

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

for proposed

Remediation of Brooke Bridge

Project No K431

for:

O'Connor Sutton Cronin



on behalf of:

Kildare County Council



by:

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Introduction..... | 3 |
| 2. The Proposed Scheme | 4 |
| Overview of the Scheme | 4 |
| Proposed Works | 5 |
| 3. Legislative Basis for EIA | 5 |
| 4. Screening Considerations..... | 6 |
| Subthreshold Development | 8 |
| 5. Conclusions..... | 8 |
| Appendix I - Descriptions of Effects | 1 |
| Appendix II - Competency of Author..... | 1 |

Figures

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Figure 1 Site Location | 4 |
| Figure 2 Photograph of Bridge | 4 |

Appendices

Appendix I - Descriptions of Effects

Appendix II - Competency of Author

1. Introduction

Environmental Impact Services has been engaged by O'Connor Sutton Cronin to prepare this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for proposed remediation works to Brooke Bridge (Project No K431). This report has been prepared to form an opinion as to whether or not the proposed development should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and if so, whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it.

The screening assesses the proposed scheme with reference to the relevant EIA legislation¹ including the EIA Directive, the Planning & Development and Roads legislation and relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, 2015, EU and *Guidance on EIA Screening*, 2001, EC. It also has regard to relevant parts of *EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding sub-threshold development*, 2003.

The consideration of potential impacts covers direct, indirect and secondary impacts as relevant, with reference to the guidance and in compliance with the legislation, including consideration of:

- (i) Characteristics of the proposal
- (ii) Location of the proposal
- (iii) Characteristics of potential impacts

Descriptions of impacts follow the statutory EPA (draft) *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (2018). For ease of reference, these standardised descriptions are reproduced in Appendix I of this report.

Information on the scheme has been obtained from O'Connor Sutton Cronin, comprising: project scope, location, principal inspection report and plan and elevations of existing bridge.

The following sections of this report cover:

- Project description (s2)
- The legislative basis for EIA (s3)
- Screening considerations (s4)
- Conclusion (s5)

An overview of the author's competency is provided in Appendix II.

¹ see section 3 for details

2. The Proposed Scheme

Overview of the Scheme

Brooke Bridge carries the L7049 local road over a River (name unknown), North of Monasterevin, Co Kildare. The existing structure is a single span stone masonry arch bridge. The bridge spans a length of 3.2m in total with a maximum width of 6.35m. The arch facing walls, parapets and spandrels are rubble and square cut limestone while the arch barrel is made up of rubble masonry.

The bridge is located on the L7049 local road, North of Monasterevin, Co Kildare.

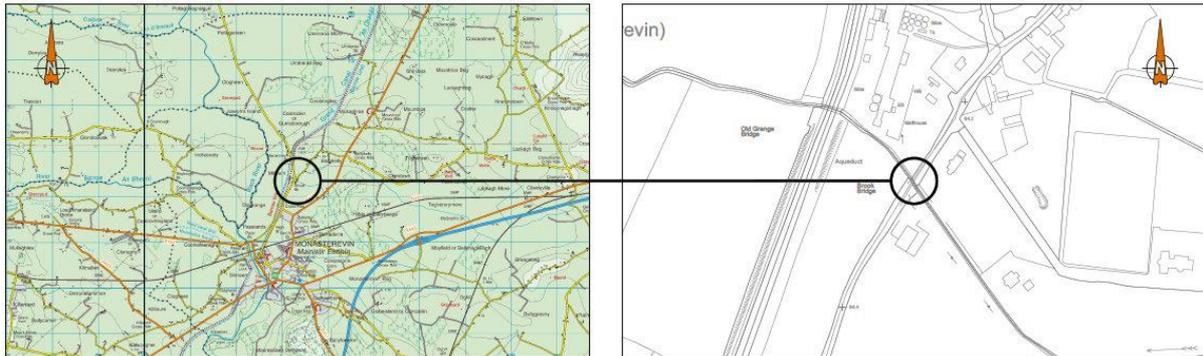


Figure 1 Site Location



Figure 2 Photograph of Bridge

Proposed Works

The proposed works comprise:

- Replacement of soft grass verges with concrete rubbing strips.
- Road resurfacing.
- De-vegetation of parapet/spandrel walls and repointing of joints as a result.
- Repair of isolated damaged sections of the parapet wall and copping.
- Stitch repair of crack in the arch barrel.
- Replacement of masonry in abutments and arch barrel including repointing of joints.
- De-vegetation of embankments.
- Removal of material that has built up in the riverbed upstream, bridge span and downstream.

3. Legislative Basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from EU Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The Directive has been transposed into the following Irish legislation.

- The Roads Act 1993, as amended by, *inter alia*, the:
 - Roads Regulations, 1994 (S.I. 119/1994)
 - European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019)

Section 50 of the Act specifies the types of roads projects that automatically require EIA and sets out criteria for determining whether or not other roads projects should be subject to EIA.

- The Planning and Development Acts 2000-2020 (Part X), as amended by, *inter alia*, the:
 - Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. 600/2001)
 - European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018) (S.I. 296/2018)

Part 1 of Schedule 5 of these regulations lists projects included in Annex I of the Directive which automatically require EIA.

For projects included in Annex II of the Directive, Part 2 of Schedule 5 provides thresholds, above which EIA is required.

4. Screening Considerations

In the first instance it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type that requires EIA.

The project types prescribed for EIA purposes in the Roads and Planning and Development legislation are listed in this table with commentaries of their applicability to the proposed scheme.

