



Corbally Active Travel Scheme

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

MARCH 2023



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Client	Limerick City & County Council
Project No.	2577
Project Title	Corbally Active Travel Scheme
Report Title	Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Rev.	Status	Author(s)	Reviewed By	Approved By	Issue Date
0	Draft for Client Review	BQ	HK	BL	24/03/2023

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1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND TO PROJECT

Ryan Hanley was commissioned by Limerick City & County Council to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report for the Corbally Active Travel Scheme, Co. Limerick.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether or not an EIA is required for the project based on criteria listed in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive and transposed into Irish Planning Law in Schedule 5, Part 1 and 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

The findings of the EIA screening undertaken by Ryan Hanley are presented in this report.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

2.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

Limerick City is Ireland's first Smarter Travel Demonstration City, leading the planning, design and delivery of Active Travel paths. The proposed active travel path along Corbally Road will provide a prioritised, safe and segregated cycle and walking route for vulnerable road users along the busy regional road.

The proposed design will upgrade the existing footpaths by providing a dedicated 3.5m wide walking and cycling path on the Scoil Íde side of Corbally Road (R463) and a 3.0m wide shared path on the opposite side. The shared path on the school side of the road will connect from Mill Road through the grounds of Scoil Íde and continue eastwards along the edge of Corbally Road where it will connect into the existing cycle track at the entrance to St. Munchin's College. The shared path will facilitate safe access to Scoil Íde National School for vulnerable road users. Segregation between the shared path and Corbally Road will be provided by varying finished surface levels and the introduction of soft landscaping features, including but not limited to planter boxes, low level planting and a rain garden. Junction tightening at Roseville Gardens, Lanahrone Avenue and St Munchin's College will reduce vehicle speeds.

The new shared surface will encourage more cycling and walking along Corbally Road and reduce reliance on cars. The new path will give priority to pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging active forms of travel, reducing traffic congestion at peak times and providing a positive addition to the community. A number of raised tables are proposed Corbally Road to provide prioritised crossing locations and also to discourage vehicle speed.

The proposed design will include:

- A new off-road shared pedestrian/cycle path with an average width of 3.5m connecting Mill Road to Corbally Road between Scoil Íde and Sunnyside Montessori;
- A redeveloped pedestrian/cycle path with an average width of 3.5m along the northern side of Corbally Road from Scoil Íde to the primary road entrance to St Munchin's College;
- Resurfacing of existing footpath along southern side of Corbally Road;
- A new bus set-down area in front of Scoil Íde, integrating with the proposed shared surface to facilitate safe transfers on and off buses for school pupils;
- A total of 3 no. new raised pedestrian crossings along Corbally Road;
- New Junction tightening measures at Roseville Gardens junction, Lanahrone Avenue junction and St Munchin's College junction to reduce vehicle speeds and increase safety for vulnerable road users;

- A new 2-3m wide rain garden with sustainable drainage system features along the northern side of Corbally Road in front of Scoil Íde; and
- New low level planting, planter boxes and soft landscaping features along Corbally Road.



Figure 2.1 Location map of the Proposed Project

3 REQUIREMENT FOR EIA

3.1 EIA LEGISLATION

The *EIA Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effect of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification)*, as amended by *EIA Directive 2014/52/EU*, sets out the process by which the likely significant effects of a project on the environment are assessed. The relevant requirements of the EIA Directive have been implemented into Irish law pursuant to the provisions of, inter alia, the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001*, as amended.

The provisions of Schedule 5 of the *EIA Regulations 2001 - 2021* identify the requirement of EIA for different project types.

Part 1 of Schedule 5 identifies projects of a class that will always have the potential for significant environmental effects and therefore will always require an EIA. Part 2 of Schedule 5 identifies projects that may have an environmental impact and, therefore, thresholds or criteria have been set by member states for the requirements of EIA.

The EIA Amendment Directive states that:

“In order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including where relevant, it’s subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and where relevant demolition phase.”

