



Athboy Town Centre Project - Bus Stop

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report



PROJECT NAME: Athboy Town Centre Project – Bus Stop

REPORT NAME: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

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Galway Office Fairgreen House, Fairgreen Road, Galway, H91 AXK8, Ireland. Tel: +353 (0)91 565 211	Dublin Office Block 10-4, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15, D15 X98N, Ireland. Tel: +353 (0)1 803 0406	Castlebar Office Market Square, Castlebar, Mayo, F23 Y427, Ireland. Tel: +353 (0)94 902 1401
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening for the Athboy Town Centre Project to provide a designated bus stop facility and associated road and urban realm upgrades within Athboy, County Meath (hereafter referred to as the proposed development) against the criteria set out under Annexes I, II and III of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive) and as transposed into Irish law. EIA Screening is the stage which ascertains whether the effects of a development on the environment are expected to be significant and determines whether an EIA is required as per the EIA Directive. It should be noted that the screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment and the whole project must be considered.

The purpose of this review is to determine the applicability of the EIA Directive to the proposed development and whether the proposed development is likely to result in significant effects, thereby requiring that an EIA is carried out.

This EIA Screening has been completed by TOBIN Consulting Engineers and takes due notice of the following regulations and guidance documents:

- Planning and Development Acts and Regulations 2000 – 2021;
- EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive);
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (August 2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on Carrying out EIA (the 2018 Guidelines);
- Environmental Protection Agency (Draft - August 2017) Revised Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (the Draft EPA Guidelines);
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (the EC 2017 Guidance);
- Roads Act 1993 (as amended); and
- Roads Regulations 1994.

2.0 REGULATORY CONTEXT

The EIA Directive is European Policy on the environment and is based on the precautionary principle, requiring that effects on the environment are considered as early as possible during planning and decision-making processes.

The EIA Directive is set out under Annexes I - III of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive). Annex I lists developments for which EIA is mandatory and Annex II lists projects which require a determination of their likely significant effects. Criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA is set out in Annex III.

These annexes are broadly transposed into Irish legislation under a variety of Acts and Regulations. For the purpose of the proposed development, the relevant legislation to consider is Schedule 5 Parts 1 and 2 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and Sections 50 and 51 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended.

Under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2001, as amended, EIA is mandatory for Part 1 developments where thresholds are met or exceeded, but also for Part 2 developments where the national thresholds are met or exceeded. A screening determination is required for all sub-threshold developments for both Part 1, where not covered by Part 2, and for Part 2 developments.

The criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA are set out under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Schedule 7A lists information to be provided for the purpose of an EIA Screening. Under Article 103 of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations, as amended the planning authority can request the submission of an EIA Report, if it is of the view that sub-threshold development would likely result in significant effects on the environment.

Under sections 50 and 51 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended, an EIA is required for certain types of road development.

The key requirement for determining sub threshold roads development is, whether the proposed scheme is likely to have a significant environmental effect as set out under Sections 50 (1)(b) & (c).

Section 50(2) of the Roads Act 1993 specifies information to be contained within an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The EIA Directive states that in order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including where relevant, its subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and where relevant demolition phase. When determining whether significant effects on the environment are likely to be caused by a project, the competent authority should identify the most relevant criteria to be considered and should take into account information that could be available following other assessments required by EU legislation in order to apply the screening procedure effectively and transparently.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND EXISTING SITE

3.1 Introduction

The proposed development will be carried out adjacent to St. James Catholic Church, north and west of St. James's Catholic Church and N51 junction. The location and layout of the proposed development can be viewed in Figures 3-1 to 3-3 below.

The proposed development will consist of:

- Amendments to the junction between the N51 and Side Road.
- Road Alignment upgrades to remove a 90° bend close to Church, Creche and Primary School.
- Amalgamation and upgrade of three existing car parks into one proposed carpark, for the provision of 57 no. car parking spaces, including 4 no. accessible spaces, 6 no. age friendly spaces and 2 no. EV spaces.
- Removal of undesignated parking zone adjacent to St. James' Catholic Church and creation of a designated bus stop and turning facility.
- Removal and relocation of existing Bring Facility.
- All associated ancillary highway works relevant (drainage, utilities, public lighting, KFPA, signs and lines and pavement design).

The relocation of existing bus stops on Main Street, located northeast of the intersection of Main- Street (N51) and Connaught Street, has been identified as causing traffic backups on the main street. In addition, the location of the existing bus stops requires passengers to make their way through parked cars in order to embark/disembark from the bus services. This represents a significant safety issue. The existing operation has a negative effect on both motorists and pedestrians. The introduction of a defined bus stop would eliminate these issues.

