

**Monaghan County Council**

## N53/A37 Ballynacarry Bridge Replacement Scheme

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Reference: N53A37-ARP-GEN-XX-RP-E-0003

Issue 02 | 17 October 2023









This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 287420-00

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# 1. Introduction

Arup have been appointed by Monaghan County Council (MCC), under the sponsorship of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and Department for Infrastructure (DfI) to prepare this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening for the N53/A37 Ballynacarry Bridge Replacement Scheme (hereafter referred to as ‘the proposed development’).

The proposed development involves the replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge which is on the N53 National Secondary route / A37 Main ‘A’ route (Concession Road) and the realignment of a portion of the N53/A37 road which crosses the River Fane. This route connects the towns of Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan and Dundalk, Co. Louth. The Bridge crosses the River Fane at the border with Co. Monaghan (Republic of Ireland) and Co. Armagh (Northern Ireland) (See Appendix A).

The proposed development aims to provide a safer commuting and economic corridor, whilst facilitating further economic growth, improving driver safety and road continuity in line with previous upgrades undertaken on this strategically important section of the road network.

This document sets out the information necessary for the competent authority, Monaghan County Council and Newry Mourne Down District Council (NMDDC) to undertake the EIA screening assessment in respect of the proposed development and to make an EIA Screening determination. It has been agreed with both planning authorities on either side of the border, that the same Environmental Impact Assessment screening report can be used for both planning applications.

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

### 2.1 Introduction

This section outlines the relevant legislation and guidance reviewed in the compilation of this EIA Screening Report. The requirement for screening of sub-threshold developments is outlined in this section.

### 2.2 Legislation and Guidance

The current requirements for EIA for projects are set out by the European Union in Council Directive 2011/92/EU on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. Further details are provided in Section 2.2.1 below.

The requirements of the 2014 EIA Directive were transposed into Irish and Northern Irish law with the enactment of a number of implementing legislative measures, including S.I. No. 296/2018 - European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 and S.I. No. 279/2019 – European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2019. These Regulations resulted in amendments to the following legislation which are considered relevant to this project:

- The Planning and Development Act ROI 2000, as amended
- The Planning and Development Regulations ROI 2001, as amended
- The Planning (EIA) Regulations NI 2017, as amended
- The Roads Act 1993 (Road Order 1993 – NI), as amended, as amended
- The Roads Regulations 1994, as amended

Further information on all relevant legislation is provided in Section 2.2.1 - Section 2.2.3 below.

### 2.2.1 EIA Directive 2014/52/EU

A European Directive for EIA has been in force since 1985 since the adoption of Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

The EIA Directive of 1985 has been amended three times by Council Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC. It was ultimately codified and repealed by Council Directive 2011/92/EU on 13 December 2011. This Directive was further amended in 2014 by Council Directive 2014/52/EU which sets out the current requirements for member states on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

The EIA Directive sets out the requirements of the EIA process, including screening the need for an EIA. Projects listed in Annex I of the EIA Directive require a mandatory EIA whilst projects listed in Annex II require screening to determine as to whether an EIA is required.

The EIA Directive 2014/52/EU defines the term ‘project’ as meaning: *“the execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources.”*

Articles 4(4) and 4(5) of the EIA Directive set out the requirements for EIA screening of Annex II projects as follows:

*“4(4) Where Member States decide to require a determination for projects listed in Annex II, the developer shall provide information on the characteristics of the project and its likely significant effects on the environment. The detailed list of information to be provided is specified in Annex IIA. The developer shall take into account, where relevant, the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive. The developer may also provide a description of any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.*

*4(5) The competent authority shall make its determination, on the basis of the information provided by the developer in accordance with paragraph 4 taking into account, where relevant, the results of preliminary verifications or assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive. The determination shall be made available to the public and:*

*(a) where it is decided that an environmental effect assessment is required, state the main reasons for requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III; or*

*(b) where it is decided that an environmental effect assessment is not required, state the main reasons for not requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III, and, where proposed by the developer, state any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.”*

### 2.2.2 Planning and Development Act and Planning and Development Regulations

The EIA Directive has been transposed into Irish law under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended and the associated Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.

Section 172 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, sets out the requirement for EIA.

The prescribed classes of development and thresholds that trigger a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment are transposed from Annex I and II of the Directive and set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Under the legislation, all projects (defined in Section 2.2.1) can be placed into one of the following categories with regard to the EIA process:

- Those that exceed the thresholds set out in the legislation and therefore have a mandatory requirement to prepare an EIAR
- Those projects that are sub-threshold must be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether or not they are likely to have significant effects on the environment; and

- Projects that fall under Annex II (13) (a) of the EIA Directive where any change or extension of projects listed in Annex I or Annex II, already authorised, executed in the process of being executed

The information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA is set out in Schedules 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

### 2.2.3 Planning Regulations – Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland this proposal falls under Planning (EIA) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 (hereafter ‘EIA Regulations’).

Within the EIA Regulations, consideration is required as to whether the proposed development will have significant effects on the environment. Part 2 Regulation 8 of the EIA Regulations states that an applicant may request the council to “make a determination as to whether a proposed development is or is not EIA development (a “screening determination”)” (Part 2, Regulation 8(1)(a)). The Regulations also note that “when making a request for a screening determination, an applicant shall, taking into account so far as relevant the selection criteria and the available results of other environmental assessments required under Union legislation (other than legislation implementing the requirements of the Directive), provide the following information:

- (a) a plan sufficient to identify the land;
- (b) a description of the development, including in particular—
  - a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
  - a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;
- (c) a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;
- (d) to the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from—
  - the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
  - the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.” (Part 2, Regulation 8(3)).

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared to assist Newry Mourne District in determining whether the proposed development is or is not an EIA development (a “screening determination”) in line with the EIA Regulations. With the Republic of Ireland EIA Regulations and the Northern Ireland EIA Regulations so closely linked and the determination process equal, for the purpose of providing a single EIA screening document, the Republic of Ireland EIA screening process and regulations have been referenced going forwards, however all Northern Ireland guidance documents, that have been used in this screening process, are referenced. It should also be noted that an Appropriate Assessment Screening (Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Stage 1 equivalent) has been completed and supports the planning application.

### 2.2.4 The Roads Act 1993 (Roads Order NI – 1993) and Road Regulations 1994

The Roads Act 1993 as amended, and the Road Regulations 1994 provide the prescribed classes of road developments that trigger a mandatory EIA. Under Section 2 of the Roads Act, a “road” is defined as:

- (a) *“any street, lane, footpath, square, court, alley or passage*
- (b) *any bridge, viaduct, underpass, subway, tunnel, overpass, overbridge, flyover, carriageway (whether single or multiple), pavement or footway*

- (c) *any weighbridge or other facility for the weighing or inspection of vehicles, toll plaza or other facility for the collection of tolls, service area, emergency telephone, first aid post, culvert, arch, gully, railing, fence, wall, barrier, guardrail, margin, kerb, lay-by, hard shoulder, island, pedestrian refuge, median, central reserve, channeliser, roundabout, gantry, pole, ramp, bollard, pipe, wire, cable, sign, signal or lighting forming part of the road, and*
- (d) *any other structure or thing forming part of the road and*
- i. *necessary for the safety, convenience, or amenity of road users or for the construction, maintenance, operation, or management of the road or for the protection of the environment, or*
  - ii. *prescribed by the Minister”*

Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act 1993 sets out the threshold for mandatory EIA which states:

*‘A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:*

- (i) the construction of a motorway;*
- (ii) the construction of a busway;*
- (iii) the construction of a service area;*
- (iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road’.*

The ‘prescribed types of road development’ under Section 50(1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act 1993 as amended, are set out in Part V Environmental Impact Assessment of the Road Regulations 1994 (S.I. No. 119 of 1994), as amended, which states the following:

*‘(8). The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of section 50 of the Act shall be -*

- (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 500 meters or more in length in an urban area*
- (b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 meters or more in length’*

Section 50(1)(e) of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the Road Regulations 1994, as amended, states that the road authority shall take into account the relevant selection criteria specified in Annex III (of the EIA Directive) in making its EIA Screening determination (see below).



Annex III of the EIA Directive

*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.*

The information required under Annex III of the EIA Directive is provided in Sections 4 to 6

## **2.3 Guidance**

A review of the above legislation was undertaken for the purpose of this EIA screening report. The following guidance documents have also been considered during the preparation of this report:

- Ecology Survey from the site in July 2022
- Ecological records gathered from Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR);
- Desk based review of web-viewers for historic environment<sup>1</sup>, natural environment<sup>2</sup>, NI flood maps<sup>3</sup> and NI regional landscape character<sup>4</sup> etc; and
- Review of professional reports for planning applications adjacent to the proposed development using the NI planning portal<sup>5</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities. Historic Map Viewer. Available on ArcGIS Web Application

<sup>2</sup> Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). Natural Environment Map Viewer. Available on NIEA Natural Environment Map Viewer (daera-ni.gov.uk).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Infrastructure. Flood Maps NI. Available on ArcGIS Web Application.

<sup>4</sup> DEARA. Regional Landscape Character Area Map Viewer. Available on ArcGIS Web Application.

<sup>5</sup> NI Planning Portal. Available on Map Search (planningni.gov.uk).

- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018);
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017) Transposition of 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) in the Land Use Planning and EPA Licencing Systems;
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017) Implementation of Directive 2014/52/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive): Advice on the Administrative Provisions in Advance of Transposition;
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003) Environmental Effect Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development;
- Environmental Protection Agency (2022) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022);
- European Commission (2017) Guidance on EIA Screening;
- The Department of Housing Planning and Local Government's (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment;
- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development;
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021) OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening; and

The OPR guidance is the most recent with regard to EIA screening and further information is provided in Section 2.3.1 below.

### 2.3.1 OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening 2021

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) published the 'Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening' in 2021.

The Practice Note advocates a step-by-step approach to EIA screening, as outlined below:

#### Step 1. Understanding the Proposal

##### A. Is the proposal a 'project' within the meaning of the EIA Directive?

Determine whether a proposal is a 'project' described in the EIA Directive and thus whether the EIA Directive applies.

##### B. Is the project a 'sub-threshold development'?

- If the project is not of a class of development in Schedule 5, Parts 1 and 2, it is not 'subthreshold development', no EIA or EIA screening is required.
- If the proposed project is of a class set out in Schedule 5, Part 1 or Part 2 and does meet or exceed the relevant threshold, or where no threshold applies, a mandatory EIAR is required.
- If the proposed project is of a class set out in Schedule 5, Part 2 but does not meet or exceed the relevant threshold, it is a 'sub-threshold development' and must be screened for EIA.

#### Step 2. Preliminary Examination

Where a development is 'sub-threshold', a preliminary examination, of, at least, the nature, size or location of the development to conclude if there is a likelihood of significant effects on the environment, must be carried out.

#### Step 3. EIA Screening Determination

Where the requirement to carry out EIA is not excluded at preliminary examination stage, a screening determination can only be carried out on the basis of the Schedule 7A information.

## 3. EIA Screening Methodology

The methodology applied in this EIA Screening report follows the structured approach provided for in the OPR Practice note as set out in Section 2.3.1. The OPR have established three steps to follow within EIAR screening which are responded to in the sections below.

It should be noted that the OPR Guidance is centred around EIA Screening under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations, as amended.

