise to noise and dust emissions within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development. This has potential to cause inconvenience for residents living in close proximity to the works. The closest such sensitive receptors are at as Eagle Valley, Fernwood, Fernwood Crescent, Garrane Darra, Hazelwood Grove and Kinsale Road. Given the separation distances from the works area to most of these residences combined with existing boundary vegetation along much of the route and standard good practice construction management measures the potential for impact is considered slight to negligible in most cases. The area for greatest potential is at Hazelwood Grove where the works area is close to and elevated above the residents. The site of one of the links to the N40 is within 50m of some residential units at Garrane Darra; these are separated by an estate road and trees from the works area and the works here are minor. Other residential units within Garrane Darra are within 25m and lack screening. The construction site can be screened as necessary to restrict dust impacts. Given the overall short-term nature of the works in proximity to the residents and the controlled working hours the overall noise impacts will be temporary, short term, local and slight to moderate.

The proposed greenway requires the acquisition of land from two residential properties. The areas involved are small in extent and are located at the rear boundaries of rear gardens. It will reduce the area of private residential amenity space for each of these residents. While this impact may be considered to be significant by the individual residents affected, it is noted that both properties will retain generous garden areas such that their overall residential amenity values will not be significantly diminished. This impact will be limited in extent to these two properties and the intensity of impact on the residential amenities of each property are considered to be moderate. Overall, it is not considered to be a significant impact on residential amenity in the overall context of the development and the scheme works area.

Land Use

The construction phase will alter the land use of the construction site for the duration of the works. The proposed route and associated works area will comprise a construction site. For those parts of the former railway corridor and other areas with paths which are currently accessible and used as a walkway / cycleway this use will temporarily be suspended. This is considered a temporary, slight, negative impact. For much of the route which is overgrown and inaccessible to the public the impact on land use will be neutral. In the areas of proposed land take at two residential properties and at entrance to the commercial property at Togher Road the land use will be altered at construction stage from their existing residential and commercial uses. Elsewhere, the lands subject to land take are currently disused.

The construction phase has potential to cause slight inconveniences for neighbouring activities. However, no potential for altering or impacting, even on a temporary basis, the land use of neighbouring lands is identified.

Recreation and Amenity

During construction the former railway route will not be accessible by the public. As some of the route is currently used for recreational purposes by the local community this will result in a temporary, negative impact. Given the existing relatively low usage levels of the route the overall impact is not expected to impact a large proportion of the population and will accordingly be a slight impact only.

Community

No effects on community uses or activities are considered likely due to the construction phase.

Human Health

Any noise and / or dust emissions will likely be of very modest levels and short term and are not consider likely to have potential for significant impacts on human health. No other aspects of the construction works are identified which are considered likely to give rise to effects with potential for impact on human health.

4.3.1.2 Operational Phase

Employment and Economy

The proposed greenway may serve a commuting function for some local residents and local workers in the area, depending on their travel route requirements. This will have a slight positive impact on the local workforce who do avail of this option as they will have a safe and segregated pedestrian / cycle route to work or for part of their journey.

Demography

The proposed greenway is not considered likely to impact on population profile or demographic patterns of the area in the future. Much of the area surrounding the greenway is already built up. The greenway is not considered likely to alter land use patterns from the existing or planned so as to influence population levels, patterns or profiles.

General Population

When operation the greenway will serve the immediate local population but will also likely bring some of the wider population of Cork City into this area of the city. Overall, the increase in cycle and pedestrian facilities for both commuting and recreational purposes across the city (with this and other schemes) is overall a significant positive permanent impact for the general population of Cork City. The contribution of this particular scheme is considered moderate given its current scope and extent.

Residential Amenity

As noted above, the proposed greenway requires the acquisition of land from two residential properties. The moderate negative impacts on the residential amenities of these properties which will commence during the construction phase will continue into the operational phase. Over time it is likely that the perceived impact felt by the residents in respect of their amenities will reduce. This overall impact is limited in scope to the residents of these two properties. It is considered to be permanent negative and moderate, potentially reducing to slight over time.

The proposed greenway will introduce public pedestrian and cycle access to parts of the former railway alignment and other lands not currently used by the public. It will also result in increased usage of parts which do currently have some form of pathway. In places where there are residential properties close to the alignment this has potential to give rise to overlooking and increase in noise so as to impact on privacy and general residential amenity. Proposed landscaping and or lighting also has potential to impact both positively and / or negatively. The closest such residential properties are at Garrane Darra, Eagle Valley, Fernwood, Fernwood Crescent, Lehenaghmore Road, Hazelwood Grove and Kinsale Road.

There is sufficient separation from most of the units at Garrane Darra from the route given the layout of the development with roadways placed to the edge thus providing a separation from the scheme. The route does come closer to some of the units within Garrrane Darra in areas that lack screening, particularly number 1 Garrane Darra where the link finishes and users of the new cycleway/walkway will use an existing footpath or road respectively to access the infrastructure within Eagle Valley to connect to the Greenway proper. While the volume of passing pedestrians and cyclists is expected to increase here, this area does not form part of the main greenway and trips here are expected to serve a local function as opposed to attracting additional recreational traffic such as could arise with the main greenway route. Particularly, there is an existing path at the location of the proposed cycleway / walkway and the northern side of the residential property is screened from same with established planting.

Within the Chetwynd Reservoir site, it is considered that the routing of the greenway is sufficiently distant from and secured from the neighbouring Eagle Valley area to protect the amenities and privacy of residents. Adjacent to Fernwood and Fernwood Crescent the route is currently accessible to the public. There are also significant levels of vegetation between the greenway and the rear of houses which will secure privacy and protect amenities. The closest houses on the southern side of the greenway at Lehenaghmore Road are considered to be sufficiently set back from the proposed greenway and screened by existing vegetation so as to protect their amenities. The residents of these properties are also already used to public access along

these parts of the route. The proposed greenway will introduce public access close to the rear of houses of Hazelwood Grove, the neighbouring Travellers Accommodation and Yard site and the rear of houses of Kinsale Road. To protect the privacy of residents of Hazelwood Grove and the neighbouring accommodation and yard site landscaping is proposed around the accommodate site and along the northern side of the greenway as it passes Hazelwood Grove. As the greenway is to the south of the rear gardens of Hazelwood Grove the landscaping specified should have regard to implications for shadowing. The existing rear boundaries of the Kinsale Road properties will protect the privacy of these properties. New boundary walls will be provided to the two Kinsale Road properties from which land will be acquired.

A parking space will need to be relocated within Garrane Darra where the proposed easternmost link from the N40 meets the estate road network. This is not an assigned space to any particular residential property and there will be no loss of parking. Therefore, the impact is considered neutral.

Future residential use is likely at the western end of the scheme where there are new residentially zoned or consented lands intersecting and adjacent the route of one of the proposed links to the scheme. The proposed development will provide an upfront active travel facility for future residents should this site be developed. On the basis of the foregoing, general impacts on residential amenities adjacent to the route are considered to vary from neutral to slight and moderate negative. Overall, the numbers of residents close to the route is not significant thereby limiting the overall level of impact of the scheme on residential amenity.

Land Use

The land use of the former railway corridor from Eagle Valley to Kinsale Road Roundabout will permanently become a cycle / pedestrian route. Given its current underutilised nature this is permanent positive impact.