Criteria for determining whether or not projects which do not clearly fall into any prescribed project type are also listed and commented upon.

| Project type / criteria | Comment | Is EIA required on this basis? |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Roads legislation | | |
| SI 279/2019 (s.5, amending section 50 of the Roads Act) | | |
| <i>(1) (a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:</i> | | |
| <i>(i) the construction of a motorway</i> | The proposed works do not provide for construction of a motorway | No |
| <i>(ii) the construction of a busway</i> | The proposed works do not include creation of new busways. | No |
| <i>(iii) the construction of a service area</i> | The proposed works do not include any service areas. | No |
| <i>(iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road</i> | | |
| The prescribed types are given in section 8 of S.I. 119/1994 as: | | |
| <i>(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:</i> | The proposed works do not include construction, realignment or widening of any roads. | No |

| Project type / criteria | Comment | Is EIA required on this basis? |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.</i> | The proposed works do not include construction of any new bridge or tunnel. | No |
| (1) (b) to (d) of S.I. 279/2019 require that any road development or road improvement project which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, including projects located on ecologically protected sites, shall be subject to EIA. | <p>The measures included in the proposal are restricted to remediation of an existing bridge. They include removal of material that has built up in the riverbed upstream, bridge span and downstream. The river is not a protected ecological area (Natural Heritage Area, Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area.</p> <p>For EIA screening purposes it is considered that the works have no real likelihood of causing significant environmental effects.</p> <p>Potential effects on downstream ecological receptors, particularly the River Barrow and River Nore SAC which is approximately 2 km downstream, are addressed in the separate Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.</p> | No |
| Planning and Development legislation S.I. 600/2001, Schedule 5, Pt 2 | | |
| <i>Project type 13. Changes, extensions, development and testing</i> | | |
| <p><i>(a) Any change or extension of development which would:-</i></p> <p><i>(i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and</i></p> <p><i>(ii) result in an increase in size greater than-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25 per cent, or - an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater | The proposed works will not result in the bridge being of a listed class. | No |

Subthreshold Development

As the proposal does not correspond to any prescribed project type and has no real likelihood of causing significant environmental effects:

- It is not considered to comprise 'sub-threshold development'² for EIA screening purposes; and
- Detailed review of its characteristics, location or of its potential impacts to determine whether it should be subject to EIA (as provided for in Annex II of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended) and in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations) is not required.

5. Conclusions

It is considered that the proposed remediation of Brooke Bridge does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for them.

This conclusion is based on an objective review of the proposal, including its characteristics, location and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental impacts. The screening has followed the relevant legislation and has had regard to the relevant guidance.

² As defined in Article 92 of the Regulations of 2001, as amended

Appendix I - Descriptions of Effects

(from *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, 2018 draft, EPA)

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Quality of Effects</p> <p>It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral</p> | <p>Positive Effects</p> <p>A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).</p> |
| | <p>Neutral Effects</p> <p>No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.</p> |
| | <p>Negative/adverse Effects</p> <p>A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).</p> |
| <p>Describing the Significance of Effects</p> <p>“Significance” is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful (also see <i>Determining Significance</i> below.).</p> | <p>Imperceptible</p> <p>An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.</p> |
| | <p>Not significant</p> <p>An effect which causes noticeable² changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.</p> |
| | <p>Slight Effects</p> <p>An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.</p> |
| | <p>Moderate Effects</p> <p>An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.</p> |
| | <p>Significant Effects</p> <p>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.</p> |
| | <p>Very Significant</p> <p>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.</p> |
| | <p>Profound Effects</p> <p>An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics</p> |
| <p>Describing the Extent and Context of Effects</p> <p>Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.</p> | <p>Extent</p> <p>Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.</p> |
| | <p>Context</p> <p>Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)</p> |

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|---|---|
| Describing the Probability of Effects Descriptions of effects should establish how likely it is that the predicted effects will occur – so that the CA can take a view of the balance of risk over advantage when making a decision. | Likely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented. |
| | Unlikely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented. |
| Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects 'Duration' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful. | Momentary Effects Effects lasting from seconds to minutes |
| | Brief Effects Effects lasting less than a day |
| | Temporary Effects Effects lasting less than a year |
| | Short-term Effects Effects lasting one to seven years. |
| | Medium-term Effects Effects lasting seven to fifteen years. |
| | Long-term Effects Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years. |
| | Permanent Effects Effects lasting over sixty years |
| | Reversible Effects Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration |
| | Frequency of Effects Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually) |

| | |
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| Describing the Types of Effects | Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary Effects) Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway. |
| | Cumulative Effects The addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects. |
| | 'Do-Nothing Effects' The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out. |
| | 'Worst case' Effects The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail. |
| | Indeterminable Effects When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described. |
| | Irreversible Effects When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost. |
| | Residual Effects The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect. |
| | Synergistic Effects Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents, (e.g. combination of SO _x and NO _x to produce smog). |

Appendix II - Competency of Author

The author, Paul Fingleton, has an MSc in Rural and Regional Resources Planning (with specialisation in EIA) from the University of Aberdeen. Paul is a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment as well as the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. He has over twenty-five years' experience working in the area of Environmental Assessment. Over this period, he has been involved in a diverse range of projects including contributions to, and co-ordination of, numerous complex EIARs and EIA screening reports. He has also contributed to and supervised the preparation of numerous AAs and AA screenings.

Paul is the lead author of the current EPA Guidelines³ and accompanying Advice Notes⁴ on EIARs. He has been involved in all previous editions of these statutory guidelines. He also provides a range of other EIA related consultancy services to the EPA. Paul is regularly engaged by various planning authorities and other consent authorities to provide specialised EIA advice.

³ *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2017 (Draft)

⁴ *Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2003