However, given the nature of the proposed development, it is also considered to be a ‘road development’, under the definition of Section 2(a) of the Roads Act 1993, as amended, where a “road” is defined as:

*“(a) any street, lane, footpath, square, court, alley or passage,*

*(b) any bridge, viaduct, underpass, subway, tunnel, overpass, overbridge, flyover, carriageway (whether single or multiple), pavement or footway”*

Thus, the OPR guidance has been adapted, within this EIA Screening Report, to also consider the requirements for EIA screening under the Roads Act 1993, as amended, and the Roads Regulations, 1994, as amended.

### 3.1 Step 1: Understanding the Proposal

#### 3.1.1 A – Is the proposal a ‘project’ within the meaning of the EIA Directive?

The EIA Directive 2014/52/EU defines the term ‘project’ as meaning: *“the execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources.”*

As outlined in Section 1, the proposed development involves the replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge which is on the N53 National Secondary route / A37 Main ‘A’ route (Concession Road) and the realignment/reconstruction of approx. 1.3km portion of the N53/A37 road which crosses the River Fane. Thus, the proposed development is considered to constitute a ‘project’ under the meaning of the EIA Directive. The EIA Directive does apply to the proposed development.

#### 3.1.2 B – Is the project a ‘sub-threshold development’?

This step requires an evaluation of both the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, to determine if mandatory EIA is required, or whether the proposed development needs to be screened for EIA.

#### **Planning and Development Regulations 2001**

The prescribed classes of development and thresholds that trigger a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment are set out in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. A review of the project types listed in the aforementioned Schedule 5 has been carried out.

##### **Part 1**

The proposed development is not a project type/class listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Thus, a mandatory EIA is not required under this class.

##### **Part 2**

The proposed development is not a project type/class listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. However, Part 2(15) of the Regulations states that

*“Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.”*

Part 2(15) of the Regulations ultimately requires the competent authority to determine, in the case where a project is considered ‘sub-threshold’ to the projects listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5, whether the project would likely give rise to significant effects on the environment.

The site area of the proposed development measures approximately 2.5hectares and is located on the N53 National Secondary route / A37 Main ‘A’ route (Concession Road) which crosses River Fane.

Having regard to Part 2(15) of Schedule 5 of the Regulations, the proposed development could be considered sub-threshold urban development , in respect of Part 2(10)(iv) of the Regulations:

*“(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.”*

The proposed development constitutes an urban development, but it is located in a rural location. It is considered to be sub-threshold as it would involve urban development below “...20 hectares elsewhere” threshold. .

*103.(1) (a) Where a planning application for sub-threshold development is not accompanied by an EIAR, the planning authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.*

*(b) Where the planning authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—*

*(i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,*

*(ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall, by notice in writing served on the applicant, require the applicant to submit to the authority the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination unless the applicant has already provided such information, or*

*(iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall—*

*(I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and*

*(II) by notice in writing served on the applicant, require the applicant to submit to the authority an EIAR and to comply with the requirements of article 105.*

*(1A) (a) Where an applicant is submitting to the planning authority the information specified in Schedule 7A, the information shall be accompanied by any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account.*

*(b) Where an applicant is submitting to the planning authority the information specified in Schedule 7A, the information may be accompanied by a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.*

The information provided in this report provides details on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects (if any) on the environment. It provides the relevant details under each of the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This information will assist the competent authority, MCC/NMDDC, to make a screening determination under Section 103 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Thus, as the proposed development can be considered to constitute ‘sub-threshold’ development with regards Part 2(10)(iv) of the Regulations, an assessment is required to be carried out to determine if the proposed development have the potential to give rise to significant effects on the environment.

### **Roads Act 1993, as amended**

Section 50 (1) of the Roads Act (1993) (as substituted by S.I No. 279 of 2019 and amended by S.I. 486 of 2019) specifies road developments for which an Environmental Impact Assessment is mandatory.

The thresholds for mandatory EIA of a road development are set out in section 50(1)(a) which states:

“50. (1) (a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:

the construction of a motorway;

(ii) the construction of a busway;

(iii) the construction of a service area;

(iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.”

The ‘prescribed types of road development’ in section 50(1)(a)(iv) are set out in Part V Environmental Impact Assessment of the Road Regulations 1994 (S.I. No. 119 of 1994) (as amended) which states the following:

(8). The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of section 50 of the Act shall be—

“(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 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;

(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.”

The proposed development involves the realignment of a type 1 single carriage that consists of two lanes and also include the construction of a bridge with a length of 70 metres bridge. Hence, it can be concluded that the proposed development does not involve the “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 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;” or “the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100metres or more in length”. The existing road will not be widened to four or more traffic lanes, no new four lane roads will be constructed and no bridges or tunnels up to 100 metres or more in length will be constructed.

The proposed development is not in a class listed in section 50 (1) of the Roads Act (1993), as amended, and it does not equal or exceed the thresholds set down in articles (8a) or (8b) of Roads Regulations 1994, as amended. Consequently, a mandatory EIA is not required.

EIA screening is required to determine the potential for the project to have significant effects on the environment, as a sub-threshold development.

### 3.2 Step 2: Preliminary Examination and Conclusion

The OPR Practice Note, Form 2 allows the preliminary examination to be recorded. Table 1 and Table 2, based on Form 2 of the Practice Note, summarise the preliminary examination based on the information provided in Section 4 of this Report, on the nature, size and location of the proposed development.

**Table 1: Preliminary Examination**

Preliminary Examination		
	Comment	Yes/No/Uncertain
<p><b>Nature of the development:</b></p> <p>Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?</p>	<p>The nature of the development is not exceptional in the context of the existing environment. The proposed development aims to improve an existing road (N53/A37) in a built environment by realigning the road from Ballynacarry bridge to a new bridge structure. This is to address geometry and safety issues at the existing Ballynacarry bridge.</p>	<p>No</p>

Preliminary Examination		
	Comment	Yes/No/Uncertain
Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?	Given the size of the proposed development, significant waste, emissions or pollutants are not expected to arise as a result of the works.	No
<b>Size of the development:</b> Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?	The size of the proposed development is not exceptional in the context of the existing environment. The area of land proposed as being within the site footprint is estimated at being approximately 2.5ha.	No
Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?	A desktop review of the National Planning Application (Republic of Ireland) and Northern Ireland Planning Portal was carried out to identify proposed and potential development in the study area. However, there were no relevant development identified at the time of writing this report which will have significant cumulative effects in conjunction with the proposed development.	No
<b>Location:</b> Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?	<p>The nearest European site to the Proposed Development is Slieve Gullion SAC (Site Code UK0030277), 14.3km to the northeast. There is no connectivity to this site.</p> <p>Dundalk Bay SAC (Site Code 000455) is 18.3km directly to the east and Dundalk Bay SPA (Site Code 004026) approximately 17km to the directly to the east are the only European sites within a potential zone of influence of the Proposed Development. The River Fane flows into Dundalk Bay approximately 30 river kilometres downstream. The possibility of a pollution event from the proposed development reaching Dundalk Bay is highly unlikely.</p> <p>The Project will include construction management for the protection of the River Fane as an area of high local biodiversity value and to uphold commitment to the Water Framework Directive to maintain and improve water quality in the River Fane.</p> <p>The proposed development will traverse elements of Wet grassland/Marsh . However, the habitats are of Local importance (higher value). Impacts on the wetlands are determined to be not significant.</p> <p>No nature reserves occur within the route or within proximity of the site.</p>	No
Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?	<p>No recorded archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites or features will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed development will have a direct, negative impact on a short section of the path of a former railway.</p> <p>There is the potential that ground works associated with the proposed development, may have a direct, negative impact on archaeological remains that survive beneath the current ground level, with no surface expression. The assessment and geophysical survey will aim to define any such features, in order to ascertain the significance of potential impacts.</p> <p>Ballynacarry Bridge will be bypassed as a result of the proposed development, which is a potential positive</p>	Uncertain

Preliminary Examination		
	Comment	Yes/No/Uncertain
	direct impact, due to the fact that the heritage structure will no longer be carrying through traffic.	

**Table 2: Conclusion of Preliminary Examination**

Conclusion of Preliminary Examination		
Based on a preliminary examination of the nature, size or location of the development: (Tick as appropriate)		
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. EIA is not required.	There is real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. An EIAR is required.	There is significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Proceed to Screening Determination.
		<b>Yes</b>

As noted in Table 2 the conclusion of Arup’s preliminary examination is that the nature, scale and location of the proposed development is such that there is significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development.

Thus, full EIA Screening is warranted.

As outlined in Section 2.2.2, the information to be provided for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA, under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, is set out in Schedule 7A of the same Regulations.

As outlined in Section 2.2.3, the Road Regulations 1994, as amended, states that the road authority shall take into account the relevant selection criteria specified in Annex III (of the EIA Directive) in making its EIA Screening determination.

Section 4 to Section 6 of this EIA Screening Report sets out the information required under both Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and Annex III of the EIA Directive, under the following headings:

- Characteristics of the Proposed Development;
- Location of the Proposed Development; and
- Type and Characteristics of Potential Effects.

It is noted that the information set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, is derived from Annex III of the EIA Directive and thus the information requirements largely align.

Table 3 below identifies the relevant sections of this EIA Screening Report where the required information is set out.

**Table 3: Schedule 7A Information and Annex III Information in relation to the proposed development**

Schedule 7A information (Planning and Development Regulations)	Annex III of EIA Directive (Road Regulations)	Section of this EIA Screening Report where this is addressed
<p>1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—</p> <p>(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and</p> <p>(b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.</p>	<p>1. Characteristics of projects</p> <p>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).</p>	<p>Section 5-Characteristics of the Proposed Development</p>
<p>2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.</p>	<p>2. Location of projects</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Section 4- Location of the Proposed Development</p>
<p>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—</p> <p>(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and</p> <p>(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.</p>	<p>4. Type and characteristics of the potential impact</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Section 6- Type and Characteristics of Potential Effects</p>

### 3.3 Step 3: Formal Screening Determination

Following the results of Step 1 and Step 2 outlined in Section 3.1 and 3.2, a formal screening determination is required. Sections 4 to 6 provides the relevant details under each of the criteria set out in Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A information of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2018 for urban developments. These sections also provide the relevant details under each of the criteria set out in Annex III in the EIA Directive for roads developments. This information will assist the competent



authority, MCC/NMDDC to make a screening determination under Section 103 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2018.

The final determination on EIA screening will be made by MCC/NMDDC, as the competent authority.

## 4. Characteristics of the Proposed Development

### 4.1 Overview of the Proposed Development

The proposed development involves the replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge which is on the N53 National Secondary route / A37 Main 'A' route (Concession Road) and the realignment of a portion of the N53/A37 road which crosses the River Fane. This route connects the towns of Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan and Dundalk, Co. Louth. The Bridge crosses the River Fane at the border with Co. Monaghan (Republic of Ireland) and Co. Armagh (Northern Ireland).

The Ballynacarry Bridge Replacement Scheme proposes to address geometry and safety issues at the existing Ballynacarry Bridge, which is located on the border with Northern Ireland, on the N53 National Secondary route.

The principal issues with the existing Ballynacarry Bridge are as follows:

- Substandard carriageway width;
- Substandard horizontal and vertical alignment;
- Limited forward visibility;
- Substandard stopping sight distance; and
- No hard shoulders/ hard strips on carriageway.