The greenway is considered likely to have a neutral impact on existing or planned (having regard to Cork City Development Plan Zoning Objectives) land uses adjacent to the route. The proposed greenway use is compatible with and supportive of existing uses. It is also compatible with the zoning objectives attached to those areas of currently vacant land neighbouring the route. In particular, it is compatible with the residential zoning at Spur Hill and the Educational zoning to the west of Togher Road. The links proposed are located within residential and public open space zoned areas and will be compatible with and supportive of the objectives for same.

Recreation and Amenity

The proposed works will provide a greenway route which will contain and connect natural areas and open spaces. The proposed works will provide improved access to this recreational facility through improved car parking and bike storage facilities at Forge Hill. The provision of this greenway is considered to have a long-term, moderate positive effect on the population of the immediate study area and the city in general.

The greenway will impact on three existing areas of public open space serving local residents. These are at Eagle Valley (2 no.) and Hazelwood Grove. At Eagle Valley the route will reduce the area of public open space, but the routes of both the Greenway and the link from the N40 are so aligned as to minimise the fragmentation of the open space. The remaining areas of open space will be significant and will continue to allow for informal play and passive recreation as is the existing situation.

At Hazelwood Grove the greenway and associated landscaping will take up most of the existing open space area. While altered, it will still retain a public amenity and recreation function. The impact for the residents of Hazelwood Grove is considered to likely be a moderate, negative local impact. For the wider community however the enhanced recreational use of this area will be a moderate, positive more widespread impact.

Community

The additional of this greenway to the local area will have general positive impacts for the local community. The facility will encourage increased use of the route by local residents which in turn can have positive impacts on local community spirit.

Human Health

Enhanced access and options for active travel and recreational activity will have long term positive impacts on human health within the local community and population of Cork City.

4.3.2 Biodiversity

This section considers the potential for the proposed Greenway to impact on different ecological receptors along the route and whether any significant effects are considered likely. It also considers the potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites.

4.3.2.1 Construction Phase

Habitats

The construction work associated with the proposed development will require the removal of scrub and vegetation along the proposed routes. The extent of vegetation removal depends on how overgrown the corridor is at various locations. The habitats observed within the proposed works area and surrounds during this walkover were found largely to be of local conservation importance (higher value) (including small pockets of relatively species rich grassy verge habitat, scrub, treeline and broadleaved woodland). The impacts on habitats then due to construction are considered to be local, moderate, negative impacts.

Birds

No SCI species for Cork Harbour SPA or Annex I bird species were recorded during the site surveys. Accordingly, no potential for likely significant effects on the SCI of Cork Harbour SPA has been identified during construction.

The site clearance and vegetation removal works required for the construction of the greenway have potential to disturb a range of common and widespread bird species recorded along the proposed greenway. This is considered to be a local slight negative impact.

Undertaking vegetation clearance works during the breeding bird season would result in potential negative effects on breeding birds. However, the clearance of woodland and scrub habitats will be undertaken between 1st March and 31st August, therefore the proposed greenway is not likely to result in significant negative effects on breeding birds.

Bats

Site clearance and vegetation removal works have potential for impacts on bats given the nature of the study area. Impacts include loss/fragmentation of foraging and commuting habitat as a result of tree felling and scrub removal, loss of potential or actual tree roosts (to be confirmed) and impacts associated as a result of artificial lighting. Potential significant negative effects to local bat populations cannot be ruled out without the need for mitigation measures. The loss/fragmentation of bat habitat will be mitigated by the landscaping plan, which will include planting of native tree and shrub species. Felling of potential bat roosts will be avoided where feasible. Where felling is unavoidable, trees with potential roosting features will be surveyed before felling to ensure no roosting bats are present. Loss of potential bat roosts will be compensated for by the provision of bat boxes. Should lighting be required during the construction phase, it will be directed so as to avoid light spill on to valuable bat foraging habitat. With the implementation of these mitigation measures, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in significant negative effects on bats.

Otter

The streams crossed by the proposed greenway are unsuitable to provide a sustained foraging resource for otter. Therefore, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in any significant adverse effects on otter.

Badger

No evidence of badger was recorded within the study area. Therefore, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in a significant adverse effect on badger.

Third Schedule Invasive Species

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) (a third schedule listed species) was identified during surveys to the west and east of Forge Hill. A number of non-Third schedule listed invasive plant species were also recorded during the survey including butterfly-bush (*Buddleia davidii*), Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*) and bamboo (*Pseudosasa japonica*) at various locations. There is potential for significant negative effects through the spread of invasive species associated with the works in the absence of treatment/mitigation prior to commencement and during the works. However, an Invasive Plant Species Management Plan will be prepared for the proposed greenway to ensure that the risk of spread of invasive plant species is avoided/

minimised, Therefore, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in significant negative effects as a result of the spread of invasive plant species.

Natura 2000 Sites – Appropriate Assessment

A Report to Inform AA Screening has been prepared by Greenleaf Ecology. The proposed greenway will cross 2 no. watercourses that support remote hydrological connectivity to Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC. However, these watercourses will be crossed via existing culverts and no instream works are required. No SCI for Cork Harbour SPA were recorded during the site surveys and the proposed Greenway is set back from this SPA by c. 2.6km. In view of these factors, the Report to Inform AA Screening concludes that the proposed greenway does not have the potential for Likely Significant Effects upon European Sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects.

4.3.2.2 Operational Phase

Habitats

There is potential for surface water run-off carrying suspended silt or contaminants to enter into the streams crossed by the proposed greenway. There is potential for moderate negative effects to streams locally in the absence of treatment/ mitigation. However, the proposed greenway will include over the edge drainage and run-off from the car park will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharge to the existing surface water network. Therefore, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in significant negative effects on habitats during the operational phase.

Birds

There is potential for noise, vibration, lighting and human presence during movements associated with operation activities. Given the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, no likely significant effects on SCI for Cork Harbour SPA or QI habitats of Great Island Channel SAC will occur during the operational phase. In view of the nature and scale of the proposed development, and the habituation of the bird species currently present at the proposed greenway to human presence, effects on local bird populations are expected to be slight.

Bats

There is potential for impacts on bats as a result of artificial lighting during the operational phase. In the absence of mitigation, this would result in a long-term significant negative effect on local bat populations. However, a wildlife friendly lighting scheme will be installed. Therefore, no significant negative effects on bats are likely to occur during the operational phase.

Otter

The streams crossed by the proposed greenway are unsuitable to provide a sustained foraging resource for otter. Therefore, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in any significant adverse effect on otter.

Badger

No evidence of badger was recorded within the study area; therefore, the proposed greenway is not likely to result in a significant adverse effect on badger.

Third Schedule Invasive Species

Any IAS recorded along the route will have been treated and / or managed during or prior to construction. No ongoing likely potential impacts are identified during the operational phase.

4.3.3 Land and Soil

4.3.3.1 Construction Phase

The soil excavation quantity for the works is estimated to be 3,605m^3 to facilitate path formation and the car park. Soil excavation can potentially result in disturbance to the shallow subsoil (if encountered), soil erosion, increased rainfall runoff and slope instability and strain to existing subsoil structure as a result of loading and reloading during construction. Soil removal has implications for climate change in terms of carbon sequestration and increased soil erosion. This is considered to be a slight negative permanent effect on the soils of the area.