In addition to the provision of a designated bus stop facility, the scheme will enhance the public space adjacent to St. James Catholic Church, through the development of new pedestrian facilities and an upgraded urban realm space. A description of works is provided hereunder.

3.2 Redesigned public car park

- The existing front boundary wall of the carpark will be removed and either re-used during the project or disposed of offsite.
- The concrete islands separating the carparks will be excavated and removed off site.
- The existing trees planted will be removed and replanted in green area of the new streetscape.

A pavement overlay design is proposed in the carpark using the existing pavement as a basecourse.

3.3 Amended entrance to St James' Catholic Church and Shared Space

- A new entrance to St. James' Catholic Church will be established by the knocking of a segment of the wall where pillars will then be constructed (this stone may be re-used elsewhere in the project).
- The existing pavement will be milled to reach required formation level for the adjoining area.
- The excavated material will be disposed of offsite to a licenced landfill.

3.4 Designated Bus Stop and Turning Head

- The pavement will be milled to reach the required formation level for the construction of the bus turning area.
- The excavated material will be disposed of offsite to a licenced landfill.
- A new infill pavement design will then be used in this area with surrounding concrete footpaths.

3.5 Realignment of Side Road

- The realignment of the side road will be a combination of inlay and new construction.
- Excavation of existing footpaths and milling of the existing road will be required, waste material will be disposed of offsite to a licenced landfill.
- The trees located along the back of the existing footpath will be removed.

3.6 Relocation of existing Bring Facility

- The bottle bank adjacent to St. James' Church will be removed and relocated to the Meath County Council Depot, located on Coille Dios Street.
- Existing containers will be relocated via lorry and placed facing northwards onto the existing street
- The provision of the new Bring Facility at this location will involve the build up of earth and installation of gullies to allow for connection to the existing sealed surface water drainage system.
- In addition, lighting will be provided as well as kerbs and 4 no. car parking spaces.
- Total area needed for proposed relocation of the bring facility is 1,200m sq.
- The facility will be cleared approximately one a month via the N52 National Road.

The subject site is partially located within a zone of archaeological notification for the historic town of Athboy (ME029-023----) and is in the vicinity of several other recorded archaeological monuments. The subject site is also located immediately adjacent to the Architectural Conservation Area for Athboy and adjacent to St. James Church and its curtilage (NIAH reference number: 14324011, RPS No. MH029 208).

This portion of the Athboy ACA is made up of rear garden spaces, set out in long narrow plots. To facilitate the proposed development, approximately 55m² of one housing plot will be removed, the extend of which is illustrated in drawing no. 11084-2002- D00.

Drainage arrangements include for the use of existing carrier drains and gullies. Additional drainage features such as tree pits and planted spaces will be incorporated to increase attenuation.

It is anticipated that the proposed construction works will commence in the latter part of 2022 and last for an approximate duration of 8-12 weeks.