### 4.2 Description of the Proposed Development

(a) The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (including any demolition works):
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#### 4.2.1 Construction

The expected duration of the construction works will be approximately 6 months. A live Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted for planning and this will be developed and submitted by the appointed contractor prior to works. It will also be included in the Contract Documents for the project. It will include the following plans:

- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Invasive Species Management Plan
- Surface Water Management Plan
- Construction and Demolition Resource and Waste Management Plan
- Environmental Incident Response Plan

The existing bridge is to be retained and continue to be used for local access. The replacement bridge will be a two span prestressed precast beam and reinforced concrete slab bridge. Furthermore there will be the realignment and construction of approx. 1.3km of road.

An overview of the construction works, and phasing required for the proposed development is presented below.

**Phase 1** - This phase will consist of constructing the bridge structure at the River Fane crossing. Excavations at the bridge support locations will be required and the piled foundations will be constructed.

After this the bridge abutment walls and central piers will be constructed. The precast concrete beams will then be lifted into place with a concrete deck being poured on top. Backfill material will then be placed behind each abutment to the underside of the road to allow for the road construction. To finish the bridge construction, bridge parapets will be installed to provide a vehicle restraint system on the bridge.

**Phase 2** – This phase will consist of the removal of the existing section of the N53 and A37 that requires realignment. The existing pavement and verges will be removed. Utility works will also take place during this phase which will include

- Relocation of underground cable and infrastructure, e.g. ESB etc.
- Installation of new gullies and manholes to tie into the existing drainage system.
- Relocation of watermains; and
- Installation of new ducts and chambers associated with any additional services.

During this phase, there will be a need for road/lane closures. However, local access will be maintained. A Traffic Management Plan will be prepared by the contractor to manage the traffic related aspects.

**Phase 3** – The new road section will either be constructed concurrently with the removal of the existing road or will be constructed after its removal. New off-road embankments will be constructed either side of the new road, with upfill required for the underside of the road subbase. Then the road sub-base will be laid, with an asphalt surfacing layer on top. Road markings and safety barriers will then be installed. This road construction will continue up until the bridge with the asphalt surfacing then being laid on top of the bridge, to tie in the A37 to the N53.

#### 4.2.2 Demolition

There are no demolitions works required for the completion of the proposed development.

#### 4.2.3 Operation

Following construction of the proposed development, the current road geometry issues will be improved, the scheme will also achieve the following objectives:

- Improved connectivity between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland on this important national border link road;
- Promotion of economic development and accessibility for the entire region;
- Improved road safety; and
- Reduced journey times between Monaghan and Dundalk /M1.

(b) Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects:

The National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) and Northern Ireland Planning Portal were consulted in May 2023, in order to ascertain if there are any other existing or permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects, when considered alongside the proposed development.

Based on Northern Ireland Planning Portal there are no permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects, when considered alongside the proposed development. Existing or permitted projects of significance within 1km of the proposed development site which have the potential to give rise to cumulative effects based on the National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) are identified in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Summary of planned development adjacent or within 1km distance to the proposed development. Source MyPlan.ie/Monaghan County Council.**

Planning Ref.	Description of developments	Status of Planning
21436	Permission to construct a replacement two-storey dwelling with detached domestic garage, install a waste water treatment system and subsoil percolation area, permanently close entrance to existing cottage (ref Postcode A75 V122), change of use of this cottage from cottage to store, modify existing entrances onto public roadway to provide gates & piers with one single exit point for both sites together with all ancillary site works.	Granted
20421	Permission for alterations & extensions of existing single-storey dwelling to comprise of the following: (1) construct an enclosed entrance porch (2) construct a single-storey split level rear extension (3) alterations of existing façade treatments to include openings and materials together with ancillary internal refurbishments (5) construct a single-storey detached domestic garage (6) alteration of existing access driveway together with all associated works.	Granted
17485	Permission to construct a domestic garage with a first floor children's playroom together with all ancillary site development works.	Granted
21700	1) Retention of existing single storey storage shed used in connection with applicants construction business, hard surfaced yard and will consist of 2) permission to block up existing unauthorised vehicular entrance onto L3210 public road and form new vehicular entrances onto L4310 public road and all associated site development works.	Granted
21207	Permission for a development consisting of demolition of existing derelict dwelling house and replacement with a bungalow style dwelling house, a new waste water treatment system and all associated site development works.	Granted

Following the review of the permitted planning developments in close proximity to the proposed development, it was considered that due to the scale, nature and location of the proposed development the cumulative effects that might arise due to construction of the proposed development overlapping with other permitted developments are minor. As such, there are no likely significant cumulative effects that would arise during the construction of the proposed development with any other permitted development listed above.

Also, as a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be implemented by the Contractor, it will take into account the above proposed project's construction schedules. Therefore, significant negative cumulative effects are not anticipated.

<p>(c) Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity:</p> <p>Will construction or the operation of the proposal use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?</p>
---

The project will involve the use of a small area of land on the riverbanks, agricultural lands and roadside verge. The proposed bridge structure will cross the River Fane which may be described as an Upland/Eroding River (FW1). However, no in-stream works will be involved and the riparian areas will not be affected.

The lands here typically conform to the designations Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1), Grassy Verges (GA2). There are also Wetlands, hedgerow (WL1) and treeline (WL2) habitats which may be impacted upon but this will be minor. There are no other natural or semi-natural habitats within the area to be affected.

The project will use natural materials excavated locally, where practicable as part of the construction phase of this project. Soils that occur in-situ will be used within the works area, where practicable. It is not anticipated that there will be a need to remove bedrock from the site.

No additional use of freshwater or groundwater will be required by works. No abstraction of water will take place.

Some energy will be required for the operation of construction compounds, construction lighting etc. However, the amount of energy required to facilitate the Proposed Development is not considered to be significant. Additionally, the natural resources (e.g., concrete, asphalt and steel) and the land take required during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is not anticipated to be significant.

There may be some requirement for water usage at the site; for welfare facilities or indeed for dust prevention, in the event that there is any stockpiling of material on site. However again, any water use on site is not expected to be significant.

(d) Production of waste:

Will the proposal produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?

There will be some waste generated on site. Standard domestic waste will be generated in the construction compound and staff welfare facilities. This will be segregated at source, removed from site and disposed of in a suitable licenced facility. Works will be subject to a Waste Management Plan prepared by the appointed contractor.

Significant generation of waste is not anticipated during the operational phase of the proposed development. There may be some waste arisings as a result of scheduled maintenance of the road and bridge but this is not anticipated to be significant.

(e) Pollution and nuisances:

Will the proposal release pollutants to ground or surface water, or air (including noise and vibrations) or water, or lead to exceeding environmental standards set out in other Directives?

The route crosses a watercourse (the River Fane). However, with the implementation of appropriate construction practices, the risk of impacts to water quality is not considered to be significant.

All works will take place within the lands made available for the scheme. The small scale of the development footprint will mean limited potential to cause nuisance through construction noise or emissions.

While the project will require the use of part of an existing public road for the construction phase, no significant delays to traffic are anticipated as the existing bridge will likely remain in operation throughout the period of works.

In operation, the scheme will have similar levels of vehicular traffic as currently exist here. However, given that the revised road geometry will allow for more efficient driving (i.e. reduced need for deceleration, braking and acceleration). It may reasonably be predicted that traffic noise and emissions will be reduced as a result of the proposed development.

(f) Major accidents and disasters:

In accordance with scientific knowledge, is there a risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?

The risk of major accident and disaster is not significant. A traffic management plan will be put in place for the duration of works.

The risk of accidents associated with the operational phase is predicted to be significantly lower than that of the bridge crossing at present. It will also increase the safety of the road here for all users, including motorists.

No novel or potentially significantly hazardous substances or technologies will be utilised during the works. A Construction Management Plan will be prepared by the appointed contractor to ensure adherence to good site practices which will reduce any risk of accidents.

No significant impacts as a result of, or in combination with climate change are predicted.

(g) Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution:

No risks to human health are predicted by the proposed development. The operational phase presents no enhanced risks to human health. Rather, road safety will improve following the completion of works.

## 5. Location of the Proposed Development

This Section describes location of the proposed development, in accordance with Section (B)(2) of Form 3 which is based off Schedule 7 of the Directive in the OPR Practice Note PN02 – Environmental Impact Assessment Screening.

(a) Generally, describe the location of the site and its surroundings:

The proposed development is located on the N53/A37 road. The N53 (County Monaghan, Republic of Ireland)/ A37 (County Armagh, Northern Ireland) links the towns of Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan and Dundalk, Co. Louth. The proposed development is also a border crossing point between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The proposed development site is within a rural landscape dominated by grassland based agriculture separated by hedgerows and treelines. The proposed development crosses the Fane River which is a 4th order stream on the EPA rivers database. The Fane flows generally in a north south direction along this portion of its extent. The Fane discharges into Dundalk bay approximately 28km downstream of the Ballynacarry Bridge.

The project will involve the use of existing road surface and some adjacent agricultural lands. It will be 1.3km in total length and will include a bridge construction over the River Fane.

When the proposed development is complete, a small portion of the lands acquired, will be permanently the footprint of the proposed development.

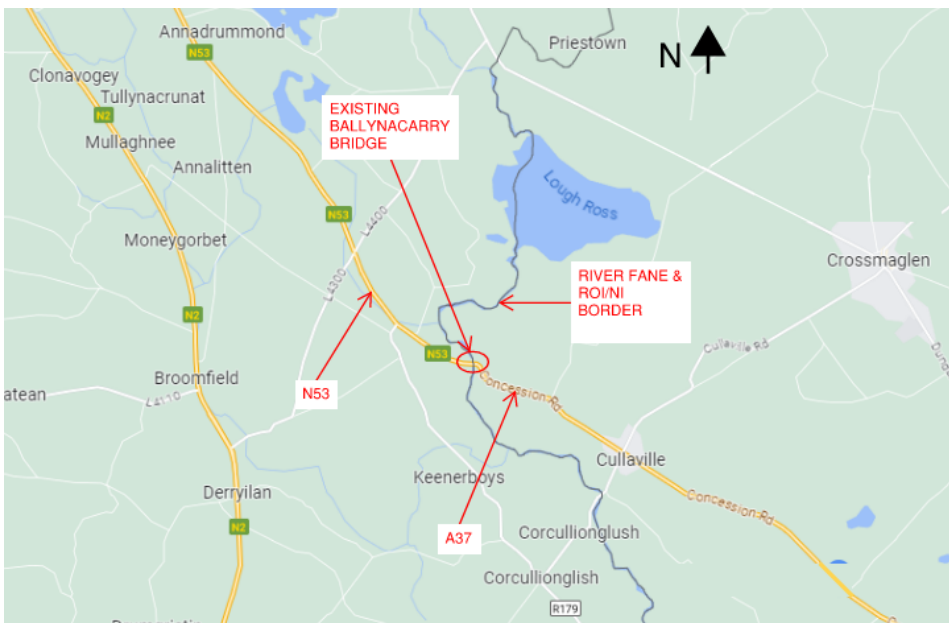
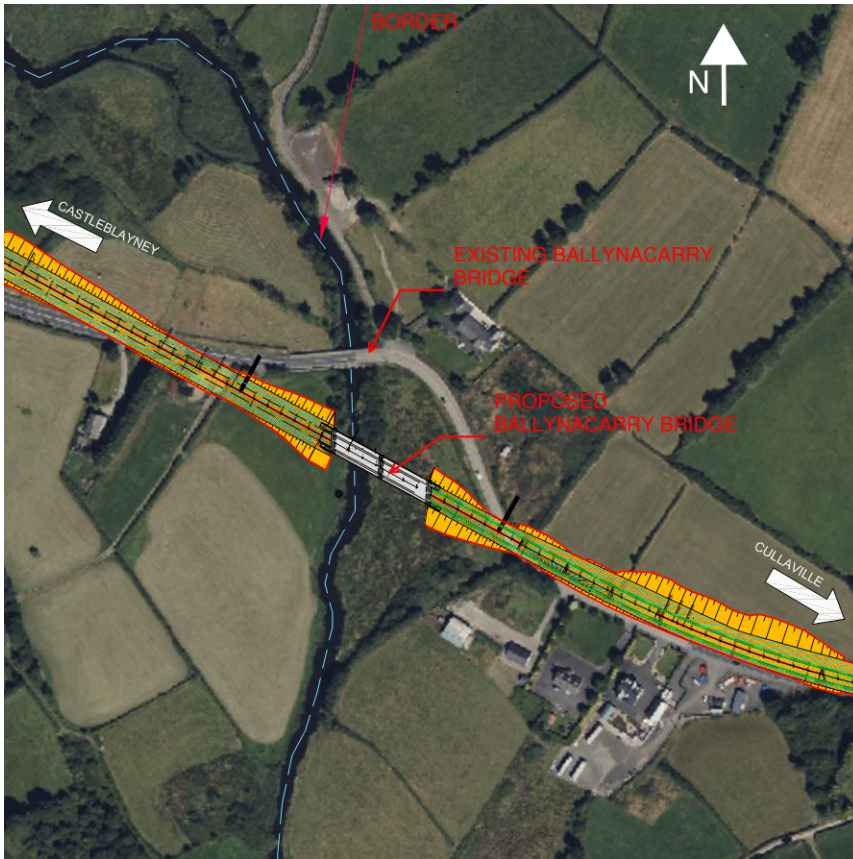