Further:

“When determining whether significant effects on the environment are likely to be caused by a project, the competent authorities should identify the most relevant criteria to be considered and should take into account information that could be available following other assessments required by Union legislation in order to apply the screening procedure effectively and transparently. In this regard, it is appropriate to specify the content of the screening determination, in particular where no environmental impact assessment is required...

...The screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment.”

Annex III of the EIA Directive provides the Criteria used to determine whether the project listed in Annex II should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. Annex III of the EIA Directive and has been replaced by a new Annex III in the 2014 Amendment Directive. (See Appendix A of this report).

3.2 EIA SCREENING METHODOLOGY

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared to document the appraisal as to whether the Corbally Active Travel Scheme would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The information used to inform this report includes desk studies and site assessments.

In addition, the following legislation and guidance documentation has been used:

- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (August 2003), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development;
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - *Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (EPA 2022);
- Planning and Development Regulations 2021 – 2023;
- European commission (2015) Interpretation of definition of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive;
- EIA (Amendment) Directive 2014/52/EU, and;
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects. Guidance on Screening.

EIA is required in one of three circumstances:

- a) The proposed development is of a class specified in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and exceeds any specified relevant quantity area or other limit specified; or
- b) The proposed development is of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and exceeds any specified relevant quantity, area or other limit as specified; or

- c) The proposed development is of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), does not exceed the relevant quantity area or other limit, but having conducted a screening it is determined that the proposed development would nevertheless be likely to have significant effects on the environment as determined by reference to criteria specified in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

3.3 EIA SCREENING – CONSIDERATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR MANDATORY EIA

In respect of public and private Schedule 5, Part 1 and Part 2 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, which requires that the competent authority should carry out an EIA in respect of certain plans or projects. Part 1 lists projects which are likely to have a significant environmental effect and thus require a mandatory EIA. Part 2 lists projects whereby the competent authority decides if an EIA is required.

The Corbally Active Travel Scheme in Co. Limerick does not fall under the projects listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. As such a mandatory EIA is not required. EIA screening criteria as listed in Schedule 7 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001 will be utilised to assess if this project falls within the requirement for an EIA. For the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA, all of the relevant information as presented within Planning and Development Regulations 2021 (Schedule 7A) has been provided. The potential for the project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment will also be evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001, as amended (2021-2023).

3.4 EIA SCREENING CHECKLIST

Annex III of the EIA Amendment Directive (transposed into Irish law through Schedule 7 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001) outlines the criteria to determine whether the projects listed in Annex II (Part 2 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001) should be subject to an EIA.

In consideration of Screening for EIA, cumulative impacts of existing and proposed developments are included in the assessment. The criteria and the likelihood of significant impact is outlined in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 EC Guidelines Screening checklist.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
Brief Project Description	This EIA Screening is in respect to the Corbally Active Travel Scheme, Co. Limerick. The project includes works along Corbally Road (R463), which are approximately 385m between the junction of Corbally Road and Mill Road to the entrance of St. Munchin's College. There is also an isolated raised pedestrian crossing on Corbally Road between Shannon Drive and the Athlunkard Bridge.	