The majority of the traffic movement associated with the proposed greenway will be over the existing former West Cork Railway corridor. There is potential for accidental spillage of diesel fuel and hydraulic oil from site machinery during the construction phase. Construction phase storage of fuels and hazardous materials has the potential to impact soil quality if not stored correctly. The resultant effect is slight temporary and negative.

During the construction phase, there is potential for sediment from exposed soil or stockpiles to be carried by wind or water and cause pollution or nuisance at local sensitive receptor locations and waterbodies within the local environment. It should be noted that this sediment may also contain invasive species which if not managed correctly could have negative effects on adjoining lands. Given the distance to sensitive receptors from the stockpiles and the employment of best practice construction methods on site the impact is considered to be negative and temporary in nature and not significant.

In terms of soil excavation and accidental spillage, best practice mitigation measures that can reasonably be expected to be adopted would be comparable with those as set out in TII Publications 'Design of Earthwork Drainage, Network Drainage, Attenuation & Pollution Control' (DN-DNG-03066). Any topsoil to be retained would typically be kept separate from general spoil and in a tidy condition. Waste arising (including soil) from excavations will be stockpiled on-site at least 50m from the nearest watercourse and removed off-site to an appropriate licensed facility in accordance with the relevant Waste Management Regulations. Where stockpiling of soil is required, stockpiles would be limited to heights not exceeding two metres, and be battered back to a stable slope, and would not be unnecessarily trafficked. Soil stockpiles will be covered and/or temporary silt fences placed at the base of the stockpile to ensure there is no surface water runoff during rainfall events. All soil stored on site would be covered with silt fencing surrounding the stockpile.

4.3.3.2 Operational Phase

No impacts on land, soil or bedrock are envisaged during the operation of the proposed greenway.

4.3.4 Water

4.3.4.1 Construction Phase

Surface Water

The former West Cork Railway corridor will cross the Moneygurney_010 waterbody at the following locations (Refer to **Figure 4-5**).

- Former West Cork Railway corridor between Spur Hill and Togher Road crosses the Moneygurney_010 (EPA name Douglas (Lee)) over culvert.
- Former West Cork Railway corridor between Lehenaghmore Road and Forge Hill crosses the Moneygurney_010 (EPA Name Lehenagh Beg) over culvert.

A small drainage channel will be crossed at a field to facilitate one of the links from the N40 cycleway/walkway to the greenway.

There is potential for water pollution and in turn, impacts to protected species and habitats during the construction phase of the proposed development. This is due to the possible release of sediment or accidental spillages of construction related materials on site. Concrete, fuel, lubricant, etc. used for construction purposes can potentially impact on groundwater, surface water and soils during the construction phase. However, there is no requirement for new culverts, bridges or instream works for the proposed development along the main greenway route; the two watercourses there will be crossed via existing culverts. At the link from the N40, the field drainage channel is small and a simple single span structure will be provided.

It is considered that the proposed works will not result in a significant effect on the surface water or groundwater quality of watercourses in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Groundwater

There is potential for groundwater pollution during the construction phase of the proposed development. This is due to the possible release of sediment or accidental spillages of construction related materials on site and the excavation works and topsoil stripping which can effect changes in the vulnerability of the underlying aquifers by altering the thickness of the overlying soil profile However, given the minimal excavation

involving clearing of vegetation and excavation with no significant cut and fill requirements, it is not envisaged that there will be any impact on the groundwater regime as a result of the proposed development.

To minimise potential impacts the construction works shall adhere to the requirements of the best practice guidelines of CIRIA[7].

4.3.4.2 Operational Phase

Surface Water

The proposed development will not create large areas of hardstanding that would increase any potential for flood risk.

During the operational phase, the proposed drainage for the greenway and linking pathways will be over the edge. Surface water run-off from the proposed car park will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharge to the existing surface water network at Forge Hill. The cycleway within Eagle Valley will drain to the existing road surface water drainage system. With the design of the drainage and the limited pathways to watercourses the impacts on water quality are slight negative and temporary.

Groundwater

The presence of additional paved surfaces in previously undeveloped areas (in particular for the proposed new carpark at Forge Hill) will restrict the amount of rainfall that will infiltrate to ground, potentially restricting groundwater recharge rates in the area. However, given that this will comprise a very small portion of additional paved area in comparison to the area of the Ballinhassig East GWB as a whole, this impact is considered an imperceptible negative permanent effect on the groundwater regime of the area.

Mitigation in the form of predominantly over the edge drainage will allow surface water runoff to infiltrate back to ground and a bypass interceptor will treat runoff before discharge to the existing surface water network at the proposed Forge Hill carpark, protecting both surface and groundwater quality. Within Eagle Valley the cycleway will be provided along the existing spine road.

Operational phase impacts on the groundwater quality and existing groundwater regime as a result of the proposed development are not expected to arise.

4.3.5 Air and Climate and Noise

4.3.5.1 Construction Phase

Air Quality and Climate

There is potential for dust generation during the construction phase from plant and construction traffic. There is also potential for material in temporary exposed soil/stockpiles to become airborne. Such works can contribute to the generation of a quantity of dust, particularly in dry and windy weather conditions. TII Guidelines *Air Quality Assessment of Proposed National Roads - Standard* (2022) provides a useful comparator for assessing impacts on air quality and climate on various types of construction projects and

7 Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects. CIRIA C648. (CIRIA, 2006)

notes the distance for effects of a minor to moderate sized construction site is within 25 to 50 metres. The nearest sensitive receptors to the works are residential properties located within Eagle Valley, Garrane Darrra, Fernwood, Fernwood Crescent and Hazelwood Grove.

The properties within Fernwood and Fernwood Crescent are within 50m of the proposed works and are separated from the works by a dense tree line which will offer protection from any potential dust. The properties at Eagle Valley and Hazelwood Grove are within 25m of the proposed works and do not have any protection between the works and the properties. At Garrane Darra, some properties are within 25m from the works area with no screening with others between 25m and 50m from the works area with trees located between. Temporary dust impacts may arise during the 10-month construction phase period resulting in temporary imperceptible to slight negative effects in the absence of mitigation. The properties at Eagle Valley and Hazelwood Grove, and some of the properties at the west and southeast of the Garrane Darra complex are likely to experience slight negative effects as they are closer and have no protection. The properties at Fernwood and Fernwood Crescent are expected to experience slight effects as they are further from the works and have protection in the form of trees in between the properties and the works.

The nearest sensitive ecological receptors are birds of the Cork Harbour SPA. The birds within Cork Harbour SPA are beyond the zone of influence of predicted noise emissions from the proposed works.

Construction vehicles travelling to and from the site during the construction phase have the potential to give rise to dust and increased pollutant concentrations at nearby sensitive receptors including the residential properties adjacent to the works such as those at Eagle Valley, Garrane Darra, Fernwood, Fernwood Crescent and Hazelwood Grove. The significance of impacts due to dust and vehicle emissions from construction traffic is dependent on the number of additional vehicular movements anticipated, and the proximity of sensitive receptors to site access routes. Given the scale of the project is a 2.9km greenway with linking cycleways and cycleway/walkways at approx. 915m and a car park, it is not expected that the proposed development will generate a volume of traffic that would give rise to significant impacts from vehicle emissions from construction traffic.