Figure 1 Map of location of Ballynacarry Bridge and surrounding road network (ref:Google Maps)

The location of the proposed bridge along the scheme is shown below.



**Figure 2 Location of the proposed bridge structure**

The full extents of the scheme is shown in Appendix A.

- (b) Is the project located within, close to or has it the potential to impact on any site specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations:
- European site
  - NHA/pNHA
  - Designated Nature Reserve
  - Designated refuge for flora or fauna
  - Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation, protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ local area plan/ draft plan or variation of a plan.

The proposed site of works is outside any site designated for conservation of nature.

There are no SPA or SAC in proximity to the proposed options of the proposed development. The nearest European site to the Proposed Development is Slieve Gullion SAC (Site Code UK0030277), 14.3km northeast of the proposed development. There is no connectivity to this site.

Dundalk Bay SAC (Site Code 000455) is 18.3km directly to the east and Dundalk Bay SPA (Site Code 004026) approximately 17km to the directly to the east are the only European sites within a potential zone of influence of the Proposed Development. The River Fane flows into Dundalk Bay approximately 30 river kilometres downstream. The possibility of a pollution event from the proposed development reaching Dundalk Bay is highly unlikely.

Within circa 2km distance to the proposed development there are two pNHA, Muckno Lake (pNHA) with site code: 000563 (designated for breeding birds, wintering ground fowl and few marginal fens) and Lough Ross (pNHA) with site code: 001495 (designated for species-poor vegetation, Littorella and

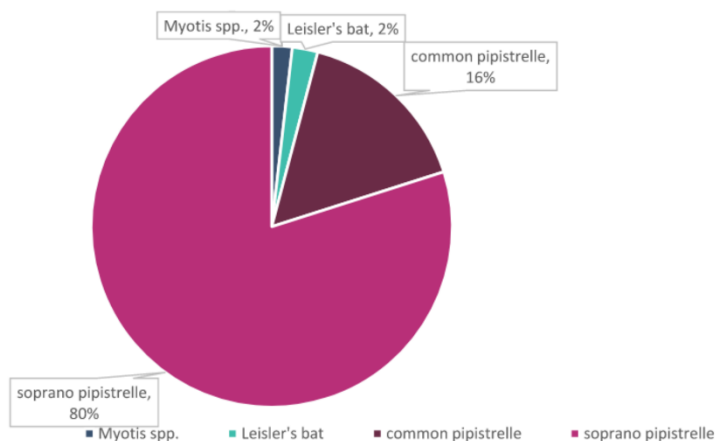
Potamogeton species). There is no hydrological or other connection to this site and therefore no impacts are predicted.

No nature reserves occur within the route or within proximity of the site.

(c) 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 (including riparian areas and river mouths), the coastal zone and the marine environment, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the project?

As stated above, the proposed development will be located in a rural area. The River Fane is known to support salmon and sea trout; however, it is not designated for salmon under S.I. 293 /1988 - European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1988.

An ecology survey was undertaken as part of the constraints study. It has been found that there is no evidence of badgers or otters in the study site. However bat activity has been detected. Activity levels were assessed as moderate and were concentrated along the River Fane both North and South of Ballynacarry bridge, and along the hedgerows bordering the road that travels North adjacent to the River Fane, as well as the two derelict building along this roadway. The diagram below shows total bat species composition.



**Figure 3 Diagram showing the bat composition**

Roosting activity was observed within the proposed development site as bats were seen emerging from the main derelict building to the North of Ballynacarry bridge, approximately 180m North from the proposed location of the new bridge. For this reason, bat boxes will be installed under the new bridge to allow for future bat roosting.

As discussed in the Construction Environment Management Plan construction activity and any associated lighting will be carried out during daytime hours only where this activity is carried out during the bat activity season (i.e. March – October inclusive).

The proposed development will traverse elements of Wet grassland/Marsh . However, the habitats are of Local importance (higher value). Impacts on the wetlands are determined to be not significant.

(d) Is the proposal likely to be highly visible to many people? Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location, or are there any routes or facilities that are used by the public for recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the proposal?

The proposed development would likely to be visible from the clustered and dispersed residential properties and agricultural lands in the landscape and views from higher drumlins and topographical areas to the northeast and southwest. Close proximity views include those from the River Fane watercourse/waterbody and adjoining lowlands.

The study site is not listed in the list of views and prospects in both the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 and the Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015. There are no protected landscape, townscape or visual designated sites impacted.

Therefore, the site is not considered to be of significant landscape character significance.

- (e) Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the project?

No recorded archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites or features will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development.

The proposed development will have a direct, negative impact on a short section of the path of a former railway.

There is the potential that ground works associated with the proposed development, may have a direct, negative impact on archaeological remains that survive beneath the current ground level, with no surface expression. The assessment and geophysical survey will aim to define any such features, in order to ascertain the significance of potential impacts.

Ballynacarry Bridge will be bypassed as a result of the proposed development, which is a potential positive direct impact, due to the fact that the heritage structure will no longer be carrying through traffic.

- (f) Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, or occupied by sensitive land uses e.g., hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the proposal?

The study area is located in a relatively rural area and hence there is no hub area from a population point of view. The population is split into electoral divisions, with one electoral division on the South side of the study area (Carrickmacross – Castleblayney in the Republic of Ireland) and the other being on the North side of the study area (Slieve Gullion in Northern Ireland).

There are no hospitals, schools, places of worship or community facilities that could be affected by the proposed development.

- (g) 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 proposal?

Some agricultural grassland will be taken for the project. This type of habitat is extremely widespread in Co. Monaghan and the adjacent Co. Armagh. However, it should be noted that the land-take of this project is very limited.

No significant impact on soils is predicted.

No additional water resources will be required. No existing watercourses will be impacted upon during construction phase. No threats to watercourses are predicted for the operational phase of the project.

- (h) Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, and where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal e.g., the status of water bodies under the Water Framework Directive?

There are no known areas within or around the site of the proposed development which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, or where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal.

- (i) Is the site located in an area susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, or flooding which could cause the proposal to present environmental problems?

There is a risk of fluvial flooding in the study area. However, the proposed development will include the construction of a two span bridge structure which spans most of the flood plain. The two span structure will serve as a mitigation to the fluvial flooding in the study site. As such, the risk to flooding in the proposed site is negligible.

As the topography of the area is relatively flat, landslide susceptibility is negligible.



(j) Are there any additional considerations that are specific to this location?

No additional considerations in addition to those previously identified are specific to this location.

## 6. Type and Characteristics of the Potential Impacts

This Section describes the types and characteristics of potential impacts, in accordance with Section (B)(3) of Form 3 of the OPR Practice Note PN02- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening.

### 6.1 Population and Human Health

There will be some construction traffic associated with the construction of the proposed development. However, the existing bridge will continue to be used for vehicular traffic in order to allow local access. In addition, temporary traffic management measures will be required where the work will cross or run adjacent to the existing N53/A37 road. These temporary traffic management measures will be designed carefully to enable the works to progress and to manage the safety of workers and the passing public. The temporary traffic management measures will evolve constantly as the works progresses. Thus, as a result of temporary traffic measures, there may be some disruption or nuisance experienced by local residents.

Prior to the commencement of the works, the contractor will be required to develop a Construction Traffic Management Plan. The Construction Traffic Management Plan will be designed to provide a safe working environment and to enable the safe and efficient passage of traffic and other road users through the road works site during the construction phase. Liaison will take place with receptors adjacent to the works to effectively manage any traffic disruption and maintain access to these receptors.

Sensitive receptors are located within 50m to the proposed development area and they include fifteen residential developments and places of work (including GP Motors Sales, Orchard Distribution, Monaghan Hire and Paul Hoey Fuel). Access routes to the above sensitive receptors will be maintained for the duration of the construction period. In the event of temporary disruption to access to these receptors, prior liaison will be undertaken with them to inform them of the proposed traffic management measures.

There will be some dust and noise emissions during the construction phase however, they are not considered to be significant. These are addressed in detail in Section 6.8 and Section 6.9 respectively.

There will be some temporary disruption to the Monaghan Way walking route, just located on the western approach to the bridge, however access will be maintained during construction.

Following completion of the proposed development, positive impacts of long-term duration are predicted as being highly likely as a result of a safer river crossing and road route being made available.

