

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

for proposed

Mobility Hub at Tallaght Luas Stop, Tallaght, Co. Dublin

for: South Dublin County Council

County Hall,
Belgard Square North
Tallaght
Co. Dublin



by: CAAS Ltd.

1st Floor,
24-26 Ormond Quay
Co. Dublin



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Document Control

	Author/Reviewer	Date
prepared by	Paul Fingleton and Clare O'Doherty	Various dates to 22 nd July 2021
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1. Introduction

CAAS has been appointed by South Dublin County Council to prepare this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for the proposed Mobility Hub at Tallaght Luas Stop, Tallaght, Co. Dublin. 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 development with reference to the EIA legislation¹ including the EIA Directive, and Planning and Development legislation. It also has regard to relevant parts of *EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding sub-threshold development*, 2003, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, *OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening*, 2021, OPR and *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, 2018, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, 2015, EU and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening*, 2017, EU.

The consideration of potential impacts covers all significant direct, indirect and secondary impacts as relevant, with reference to the guidance and in compliance with the legislation, including the criteria for determining whether certain development types should be subject to EIA, and which are grouped into these categories in the Directive:

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

Where used, descriptions of impacts follow the statutory EPA (draft) *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (2017). For ease of reference, these standardised descriptions are reproduced in Appendix I of this report.

Information on the development has been obtained from South Dublin County Council, including a brief written description and relevant drawings.

The following sections of this report cover:

- The proposed development (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 development

2.1 Overview of the development

The proposed development involves the construction of a Mobility Hub and landscaped area at Tallaght Luas Stop on Blessington Road, Co. Dublin.

The proposal involves the development of two sites along the Tallaght Luas stop, one located at the Blessington Road and Belgard Square West junction (approx. 0.31 ha in area), and the other located between Rua Red café and the Civic Theatre (approx. 0.13 ha in area)

2.2 Project details

The proposed development comprises:

- Construction of Mobility Hub at the existing Tallaght Luas stop including hard and soft landscaping works.
- Provision of information point totem and a feature bench.
- Provision of feature streetlighting.
- Provision of outdoor seating to Rua Red and Betelnut cafes to include parasols, tables and chairs.
- Associated ancillary works.

The total proposed site area is approx. 0.4 ha.