Noise

The construction phase will give rise to a temporary increase in noise as a result of the operation of plant and machinery. The construction works will last for a period of approx. 10 months. The proposed development is likely to give rise to temporary imperceptible to slight adverse effects from noise related to plant and machinery during this phase.

Standard practice construction techniques and methods will be implemented to ensure construction noise levels remain within acceptable limits. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the requirements of BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014, Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites. Working hours will also be restricted.

4.3.5.2 Operational Phase

Air Quality and Climate

The operational phase proposed greenway is considered to have a positive impact on air quality and climatic factors due to the fact that it will encourage more sustainable modes of transport i.e., cycling and walking for commuting and leisure activities. The proposed development will decrease the reliance on the private car leading to a reduction in emissions from private cars. This amounts to a long term significant positive effect in terms of air and climatic factors.

Noise

Once operational the greenway will attract more users and there is potential for some nuisance to the nearby residents associated with localised traffic disruption as a result of cars entering and egressing from the car park on to Forge Hill, a road that experience traffic queuing regularly. The proposed development could give rise to potential for imperceptible to slight negative long-term effects due to noise and traffic within the study area during the operational phase.

4.3.6 Material Assets

4.3.6.1 Construction Phase

The primary material asset for consideration in relation to the proposed development relates to the existing local access roads in the vicinity. The construction phase of the proposed development will give rise to an increase in vehicles utilising the local road network within the vicinity of the site. There will also be a need for single lane traffic management at Forge Hill, Togher Road (L-2454) and within Eagle Valley which will cause some traffic disruption and delays. Given the limited areas affected however and the short-term duration of the works It is considered that the impacts on the local road network and users will be slight, temporary, localised and negative.

There will be closures to the sections of the existing walkway from Togher Road (L-2454) to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) which is currently used as a walkway to facilitate the construction of the proposed greenway, and of the paths around the former soccer grounds to facilitate the link walk. This will be a slight negative temporary effect on users of the current pathways.

The existing watermain along the route of the greenway will be protected during construction. The works proposed are relative shallow in any case. No potential for likely significant impacts is identified.

It is likely that there will be a requirement to treat areas of Japanese knotweed which may need disposal at a licenced facility that accepts contaminated waste. This will result in a slight negative impact of temporary duration during treatment and management works.

4.3.6.2 Operational Phase

Once operational, it is estimated that there will be an increase of users of the greenway for both recreational and commuting purposes. Where the greenway is used for local commuting purposes by residents and workers of the area this could potentially result in a slight reduction in vehicular trips in the area which would be a slight positive impact.

The proposed car park at Forge Hill will likely result in an increase in vehicular traffic movements for users wishing to drive to the car park and avail of the facilities. The effect of this increase is considered to be a slight negative, local and long-term impact.

4.3.7 Cultural Heritage

4.3.7.1 Construction Phase

Archaeological Heritage

As noted above there is one feature on the Record of Monument and Places (RMP) within the vicinity of the former West Cork Railway, namely that of a Ritual site - holy well, Monument Identifier Reference CO086-006 located east of Spur Hill, within the footprint of the carriageway of the former West Cork Railway corridor. There are no visible remains of this feature, and it is understood that it was destroyed during the construction of the Cork-Bandon railway in the middle of the 19th century. Consequently, it is expected that the proposed greenway works will not impact on the site of the holy well. The works will be subject of archaeological supervision in any event. No potential for likely significant effects on the RMP is therefore identified.

Architectural and Cultural Heritage

The works on the railway bridges, (all three are NIAH features) will include repointing of masonry stone/open joints and the repair of the parapet walls and the clearance of dirt, vegetation and graffiti. As indicated in the JCA Architectural Conservation Report prepared for the proposed bridge works, *"The proposals to retain the bridges, which are currently in poor repair and vulnerable to continuing loss of fabric, and not to alter them but to repair them using best practice methods will also have a major beneficial impact on these structures, whose regional significance is recognised by the NIAH. The decision to route the proposed Greenway under the existing historic bridges means that their historic function and character will remain fully legible".*

On this basis it is considered that there will be an overall significant positive impact on Architectural Heritage as a consequence of the construction works proposed.

4.3.7.2 Operational Phase

Archaeological Heritage

The Archaeological Impact Assessment report prepared by John Cronin & Associates identifies an opportunity for the erection of an information board within the vicinity of the holy well site and Spur Hill commemorating the former location of St. Bartholomew's Well, to help ensure that a folk memory of the site continues. It is suggested that this could potentially include content from the 18th century descriptions of the holy well and its associated traditions. This would be a slight positive impact of the proposed development if implemented.

Architectural and Cultural Heritage

The proposed development will reuse the former railway corridor and has the potential to create positive enhancement and presentation of this cultural heritage resource whilst also having due regard for the inherent protection and preservation of same. This will result in a positive long term significant impact.

Strategically selected resting places, careful design and routing to incorporate attractive vistas of extant cultural heritage remains, as well as encouragement to visit, learn more, celebrate and enjoy the identified community heritage assets are identified as items that can be considered for the overall project design to enhance its positive impacts.

As noted in the JCA report, "*The introduction of a 4m wide Greenway to the route and the retention of embankments will mean that a rail line could be reintroduced to the route at a future time, which may also be considered a positive impact".*

4.3.8 Landscape

4.3.8.1 Construction Phase

All of the greenway site is located within High Value Landscape - LCT City Harbour and Estuary. The Scenic route Reference No. *S56 Road between Frankfield and Ballygarvan Townland* which runs along the N27 Kinsale Road is located approx. 30m from the proposed development. The construction site and associated works will mainly be hidden from view from this route. The works at Kinsale Road roundabout will be visible. In the context of a major traffic junction, these local visual impacts will be negligible to slight, negative and temporary.

The section of the proposed greenway within the Chetwynd Reservoir is zoned as ZO 20, City Hinterland in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. The Cork City Development 2022-2028 notes that *the primary objective of this area is to preserve the character of the City Hinterland generally for use as agriculture, rural amenity, open space, recreational uses, green and blue infrastructure and to protect and enhance biodiversity.* Therefore, inserting the proposed greenway within the City Hinterland zoning is compatible with the development plan. The greenway in this area will also run alongside an existing roadway which will assist in visually absorbing the greenway into the landscape at this location.

In general, throughout the scheme, the construction activities will result in slight negative temporary landscape and visual effects, in particular, arising from the movement of construction vehicles and traffic, where construction movements may interact with local traffic along the local road network including, Forge Hill, Togher Road (L-2454), Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) and Spur Hill.

The landscape and visual effects associated with construction related activity will potentially impact on local residents on a temporary basis and result in slight negative effects.

4.3.8.2 Operational Phase

As an at grade pedestrian and cycle route, the greenway does not comprise any substantial structural elements with potential for significant visibility in the wider area. The fact that the greenway will be accommodated within a former railway corridor largely kept free of development and having considerable boundary vegetation means that there will be very limited visibility of the route from surrounding areas. Generally limited views onto the route will be available from the local road network.

Where views of the greenway are available from surrounding roads or residential areas, it is considered that the new greenway works and its associated landscaping and lighting will comprise a positive contribution to the local landscape and will be recognisable as a high standard, safe and secure facility. Positive long term

impacts will be associated with the areas of proposed new landscaping, which will be a positive addition to the landscape and visual amenity

4.3.9 Summary of Likely Significant Impacts

Table 4-7 summarises the identified potential for likely significant impacts with reference to the various environmental aspects considered.