### 6.2 Biodiversity

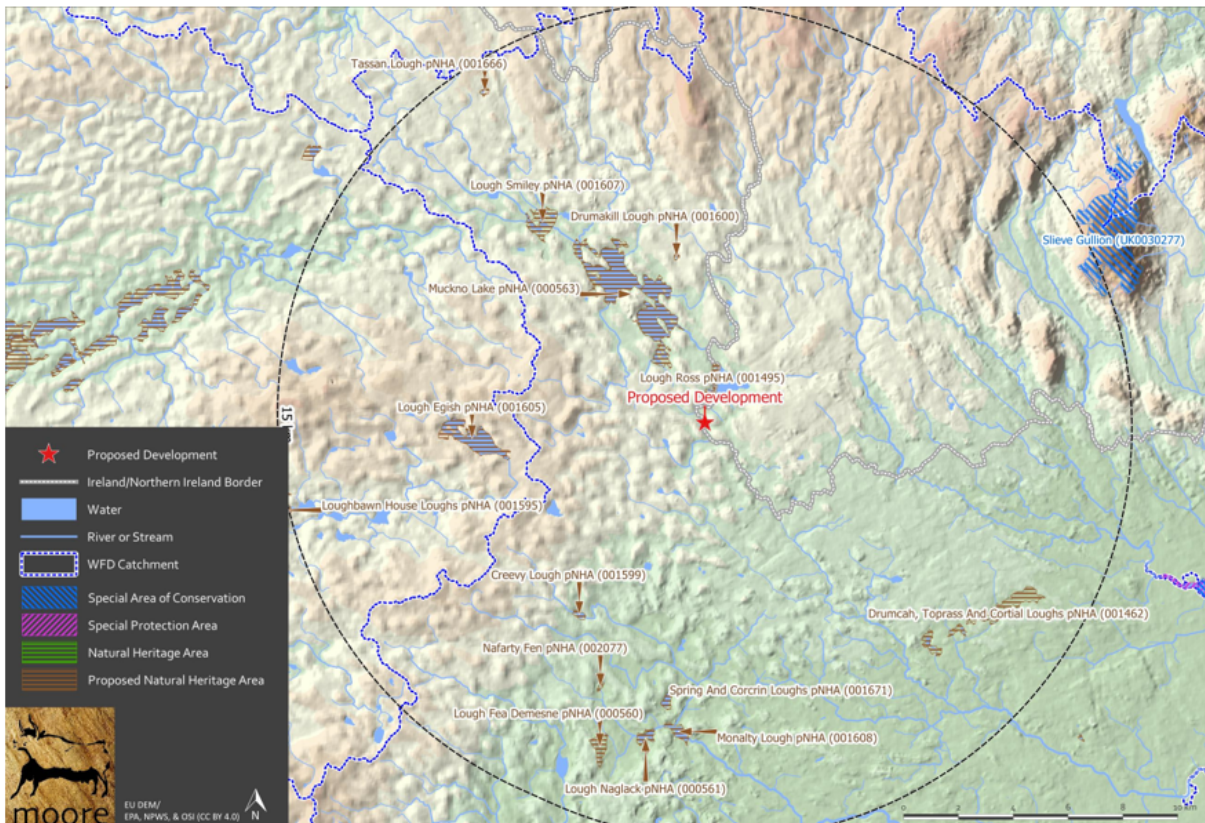
The Proposed Development is located at a crossing of the River Fane where it forms the international border between Ireland and the United Kingdom, 1km northwest of Cullaville, Co. Armagh.

There are no SPA or SAC in proximity to the proposed options of the proposed development. The nearest European site to the Proposed Development is Slieve Gullion SAC (Site Code UK0030277), 14.3km northeast of the proposed development. There is no connectivity to this European site.

Dundalk Bay SAC (Site Code 000455) is 18.3km directly to the east and Dundalk Bay SPA (Site Code 004026) approximately 17km to the directly to the east are the only European sites within a potential zone of influence of the Proposed Development. The River Fane flows into Dundalk Bay approximately 30 river kilometres downstream. The possibility of a pollution event from the proposed development reaching Dundalk Bay is highly unlikely.

Within circa 2km distance to the proposed development there are two pNHA, Muckno Lake (pNHA) with site code: 000563 (designated for breeding birds, wintering ground fowl and few marginal fens) and Lough Ross (pNHA) with site code: 001495 (designated for species-poor vegetation, Littorella and Potamogeton species). There is no hydrological or other connection to this site and therefore no impacts are predicted.

The lands at the proposed development site typically conform to the designations Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1) and Grassy Verges (GA2). The proposed development will traverse elements of Wet grassland/Marsh. However, the habitats are of Local importance. Impacts on the wetlands are determined to be not significant. There are also hedgerow (WL1) and treeline (WL2) habitats which may be impacted upon but this will be minor. There are no other natural or semi-natural habitats within the area to be affected.



**Figure 4: Showing European Sites and NHAs/pNHAs within the wider Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development**

An Appropriate Assessment Screening was carried out and the report concluded that:

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites; 30 river km distance to Dundalk Bay;
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

Therefore, the report has objectively concluded that:

- The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
- The Proposed Development is not likely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.

- The Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have significant effects on a European site.
- It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

### 6.3 Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage

No recorded archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites or features will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development.

The proposed development will have a direct, negative impact on a short section of the path of a former railway.

There is the potential that ground works associated with the proposed development, may have a direct, negative impact on archaeological remains that survive beneath the current ground level, with no surface expression. The assessment and geophysical survey will aim to define any such features, in order to ascertain the significance of potential impacts.

Ballynacarry Bridge will be bypassed as a result of the proposed development, which is a potential positive direct impact, due to the fact that the heritage structure will no longer be carrying through traffic.

### 6.4 Landscape and Visual

The majority of the study area comprises a lowland valley bisected by the meandering corridor of the River Fane. It flows generally in a south-easterly direction from County Monaghan to Dundalk Bay in County Louth and acts as a natural demarcation between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland for part of its length. Agricultural lands adjoin the river Fane where the topography allows, while lower lying areas abutting the river consist of wetland and riparian habitats.

Landform undulates and rises to the southwest and northeast. The lowest level in the study area is approximately 87m ASL. The ridgelines to the southwest are wooded in parts and prevent views from the local road to the south of the ridge in Ardkirk. The field patterns are predominately small, regular and rectangular in form with well-defined boundaries. The field patterns become more irregular in shape where they adjoin the existing roads, the River Fane and its associated wetland habitat.

The proposed development works extends to the south of the existing Ballynacarry bridge, this will directly impact residential properties, farming properties, the corridor of the River Fane and its associated, scrub, semi-natural vegetation and treelines. However, the proposed development will be keeping the existing development pattern and affords views along the N53/A37.

The proposed development would likely be visible from the clustered and dispersed residential properties and agricultural lands in the landscape and views from higher drumlins and topographical areas to the northeast and southwest. Proximity views include those from the River Fane watercourse/waterbody and adjoining lowlands. However, no significant impacts are predicted given that the structure to be constructed will be immediately adjacent an existing structure (Ballynacarry bridge). No sensitive or listed/protected views will be impacted upon by the proposed works. There are no protected landscape, townscape or visual designated sites that will be impacted by the proposed development.

### 6.5 Soils and Geology

Published geological mapping indicates that bedrock beneath the site west of the river comprises “Turbidite, sandstone and siltstone” (GSI), and the bedrock beneath the site east of the river comprises “Sandstone” (GSNI).

The surface soils, subsoils, geomorphology and bedrock geology are generally consistent throughout the study area. As the topography of the area is relatively flat, landslide susceptibility is negligible. There is evidence from aerial photographs of a historic rail line that intersects the study area in the western side, which may be a source of uncontrolled and potentially contaminated fill.

Published geological mapping from GSI indicates that the area to the west of the river is underlain by a poor aquifer, often associated with fine grained subsurface material overlaying bedrock. GSI Groundwater Vulnerability map show that the site west of the river is underlain by ground with extreme groundwater vulnerability.

There are no known active or historic pits and quarries in the site.

Only shallow excavations will be required during the construction of the proposed road. The bridge will consist of piled foundations with minimal excavation to get down to the founding level. No dewatering will be required during the construction phase of the proposed development. The Contractor will send any excavated material which cannot be re-used/recycled for disposal to a suitably licenced facility.

The contractor will ensure that any interim storage or waste management facilities for excavated material have the appropriate waste licences of waste facility permits in place. It is therefore not envisaged that the proposed development will result in significant effects on soils and geology.

## **6.6 Water Quality, Hydrology and Hydrogeology**

The primary water features located within the study site is River Fane. The risk status of River Fane is classified as ‘at risk’ according to the River Waterbodies Risk, while it has a ‘poor’ River Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021. There is potential pollution from construction phase (construction runoff (sediments, hydrocarbons, and concrete spills) of the proposed development. However, any impacts would most likely be temporary.

The River Fane is designated as a “Drinking Water River” over two reaches downstream of the existing N53. River Fane (Fane\_040) reaching from Ballynacarry Bridge to Inniskeen (IEPA1\_GBNI1NB060608249) and further downstream the River Fane (Fane\_050) reaching from Inniskeen to Stephenstown (IEPA1\_NB\_06F010900). The impact on the flow regime is likely to be slight to imperceptible given that such abstractions are located downstream on the River Fane at Inniskeen and Stephenstown.

There are no large lakes within the study area however one small lake feature, Cornahove Lough (approximately 2ha in area), has been identified on the Co. Armagh side of the RoI/NI Border. However, this lake has not been identified by the NIEA as a lake waterbody under the European Water Framework Directive (WFD).

There is a risk of fluvial flooding in the study area. However, the proposed development consist of construction of a two span bridge structure which spans most of the flood plain. The two span structure will serve as a mitigation to the fluvial flooding in the study site. As such, the risk to flooding in the proposed site is negligible.

As stated in Section 4.2.1 above, only shallow excavations will be required during the construction of the proposed road. The bridge will consist of piled foundations with minimal excavation to get down to the founding level. No dewatering will be required during the construction phase of the proposed development. Best practice construction measures such as silt and sediment controls will be installed prior to the commencement of any construction works. Thus, significant negative effects on water quality, hydrology, hydrogeology are not envisaged.

During construction, surface water generated during the construction phase will be managed in line with best construction practices such as the implementation of silt and sediment controls. The proposed development will also implement sustainable drainage (SuDS) throughout the proposed development to manage surface water runoff.

Thus, significant negative effects on water quality and hydrology are not envisaged during the construction or operational phases.

## **6.7 Air Quality and Climate**

During the construction phase, the potential for dust emissions will arise in respect of excavations/planning of road surfaces in dry weather. Dust may be raised by wind from dry surfaces and stockpiles. Air emissions from the exhausts of construction plant, machinery and haulage trucks will also

be elevated during construction but are not expected to be significant. No odour emissions are envisaged from the proposed construction works.

The employment of good construction management practices by the appointed contractor for the Proposed Development will serve to minimise the risk of dust emissions. Examples of measures to be employed include the spraying of exposed earthworks during dry periods, the provision of wheel washes and sweeping of roads. A list of appropriate measures will be proposed and implemented by the Contractor in advance of the construction works. It is anticipated with the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measures; significant construction phase air quality impacts will not arise.

Positive impacts on air quality are likely as a result of improved road geometry and more efficient driving. No increases in pollutant concentrations over baseline levels may be predicted as a result of the proposed works. No negative impacts on air quality or climate may be predicted from a project of this nature and scale.

## **6.8 Noise and Vibration**

There may be an increase in noise levels during the construction activities. While temporary noise impacts on human receptors may be anticipated during the construction phase, these will be mitigated by best practice construction measures implemented by the appointed contractor. Examples of measures to be employed include the selection of quiet plant, not leaving plant idling and maintenance of plant to minimise noise generation. Appropriate measures will be proposed and implemented by the contractor during of the construction works.

Standard working hours of 07:00 – 19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00-14:00 on Saturday will apply to all works. Night-time and Sunday working may be required to facilitate road works that cannot be undertaken during daytime / evening conditions. The planning of such works by the appointed contractor will take place in consultation with MCC/NMDDC and will have consideration for sensitive receptors, in particular nearby residential areas.

Noise emissions will be controlled by the implementation of best practice construction methods.

Significant rock breaking is not envisaged, however if localised rock breaking is required this will be managed appropriately.