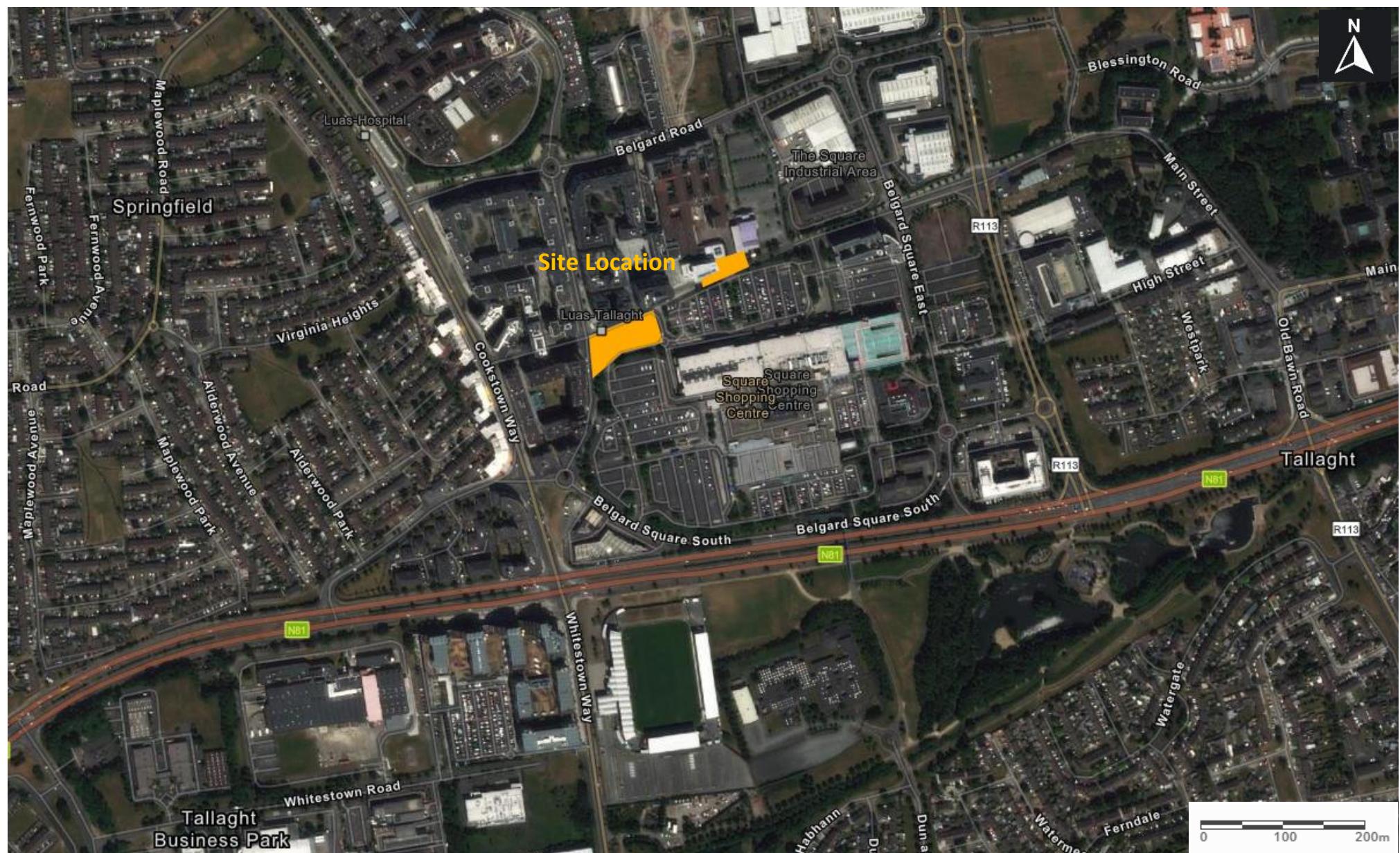


Figure 1 - Site location map²

² Source: ArcGIS online

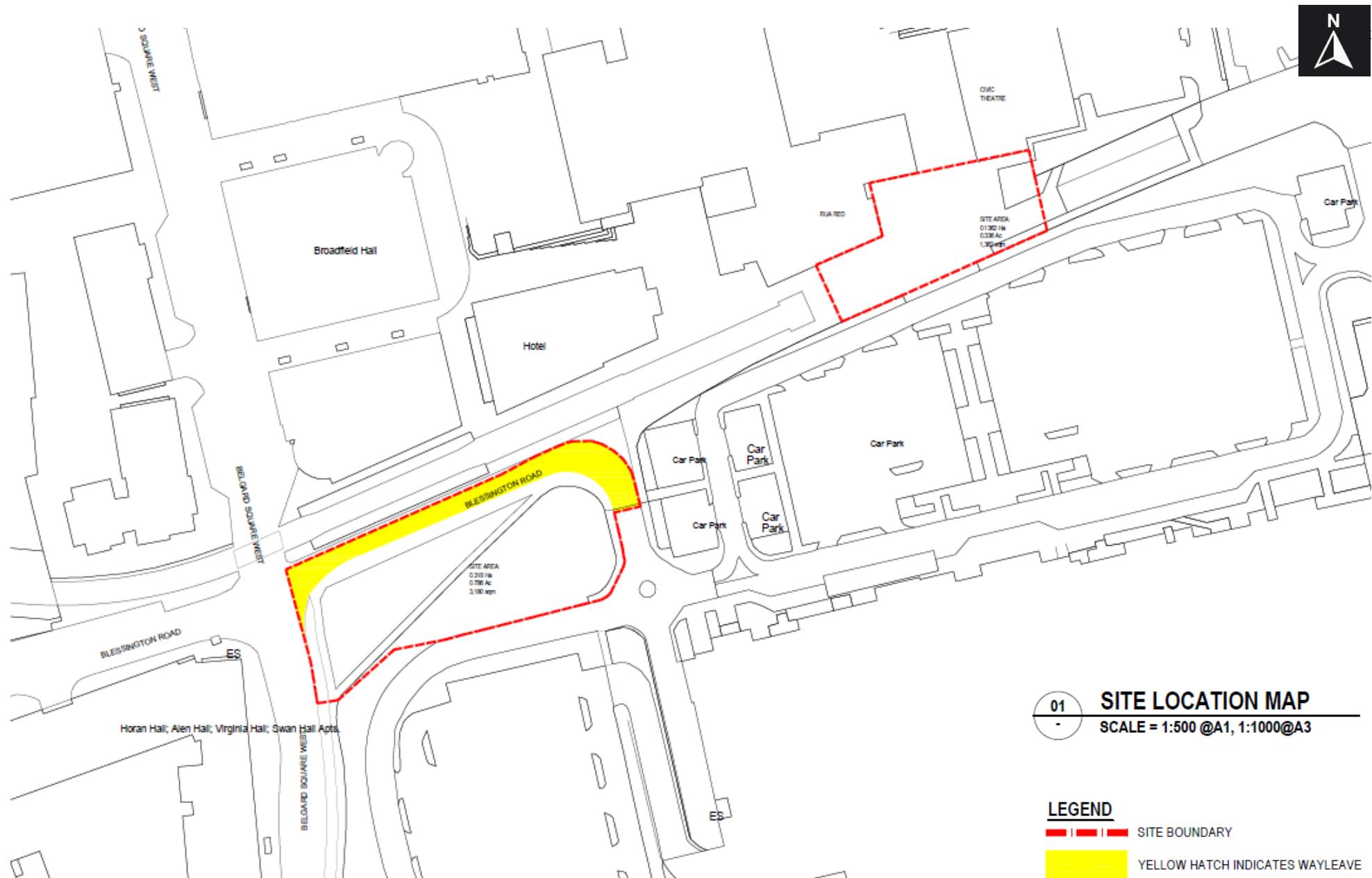


Figure 2 – Site location map



Figure 3 - Proposed site layout (Blessington Road and Belgard Square West junction)



Figure 4 - Proposed site layout (Rua Red café and the Civic Theatre)