Table 4-7: Summary of Potential for Likely Significant Impacts

Environmental Aspect	Construction Phase Impact	Operational Phase Impact
Population and Human Health	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Biodiversity	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Land and Soil	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Water	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Air and Climate and Noise	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Material Assets	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Cultural Heritage	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely
Landscape	No significant impacts considered likely	No significant impacts considered likely

5 EIA CONCLUSION

The proposed development does not comprise a class of development described under Section 50 (1)(a) of (b) of the Roads Act. Accordingly, EIA is not a mandatory requirement for the proposed development under the Roads Act. Section 50(1)(c) of the Roads Act expands the circumstances where EIA may be required (other than development to which Section 50(1)(a) applies) to include any proposed road development or the improvement of an existing public road which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This effectively introduces some level of non-mandatory EIA Screening for any proposed road development.

The proposed development could be considered to comprise a class of development listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). This class of development comprises '*Urban development'.* However, given the extent of the site area of the proposed greenway (4.27ha) it would fall below the thresholds set out for this class of development whare are *"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"*. The proposed development is therefore considered a sub-threshold development.

It is therefore appropriate to consider whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

This Report to Inform EIA Screening provides an assessment of whether the development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment by addressing the criteria and information set out in Annex III and IIA of the EIA Directive and Schedules 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

This assessment concluded that no significant effects on the environment were considered likely to arise. On this basis it is considered that the development does not require Environmental Impact Assessment and that an EIAR is not necessary.

Appendix A
Drawings

Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Cork City Council

Part VIII Planning Drawings

Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I

April 2023

Cork City Council

Part VIII Planning Drawings

Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I

Drawings Index

Drawing No.	Drawing Title
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-IX0001-01	INDEX SHEET
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001-01	LOCATION MAP (SHEET 1 OF 2)
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001-02	PROPOSED GREENWAY SCHEME- KEY PLAN (SHEET 2 OF 2)
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008-01	SITE LOCATION & PROPOSED GREENWAY SCHEME (SHEET 1 OF 2)
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008-02	SITE LOCATION & PROPOSED GREENWAY SCHEME (SHEET 2 OF 2)
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0009-01	SITE LOCATION & PROPOSED WALKWAY-CYCLEWAY LINKS TO N40
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-LA0001-01	LANDSCAPE DESIGN (SHEET 1 OF 3)
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-LA0001-02	LANDSCAPE DESIGN (SHEET 2 OF 3)
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-LA0001-03	LANDSCAPE DESIGN (SHEET 3 OF 3)

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Status Rev	Date	Drn Chk	Amendment / Issue	App
A1.C01	24.04.23	GG RG	Issue for Planning	RG

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Model File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-IX0001

Scale: N.T.S. @ A1, N.T.S. @ A3

Created on: January 2023

Sheets: 01 of 01

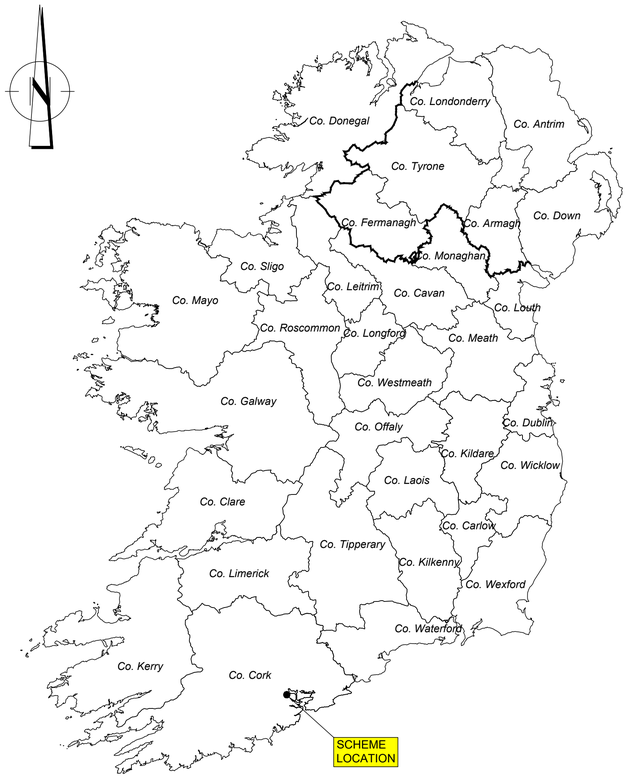
Project: Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I

