

**CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS**

## **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**


**Prepared by  
Cunnane Stratton Reynolds**

**For a Part 8 planning application for a proposed boardwalk from  
the plaza to the existing river side path**

**At  
Lucan Demesne, County Dublin.**

## Document Control Sheet

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*Disclaimer: The advice in this report has been informed by a search of the available online planning history and development plan zoning objectives for the site in question, and excludes consideration of other existing or potential, perceived or actual issues including but not exclusively relating to wayleaves, other rights of way, ownership, availability or otherwise of access, flood risk, infrastructural constraints, and of other advices produced in relation to the site by other parties. Our advice has been prepared without consultation with any other party including the local authority in whose jurisdiction the site is located. We reserve the right to amend the advice contained in the report based upon the availability of further information as and when it may become available. The site boundary indicated in Figures 1 is indicative only.*

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## **STATEMENT OF COMPETENCY**

The EIAR Screening Report has been compiled by Eamonn Prenter of Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Ltd (CSR). Eamonn is a Director of CSR and a member of the Irish Planning Institute. His qualifications are as follows:

**Eamonn Prenter, *BA (Hons) Geography, MSc Planning; MRTPI MIPI,***

Eamonn is a chartered town planner with both public and private experience and over 30 years post qualification experience having undertaken a number of EISs, EIARs, SEAs and various screening reports over that period of time for both public and private sector clients.

Eamonn undertook an extensive walk through the application site and surrounding area as part of this assessment.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Background

This EIAR Screening Assessment was undertaken by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Ltd of Gainsboro House, 24 Suffolk Street on behalf of South Dublin County Council in respect of a Part 8 planning application for a proposed boardwalk at Lucan Demesne, in the townlands of Lucan, Co Dublin as per Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The location of the application site is shown in Figure 1 below.

Details of the construction and design of the proposed development are provided in the technical reports attached to the planning application.

The EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) has brought a number of changes to the EIA process with a strengthening of the Screening process as follows: Article 4 (4) of this Directive introduces a new Annex IIA to be used in the case of a request for a screening determination for Annex II projects. This is information to be provided by the developer on the projects listed in Annex II (see below): Annex II: Information to be provided by the developer on the projects listed in Annex II:

#### 1. A description of the project, including in particular:

- (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole project and, where relevant, of demolition works **(Section 2 of this report)**;
- (b) a description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected **(Section 2 of this report)**;
- 2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project **(Section 2 of this report)**;

#### 3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the project on the environment resulting from:

- (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant **(Section 5 of this report)**;
- (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity **(Section 5 of this report)**; and,
- 4. The criteria of Annex III shall be taken into account, where relevant, when compiling the information in accordance with points 1 to 3 **(Section 5 of this report)**.

Article 4(4) specifies that the developer may provide a description of any features of the project and/or mitigation measures to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant effects on the environment. It should be noted that this does NOT include compensation measures.

#### Article 4(5) Determination of Screening

The competent authority shall make its determination, on the basis of 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 that Directive.

The determination shall be made available to the public and:

- (a) where it is decided that an environmental impact 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 impact 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 envisage to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

The EIA Screening prepared here will inform the competent authority, in this instance South Dublin County Council. For the EIA Screening Determination please see Section 6 of this Report.

This report outlines the methodology used to screen the proposed development in respect of environmental assessment and assesses the requirement to prepare an EIAR. It sets out the proposal, the assessment of potential environmental effects, and the outcome and conclusions of the screening process.

This EIA Screening exercise was completed to determine the potential for the proposed development and activity to have significant environmental effects or not. The exercise has been informed by a desk study of the site, based on best available information. The following is a summary of the findings of this report:

- The proposed development does not constitute development for which EIA is mandatory or required.
- In terms of scale, development and operation of the proposed development, comprising a boardwalk, does not fall under those projects requiring mandatory EIAs as prescribed in Annex I of the EIA Directive (Schedule 5, Part 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended). Therefore, a mandatory EIA is ruled out for reasons set out in below. Given that the status of the development activity is therefore sub-threshold, the requirement for EIA must be determined on a specific case basis.
- This screening report concludes that development as proposed will not result in significant negative impacts on the environment.