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>1. Will construction, operation, decommissioning, or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?</p>	<p>Yes. While most works will take place on the existing roads and footpaths, some works will alter green lands habitats as the works involve extending some built land areas.</p>	<p>No. Most works will take place in existing built land environments. Any green land habitats altered will be replanted in other areas.</p>
<p>2. Will construction or the operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials, or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?</p>	<p>Yes. Construction will involve natural resources such as standard construction materials.</p>	<p>No. The project will require natural resources in the form of standard construction materials. The quantities to be used as part of the project will be relatively small given the scale of the project.</p>
<p>3. Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?</p>	<p>Yes. The project will involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health.</p>	<p>No. Standard construction materials for a proposed project will be used during construction, however it is unlikely that this would include any quantity of materials that could be harmful to human health or the environment. Best practice construction will be implemented during the construction phase and all such materials will be stored in secure locations and will be handled in accordance with accepted construction procedures.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?</p>	<p>Yes. Solid waste may be produced during construction.</p>	<p>No. All solid waste will be managed in accordance with relevant waste legislation and all waste would be removed by the site by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facility. Efforts will be made to reuse material generated during excavation e.g soil, etc as part of the project's construction phase.</p>
<p>5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic, or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC)?</p>	<p>Yes. It is expected that dust and emissions from construction vehicles and equipment may be released temporarily during the construction stage.</p>	<p>No. Construction stage emissions are expected to be at worst minor and mitigation measures (to be included in the Contractor's CEMP) will be implemented to minimise emissions and prevent discharge. All emissions will be kept within standard air quality limits outlined in the relevant legislation.</p>
<p>6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?</p>	<p>Yes. There will be some temporary vibration and noise disturbance expected during the construction stage.</p>	<p>No. Any noise and vibration disturbance proposed as a result of the construction stage is considered temporary, minor and short-lived in nature. Mitigation measures have been outlined in the CEMP to minimise the potential impact of noise and vibration.</p> <p>The project site is located within an urban environment with existing lighting. The project will not change the extent of lighting in the area.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters, or the sea?</p>	<p>Yes. Potential risk of pollutants into the nearby River Shannon waterbody.</p>	<p>No. There are no watercourses crossed by the project and the nearest watercourse, the River Shannon is located c.50m from the nearest section of minor works. These works are at a downhill gradient from the River Shannon.</p> <p>In addition, any potentially polluting materials will be stored and used during the construction phase of the project in accordance with best practice procedures.</p>
<p>8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project that could affect human health or the environment?</p>	<p>Yes. Potential risk of accidents during construction stage.</p>	<p>No. Construction activities would be undertaken with due regard to occupational health and safety. The site manager would be responsible for the management of health and safety on site during construction with adherence to the Health and Safety Plan, Traffic Management Plan, etc</p>
<p>9. Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?</p>	<p>No. There is no potential for the project to result in environmentally related social changes.</p>	<p>No. There is no potential for the project to result in environmentally related social changes.</p>
<p>10. Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?</p>	<p>No. All future plans for development of the area are identified within the Limerick City & County Development Plan.</p>	<p>No. All future plans for development of the area are identified within the Limerick City & County Development Plan.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
11. Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The River Shannon is designated as an SAC and is located c.40m from the project.	No. The Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) has been screened out through the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening process.
12. Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g., wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests, or woodlands, that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The River Shannon watercourse is located c.50m from the nearest section of the proposed works.	No. The proposed works take place within the existing road structure which has a descending gradient from the River Shannon. Water from rain or other sources will remain on this surface instead of draining away into the River and will naturally absorb into the roads underlying materials.
13. Are there any areas on or around the location that are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g., for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?	No. There are no areas on or around the works location that are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora.	No. The project site and surrounding area does not support habitats that are relied upon by important or sensitive species of fauna or flora.
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine, or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The River Shannon is located c.50m from the nearest section of proposed works.	No. The proposed works take place within the existing road structure which has a descending gradient from the River Shannon. Water from rain or other sources will remain on this road surface instead of draining away into the River Shannon and will naturally absorb into the roads underlying materials.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	No. There are no areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the project location.	No. The proposed project is taking place within an existing road environment.
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes there are walkways/cycleways around the project location, which would be used by the public.	No. The proposed project will aid in the connecting of the surrounding Active Travel Schemes in Limerick City.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion, or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. There is potential for congestion on Corbally Road.	No. The construction phase of this project is short term in duration and works will be carried out primarily during school holidays. The provision of the project will have positive implications for traffic and transport congestion by offering safer pedestrian and cycling permeability in the surrounding area.
18. Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes. The project is located on a main road.	Yes. During the construction phase any visual disturbances will be mitigated to minimise potential disturbances. During operational phase the project will blend in with the surrounding built urban landscape.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. A Burial ground has been reported adjacent to the Mill Road, near the Corbally Road.	No. This Burial ground is considered low risk. Contractor is to provide an on-site archaeologist to monitor topsoil screening on Mill Road.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
20. Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes. Small sections of the works will take place in greenfields.	No. In order to expand the pedestrian/cycle lane some greenfield borders will need to be altered. Any loss in habitat will be mitigated and replanted elsewhere.
21. Are there existing land uses within or around the location e.g., homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The proposed works are located on the Corbally Road which is lined by private housing, gardens and schools.	No. There is potential for minor levels of disturbance and nuisance to properties occurring adjacent to the project site during the construction phase. Typical mitigation measures will be included in the Contractor's CEMP and it is predicted that, with the implementation of these mitigation measures, potential for disturbance and nuisance to these properties will be minimised.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Local planning applications have been reviewed utilising myplan.ie. The review of the Limerick City and County Council planning register documented relevant general development planning applications in the vicinity of the proposed works, most of which relate to the provision and/or alteration of one-off housing.	No. Any plans and projects in the surrounding areas will not be affected by the project.
23. Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The project is located on Corbally Road.	No. The construction phase will be restricted to the project site along an existing road and with the implementation of a best practice approach to the construction phase and typical mitigation measures as included in the Contractor's CEMP there will be no potential for significant effects to the population occurring in the surrounding area.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>24. Are there any areas within or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g., hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes. Two schools are located in the vicinity of the project site.</p>	<p>Yes. Two schools are located in the vicinity of the project site. However, the construction phase will be restricted to the project site, carried out primarily during school holidays and with the implementation of a best practice approach to the construction phase as well as subject to typical mitigation measures as included in the Contractor's CEMP. Therefore there will be no potential for significant effects to the population occurring in the surrounding area.</p>
<p>25. Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g., groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>No. There are no areas within or around the project which contain important, high quality or scarce resources.</p>	<p>No. There are no areas within or around the project which contain important, high quality or scarce resources.</p>
<p>26. Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g., where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>No. There are no areas within or around the project site which is already subject to pollution or environmental damage.</p>	<p>No. There are no areas within or around the project site which is already subject to pollution or environmental damage.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
27. Is the Project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g., temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the Project to present environmental problems?	No. The project site is not susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions.	No. The project site is not susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions.