The main vibration source during the construction phase will be from the proposed excavation/road planning works. A variety of potential vibration causing items of plant are likely to be used such as excavators, lifting equipment, rock breakers and dumper trucks.

Vibration effects will be controlled by the implementation of best practice construction methods. Examples of measures to be employed include the use of suitable vibration isolators in equipment mountings and ensuring that materials are lowered rather than dropped from heights. A list of appropriate measures will be proposed and implemented by the contractor in advance of the construction works.

The operational phase of the road will have no potential significant negative impacts. Rather, positive effects from improved road geometry and more efficient driving are predicted.

## **6.9 Land Use and Materials**

The project will involve the use of a small area of land on the riverbanks, agricultural lands and roadside verge. The proposed bridge structure will cross the River Fane which may be described as an Upland/Eroding River (FW1). However, no in-stream works will be involved and the riparian areas will not be affected.

The lands here typically conform to the designations Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1), Grassy Verges (GA2). There are also hedgerow (WL1) and treeline (WL2) habitats which may be impacted upon. There are no other natural or semi-natural habitats within the area to be affected.

The project will use natural materials excavated locally, where practicable as part of the construction phase of this project. Soils that occur in-situ will be used, where practicable within the works area. It is not anticipated that there will be a need to remove bedrock from the site.

There will be no disruption to existing water supplies during the proposed development.

No significant negative effects on land use or material assets are predicted during the construction or operation phases of the proposed development.

### **6.10 Cumulative Effects**

The National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) and Northern Ireland Planning Portal were consulted in May 2023, in order to ascertain if there are any other existing or permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects, when considered alongside the proposed development.

Based on Northern Ireland Planning Portal there are no permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects, when considered alongside the proposed development. Existing or permitted projects of significance within 1km of the proposed development site which have the potential to give rise to cumulative effects based on the National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) are identified in Table 4 above.

Following the review of the permitted planning developments in close proximity to the proposed development, it was considered that due to the scale, nature and location of the proposed development the cumulative effects that might arise due to construction of the proposed development overlapping with other permitted developments are minor. As such, there are no likely significant cumulative effects that would arise during the construction of the proposed development with any other permitted development listed above.

Also, as a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be implemented by the Contractor, it will be required to take into account the above proposed project's construction schedules. Therefore, significant negative cumulative effects are not anticipated.

### **6.11 Interaction between the above factors**

The interaction of the above factors has been considered in this screening assessment. Environmental interactions occur between the topics of population, human health, air quality, noise and vibration and traffic and transport. The interaction of these topics has been considered during the screening assessment.

No significant effects due to the interaction of environmental factors are predicted.

### **6.12 Transboundary Effects**

The site of the proposed development is approximately 2.5ha in size and is located on the N53/A37 and therefore traverses the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The N53 (County Monaghan, Republic of Ireland)/ A37 (County Armagh, Northern Ireland) links the towns of Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan and Dundalk, Co. Louth. It is anticipated that there will be no significant construction or operational phase impacts within the two separate jurisdictions.

## **7. Overall Conclusions**

The prescribed classes of urban development and thresholds that trigger a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended. A review of the project types listed in the aforementioned Schedule 5, as amended has been carried out. The Proposed Development is a type set out in Part 2 Class 10 (b)(iv) of Schedule 5 as described previously but it does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part. Therefore, it is a sub-threshold urban development and has been screened for EIA on that basis.

The prescribed classes of roads developments and thresholds that trigger a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment are also contained in Section 2 and Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended. A review of project types listed in Part V of the Road Regulations 1994 has been carried out. The Proposed Development does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified within this Legislation. Therefore, it is a sub-threshold roads development and has been screened for EIA on that basis.

Arup has prepared this EIA Screening Report on behalf of MCC/NMDDC to determine whether an EIA is required for the Proposed Development. The information provided in this report provides details on the characteristics of the Proposed Development and its likely significant effects (if any) on the environment. This information will assist the competent authority / roads authority, MCC/NMDDC to undertake the EIA screening as required under the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended and the Roads Act 1993, as amended.

Based on the information provided in this report, it is the opinion of Arup that there are no significant impacts on the environment will arise from the construction or operation of the Proposed Development and that an EIA is not required. However, the determination on EIA screening will be made by MCC and NMDDC.

## 8. Reference

- Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015.
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018)
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017) Transposition of 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) in the Land Use Planning and EPA Licencing Systems;
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017) Implementation of Directive 2014/52/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive): Advice on the Administrative Provisions in Advance of Transposition;
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development;
- Environmental Protection Agency (2022) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (May 2022);
- Environmental Protection Agency (2015) Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements Draft September 2015;
- Environmental Protection Agency (2003) Advice Notes on Current Practice in the Preparation of Environmental Impact Statements;
- Environmental Protection Agency (2002) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements;
- EPA Envision Mapping (Accessed May 2023) <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>
- European Commission (2017) *Guidance on EIA Screening*.
- Google Aerial Photography and Mapping (<https://www.google.ie/maps>
- Geological Survey of Ireland (Accessed May 2023) <https://dcnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ebaf90ff2d554522b438ff313b0c197a&scale=0>
- Landscape Assessment of County Monaghan (2008)
- Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.
- National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland).
- Northern Ireland Planning Portal.

- Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (2016)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (Accessed May 2023)  
<http://webgis.buildingsofireland.ie/HistoricEnvironment/index.html>
- O'Connor Sutton Cronin (2015) *The EXO Building Point Village Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment Report*
- Planning and Development Act, 2000 (No. 30 of 2000).
- Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001).
- Shay Cleary Architects (2015) *The EXO Building Point Village: Proposed Point Village Foul and Surface Water Layout.*
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) (2014) *Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Scheme Drawing C705 – SK10*
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) formerly National Roads Authority (NRA) (2011) *Guidelines for Treatment of Air Quality during the Planning and Construction of National Road Schemes*, TII, Dublin, Ireland
- UK Highways Agency (2007) *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)*, Highways Agency, London, UK



## 9. Screening Checklist

The potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Development have been outlined in the previous sections of this report.

The EC *Guidance on EIA Screening* (EC, 2017) provides a checklist to help users decide whether EIA is required based on the characteristics of a project and its environment. This screening checklist is included in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Screening Checklist to determine if EIA is required based on the characteristics of a project and its environment**

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No – Why
1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	No	No There will be no significant change in land use as a result of the Proposed Development.
2. Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	No The project will involve the use of a small area of land on the riverbanks, agricultural lands and roadside verge. However, the amount of land-take is extremely limited  Services such as water and power will be required during the construction phase. Mobile generators will be used during the construction phase. It is not considered that there will be a significant use of these resources as part of the Proposed Development.  Construction materials will include concrete, steel, pipework, signage etc.  Energy will also be required during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. However, this is not expected to be significant.  A Report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment was carried out and it has been determined by Arup that there is no potential for significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites and therefore it is the view of Arup that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.
3. Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes	No. The types of standard construction materials that will be used will not be harmful to human health or the environment. The contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 291 of 2013). It is envisaged that the risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used is very low and

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No – Why
		therefore will not result in significant environmental effects.
4. Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	No. Inert construction waste generated will be removed from the site areas and disposed of at a suitable licensed facility. The production of waste will be managed in accordance with the relevant waste legislation. Should the appointed contractor encounter contaminated ground during the excavation works, it will be managed appropriately and disposed of at suitably licensed and permitted facilities in accordance with the requirements of current RoI/NI waste management legislation.
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?	No	No. It is expected that dust may be emitted during construction and construction fumes from construction plant and vehicles will arise during the construction phase, but these will be minimal. See Section 6.7 and 6.9 for details on the mitigation measures to be implemented.
6. Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	No. Standard construction noise is expected during construction activities. No significant rock breaking will likely be required. Vibration effects will be controlled by the implementation of best construction practice See Section 6.8 for details on mitigation measures which will be implemented in relation to noise and vibration.
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?	Yes	No. With the installation of SuDs infrastructure, it is anticipated that there will be a positive impact to the surface water baseline.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the project which could affect human health or the environment?	Yes	No. The risk of major accident and disaster is not significant. A traffic management plan will be put in place for the duration of works. The risk of accidents associated with the operational phase is predicted to be significantly lower than that of the bridge crossing at present. It will also increase the safety of the road here for all users, including motorists.

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No – Why
		<p>No novel or potentially significantly hazardous substances or technologies will be utilised during the works. A Construction Management Plan will be prepared by the appointed contractor to ensure adherence to good site practices which will reduce any risk of accidents.</p> <p>No significant impacts as a result of, or in combination with climate change are predicted.</p>
9. Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes	<p>No.</p> <p>The proposed development will improve connectivity between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland on this important national border link road. It will also promote economic development and accessibility for the entire region and improve the road safety.</p>
10. Are there any other factors which should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	No	<p>No</p> <p>There are no cumulative impacts predicted.</p>
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?	No	<p>No.</p> <p>Refer to Section 6.2 and Section 6.3 for details.</p>
12. Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	<p>No</p> <p>Refer to Section 6.2 for details.</p>
13. Are there any areas on or around the location which 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	<p>No</p> <p>Refer to Section 6.2 for details.</p>
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	<p>No</p> <p>The primary water features located within the study site is River Fane. The risk status of River Fane is classified as ‘at risk’ according to the River Waterbodies Risk, while it has a ‘poor’ River Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021. There is potential pollution from construction phase (construction runoff (sediments, hydrocarbons, and concrete spills) of the proposed development. However, any impacts would most likely be temporary.</p> <p>The River Fane is designated as a “Drinking Water River” over two</p>

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No – Why
		reaches downstream of the existing N53. River Fane (Fane_040) reaching from Ballynacarry Bridge to Inniskeen (IEPA1_GBNI1NB060608249) and further downstream the River Fane (Fane_050) reaching from Inniskeen to Stephenstown (IEPA1_NB_06F010900). The impact on the flow regime is likely to be slight to imperceptible given that such abstractions are located downstream on the River Fane at Inniskeen and Stephenstown.
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	No
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	No A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be implemented for the duration of the construction works in order to minimise any disruption to traffic flow on the road network at and surrounding the proposed development areas.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No The existing bridge will continue to be used for vehicular traffic in order to allow local access. A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be implemented in order to limit disruption to road users during the construction works.
18. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	No	No. The proposed development would likely be visible from the clustered and dispersed residential properties and agricultural lands in the landscape and views from higher drumlins and topographical areas to the northeast and southwest. Close proximity views include those from the River Fane watercourse/waterbody and adjoining lowlands. However, no significant impacts are predicted given that the structure to be constructed will be immediately adjacent an existing structure (Ballynacarry bridge).
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No. Section 6.3 for details.