Fig 3-1: Athboy Town Centre Project - Bus Stop Site Location Map

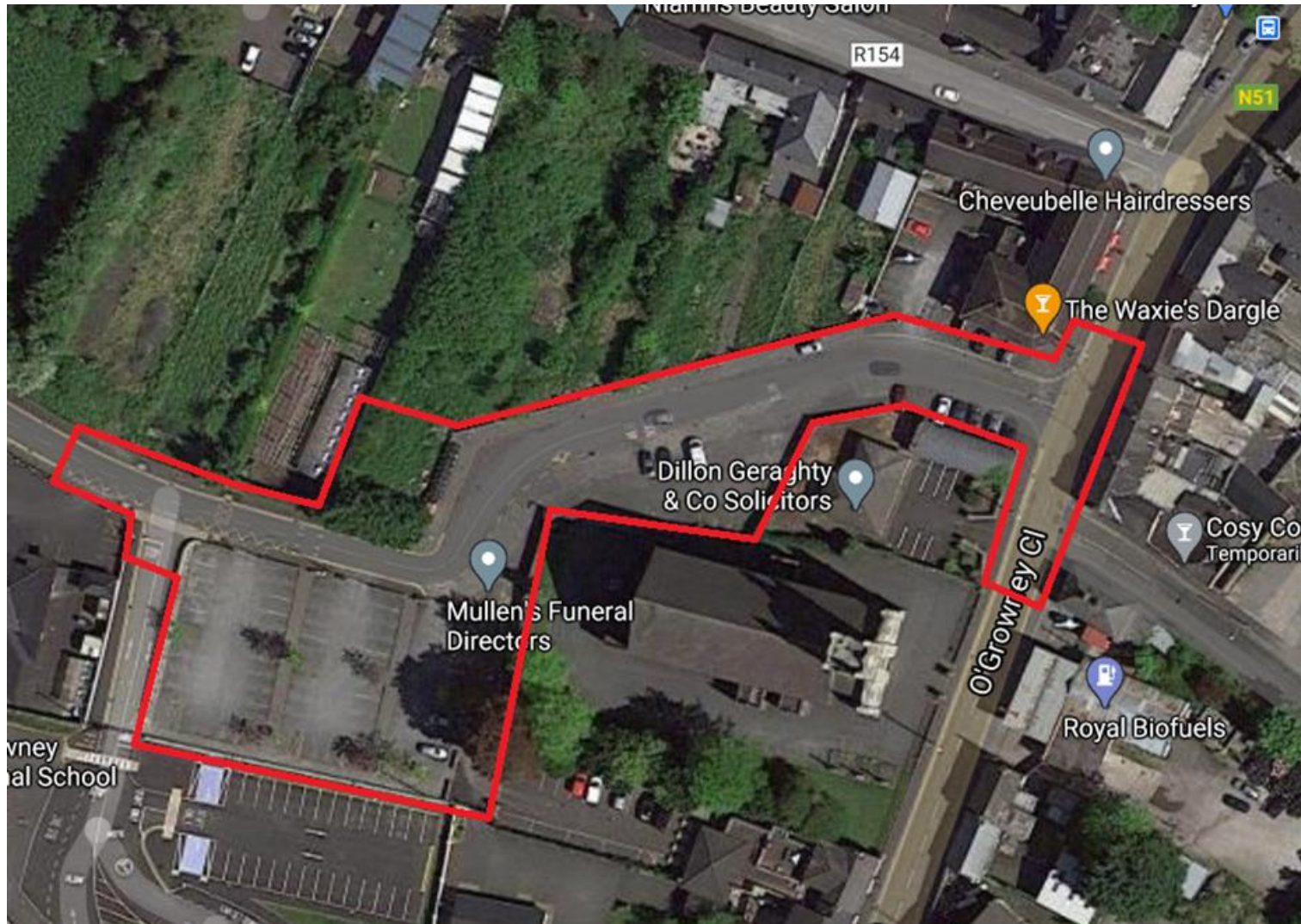


Figure 3-2: Athboy Town Centre Project – Bus Stop Site Layout Plan

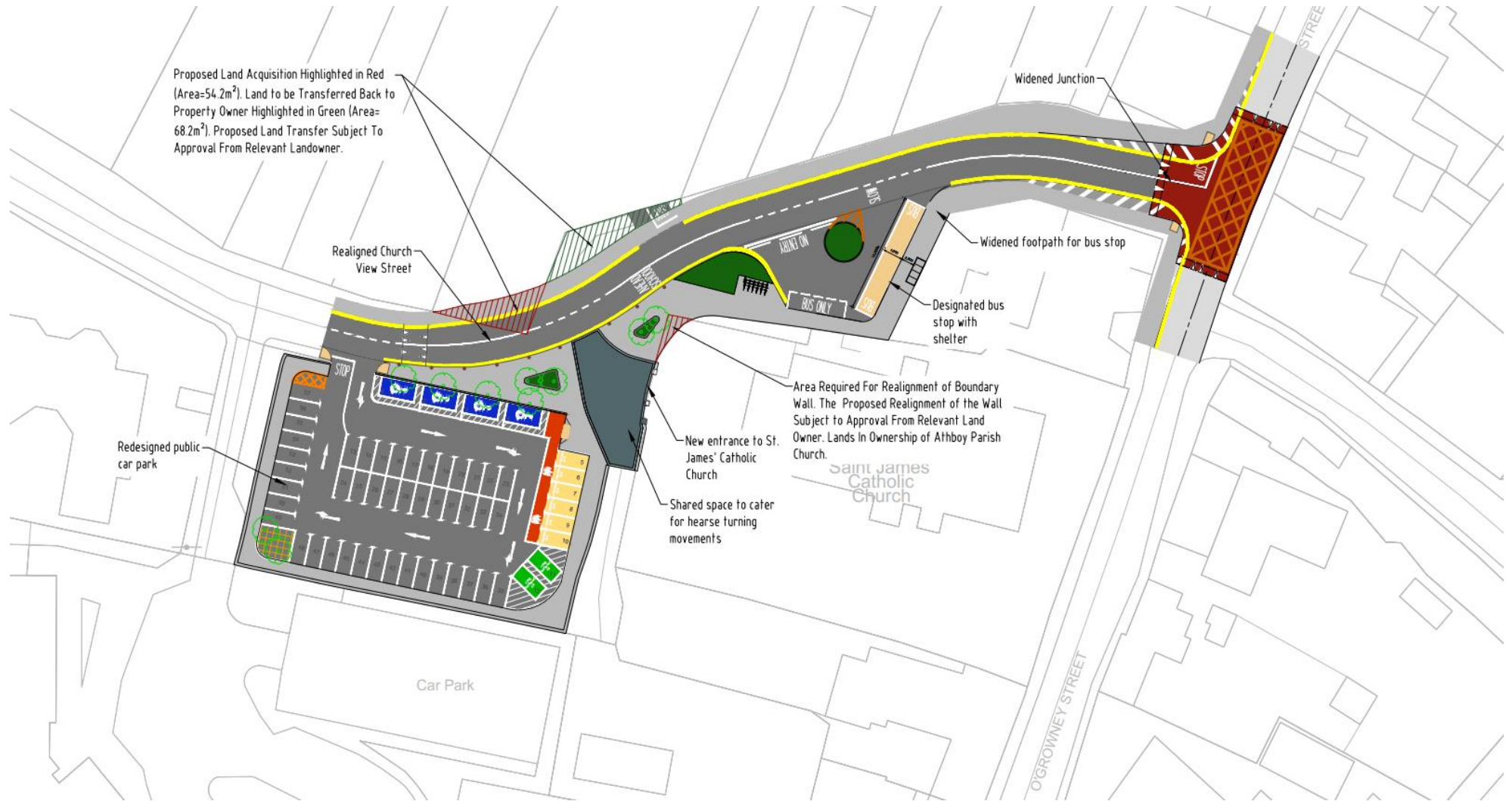


Figure 3-3: Athboy Town Centre Project – Relocation of Bring Facility



4.0 SCHEDULE 5 PROJECT TYPE APPLICABILITY

4.1 Schedule 5 Parts 1 & 2 Of The Planning And Development Regulations, 2001

This section considers the full proposed construction of the proposed development with respect to Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The proposed development is located in an urban environment and involves the provision of a designated bus stop facility, road and public realm upgrades and improvements.

The proposed development does not meet or exceed Schedule 5 Part 1 or Part 2 thresholds or criteria, and as such, EIA is not mandatory.

A consideration of sub-threshold has been carried out and as per the ruling of the European Court¹, it is recognised that the EIA Directive has a *'wide scope and a broad purpose'* when determining if EIA is required. A review of Part 1 confirms that there are no applicable Classes, hence the proposed development is not considered a Part 1 sub-threshold development.

Part 2 Class 10 (b) Infrastructure Projects and in particular, (iv) Urban development is of relevance. This Class is applicable to 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."* As the proposed site is located in Athboy town, the proposed development could be considered to be located within a "built-up area." The size of the proposed site however is approximately approx. 0.44ha hectares and therefore is substantially less than the applicable threshold of 10 hectares.