## **1.2 Purpose of this EIAR Screening Report**

An EIAR is:

*‘A statement of the effects, if any, which proposed development, if carried out, would have on the environment.’*

This EIA screening report is prepared for South Dublin County Council and is submitted as part of the consent process. The competent authority (CA), also South Dublin County Council, will use the information provided to assess the environmental effects of the project and, in the context of other considerations, determine if consent should be granted. The information in the EIAR is also used by other parties to evaluate the acceptability of the project and its effects and to inform their submissions to the CA.

An EIAR consists of a systematic analysis and assessment of the potential effects of a proposed project on the receiving environment. The amended EIA Directive currently in place prescribes a range of environmental factors which are used to organise descriptions of the environment and these factors must be addressed in any EIAR. These factors are considered in the context of screening for EIA as in this case.

The overall purpose of this Screening Report is to identify and detail the findings of a desktop study undertaken to analyse the impacts, if any, of the proposed development on the receiving environment and, based on the results, decide whether or not an EIAR is required.

The purpose of the report is to determine if an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the proposed development as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended and Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended 2023. The requirement for a sub-threshold development to be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in significant environmental effects which may arise due to the location of the development or the characteristics of the development. The EIA screening

exercise outlined below has examined the project with reference to the relevant thresholds and criteria.

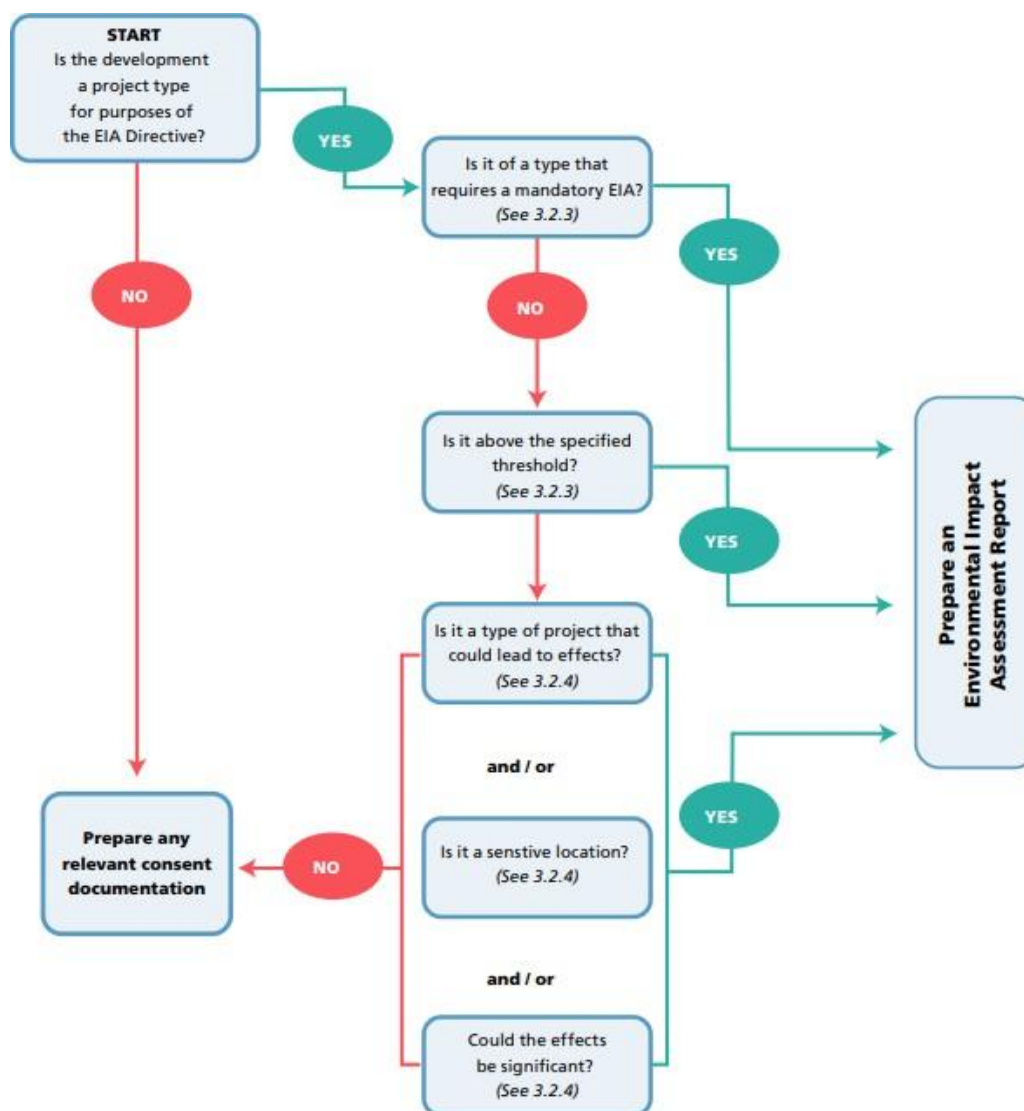
The term 'screening' is used to describe the process of ascertaining whether or not a proposed development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be provided to aid EIA by the competent authority of that project. EIAR is mandatory where project size, type or location EIA thresholds are met or exceeded. By request of the CA, an EIAR may be requested where mandatory EIA criteria are not met (ie sub threshold development) but the authority deems EIA necessary. EIA legislation sets out the types of projects that require a mandatory EIAR and the considerations that may give rise to the requirement for an EIAR where prescribed thresholds are not met.