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	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?	No	No  The proposed development is located on the existing N53 National Secondary route / A37 Main 'A' route (Concession Road).
21. Are there existing land uses on 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 which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No.  There are a number of residential and work places in close proximity to the proposed development. Access to these facilities will be maintained during the construction phase.  During the construction phase, the potential for dust emissions will arise in respect of excavations/planning of road surfaces in dry weather. Dust may be raised by wind from dry surfaces and stockpiles.  Air emissions will be generated during the construction phase however these will be minimal and appropriate mitigation measures will be put in place.  The proposed development is already located in a built – up busy environment and therefore, noise emissions are not expected to be significant.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No
23. Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	No	No  The residential properties and the work places in proximity to the proposed development are sparse.  Air emissions will be present during the construction phase however these will be minimal and appropriate mitigation measures will be put in place.  The Proposed Development is already located in a built – up busy environment and therefore, noise emissions are not expected to be significant.
24. Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	No	No
25. Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No  The primary water features located within the study site is River Fane. The risk status of River Fane is classified as 'at risk' according to the River Waterbodies Risk, while it has a 'poor' River Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021. There is potential pollution from

Brief Project Description	Yes/No	Is this likely to result in a significant impact Yes/No – Why
		<p>construction phase (construction runoff (sediments, hydrocarbons, and concrete spills) of the proposed development. However, any impacts would most likely be temporary.</p> <p>The River Fane is designated as a “Drinking Water River” over two reaches downstream of the existing N53. River Fane (Fane_040) reaching from Ballynacarry Bridge to Inniskeen (IEPA1_GBNI1NB060608249) and further downstream the River Fane (Fane_050) reaching from Inniskeen to Stephenstown (IEPA1_NB_06F010900). The impact on the flow regime is likely to be slight to imperceptible given that such abstractions are located downstream on the River Fane at Inniskeen and Stephenstown.</p> <p>The project will involve the use of a small area of land on the riverbanks, agricultural lands and roadside verge. However, the amount of land-take is extremely limited.</p>
26. Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No	No
27. Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes	<p>No</p> <p>There is a risk of fluvial flooding in the study area. However, the proposed development consist of construction of a two span structure which spans most of the flood plain. The two span structure will serve as a mitigation to the fluvial flooding in the study site. As such, the risk to flooding in the proposed site is negligible</p>

**Appendix A – Scheme Boundary Drawing**

**Appendix B – Form 3 -OPR Screening Checklist**



**Screening Determination:****A: Case Details:**

<b>Planning Register Reference:</b>		
<b>Development Summary:</b>	<b>N53/A37 Ballynacarry Bridge Replacement Scheme</b>	
	<b>Yes / No / N/A:</b>	<b>Comment (if relevant):</b>
<b>Does the application include information specified in Schedule 7A?</b>	Yes	
<b>Other relevant information submitted:</b>	N/A	
<b>Does the application include a NIS and/or other reports to enable AA screening?</b>	Yes	Report for the Purposes of AA Screening
<b>Is an IED/IPC/Waste Licence or Waste Water Discharge Authorisation (or review of licence/ authorisation) required from the EPA for the subject development?</b>	No	
<b>If YES has the EPA been consulted?</b>	N/A	
<b>Have any other relevant<sup>8</sup> assessments of the effects on the environment been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives – for example SEA or AA?</b>	AA	Report for the Purposes of AA Screening Prepared

**Examination:****1. Characteristics of Proposed Development****(including demolition, construction, operation, or decommissioning):**

<sup>8</sup> Relevant assessments are those which have a significant bearing on the project.

Screening Determination:	
	<b>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development</b> (i.e. the nature and extent):
a. <b>The size and design of the whole of the Proposed Development (including any demolition works):</b>	The site of the Proposed Development is approximately 2.5ha. The Proposed Development is described in Section 4.2.1 of this report.
b. <b>Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects:</b>	The National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) and Northern Ireland Planning Portal were consulted in order to ascertain if there are any other existing or permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects, when considered alongside the Proposed Development. Projects of note are identified in Section 6.10 of this report.  Given that there are no likely significant effects identified as a result of the Proposed Development, no cumulative effects are identified.
c. <b>Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity:</b>  <i>Will construction or the operation of the proposal use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?</i>	<p>The project will involve the use of a small area of land on the riverbanks, agricultural lands and roadside verge. The proposed bridge structure will cross the River Fane which may be described as an Upland/Eroding River (FW1). However, no in-stream works will be involved and the riparian areas will not be affected.</p> <p>The lands here typically conform to the designations Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1), Grassy Verges (GA2). There are also Wetlands, hedgerow (WL1) and treeline (WL2) habitats which may be impacted upon but this will be minor. There are no other natural or semi-natural habitats within the area to be affected.</p> <p>The project will use natural materials excavated locally, where practicable as part of the construction phase of this project. Soils that occur in-situ will be used within the works area, where practicable. It is not anticipated that there will be a need to remove bedrock from the site.</p> <p>No additional use of freshwater or groundwater will be required by works. No abstraction of water will take place.</p> <p>Some energy will be required for the operation of construction compounds, construction lighting etc. However, the amount of energy required to facilitate the Proposed Development is not considered to be significant. Additionally, the natural resources (e.g., concrete, asphalt and steel) and the land take required during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is not anticipated to be significant.</p> <p>There may be some requirement for water usage at the site; for welfare facilities or indeed for dust prevention, in the event that there is any stockpiling of material on site. However again, any water use on site is not expected to be significant.</p>
d. <b>Production of waste:</b>  <i>Will the proposal produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?</i>	<p>There will be some waste generated on site. Standard domestic waste will be generated in the construction compound and staff welfare facilities. This will be segregated at source, removed from site and disposed of in a suitable licenced facility. Works will be subject to a Waste Management Plan prepared by the appointed contractor.</p> <p>Significant generation of waste is not anticipated during the operational phase of the proposed development. There may be some waste arisings as a result of scheduled maintenance of the road and bridge but this is not anticipated to be significant.</p>

**Screening Determination:**

<p><b>e. Pollution and nuisances:</b></p> <p><i>Will the proposal release pollutants to ground or surface water, or air (including noise and vibrations) or water, or lead to exceeding environmental standards set out in other Directives?</i></p>	<p>The route crosses a watercourse (the River Fane). However, with the implementation of appropriate construction practices, the risk of impacts to water quality is not considered to be significant.</p> <p>All works will take place within the lands made available for the scheme. The small scale of the development footprint will mean limited potential to cause nuisance through construction noise or emissions.</p> <p>While the project will require the use of part of an existing public road for the construction phase, no significant delays to traffic are anticipated as the existing bridge will likely remain in operation throughout the period of works.</p> <p>In operation, the scheme will have similar levels of vehicular traffic as currently exist here. However, given that the revised road geometry will allow for more efficient driving (i.e. reduced need for deceleration, braking and acceleration). It may reasonably be predicted that traffic noise and emissions will be reduced as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>Refer to Section 6.7 for a detailed description of the types and characteristics of effects.</p>
<p><b>f. Major accidents and disasters:</b></p> <p><i>In accordance with scientific knowledge, is there a risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?</i></p>	<p>The risk of major accident and disaster is not significant. A traffic management plan will be put in place for the duration of works.</p> <p>The risk of accidents associated with the operational phase is predicted to be significantly lower than that of the bridge crossing at present. It will also increase the safety of the road here for all users, including motorists.</p> <p>No novel or potentially significantly hazardous substances or technologies will be utilised during the works. A Construction Management Plan will be prepared by the appointed contractor to ensure adherence to good site practices which will reduce any risk of accidents.</p> <p>No significant impacts as a result of, or in combination with climate change are predicted.</p>
<p><b>g. Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution:</b></p>	<p>No risks to human health are predicted by the proposed development. The operational phase presents no enhanced risks to human health. Rather, road safety will improve following the completion of works.</p> <p>Refer to Section 6.1 for an assessment of the potential for effects on human health.</p>

**2 Location of Proposed Development:**

<p><b>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the Proposed Development:</b></p>	<p>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location</p> <p>(with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):</p>
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**Screening Determination:**

<p>a. <b>Generally describe the location of the site and its surroundings:</b></p>	<p>The proposed development is located on the N53/A37 road. The N53 (County Monaghan, Republic of Ireland)/ A37 (County Armagh, Northern Ireland) links the towns of Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan and Dundalk, Co. Louth. The proposed development is also a border crossing point between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The proposed development site is within a rural landscape dominated by grassland based agriculture separated by hedgerows and treelines. The proposed development crosses the Fane River which is a 4th order stream on the EPA rivers database.</p> <p>The Proposed Development is approximately 2.5ha in size.</p>
<p>b. <b>Is the project located within, close to or has it the potential to impact on any site specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>European site</b></li> <li>– <b>NHA/pNHA</b></li> <li>– <b>Designated Nature Reserve</b></li> <li>– <b>Designated refuge for flora or fauna</b></li> <li>– <b>Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation, protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ local area plan/ draft plan or variation of a plan.</b></li> </ul>	<p>The proposed site of works is outside any site designated for conservation of nature.</p> <p>The nearest European site to the Proposed Development is Slieve Gullion SAC (Site Code UK0030277), 14.3km to the northeast. There is no connectivity to this site.</p> <p>Dundalk Bay SAC (Site Code 000455) is 18.3km directly to the east and Dundalk Bay SPA (Site Code 004026) approximately 17km to the directly to the east are the only European sites within a potential zone of influence of the Proposed Development. The River Fane flows into Dundalk Bay approximately 30 river kilometres downstream. The possibility of a pollution event from the proposed development reaching Dundalk Bay is highly unlikely.</p> <p>The Project will include construction management for the protection of the River Fane as an area of high local biodiversity value and to uphold commitment to the Water Framework Directive to maintain and improve water quality in the River Fane.</p> <p>The lands at the proposed development site typically conform to the designations Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1) and Grassy Verges (GA2). The proposed development will traverse elements of Wet grassland/Marsh . However, the habitats are of Local importance. Impacts on the wetlands are determined to be not significant. There are also hedgerow (WL1) and treeline (WL2) habitats which may be impacted upon but this will be minor. There are no other natural or semi-natural habitats within the area to be affected</p>
<p>c. <b>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 (including riparian areas and river mouths), the coastal zone and the marine environment, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the project?</b></p>	<p>As stated above, the proposed development will be located in a rural area. The River Fane is known to support salmon and sea trout; however, it is not designated for salmon under S.I. 293 /1988 - European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1988.</p> <p>An ecology survey was undertaken as part of the constraints study. It has been found that there is no evidence of badgers or otters in the study site, however bats have been detected north of Ballynacarry Bridge.</p> <p>The proposed development will traverse elements of Wet grassland/Marsh . However, the habitats are of Local importance (higher value). Impacts on the wetlands are determined to be not significant.</p>

**Screening Determination:**

<p>d. <b>Is the proposal likely to be highly visible to many people? Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location, or are there any routes or facilities that are used by the public for recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the proposal?</b></p>	<p>The proposed development would likely to be visible from the clustered and dispersed residential properties and agricultural lands in the landscape and views from higher drumlins and topographical areas to the northeast and southwest. Close proximity views include those from the River Fane watercourse/waterbody and adjoining lowlands.</p> <p>The study site is not listed in the list of views and prospects in both the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 and the Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015. There are no protected landscape, townscape or visual designated sites impacted.</p> <p>Therefore, the site is not considered to be of significant landscape character significance.</p>
<p>e. <b>Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the project?</b></p>	<p>No recorded archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites or features will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed development will have a direct, negative impact on a short section of the path of a former railway.</p> <p>There is the potential that ground works associated with the proposed development, may have a direct, negative impact on archaeological remains that survive beneath the current ground level, with no surface expression. The assessment and geophysical survey will aim to define any such features, in order to ascertain the significance of potential impacts.</p> <p>Ballynacarry Bridge will be bypassed as a result of the proposed development, which is a potential positive direct impact, due to the fact that the heritage structure will no longer be carrying through traffic.</p>
<p>f. <b>Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, or occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the proposal?</b></p>	<p>The study area is located in a relatively rural area and hence there is no hub area from a population point of view. The population is split into electoral divisions, with one electoral division on the South side of the study area (Carrickmacross – Castleblayney in the Republic of Ireland) and the other being on the North side of the study area (Slieve Gullion in Northern Ireland).</p> <p>There are no hospitals, schools, places of worship or community facilities that could be affected by the proposed development.</p>
<p>g. <b>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 proposal?</b></p>	<p>Some agricultural grassland will be taken for the project. This type of habitat is extremely widespread in Co. Monaghan and the adjacent Co. Armagh. However, it should be noted that the land-take of this project is very limited.</p> <p>No additional water resources will be required. No existing watercourses will be impacted upon during construction phase. No threats to watercourses are predicted for the operational phase of the project.</p> <p>The ecological surveys carried out during the preparation of the Appropriate Assessment Screening process; concluded on sites ditches do not identify any significant natural resources within the area proposed for works.</p>