On review, the proposed development is for the construction of a designated bus stop facility, road and public realm upgrades and improvements within an urban environment. Recognising the requirement to apply a 'wide scope' it is considered the proposed development should be subject to a sub-threshold development as it is considered to fall within the project meaning of Part 2 Class 10 (b) (iv). An EIA Screening determination is required for sub-threshold developments as per the 2001 Regulations, as amended and a screening assessment is provided in Section 5 of this report.

4.2 Roads Act, 1993

Outside of planning legislation and regulation, there is other legislation which can trigger a requirement for an EIA. This section of the report considers the proposed development under Sections 50 and 51 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended), which requires an EIA in the following circumstances:

S.50.– (1) (a) 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;

¹ Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment August 2018, August 2018

-
- (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.

Part V of the Roads Regulations 1994 prescribes 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.

On review the proposed development is located within Athboy Town and involves the realignment and improvement of existing carriageway, the provision of a bus stop and turning area, the amalgamation of 3 no. existing car parks in to one, and other associated upgrades to the public realm.

The proposed development does not involve the construction of a motorway, busway or service area. For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)(iv) above, the proposed development is not a new road, but will involve the realignment and upgrade of existing road, approx. 166m in length, in an urban area. It is noted that this is below the threshold stated above of 500 metres in an urban area. Lastly, the proposed development does not involve the construction of a bridge or a tunnel.

