



Leitrim County Council

Environmental Impact Assessment

Screening Report

for proposed Public Realm Improvement

Scheme, Carrick-on-Shannon

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1. Introduction

This is an EIA screening report for the proposed Public Realm Improvement Scheme, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim. The purpose of the report is to screen the proposed development to establish whether it requires Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and as a result if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Statement and Ecological Impact Assessment have also prepared as separate documents.

The screening process includes an assessment of the details of the proposal with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended by Planning and Development Regulations 2015), the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, EU, 2015 and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening*, EU, 2017.

The EIA screening covers:

- i. Description of the proposed development
- ii. The legislative basis for EIA
- iii. Screening considerations
- iv. Conclusions

2. The Proposed Development

The site is located in the centre of the county town of Carrick-on-Shannon. The site boundary is shown in Figure 1 overleaf and comprises

1. **To undertake a Public Realm Improvement Scheme** within the town centre to enhance the existing streetscapes of Main Street & St. George's Terrace to include the junction of both streets with Bridge Street. The Scheme extends from Main Street onto the old Dublin Road, lower Summerhill, the Leitrim Road, Priest's Lane and Church Lane. The nature of the Public Realm Improvement Scheme includes, inter alia, the widening of footpaths, introduction of shared surface space at identified locations, to provide enhanced pedestrian crossings, to replace existing road surfaces, to replace existing street lights, the provision of soft landscaping measures and street furniture and to reduce the extent of on street car parking provision.

As part of the proposal, the Town Clock, a Protected Structure, will be moved by approximately 2 metres from its current position so that it is visible from Main Street, Bridge Street and St. George's Terrace. The Public Realm Improvement Scheme is contained largely within the Carrick on Shannon Architectural Conservation Area.

2. **To provide a public car park** (105 no. car parking spaces) immediately north of the Primary Care Centre which is presently under construction within the area known locally as 'Flynn's Field' (Townparks Townland) to the rear of Main Street and Bridge Street.
3. **To replace the existing fixed boardwalk along the River Shannon** at the property of le boat / Emerald Star and Carrickcraft boating companies (The Marina, St. George's Terrace or Townparks Townland) and **to provide a public floating boardwalk** at this location inclusive of

landscaping measures and accommodation works. The proposed public boardwalk will connect to the existing car parking area at the quayside.