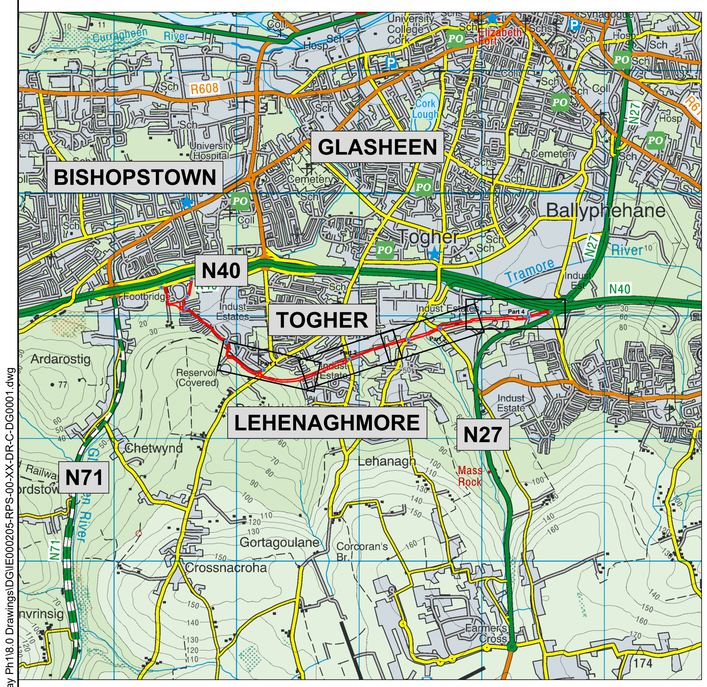
Title: INDEX SHEET

File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-IX0001 - 01

Status: A1

Rev: C01





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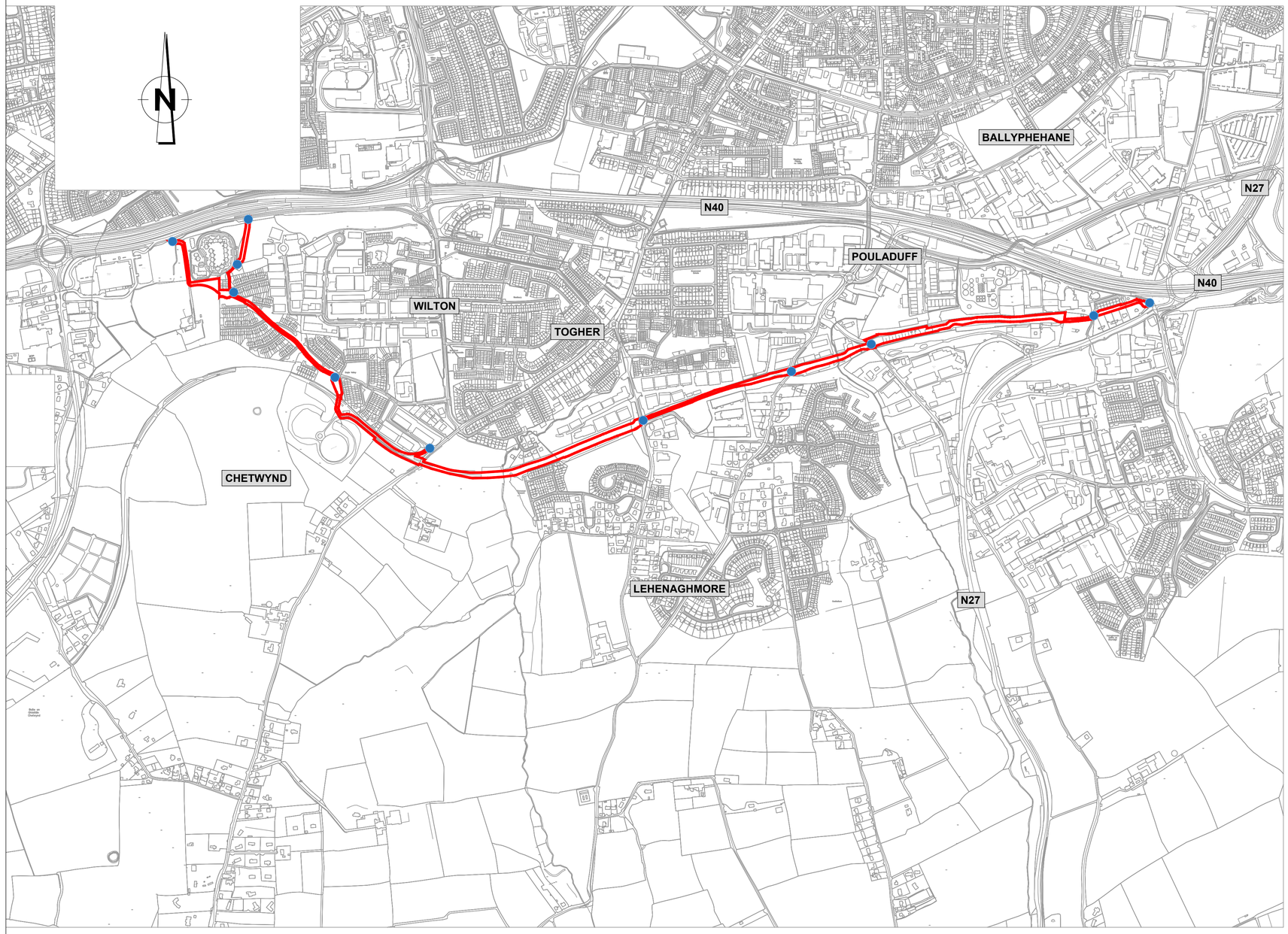

Legend

Site Notice Locations

SITE LOCATION
(Scale 1 : 7,500)

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Model File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001

Scale	Project
As Shown @ A1 Half @ A3	Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Created on: January 2022	Title: Location Map, Sheet 1 of 2
Sheets: 01 of 02	

File Identifier	Status	Rev
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001 - 01	A1	C01

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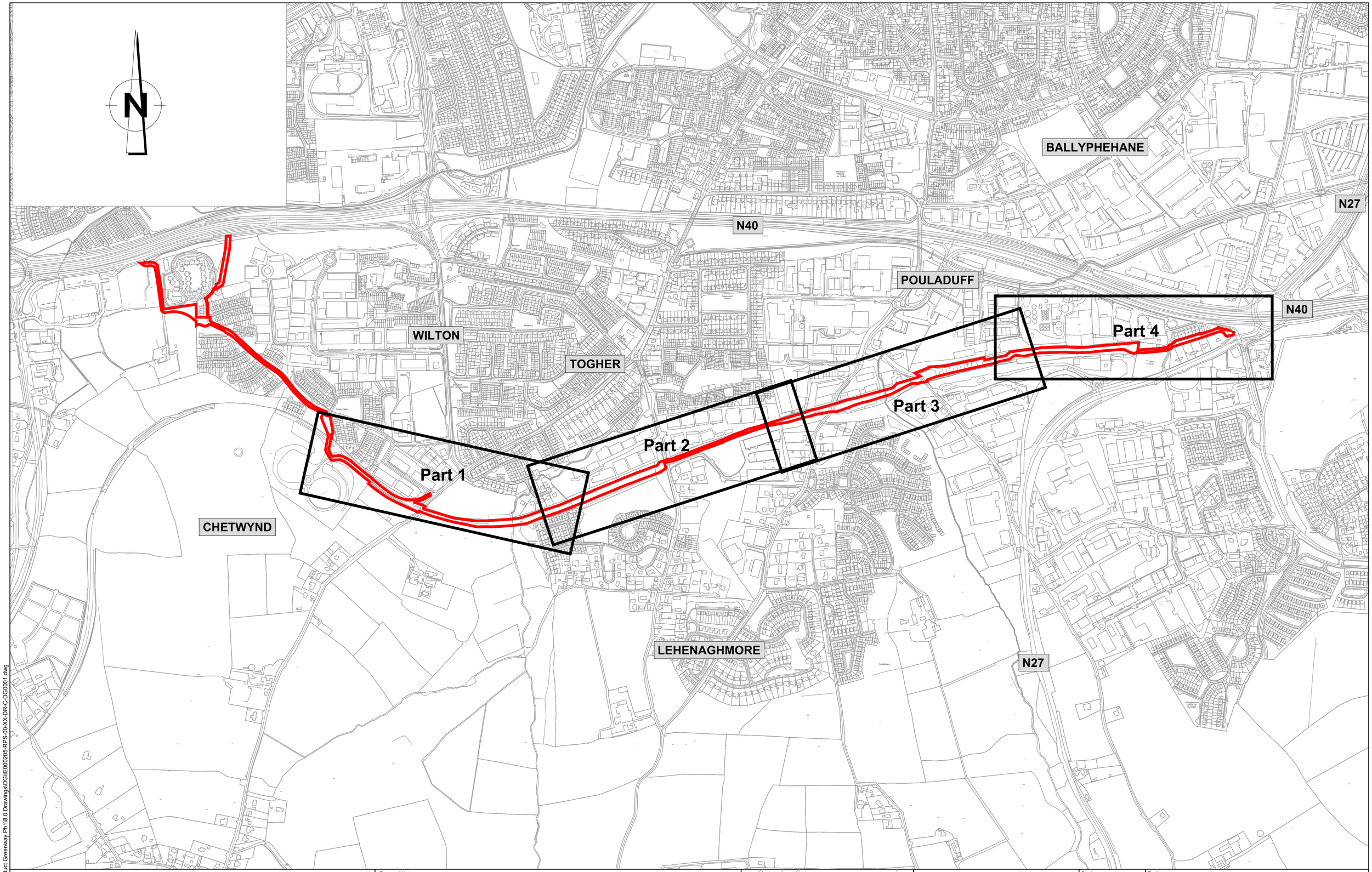

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Scale: NTS @ A1, Half @ A3

Created on: January 2022

Sheets: 02 of 02

Project: Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I

Title: Proposed Greenway Scheme - Key Plan

Sheet 2 of 2

File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0001 - 02

Status: A1

Rev: C01

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Proposed "Linear Park" Landscaped Area