The proposal as such does not fall under the classes of development prescribed for under Sections 50 and 51 of the Road Act 1993 (as amended) and therefore does not require mandatory EIA.

To understand if the proposed development is likely to have a significant environmental effect as set out under Sections 50 (1)(b) & (c), a screening assessment is provided in Section 5 of this report.

5.0 SCHEDULE 7 EIA SCREENING

This section provides an EIA Screening against the appropriate criteria as established by the EIA Directive Annex III and as transposed into Irish law under Schedule 7 of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations, as amended.

It should be noted that under the EIA Directive, the EIA Screening process balances two objectives, in determining if a project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore be made subject to an assessment of its effects on the environment; and it should ensure that EIA is only carried out for those projects which is thought that a significant impact on the environments is possible².

Table 5.1 below screens the proposed development against the Schedule 7 criteria. Information pertaining to Schedule 7A of the 2001 Regulations, as amended is provided herein and is further supplemented with an AA Screening Report (November 2021).

² Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU), European Union 2017

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
1. Characteristics of project	Consideration of the proposed development
<p>The characteristics of projects be considered, with particular, regard to: -</p> <p>a) the size and design of the whole project;</p> <p>b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects</p> <p>c) the nature of any associated demolition works</p> <p>d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;</p> <p>e) the production of waste;</p> <p>f) pollution and nuisances;</p> <p>g) the risk of major accidents having regard in particular to substances or technologies used and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;</p> <p>h) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).</p>	<p>There is no likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development having regard to the characteristics of the project, as set out below:</p> <p>a) The project is not significant in terms of size or design and is largely contained within existing roadways and an existing carpark. The proposed development seeks to undertake amendments to the junction between the N51 and side road, to undertake road re-alignment upgrades for the purpose of removing an existing 90° bend, to provide an upgraded car park in place of 3 separate existing car parks and to remove an existing undesignated car parking area for replacement with designated bus stop and turning facility and to relocate an existing Bring Facility. The proposed development will involve the provision and upgrade of utilities, public lighting, KFPA, signs and lines and pavement design.</p> <p>b) A review of planning applications within 500 metres of the site for the years 2016 – 2021 indicates that there are no significant development proposals within the vicinity of the site that could act in cumulation with the project. In addition, the small-scale nature and operation of the proposed development is unlikely give rise to any significant cumulative environmental effects. The following projects are of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reg. Ref.: KA191282 located on the northern boundary of the proposed development has received planning approval for the construction of 6 no. dwellings. This development is under construction and is nearing completion. - Reg. Ref.: 21848 located north of the proposed development on the Main Street of Athboy has received planning approval for a change of use from retail for use as primary health care provision. - Reg. Ref.: KA180815 & KA201635 has received approval for the construction of 80 no. dwellings approximately 500m south of the proposed development site. <p>c) The proposed development will involve small scale demolition for the removal of the existing front boundary wall of the carpark and concrete islands separating the carparks. A new entrance to St. James' Catholic Church will be established by the knocking of a segment of the wall where pillars will then be constructed. These items will be removed and either re-used during the project or disposed of offsite.</p>

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria
<p>d) There are no elements of the proposed development that will make use of any natural resources during construction or operation other than the re-use of the existing roadway and carpark. The proposed development will involve a small amount of removal of overgrowth and vegetation along the northern boundary to allow for the re-alignment of the roadway.</p> <p>e) The production of wastes on site during construction relate primarily to the dismantling and removal of existing walls. Wastes produced from demolition will involve standard construction materials that will be managed in accordance with approved removal practices. There will be no production of wastes on site during the construction or operation of the proposed development. To ensure the protection of the environment during construction, a detailed construction management plan will be prepared by the Main Contractor. This will ensure the containment of any pollution on site during construction.</p> <p>f) The proposed development during construction and operation will not result in significant pollution or nuisance.</p> <p>The proposed works will generate noise during construction from general building works. The permissible hours of operation of a building site within Meath County Council are Monday to Friday 07.00 – 18.00, and Saturday 08.00 – 14.00, with no noisy work permissible on Sundays or bank holidays. The construction works will be subject to applicable standards including BS 5228:2009 and A1:2014 “Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites” and Meath County Council Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control Unit.</p> <p>Construction and operation lighting will be provided in accordance with hours of construction and operation. Light spill associated with construction lighting will be minimised where possible.</p> <p>Standard construction measures will be adopted to minimise the impact of any dust generated during construction.</p> <p>Residential gardens and dwellings are located along the northern boundary of the proposed development site with approximately 10 no. individual units and one mixed use residential and retail development located</p>

