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DESIGNING AND DELIVERING
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PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SAFETY SCHEMES CORK CITY

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Prepared for:

Cork City Council



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

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APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report to Cork City Council for Pedestrian Crossing Safety Schemes Cork City.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Fehily Timoney and Company (FT) have been commissioned by Cork City Council (CCC) to prepare this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, for the delivery of 8 no. Pedestrian Crossing Safety Schemes across suburban and peri-urban locations within Cork City Council's administrative area.

The 8 no. schemes are as follows:

1. R639 Riverstown Road at Glanmire Community Centre
2. R639 Riverstown Road at Glanmire GAA
3. R639 Riverstown Road at The Hermitage estate
4. R617 Tower to Blarney Road at Shournagh Drive
5. R617 Tower to Blarney Road at Primrose Hill estate
6. L1010 Pearse Road at Scoil Maria Assumpta
7. L5283 Eglantine Park at Scoil Bhride Eglantine
8. L2465 Church Street, Douglas

Further details are provided in Section 2.

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

1.1 Methodology

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the following guidance:

- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Commission Notice (2021) Brussels, 28.9.2021 C(2021) 6913 final (European Commission, 2021)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin (2009, updated 2010) (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010)
- Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. (European Commission, 2019)
- OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021)



2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Description of Scheme

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

1. R639 Riverstown Road at Glanmire Community Centre (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0001)

The section of improvement works involve a comprehensive upgrade of the existing zebra crossing to improve pedestrian safety. The scheme includes:

- Enhanced zebra crossing infrastructure
- Upgraded road markings and signage in advance of new traffic signals
- Repairs to adjacent kerbs and footpaths

This intervention supports safer crossing movements in a busy community area.

2. R639 Riverstown Road at Glanmire GAA (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0002)

The proposed section of road is located on the R639 (Riverstown Road) adjacent to the entrance to Glanmire GAA Club, situated on the eastern side of the R639. The proposal introduces pedestrian safety enhancements through:

- Construction of a new pedestrian gate to the GAA facilities, approximately 40m from the existing vehicular entrance
- A 2m wide footpath build-out on the eastern side of the R639
- Lane narrowing using dished kerbs on the western side
- Installation of a raised table zebra crossing at the narrowed section of road to allow safe crossing between the residential/commercial areas and key facilities such as bus stops and the GAA Club.

This scheme improves accessibility for pedestrians to cross the R639 improving accessibility to the sports facilities and local amenities.

3. R639 Riverstown Road at The Hermitage (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0003)

The proposal at the junction to The Hermitage Estate from R639 involves the:

- Extension of the footpath on the eastern side of the R639 by approximately 20 metres
- Installation of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, with drop kerbs and blister tactile paving on both sides



This solution enables safe access from the Hermitage Estate to the footpath on the opposite side of the R639 road.

4. R617 Tower to Blarney Road at Shournagh Drive (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0004)

The proposal focuses on a section of the R617 where it meets the junction to Shournagh Drive and includes:

- Footpath build-outs to reduce the junction turning radius
- An uncontrolled crossing at junction to Shournagh Drive
- A new signalised pedestrian crossing on the R617 (between existing bus stops to east of Shournagh Drive) to reduce vehicle speeds and support safe crossing

This scheme improves accessibility for residents of nearby housing estates, including Elm Court.

5. R617 Tower to Blarney Road at Primrose Hill estate (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0005)

The proposed section of road is R617 on approach to junction to Primrose Hill on eastern side of road. The scheme introduces:

- a new signalised pedestrian crossing across the R617, connecting bus stops on both sides of the road
- A new dropped kerb within the existing footpath

The proposal enhances crossing opportunities for residents of adjacent estates along the R617 and Primrose Hill Road, improving access to public transport and local amenities.

6. L1010 Pearse Road at Scoil Maria Assumpta (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0006)

The Preferred Option consists of a range of pedestrian safety enhancements near Scoil Maria, including:

- Tightened kerb radii at Nuns Walk and Pearse Road to reduce vehicle turning speed
- New dropped kerbs and tactile paving at key crossing points
- Replacement of the existing school warden crossing with a raised zebra crossing
- Installation of a speed table near the school entrance
- Placement of pencil-shaped bollards along the footpaths to create a protected zone for children

These measures improve safety and accessibility for schoolchildren, residents, and those accessing nearby community services.

7. L5283 Eglantine Park at Scoil Bhride Eglantine (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0007)

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

- Installation of a raised table zebra crossing between new footpath build-outs near the school
- Installation of a separate speed table on approach to the crossing
- Use of coloured pencil bollards to prevent illegal parking and clearly identify the school zone

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



8. L2465 Church Street, Douglas (Drawing P23120-FT-ZZ-01-DR-CE-0008)

The section of improvement works involve a comprehensive upgrade of the existing crossing to improve pedestrian safety. The scheme includes:

- Enhanced zebra crossing infrastructure
- Upgraded road markings and signage in advance of new traffic signals
- Repairs to adjacent kerbs and footpaths

This intervention supports safer crossing movements in a busy community area.



3. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

Consideration is given to whether the proposed projects are likely to have a significant effect upon any European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and with each other. The approach to identifying European sites which have potential for significant effects due to the proposed projects follows the approach set out in the AA screening practice note (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021).

3.2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model

The practice note (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021) states that the Zone of Influence (ZoI) must be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model. In this regard, consideration is given to the nature and extent of the proposed works and the characteristics of the immediate environment along with the consideration of potential pathways for connectivity to European sites, which are identified using Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping.