EAGLE VALLEY

New Fence between the Greenway and Chetwynd Reservoir Site

New gated access to the Chetwynd Reservoir Site

Gates for Chetwynd Reservoir

Edge of existing reservoir access road

New Fence at the south of Greenway

New 4m wide Greenway (See Section 3 above)

CHETWYND RESERVOIR

Existing reservoir access road

Gate to be relocated

Realigned reservoir access road (Realigned to the North by 1.7m)

New Fence at the south of Greenway

Proposed Viewing and Picnic Area - with cycle parking. (See Landscaping Drawings)

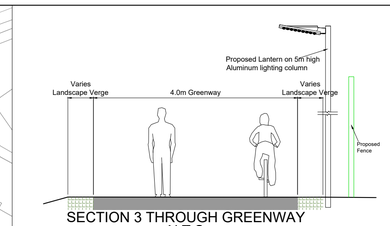
SPUR HILL BRIDGE (Stone to be repointed, reset and cleaned)

New 4m wide Greenway (See Section 4)

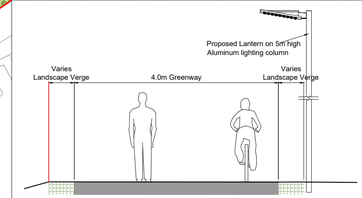
SPUR HILL

FERNWOOD

Match Line



SECTION 3 THROUGH GREENWAY
N.T.S.



SECTION 4 THROUGH WALKWAY/CYCLEWAY
N.T.S.

LOCATION PLAN - PART 1 of 4

Legend

- Proposed standard tree planting
- Existing or proposed native shrubs
- Proposed ornamental shrub mix
- Flowering perennials
- Proposed climbers
- Proposed pollinator-friendly seed mix
- Proposed Red line Boundary
- Proposed Fencing
- Proposed 5m Aluminium Lighting Column

Typical Toucan Crossing

Existing Pathway to be Upgraded

Proposed Toucan Crossing on L2454 Togher Road (See Above)

ESB Pole to be relocated

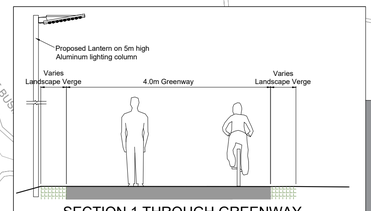
ESB Pole to be relocated

New 4m wide Greenway (See Section 1 below)

WESTGATE BUSINESS PARK

L2454 - TOGHER ROAD

Existing Corridor



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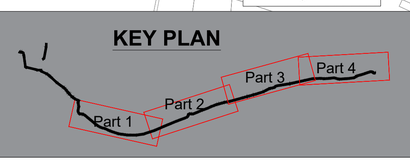

LOCATION PLAN - PART 2 of 4

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Scale	1:1000 @ A1 Half @ A3
Created on	Apr. 2023
Sheets	01 of 02
Project	Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Title	Site Location & Proposed Greenway Scheme Sheet 1 of 2
Model File Identifier	IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008
File Identifier	IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008 - 01
Status	A1
Rev	C01

L2455 LEHENAGHMORE ROAD BRIDGE (Stone to be repointed, reset and cleaned)

L2455 - LEHENAGHMORE ROAD

Match Line

New 4m wide Greenway (See Section 1 below)

Upgraded Controlled Access (via gates) to new car park

Forge Hill Parking Area and Cycle Hub. Proposed seating, bike storage & bike stands (See Landscaping Drawings)

Proposed 50 Space Car Park

Match Line

1550 1600 1650 1700 1750 1800 1850 1900 1950 2000 2050 2100 2150 2200 2250 2300

Existing Corridor

Links to the Greenway to be developed as part of the planned L2455 Lehenaghmore Road Improvement Scheme

L2455 - LEHENAGHMORE ROAD

Existing Corridor

FORGE HILL BRIDGE (Stone to be repointed, reset and cleaned)

FORGE HILL

Match Line

Pond

FARM LANE

Southside Industrial Estate

POULADUFF RD

Togher Industrial Estate

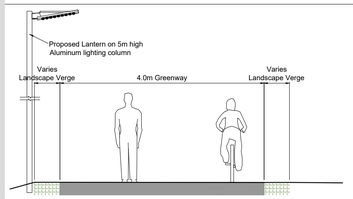
Hazard Hands Adoption Mediation Agency

City Link Park

LOCATION PLAN - PART 3 of 4

Legend

- Proposed standard tree planting
- Existing or proposed native shrubs
- Proposed ornamental shrub mix
- Flowering perennials
- Proposed climbers
- Proposed pollinator-friendly seed mix
- Proposed Red line Boundary
- Proposed Fencing
- Proposed 5m Aluminium Lighting Column



SECTION 1 THROUGH GREENWAY
N.T.S.

Wall at Hazelwood Groove

N40 SOUTH RING ROAD

SOUTH RING ROAD

Landscaped hedging/screening (See Landscaping Drawings)

KINSALE ROAD ROUNDABOUT

Landscaped hedging/screening (See Landscaping Drawings)

Match Line

2250 2300 2350 2400 2450 2500 2550 2600 2650 2700 2750 2800 2850 2900 2939

New 4m wide Greenway (See Section 1 above)

Raised crossing at Hazelwood Grove

HAZELWOOD GROVE

New 4m wide Greenway (See Section 1)

TIE IN TO EXISTING CROSSING IN THE IMMEDIATE TERM WITH FURTHER ENHANCEMENT IN THE FUTURE VIA BUS CONNECTS SCHEME

KINSALE RD

KINSALE ROAD

N27 (KINSALE ROAD)

Car Park

Tk

Tks

ES

Hotel

KEY PLAN

Part 1 Part 2 Part 3 Part 4

LOCATION PLAN - PART 4 of 4

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Cork City Council

General Notes

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Status	Rev	Date	Dm Chk	Amendment / Issue	App
A1	C01	24.04.23	GG RG	Issue for Planning	RG

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Model File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008

Scale	Project
1:1000 @ A1 Half @ A3	Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Created on: Apr. 2023	Title: Site Location & Proposed Greenway Scheme Sheet 2 of 2
Sheets: 02 of 02	

File Identifier	Status	Rev
IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0008 - 02	A1	C01

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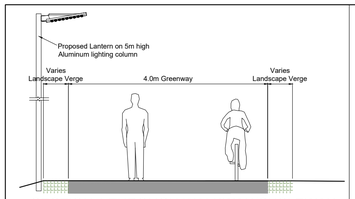

SECTION 1 THROUGH WALKWAY/CYCLEWAY
N.T.S.