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
	<p>adjacent to the proposed development. Any construction related impacts arising from noise, lighting and dust are expected to be short in duration. It is anticipated that the proposed construction works will commence in the latter part of 2022 and last for an approximate duration of 8-12 weeks.</p> <p>With respect to construction traffic, a traffic and transport assessment has been carried out for the proposed development, which shows that the ratio of flow capacity (RFC) values are significantly lower than the maximum threshold of 0.85. Therefore, there are no anticipated significant impacts anticipated from construction related traffic.</p> <p>Operational related traffic for the proposed bus stop is anticipated to be less than 5 vehicle movements per day. As such there are no significant impacts anticipated with regard to operational traffic or traffic related noise.</p> <p>Lighting and noise during operation is expected to remain the same as or similar to existing levels of light and noise provided along the existing roadway and within the existing car park.</p> <p>The management of surface water run off during construction phase will be carried out in accordance with the CIRIA C698 publication Site Handbook for Construction of SUDS and is illustrated in drawing no. 11084-2011 Drainage-D00.</p> <p>The proposed relocation of the existing Bring Facility, during construction and operation will not result in significant pollution or nuisance to the surrounding environment with respect to noise, lighting or dust. The relocation of the existing bins will be carried out via lorry drop. Preparation works for their installation will be short term in nature and will involve the build up of earth, laying of ducting and provision of gullies to connect with existing sealed surface water drainage system. Impacts associated with construction are therefore expected to be minimal and temporary. The operation of the new Bring Facility will not result in a significant increase in lighting over and above existing lighting on Coille Dios Street. There are no adjacent dwellings to the proposed development, with the nearest residential receptor located approximately 60m northwest of the site.</p>

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
	<p>g) The proposed development will not result in a risk of major accidents and/or disasters. The proposed development will be largely contained within existing roadways and an existing carpark and will involve works small scale in nature that are not likely to have a significant impact on the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The proposed development is not a COMAH site (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) nor is the site location near a nuclear installation.</p> <p>There are a number of safety concerns relating to the existing layout of the side street and the current operation of vehicles between the carriageway and undesignated parking areas. These are in addition to no pedestrian facilities on the south side of the road and sub-standard alignment leading to reduced visibilities. Multiple accesses to and from the carriageway also raises safety concerns between motorised and non-motorised road users and is emphasised by regular illegal parking in the area often blocking the footpath on the Northern side of the road. There is a recently installed pedestrian crossing located at the school entrance which is yet to be commissioned. The proposed development for road re-alignment upgrades for the purpose of removing an existing 90° bend and proposed removal of existing undesignated parking area are anticipated to remedy many of the safety concerns set out above.</p> <p>The relocation of the existing Bring Facility is not expected to result in any safety concerns with respect to road users or traffic. The proposed facility will be provided with 4 no. car parking spaces off the existing public roadway. The removal of wastes from site will take place monthly with the existing road network currently facilitating waste removal for the nearby Coille Dios housing development.</p> <p>h) The design and operation of the proposed development is not expected to result in water contamination. There are no operations on site during construction or operation that could result the generation of significant levels of air pollution.</p>
2. The Location of Project	Consideration of the proposed development

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
<p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, with particular regard to: -</p> <p>a) the existing and approved land use;</p> <p>b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground</p> <p>c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: -</p> <p>i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</p> <p>ii. coastal zones and the marine environment;</p> <p>iii. mountain and forest areas;</p> <p>iv. nature reserves and parks;</p> <p>(v) areas classified or protected under Member States' national legislation; special protection Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;</p>	<p>There are no geographical areas with environmental sensitives likely to be affected by the proposed development. In consideration of the location of the project, there are no anticipated significant environmental effects arising with regards to:</p> <p>a) The proposed development will be largely contained within an existing roadway and existing car park. Therefore, there is no proposed change of use of the proposed development site. Under the new Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and Draft Ministerial Direction for Athboy (MA03), the site of the proposed car park and bus top is zoned B1 – Commercial Town or Village Centre, which seeks to protect, provide for and/or improve town and village centre facilities and uses. It should be noted that the zoning of these lands will not be fully determined until the draft direction process is complete.</p> <p>b) The project is not likely to have a significant impact on the relative abundance, availability, quality, or regenerative capacity of natural resources. An Environmental Appraisal Report has been undertaken for the proposed development which has confirmed that there are no watercourses flowing through the proposed development site area.</p> <p>The proposed development is in an area of high groundwater vulnerability which could affect the water quality of groundwater bodies if deep foundations were needed for construction, however, there will be no deep excavations or deep drilling during this project therefore there is no risk of groundwater impacts.</p> <p>With respect to watercourses, there are no watercourses within the proposed development site area. The river Athboy is located approximately 400m northeast of the proposed development site. Nearby downgradient sections of the Athboy river are classified by the WFD as 'At Risk' with 'Moderate' ecological status.</p> <p>At a distance of 400m away, the project is not likely to have a significant impact on existing watercourses as there is existing drainage infrastructures in place to manage construction and operational related run off. In addition, good practice construction methods employed during construction will ensure that there is no significant impact to the waterbodies.</p>