The mandatory requirement for an EIAR is based on the nature and/or scale of a development. This is addressed in EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC and 2014/52/EU). Regard must also be had to the criteria as set out under Annex III of the EIA Directive the majority of which criteria are also referred to under Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended ('the 2001 Regulations').

In determining whether a development requires an EIAR to be undertaken, it is first necessary to determine whether the development falls into a category of specified development for which an EIAR is mandatory and thereafter consider whether the proposed development would require an EIAR if the relevant spatial or area threshold for that category is exceeded. Where the development falls within the relevant area or spatial category as sub-threshold, it is then necessary to consider whether the proposed development is likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment. Such significant effects may arise by virtue of the type and scale of development proposed, and also the location of the development in relation to nearby sensitive environments.

The screening process is summarised in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Screening Process



Source, Table 3.2 Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, May 2022.

The project giving rise to this Screening Report is the proposed development of a boardwalk as set out in more detail below.

### 1.3 Objectives and Work brief

This EIA screening report is being submitted as part of the planning application process for the proposed development referenced above and has been prepared to assist in the decision as to whether an EIA is required. The question of whether an EIA is required arises only in relation to the projects that fall within the scope of one or more of the project classes listed in Annex I or II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU and/or corresponding classes or projects listed in Schedule 5, Parts 1 and 2 of the Planning and Development regulations 2001, as amended. Projects which do not fall within the scope of the listed projects are not subject to any requirements for an EIA or screening EIA under EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU.



## 2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, LOCATION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

### 2.1 The Proposed Development

The proposed development involves the construction of a timber boardwalk from the plaza to the existing river side path. The boardwalk comprises a wooden structure measuring approximately 105m in length, ranging from 150mm to 900mm in elevation, and generally 2m in width, widening in places up to 3m. There will be railings on either side of the boardwalk to a height of 1.1m. The wood is treated to be weather durable and the wood itself is timber which is known for its highly variable properties.

The boardwalk proposed meanders between the existing car park and the existing path along the River Liffey and follows the route of an existing tarmacked pedestrian path. It is intended to have the boardwalk above the existing path. The existing path will be removed and that original area will be allowed to revert to its original state. The boardwalk will be sufficiently above the existing terrain to allow such regrowth occur, there will be slats within the boardwalk itself to allow natural sunlight penetrate and the board walk itself will be sufficiently narrow to allow regrowth.

The boardwalk will be suspended above the ground by a number of semi submerged pylons. These will typically be 1.5m long and will be submerged into the ground to a distance of 1m. The pylons are 400mm in diameter. There are no significant earthworks required, no significant excavations nor trenches or foundations.