**Screening Determination:**

<p><b>h. Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, and where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal e.g. the status of water bodies under the Water Framework Directive?</b></p>	<p>There are no known areas within or around the site of the proposed development which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, or where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal.</p> <p>The route crosses a significant watercourse, which is the River Fane. However, provided best construction practices are followed, the risk of impacts to water quality is not considered to be significant.</p>
<p><b>i. Is the site located in an area susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, or flooding which could cause the proposal to present environmental problems?</b></p>	<p>There is a risk of fluvial flooding in the study area. However, the proposed development will include the construction of a two span bridge structure which spans most of the flood plain. The two span structure will serve as a mitigation to the fluvial flooding in the study site. As such, the risk to flooding in the proposed site is negligible.</p> <p>As the topography of the area is relatively flat, landslide susceptibility is negligible.</p>
<p><b>j. Are there any additional considerations that are specific to this location?</b></p>	<p>No additional considerations in addition to those previously identified above are specific to this location.</p>

**3 Types and characteristics of potential impacts:**

<p><b>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below.</b></p> <p><b>(including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):</b></p>	<p><b>If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.</b></p>	<p><b>Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?</b></p>
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***Population and human health:***

<p><b>There will be some construction traffic associated with the construction of the proposed development. However, the existing bridge will continue to be used for vehicular traffic in order to allow local access. In addition, temporary traffic management measures will be required where the work will cross or run adjacent to the existing N53/A37 road. These</b></p>	<p>Temporary traffic management measures will be required where the work will cross or run adjacent to the local public roads. These temporary traffic management measures will be designed carefully to enable the works to progress and to manage the safety of workers and the passing public. The temporary traffic management measures will evolve constantly as the works progresses. Thus, as a result of temporary traffic measures, there may be some disruption or nuisance experienced by local residents and businesses.</p>	<p>No</p>
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**Screening Determination:**

temporary traffic management measures will be designed carefully to enable the works to progress and to manage the safety of workers and the passing public. The temporary traffic management measures will evolve constantly as the works progresses. Thus, as a result of temporary traffic measures, there may be some disruption or nuisance experienced by local residents.

Prior to the commencement of the works, the contractor will be required to develop a Construction Traffic Management Plan. The Construction Traffic Management Plan will be designed to provide a safe working environment and to enable the safe and efficient passage of traffic and other road users through the road works site during the construction phase. The Plan will take account of any specific planning conditions and will be agreed with the Planning Authorities and emergency services before works commence. Liaison will take place with receptors adjacent to the works to effectively manage any traffic disruption and maintain access to these receptors.

Sensitive receptors are located within 50m to the proposed development area and they include fifteen residential developments and places of work (including GP Motors Sales, Orchard Distribution, Monaghan Hire and Paul Hoey Fuel). Access routes to the above sensitive receptors will be maintained for the duration of the construction period. In the event of temporary disruption to access to these receptors, prior liaison will be undertaken with them to inform them of the proposed traffic management measures.

There will be some dust and noise emissions during the construction phase however, they are not considered to be significant. These are addressed in detail in Section 6.8 and Section 6.9 respectively.

There will be some temporary disruption to pedestrian and cycle routes during the construction

In the event of temporary disruption to access to these receptor, prior engagement will be undertaken to inform any impacted access routes.

Screening Determination:		
<p>phase of the proposed development. However, the operation of the proposed development will allow an enhanced facility for pedestrian and cyclist users.</p> <p>Following completion of the proposed development, positive impacts of long-term duration are predicted as being highly likely as a result of a safer river crossing and road route being made available.</p>		
<p><i>Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive.<sup>9</sup> *</i></p>		
<p>No significant effects on biodiversity are predicted as a result of the proposed development</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><i>Land, soil, water, air and climate:</i></p>		
<p><b>Only shallow excavations and planning will be required during the construction of the Proposed Development. No dewatering will be required during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.</b></p> <p><b>During construction, surface water generated in line with best construction practices such as the implementation of silt and sediment controls. The proposed development will also implement sustainable drainage (SuDS) throughout the proposed development to manage surface water runoff.</b></p> <p><b>There will be some waste generated on site. Standard domestic waste will be generated in construction compounds and welfare facilities.</b></p>	<p>The Contractor will send any excavated material which cannot be re-used/recycled for disposal to a suitably licenced facility. The contractor will ensure that any interim storage or waste management facilities for excavated material have the appropriate waste licences of waste facility permits in place.</p> <p>All construction machinery will be stored in a bunded construction compound on site. No fuels will be stored on site. Best practice construction practises will be implemented throughout the duration of the construction phase.</p> <p>Part of the Proposed Development involves the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). As such, surface water will be managed in accordance with SuDS. Surface water generated during the construction phase will be managed in line with best construction practices such as the implementation of silt and sediment controls.</p> <p>The level of monitoring and adoption of mitigation measures will vary throughout the construction works depending on the type of activities being undertaken and the prevailing weather conditions at the time. A dust screen will be use around the site. It is noted that the stockpiling of excavated material on site is to be minimised with immediate removal of excavated materials envisaged for the majority of the works.</p>	<p>No</p>

<sup>9</sup> And with particular regard to areas specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations.



**Screening Determination:**

**This will be segregated at source, removed from site and disposed of in a suitable licenced facility.**

**There is potential for dust impacts to arise due to construction activities associated with the Proposed Development, including the excavation works and the stockpiling of material on site.**

**The Proposed Development will result in emissions to air from the combustion exhausts of construction plant and machinery and the vehicles used to transport the workforce, materials and waste to and from the works areas. Emissions to air from the Proposed Development during the construction phase will be temporary and the effect on air quality is not expected to be significant.**

**Due to the facilitation of active travel routes throughout the Proposed Development and restructuring of existing road networks, there is the potential for a decrease in vehicle usage which would result in a net positive air effect during the operational phase. There will be no significant negative air effects as a result of the Proposed Development.**

**There may be an increase in noise levels during the construction activities. While temporary noise impacts on human receptors may be anticipated during the construction phase, these will be mitigated by best practice construction measures implemented by the appointed contractor. Examples of measures to be employed include the selection of quiet plant, not leaving plant idling and maintenance of plant to minimise noise generation. Appropriate measures will be proposed and implemented by the contractor during of the construction works.**

**Vibration effects will be controlled by the implementation of best practice construction methods. Examples of measures to be employed include the use of suitable vibration isolators in**

The contractor will implement normal good practice measures in monitoring and reducing exhaust emissions during the construction phase. A CTMP will be implemented for the duration of the construction phase. Construction traffic will be managed to keep trips by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to the practical minimum.

Construction operations on site, deliveries to site and construction shift times will be managed to ensure minimal disruption and ensure construction traffic will have limited impact on the traditional network peak periods. Construction operations will generally take place between the hours of 07:00-18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00-14:00 on Saturday. Night-time and Sunday working may be required to facilitate street works that cannot be undertaken during day time / evening conditions. The planning of such works by the appointed contractor will take place in consultation with DCC and will have consideration for sensitive receptors, in particular any nearby residential areas.

Noise emissions will be further managed by the implementation of specific control measures. Examples of measures to be employed include the selection of quiet plant, not leaving plant idling and maintenance of plant to minimise noise generation. A full list of measures will be proposed and implemented by the contractor in advance of the construction works.

**Screening Determination:**

<p><b>equipment mountings and ensuring that materials are lowered rather than dropped from heights. A list of appropriate measures will be proposed and implemented by the contractor in advance of the construction works.</b></p> <p>The operational phase of the road will have no potential negative impacts. Rather, positive effects from improved road geometry and more efficient driving are predicted. Significance of this impact is therefore imperceptible.</p>		
<p><i>Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape:*</i></p>		
<p><b>Given the volume of traffic through the site, there is the potential for slight negative landscape and visual effects during the construction works. However, as these works will be localised and of short duration, significant impacts to the existing landscape are not anticipated.</b></p> <p><b>The proposed construction strategy will also involve the relocation of several gullies and utility alteration works to facilitate the works. However, the extent of these works will be determined during detailed design stage but the works are unlikely to significantly impact any material assets.</b></p> <p><b>There are no national monuments or recorded structures that will be impacted as part of the Proposed Development.</b></p>	<p>Consultation with the relevant service providers will ensure minimal disruption to existing services during the construction phase.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>Cumulative effects:</b></p>		
<p><b>The National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) and Northern Ireland Planning Portal were consulted in May 2023, in order to ascertain if there are any other existing or permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects,</b></p>	<p>None Required</p>	<p>No</p>

**Screening Determination:**

when considered alongside the proposed development.

Based on Northern Ireland Planning Portal there are no permitted projects that could give rise to cumulative effects, when considered alongside the proposed development. Existing or permitted projects of significance within 1km of the proposed development site which have the potential to give rise to cumulative effects based on the National Planning Application Database (Republic of Ireland) are identified in Table 4 above.

Following the review of the permitted planning developments in close proximity to the proposed development, it was considered that due to the scale, nature and location of the proposed development the cumulative effects that might arise due to construction of the proposed development overlapping with other permitted developments are minor. As such, there are no likely significant cumulative effects that would arise during the construction of the proposed development with any other permitted development listed above.

*Transboundary effects:*

The site of the proposed development is approximately 2.5ha in size and is located on the N53/A37 and therefore traverses the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The N53 (County Monaghan, Republic of Ireland)/ A37 (County Armagh, Northern Ireland) links the towns of Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan and Dundalk, Co. Louth. It is anticipated that there will be no significant construction or operational phase impacts within the two separate jurisdictions.

None required.

No

**Screening Determination:****4 Additional Considerations:**

**Further relevant information, if any, relating to how the results of any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment have been taken into account (e.g. SEA, AA screening, AA):**

The conclusions of the AA Screening Report have been considered in the preparation of this report.

**Other relevant information / considerations of note:**

**C Determination:**

**No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.**

√

EIAR is not required

**Real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.**

EIAR is required

**D Main Reasons and Considerations:**

**Having regard to the criteria in Schedule 7, the information provided in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and the following:**

**Set out the main reasons and considerations specific to the nature, size, or location of the Proposed Development, and the types and characteristics of potential impacts:**

**Where relevant, reference any key mitigation measures of significance to the screening determination:**

**Where relevant, reference the results of any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment (e.g. SEA, AA screening, AA):**

**Any other relevant information:**

**It is considered that the Proposed Development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact report is not therefore required.**