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
<p>(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation have already been exceeded and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;</p> <p>(vii) densely populated areas</p> <p>(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.</p>	<p>c) There will be no impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment. A review of Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study maps (CFRAMS) confirms that there is no evidence of historical flooding events recorded within the study area. Furthermore, the proposed development is located approximately 327m outside a low probability flood event, according to the CFRAM river flood extents mapping. Low Probability flood events have an indicative 1-in-a-1000 chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year. This is also referred to as an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of 0.1%.</p> <p>There is a recording of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A recurring flood event approximately 1.5 kilometres to the North-East of the study area at Mullaghstones N51 - A recurring flood event approximately 2 kilometres South-East of the study area at Kildarkey Rd CR343 - A flood event approximately 2.5 kilometres of the study area at Boyne Catchment Castletown Athboy dated 15/08/2008 <p>As set out above, due to the distance between the proposed development and nearby watercourses, the project is not likely to have a significant impact on existing watercourses as there is existing drainage infrastructures in place to manage construction and operational related run off. In addition, good practice construction methods employed during construction will ensure that there is no significant impact to the waterbodies.</p> <p>The proposed development is not situated within a coastal zone, mountain, forest or nature reserve and there are no likely direct or indirect effects arising from the proposed development on the natural environment.</p> <p>v) A screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development which has concluded that potential impacts associated with the proposed development, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, will not result in likely significant effects on any European site in view of their conservation objectives. A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.</p>

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria
<p>vi) This site has not been identified as being situated within an area in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation have already been exceeded and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.</p> <p>vii) Having regard to densely populated areas, the project will involve short-term construction work associated with the re-alignment of side road, provision of designated bus stop and turning facility and other car park and public realm improvement and upgrade works. In the long term the project is considered to benefit the community and the environment by providing improved access to public transport as well improved safety and enhanced streetscape. The proposed development is not considered to have a negative impact on local population.</p> <p>vii) The proposed development will be located adjacent to and on the boundary of the Athboy Architectural Conservation Area and is indicated as being partially located within a zone of Archaeological Potential. It is also within the vicinity of several recorded archaeological monuments and immediately adjacent to St. James Church and its curtilage (NIAH reference number: 14324011, RPS No. MH029 208). The project will involve engagement with Meath County Council Conservation and Heritage for any works involving St James' Catholic Church.</p> <p>As set out in Section 3 above, the site sits on the southern boundary of the Athboy Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). This portion of the ACA is made up of rear garden spaces, set out in long narrow plots. To facilitate the proposed development, a small portion of one housing plot will be removed.</p> <p>Archaeological monuments in the vicinity of the proposed development are:</p> <p>SMR No. ME029-023--- Classification: Historic Town</p> <p>SMR No. ME029-023001--- Classification: Town defences</p> <p>SMR No. ME029-023010--- Classification: Building</p>

Table 5-1: Athboy Town Centre Project Bus Stop Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

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<p>SMR No. ME029-023011--- Classification: Excavation - miscellaneous</p> <p>SMR No. ME029-023009--- Classification: Stone Sculpture</p> <p>SMR No. ME029-023013--- Classification Stone Sculpture</p> <p>A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development, with a description of direct, physical impacts on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage listed in Section 3.1 of that report. The following mitigation measures set out in Section 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given that the subject site is located partially within the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Athboy ((ME029-023---)) there remains a possibility that archaeological materials or features may be encountered. It is recommended that archaeological monitoring of engineering trial pits and trenches be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist. - Based on the results of GI works and in consultation with the National Museum and the National Monuments Section of the DHLGH, further mitigation may be required. - Care should be taken to ensure that no inadvertent impacts to any of the sites, monuments, sites of architectural significance and vernacular features identified in this report are caused by machinery or personnel operating in these areas. <p>The above recommendations are subject to the approval of the National Monuments Service (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) and the Meath County Council Archaeologist and Heritage Officers.</p>