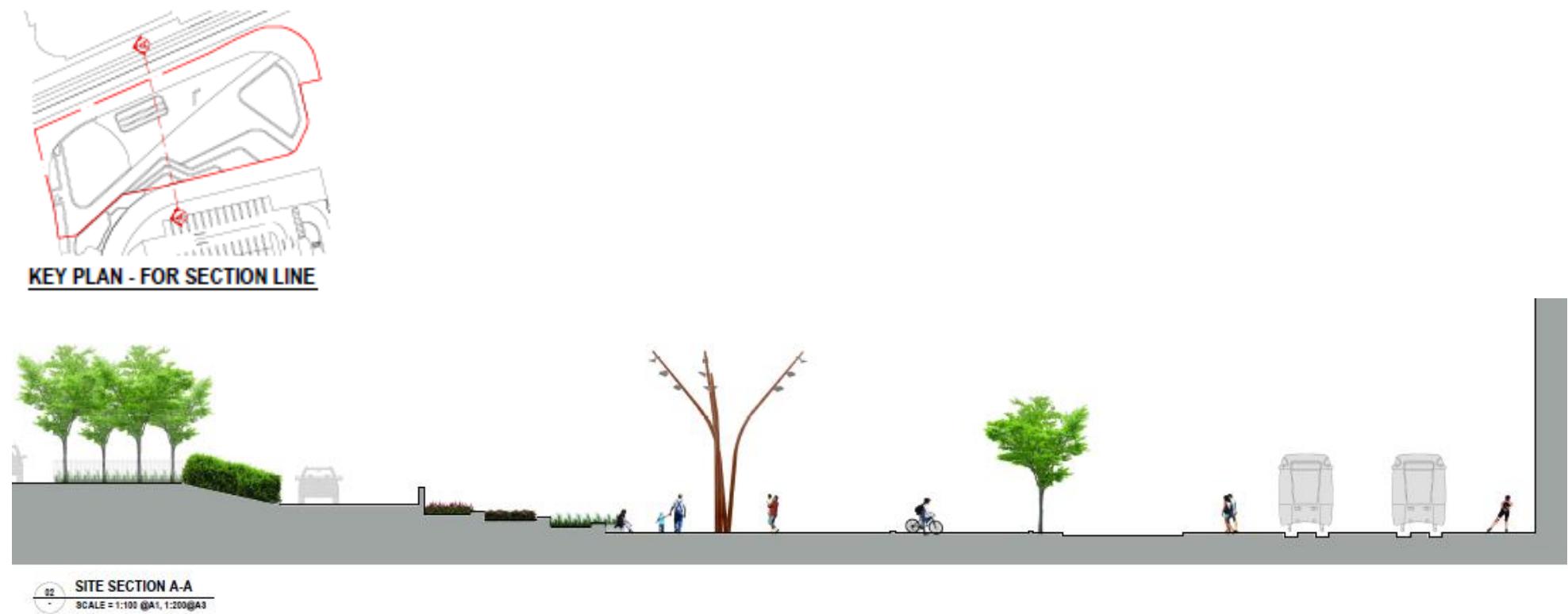


Figure 5 - Proposed section (Blessington Road and Belgard Square West junction)

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 various Irish legislation of which the following are the most relevant to this development.