3.2.1 Study Area/ZoI

As per CIEEM guidelines (2018)¹, the potential direct and indirect links to sensitive receptors of European sites from the proposed works is considered as follows:

- Impacts on habitats - the potential for biophysical change by disturbance/damage/ degradation is taken as the footprint of the works (including any site clearance) plus 10m beyond (based on Ryan Hanley, 2014)².
- The potential disturbance zone for birds was considered having regard to Cutts et al (2013)⁴ and the British Standards Institution (2014)⁵, and was defined as 300m;
- The potential disturbance zone for mammals follows NRA (2008) Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes which notes a 150m potential disturbance zone.

The projects are located wholly outside of any European site. The closest Natura 2000 sites to the proposed projects are Cork Harbour SPA (0.55 km), Great Island Channel SAC (4.13 km), and Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (9.50 km). All are outside of the disturbance/impact zones described above.

¹ CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.2. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

² Ryan Hanley (2014b) Stage 1: Appropriate Assessment Screening Methodology for the Maintenance of Arterial Drainage Schemes. Prepared by Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers on behalf of the Office of Public Works

⁴ Cutts N, Hemingway K and Spencer J (2013). The Waterbird Disturbance Mitigation Toolkit Informing Estuarine Planning and Construction Projects. Produced by the Institute of Estuarine and Coastal Studies (IECS). Version 3.2.

⁵ The British Standards Institution (2014). Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites. Part 1: Noise.



While the proposed projects are outside of European Sites, consideration is given to the potential for lands within disturbance and impact Zols (as described above) to support the qualifying interests / special conservation interests of these nearby European sites (see Table 3-1: Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment). In this regard, an assessment is made as to whether there could be landscape⁶ or ecological connectivity⁷ to any European site. Consideration was given to existing records for qualifying features in the locality of the proposed projects and an assessment of the potential for mobile qualifying features of European sites to use the lands within the disturbance and impact Zols.

⁶ Landscape connectivity is a combined product of structural and functional connectivity, i.e. the effect of physical landscape structure and the actual species use of the landscape (Kettunen et al. 2007)

⁷ Connectivity is defined as a measure of the functional availability of the habitats needed for a particular species to move through a given area. Examples include the flight lines used by bats to travel between roosts and foraging areas, or the corridors of appropriate habitat needed by some slow colonising species if they are to spread (CIEEM, 2018).



Table 3-1: Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment

European Site (Code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest	Distance (km)	Connections (Source-Pathway-Receptor)	Considered further in Screening (Y/N)
Cork Harbour SPA (004030)	Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>) [A004] Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [A028] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	0.55	The bird species present within this European site are coastal bird species and the lands surrounding the proposed development (which are within the 300m disturbance zone for birds) are not suitable foraging or roosting habitats for these birds, which use coastal mudflat and intertidal habitats. As the proposed schemes are not suitable destinations for foraging or roosting, there is no pathway for effect.	N



European Site (Code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest	Distance (km)	Connections (Source-Pathway-Receptor)	Considered further in Screening (Y/N)
Great Island Channel SAC (001058)	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]	4.13	There are no watercourses on any site that could result in connectivity between the proposed schemes and this SAC. Thus, the SAC is outside the Zol of the proposed development and there is no pathway for effects on the QI.	N
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (002170)	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaite Shad) [1103] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]	9.50	There are no watercourses on any site that could result in connectivity between the proposed schemes and this SAC. Thus, the SAC is outside the Zol of the proposed development and there is no pathway for effects on the QI.	N



3.3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

The guidance (European Commission, 2021) notes that the significance of the effects will vary depending on factors such as the magnitude of impact, the type, extent, duration, intensity, timing, probability, in-combination effects and the vulnerability of the habitats and species concerned. European site(s) identified are now examined for the potential for likely significant effects.

Table 3-2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects.

(a) Identify all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project under the following headings:	
Impacts:	Possible Significance of Impacts: (duration/magnitude etc.)
Construction phase:	<p>There will be alterations to pre-existing artificial surfaces and temporary localised increase in noise for the duration of the works.</p> <p>Given the scale of the proposed schemes, there is no impact to European Sites as all are located outside the Zol of the proposed scheme and there is no ecological or landscape connectivity to the works locations and any European site.</p>
Operational phase:	<p>The proposed scheme will not affect the current operations of the sites. These sites are pre-existing roads in urban environments and do not support any qualifying interests of any European sites. No significant impact can occur.</p>
In-combination/Other:	<p>Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that:</p> <p>“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives”.</p> <p>It is therefore required that the likely significant effects of the proposed schemes are considered in-combination with any other plans or projects.</p> <p>The consideration of in-combination effects with other plans or projects focused on the sources of impacts identified for the proposed development and ecological pathways identified in Table 3-1: Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment)</p> <p>However, as there are no meaningful pathways for effects identified with respect to European sites - given the nature of the habitats on the sites and the distance from relevant European sites. There are no further considerations required as the S-P-R model has been completed with no potential effects that could arise from the proposed schemes.</p>
(b) Describe any likely changes to the European site:	



	No changes likely given absence of S-P-R connectivity.
(c) Are 'mitigation' measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	No mitigation measures are required.

3.4 Screening Conclusion

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report concludes that, given the scale and nature of the potential sources, there are no likely significant effects identified to any European sites. This process has considered potential effects which may arise during all phases of the proposed projects. Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the sources for impacts, taking account of the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interest or the conservation objectives of any designated European site.



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