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3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact	Consideration of the proposed development
<p>The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b) (i) (I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account:</p> <p>a) the magnitude and special extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);</p> <p>b) the nature of the impact;</p> <p>c) the trans frontier nature of the impact;</p> <p>d) the magnitude intensity and complexity of the impact;</p> <p>e) the probability of the impact;</p> <p>f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;</p> <p>g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;</p>	<p>There are no anticipated likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development, taking the following into account:</p> <p>a) The magnitude and spatial extent of impacts associated with the proposed development are considered not significant. The proposed development will be provided within the footprint of an existing roadway and car park. The proposed development is not considered at risk of flooding on site or elsewhere.</p> <p>b) The nature of impacts during construction will be temporary in that on site construction work, noise, dust and traffic and lighting, will have a temporary effect on existing dwellings and surrounding uses.</p> <p>Prior to the adoption of the mitigation measures set out above, anticipated impacts to architectural, architectural and cultural heritage, could be direct, physical and permanent.</p> <p>During operation, the project when complete will result in a positive long-term effect through the provision of off-street parking and re-use of an existing derelict site.</p> <p>c) The project will not result in transboundary impacts.</p> <p>d) Impacts arising during construction will be temporary and managed through best practice construction guidelines with respect of excavation, soil removal, dust, traffic and lighting. Waste generated during the construction process will be controlled through measures adopted in a waste management plan. Potential impacts affecting architectural, architectural and cultural heritage would be, if not mitigated, direct, physical and permanent.</p> <p>e) The probability of impacts arising from construction are low where best practice construction methodologies are adopted and implement. The probability of impacts to architectural, architectural and cultural heritage are low where mitigations measures recommended are adopted and include for any</p>

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h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	<p>additional mitigation measures recommended by the National Monuments Service (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) and the Meath County Council Archaeologist and Heritage Officers.</p> <p>f) Regarding the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impacts, it should be noted that no significant impacts are anticipated with respect to construction or operation of the facility. Impacts associated with construction are expected to last approximately 8-12 weeks, during standard and regularised construction hours of operation. Impacts associated with operation, such as lighting, noise and traffic will be in line existing levels and use of the side road and car park. With respect to potential impacts to architectural, architectural and cultural heritage, in the absence of mitigation, the impacts would short in duration and permanent.</p> <p>g) MyPlan planning databases was searched to determine if any nearby plans or projects were likely to result in potentially significant cumulative impacts. The most notable approved or planned developments are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reg. Ref.: KA191282 located on the northern boundary of the proposed development has received planning approval for the construction of 6 no. dwellings, which is currently under construction and nearing completion. - Reg. Ref.: 21848 located north of the proposed development on the Main Street of Athboy has received planning approval for a change of use from retail for use as primary health care provision. - Reg. Ref.: KA180815 & KA201635 has received approval for the construction of 80 no. dwellings approximately 500m south of the proposed development site. <p>Therefore, there are no anticipated cumulative impacts arising from the proposed development in combination with existing or approved projects.</p> <p>h) With respect to the possibility of effectively reducing the impact the design of the project has been optimised to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised as much as possible. In addition, a number of mitigation measures are recommended to ensure no impact to architectural, architectural and cultural heritage. These impacts are not considered significant and do not result in a requirement for EIA.</p>

6.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed development does not meet or exceed Schedule 5, Part 1 or Part 2 thresholds and criteria, and as such, EIA is not mandatory. In addition, the proposed road improvement scheme does not meet or exceed thresholds or criteria set out under Sections 50 or 51 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended. As such, EIA is not mandatory.

The proposed development can be considered a sub-threshold project under Part 2 Class 10 (b) (iv). A screening determination is required for a sub-threshold development.

An EIA screening has been carried out considering the nature of the proposed development, its size and location having due regard to the criteria listed in Schedule 7 and the relevant information listed in Schedule 7A. It is concluded that the proposed development will not result in significant effects on the environment. Furthermore, the proposed development is anticipated to result in long term positive effects on public transport usage.

www.tobin.ie

 TOBIN Consulting Engineers

 @tobinengineers

Galway
Fairgreen House,
Fairgreen Road,
Galway,
H91 AXK8,
Ireland.
Tel: +353 (0)91 565 211

Dublin
Block 10-4,
Blanchardstown Corporate Park,
Dublin 15,
D15 X98N,
Ireland.
Tel: +353 (0)1 803 0406

Castlebar
Market Square,
Castlebar,
Mayo,
F23 Y427,
Ireland.
Tel: +353 (0)94 902 1401