4 CONCLUSION

This screening report has been carried out in accordance with a methodology that is based on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development (EPA, 2003) and The European Commission Guidelines on EIA Screening (2017).

Based on Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2023 the proposed works for Corbally Active Travel Scheme in Co. Limerick does not exceed any of the thresholds prescribed in the Regulations that would trigger a mandatory requirement to conduct an EIA and prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). In consideration of sub-threshold projects (Schedule 5, Part 2, Section 15), the proposed project is not listed in Part 2 of the Regulations and therefore does not fall under the EIA requirement for sub-threshold projects.

Having regard for the proposed works this report concludes that this proposal is not one which is likely to have significant effects on the environment, either by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, and that an EIA and subsequent **EIAR is not required** in relation to this project.

It is noted within this report that an Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening has also been carried out (under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)), which concluded that a full AA and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is not required.

It is therefore concluded that there is no requirement for the Planning Authority to request an EIA in respect of this project and there is no requirement to prepare and submit an EIAR in relation to this project. However, ultimately it is the responsibility of the relevant planning authority to make a determination to whether an EIAR is required for a particular project, based on the findings of the screening assessment.

APPENDIX A - 2014 AMENDMENT DIRECTIVE - ANNEX III

DIRECTIVE 2014/52/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 16 APRIL 2014 AMENDING DIRECTIVE 2011/92/EU ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF CERTAIN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROJECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Annex III

Selection criteria referred to in article 4(3) (criteria to determine whether the projects listed in annex II should be subject to an environmental impact assessment)

1. Characteristics of projects

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

- (A) the size and design of the whole project;
- (B) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;
- (C) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- (D) the production of waste;
- (E) pollution and nuisances;
- (F) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;
- (G) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location of projects

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 directive 92/43/eec and directive 2009/147/ec;
 - (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;
 - (vii) densely populated areas;
 - (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

3. Type and characteristics of the potential impact

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 approved projects;
- (H) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.