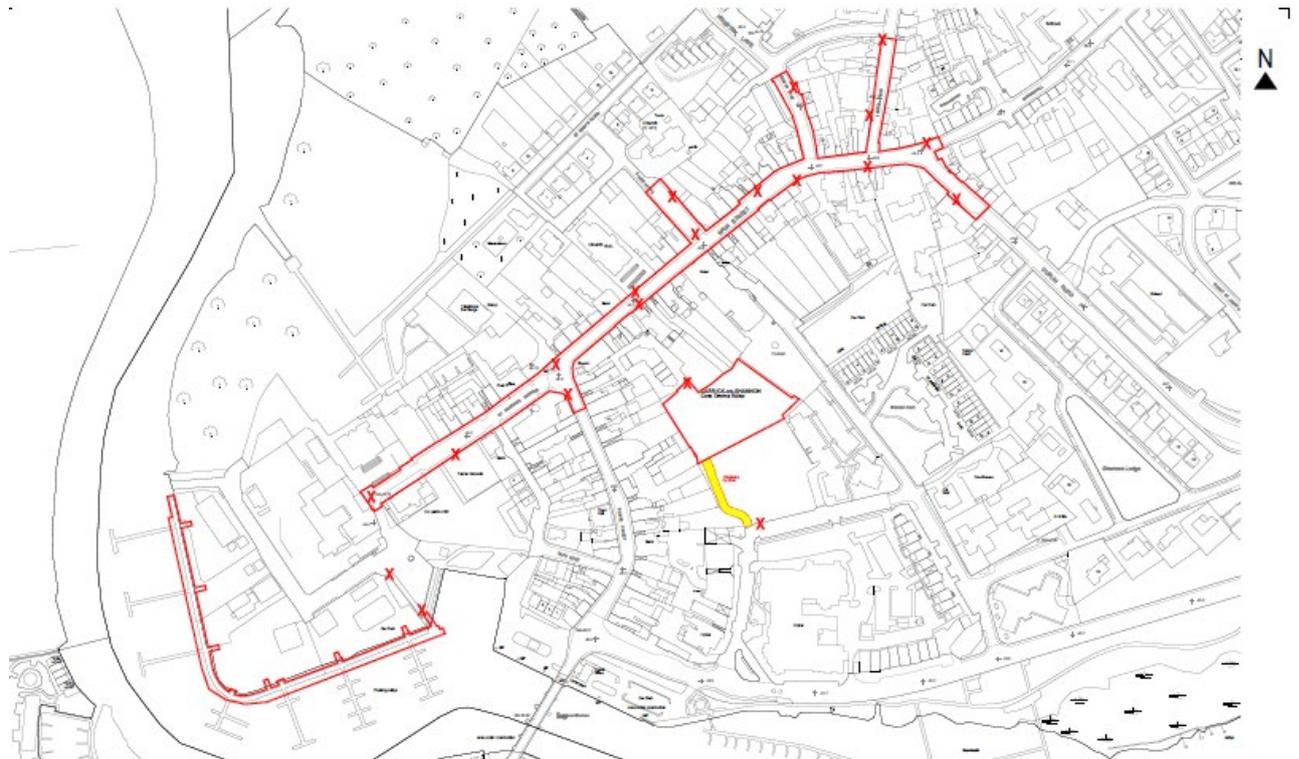


Figure 1: Location of Proposed Development

The proposed development will also include necessary services and utility provision and associated site works.

3. Legislative Basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). As the amended Directive came into force on 16th May 2017 and regulations transposing it into national legislation have been enacted. No changes to the prescribed project types or thresholds are required under the amended Directive so the types and thresholds set out in the 2001-2010 Regulations remain in effect.

EIA legislation as it relates to the planning process has been largely brought together in Part X of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018 and Part 10 and Schedules 5, 6 and 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018. Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations lists project types included in Annex I of the Directive which automatically require EIA. Part 2 of the same Schedule, lists project types included in Annex II. Corresponding developments automatically require EIA if no threshold is given or if they exceed a given threshold. Developments which correspond to Part 2 project types by are below the given threshold must be screening to determine whether they require EIA or not. This is done by consideration of criteria set out in Schedule 7.

4. Screening Considerations

Class of Development

In the first instance, it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type (or 'class') that requires an EIAR. This project does not correspond to any of the prescribed types listed in Annex I. However, it could be considered to correspond to the Infrastructure Projects type set out in Annex II, as discussed below.

Infrastructure Projects

Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 includes this project type:

10. Infrastructure projects

(b) (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

(In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

The EU Guidance on 'Interpretation of definitions of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive' (2015) interprets 'urban development' as taking '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.*

The overall area of the proposed development is 1.86 hectares, of which 1.54 hectares are located within the business district. This corresponds to 77% of the 2 hectare threshold which applies in the case of a business district. The replacement of the existing fixed boardwalk with a floating public boardwalk is not located within the business district and should be excluded from such consideration. The substantive part of the development site constitutes the existing streets which are proposed for public realm enhancement. The combined area of the streets included in this project extends to 1.12 hectares. The provision of the proposed car park in Flynn's Field extends to 0.42 hectares and this is the only extent of the overall project which relates to 'development' as opposed to 'redevelopment'.

Therefore the proposal is a prescribed project type but is considered below the threshold if the streets are included and well below the threshold if the streets are excluded.

Sub-threshold Development

As the proposed development corresponds to an Annex II project type but does not meet the prescribed thresholds above, it can be considered to be a 'sub-threshold' development.

Having regard to the 'wide scope and broad purpose' of the Directive, it is appropriate to consider if it is likely to cause significant environmental impacts by reference to the relevant criteria for determining same, as set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations.