- 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

4.1 Project type

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

Potentially relevant project types prescribed for EIA purposes in the Planning and Development legislation are listed in the table below, with commentaries of their applicability to the proposed development. Criteria prescribed in the legislation for changes or extensions are included.

The proposed development does not correspond to any specific project type listed under the regulations. However, for the purpose of providing a robust assessment, the proposed development has been considered under classes which it may correspond to most.

Project type / criteria	Comment	Is EIA required on this basis?
Planning and Development legislation S.I. 600/2001, Schedule 5, Pt 2		
Project type 10. Infrastructure projects (b) (iv)		
<i>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.</i> <i>(In this paragraph, “business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)</i>	<p>Commission guidance³ lists a range of projects, stating that these or other projects with similar characteristics can be considered to be ‘urban development’. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping centres • Bus garages • Train depots • Hospitals • Universities • Sports stadiums • Cinemas • Theatres • Concert halls • Other cultural centres • Sewerage or water supply networks <p>The proposed project does not correspond to or have similar characteristics to any of the above listed project types.</p>	No

³ Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2015, EU

Project type / criteria	Comment	Is EIA required on this basis?
<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"> <i>- 25 per cent, or</i> <i>- an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater</i> 	<p>The changes covered by the proposed development will not result in:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">(i) the development being of a listed class or (ii) the development corresponding to either of the expansion scales given in (ii)</p>	No

4.1 Subthreshold development

Article 92 of the Regulations of 2001, as amended define: 'sub-threshold development' as:

development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development.

Annex III of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended) as transposed into Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations - sets out criteria for review of sub-threshold projects to determine if they should be subject to EIA. These criteria include characteristics, location and potential impacts.

As the proposed development does not fall into a project type prescribed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 it is considered not to comprise 'sub-threshold development'. Therefore, it is not required to review it against the Schedule 7 criteria.

5. Conclusions

It is considered that the Mobility Hub at Tallaght Luas Stop in Co. Dublin does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for it.

This conclusion is based on an objective review of the proposed development, 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.

Appendix I – Standard Descriptions of Effects

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

Quality of Effects It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral	Positive Effects 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).
	Neutral Effects No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
	Negative/adverse Effects 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).
Describing the Significance of Effects "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.).	Imperceptible An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
	Not significant An effect which causes noticeable ² changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
	Slight Effects An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
	Moderate Effects An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
	Significant Effects An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Very Significant An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Profound Effects An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics
Describing the Extent and Context of Effects Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.	Extent Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.
	Context Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)

<p>Describing the Probability of Effects</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Likely Effects</p> <p>The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.</p>
	<p>Unlikely Effects</p> <p>The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.</p>
<p>Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects</p> <p>'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.</p>	<p>Momentary Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting from seconds to minutes</p>
	<p>Brief Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting less than a day</p>
	<p>Temporary Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting less than a year</p>
	<p>Short-term Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting one to seven years.</p>
	<p>Medium-term Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.</p>
	<p>Long-term Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.</p>
	<p>Permanent Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting over sixty years</p>
	<p>Reversible Effects</p> <p>Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration</p>
	<p>Frequency of Effects</p> <p>Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)</p>
<p>Describing the Types of Effects</p>	<p>Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary Effects)</p>
	<p>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.</p>
	<p>Cumulative Effects</p>
	<p>The addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.</p>
	<p>'Do-Nothing Effects'</p>
	<p>The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.</p>
	<p>'Worst case' Effects</p>
	<p>The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.</p>
	<p>Indeterminable Effects</p>
	<p>When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.</p>

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 SOx and NOx to produce smog).

Appendix II - Competency of Authors

Paul Fingleton, the lead author, 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 Guidelines⁴ and accompanying Advice Notes⁵ 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.

Clare O'Doherty, Environmental Assistant has a BSc in Environmental Management, Dublin Institute of Technology, 2019. Clare has experience working as part of team projects and in the preparation of EIA and AA documents on behalf of multi-nationals and infrastructural providers. She also liaises with various government agencies and local authorities in order to assimilate the environmental baseline information that is used in EIAs and AAs and assists in the preparation of the various EIA and AA related documentation.

⁴ *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2017 (Draft)

⁵ *Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2003