Legend

- Proposed standard tree planting
- Existing or proposed native shrubs
- Proposed ornamental shrub mix
- Flowering perennials
- Proposed climbers
- Proposed pollinator-friendly seed mix
- Proposed Red line Boundary
- Proposed Fencing
- Proposed 5m Aluminium Lighting Column

KEY PLAN

Greenway Scheme

LOCATION MAP Scale 1:5000

Pedestrian Guardrail to provide a buffer from the N40 carriageway

N40

Possible Entrance from N40

New 4m wide Walkway & Cycleway Link (See Section 1 above)

SOUTH RING ROAD

GARRANE DARRA

WOODHAVEN

No works proposed in this area. Users of the new link cycleway/walkway to use existing road and footpath to connect to new cycleway and existing footpaths in Eagle Valley for onward connection to new Greenway

Pedestrian Guardrail to provide a buffer from the N40 carriageway

START OF SCHEME

New 4m wide Walkway & Cycleway Link (See Section 1 above)

Former access road

DUNNES STORES CAR PARK

Proposed Flat Top Full Width Ramp

EAGLE VALLEY

New 1.5m Segregated Cycle Track

Existing Eagle Valley Road Layout

Proposed Flat Top Full Width Ramp

THE HEDGEROWS

GREENWAY SCHEME

LOCATION PLAN

Client

Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

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Status	Rev	Date	Drn	Chk	Amendment / Issue	App
A1 S3 CDI	C01	24.04.23	GG	RG	Issue for Planning	RG
S3 CDI	P01	03.04.23	KT	RG	Issue for Review and Comment	RG

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Model File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0009

Scale	Project
1:1000 @ A1 Half @ A3	Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Created on: April 2023	Title: Site Location & Proposed Walkway / Cycleway Links to N40
Sheets: 01 of 01	

File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-C-DG0009 - 01

Status: A1

Rev: C01

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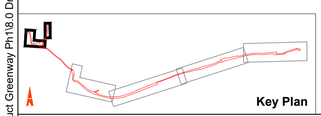
Legend

- Proposed standard tree planting
- Existing or proposed native shrubs*
- Proposed amenity grass mix
- Proposed ornamental shrub mix
- Flowering perennials
- Proposed pollinator-friendly seed mix
- Sustainable urban drainage system

*Exact location and combination of existing and proposed shrubs and trees to be confirmed once vegetation survey obtained

Pollinator-friendly Wildflower Seeding
Once construction work on site is complete subsoil and small amounts of topsoil will be spread in proportions and to depths to facilitate wildflower meadows. The areas indicated on the drawing are to be seeded at density of 5 g per square metre with a pollinator-friendly seed mix of Irish provenance to match soil pH. Seeding and maintenance of grassy areas is to be carried out in accordance with the 'All Ireland Pollinator Plan Advice to Councils'.

Sustainable drainage system (SuDS)
SuDS allow surface water to be retained for longer and released slowly which helps to alleviate surface water flood risk. They provide green space which can enhance the biodiversity and public amenity of an area. Wetlands can also improve air quality by absorbing and removing pollution. The SuDS area proposed here will be a low area planted with plants suitable for intermittently wet areas, such as the native yellow iris and purple loosestrife.



Key Plan

Client
Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

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A1	C01	24.04.23	GG	RG	Issue for Planning	RG

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Scale: 1:500 @ A1, Half @ A3
Created on: Aug 2022
Sheets: 01 of 03

Project: Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Title: Landscape Design
Sheet 1 of 3

Model File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-L-LA0001
File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-L-LA0001 - 01
Status: A1
Rev: C01

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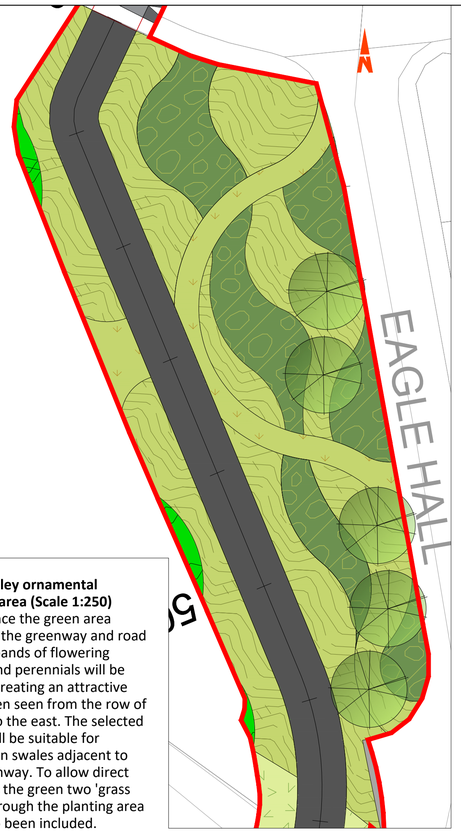
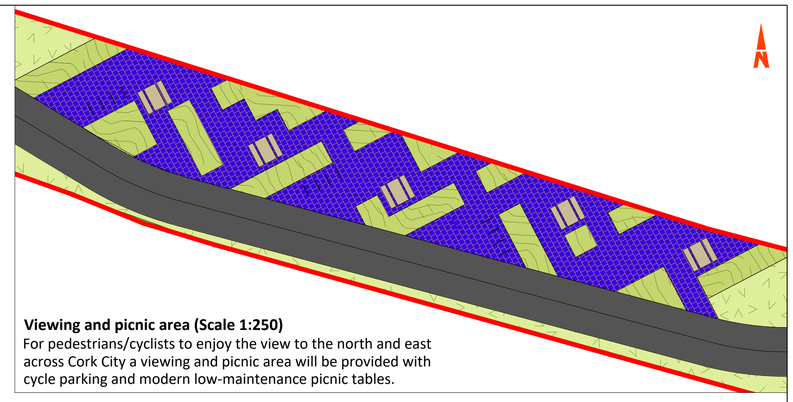


Eagle Valley ornamental planting area (Scale 1:250)
To enhance the green area between the greenway and road flowing bands of flowering shrubs and perennials will be planted creating an attractive view when seen from the row of houses to the east. The selected plants will be suitable for planting in swales adjacent to the greenway. To allow direct access to the green two 'grass paths' through the planting area have also been included.



Viewing and picnic area (Scale 1:250)
For pedestrians/cyclists to enjoy the view to the north and east across Cork City a viewing and picnic area will be provided with cycle parking and modern low-maintenance picnic tables.

Legend

- Proposed standard tree planting
- Existing or proposed native shrubs*
- Proposed ornamental shrub mix
- Flowering perennials
- Proposed pollinator-friendly seed mix
- Proposed amenity grass mix
- Proposed paving or paths
- Proposed cycle parking

*Exact location and combination of existing and proposed shrubs and trees to be confirmed once vegetation survey obtained

Client
Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

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A1	C01	24.04.23	GG	RG	Issue for Planning	RG

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Scale: 1:1000 @ A1, Half @ A3
Created on: Aug 2022
Sheets: 02 of 03

Project: Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Title: Landscape Design
Sheet 2 of 3

File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-L-LA0001 - 02
Status: A1
Rev: C01

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Forge Hill parking area and cycle hub (Scale 1:500)
As well as parking for cyclists this area will also provide bespoke cycle storage alongside seating areas next to ornamental perennial and shrub planting. An area at the entrance is left open for future development of facilities such as cycle hire or a cafe.

Legend

- Proposed standard tree planting
- Existing or proposed native shrubs*
- Proposed ornamental shrub mix
- Proposed native hedgerow
- Flowering perennials
- Proposed climbers
- Proposed amenity grass mix
- Proposed paving or paths
- Proposed cycle storage
- Proposed cycle parking

*Exact location and combination of existing and proposed shrubs and trees to be confirmed once vegetation survey obtained

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Created on: Aug 2022
Sheets: 03 of 03

Project: Cork City to Viaduct Greenway - Phase I
Title: Landscape Design
Sheet 3 of 3

File Identifier: IE000205-RPS-00-XX-DR-L-LA0001 - 03
Status: A1
Rev: C01

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