Given the scale of the proposed development it is unlikely to cause sufficiently significant effects to warrant a sub-threshold EIA. However, in order to provide a comprehensive screening, this screening proceeds to consider it against the Schedule 7 criteria nonetheless. Schedule 7 specifies 'Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment' under these three headings:

1. Characteristics of Proposed Development
2. Location of Proposed Development
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The tables below and overleaf provides sets out these considerations using both the main and sub-criteria which are specified in Schedule 7.

SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA		Relevance	Commentary
1. Characteristics of Proposed Development The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	The size of the proposed development.	No	The proposed development extends to an area of approximately 1.54 hectares. The substantive part of the overall site comprises of existing streets and footpaths which are been replaced. The remainder relates to the provision of a proposed car park.
	The cumulation with the proposed development.	No	There is a Primary Care Centre under construction to the south of the proposed car park at Flynn's Field. There is also an approved Part VIII to undertake road improvements (flood resilience works) to the local access road from which the car park will be accessed.
	The use of natural resources.	Potential	The proposed development does include the use of natural resources to ensure that the setting of buildings within the Architectural Conservation Area are enhanced.
	The production of waste.	No	Waste produced during the construction process are

			anticipated to be insufficient to cause significant effects. The materials will be brought to a construction and demolition recycling centre for reuse.
	Pollution and nuisances.	No	The impacts including noise and dust within acceptable standards are anticipated to be negligible. This takes account of the Transport and Traffic Assessment submitted as part of Part VIII application. In addition, a Construction Management Plan will be required at contract stage.
	The risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used.	No	The potential impacts are anticipated to be negligible given the nature of the proposed development.

SCHEDULE 7 CRITERIA		Relevance	Commentary
2. Location of Proposed Development The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, having regard in particular to:	The existing land use	No	There is minimal change in existing land use associated with this proposed development. The proposed car park is located within the commercial core of the town centre and is presently unused backlands.
	The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	No	The impacts are anticipated to be negligible given the scale of the proposed development.
	The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:		
	Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	No	The proposed floating public boardwalk replaces an existing fixed boardwalk. There is no loss of habitat therefore associated with this element of the overall project. This element of the project has been assessed carefully in the Ecological Impact Assessment.

	Coastal zones	No	
	Mountain and forest areas	No	
	Nature reserves and parks	No	
	Areas classified or protected under legislation, including special protection areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	No	The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report submitted as part of part VIII application concludes that the proposed development is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on designated European sites.
	Areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the EU have already been exceeded	No	
	Densely populated areas	No	
	Landscapes of historical, cultural archaeological significance	No	The impacts particularly those of historical, cultural and archaeological significance are anticipated to be negligible. It is proposed to undertake an Archaeological Assessment as part of the works contract although it is not considered likely that any finds of significance will be encountered.

SHEDULE 7 CRITERIA		Relevance	Commentary
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 above and having particular regard to:	The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population)	No	The impacts are anticipated to be insufficient given the scale of the proposed development.
	The nature of the impact	No	The impact of the proposal will be negative during construction stage but will be positive once complete.

	The transboundary nature of the impact	No	Not considered relevant.
	The magnitude and complexity of the impact.	No	The impacts are anticipated to be insufficient given the scale of the proposed development.
	The probability of the impact.	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.
	The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.
	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	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated.
	The possibility of effectively reducing the impact	No	There are no significant environmental effects anticipated

5. Conclusion

The proposed development falls within the scope of the Infrastructure project type prescribed in the Directive or Regulations. However it is considered to be sub-threshold in nature.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the proposal; having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development, and having regard to the characteristics of potential impacts it is considered that the project is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental impacts.

It is also noted that a separate Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has concluded that there will be no negative impacts on the qualifying interests or species of any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the proposed development. In addition, an Ecological Impact Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and Traffic and Transport Assessment of the proposed development were undertaken separately by competent professionals and have all informed this assessment.

It is concluded that there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried out for the proposed Public Realm Improvement Works at Carrick-on-Shannon and there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be prepared.