It is anticipated that the board walk will be assembled on site over a period of 2 weeks and this is taken to be the construction period. It is not anticipated that there will be any heavy machinery deployed in the construction of the board walk.

The use of the boardwalk will be over the same periods of opening as the existing park. Opening hours will not be extended to accommodate any additional use of the proposed park visitor amenities.

A benefit of the proposed boardwalk is that users will not be able to stray off the board walk in the manner that they would be able to stray off the existing tarmac path.

The boardwalk itself does not in any way stray closer to the river than the existing tarmac path and certainly does not reach or overhang the river.

During construction the digging will be done by hand and the equivalent of buggies and parks maintenance vehicles.

The current access to the Liffey Valley Park consists of a steep tarmac path from the carpark to the riverside pathway.

**Figure 2: Site Location**



It is considered that the proposed development results in a considerable improvement to existing River Liffey walkway for the community of Lucan and the amenity of park users and visitors

The application is supported by:

A Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan produced by Tobin Consulting Engineers.

This assessment is accompanied by Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) carried out by Faith Wilson Ecology and a Flood Risk Assessment carried out by Tobin Consulting Engineers.

A Tree survey is carried out by CSR Landscaping includes an Arboricultural Method Statement to provide guidance on the tree works and monitoring and compliance of the site.

## **2.2 The Application Site**

The application site is located to the south of the River Liffey along the Leixlip Road (R835) and east of the Lucan Bypass (N4). The site measures some 0.1ha. It is occupied primarily by an existing tarmacadam footpath and some under growth. There is undergrowth located within the application site but there are no significant trees within the application site that would in any way be threatened by the proposed boardwalk.

## **2.3 Location**

The site is located to the northwest of Lucan Village at the Sluice Carpark. The area is characterised as greenfield with intense shrubbery as being at the southernmost edge of the existing Liffey Valley Park. The application site is bounded to the north by the River Liffey, to

the east by shrubbery, to the south by Sluice Carpark and similar shrubbery to the west and is located within the Liffey Valley Park, a regional scale park.

Lucan Village is approximately 500m to the east of the proposed site. The village centre retains much of its historical character, including a selection of eclectic food and café offerings and a quaint village green. Because of its proximity to the carpark the location is characterised as peri-urban or edge of urban with road noise and activity prevalent in this location.

The River Liffey can be accessed from the village at Lucan Bridge, the largest single-span masonry arch bridge in Ireland. It is also possible to explore along the Liffey at Lucan Demesne Park, which is but a five-minute walk from the village centre and connects onwards to St Catherine's Park and to Leixlip. The application site is served by the following public bus services: C3, C4, C5, C6, L51, L52, L54, X30, X31, X32.

## **2.4 Planning Guidance and Policy**

### Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework 2018

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (NPF) is a key national planning policy document, providing a broad planning framework for development and population growth in Ireland. The NPF provides a series of contextual planning objectives, taking into account the future long term population growth and development needs of Ireland to 2040.

The application site at Lucan Demesne -

The development of this site would be fully consistent with a number of key National Policy Objectives (NPO's) that will deliver the NPF's overarching objective of quality of life and place, including the following specific objectives:

*National Strategic Outcome 1 – Compact Growth - Ensure transition to more sustainable modes of travel (walking, cycling, public transport) and energy consumption (efficiency, renewables) within an urban context;*

*National Strategic Outcome 7 – Enhanced Amenities and Heritage - Implementation of planning and transport strategies for the five cities and other urban areas will be progressed with a major focus on improving walking and cycling routes, including continuous greenway networks and targeted measures to enhance permeability and connectivity.*

*National Policy Objective 27 Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.*

*National Policy Objective 64 Improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport to the private car, the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions.*

*The Environment One of the principal benefits of more compact urban development is that it will reduce harmful impacts on the environment by:*

- *Enhancing public health by encouraging and facilitating more active lifestyles by creating a more walkable and cycling friendly urban environment.*

The proposed development is clearly consistent with the above national policy objectives as it involves improved walking amenities within an existing redevelopment of underutilised riverside walking space within Lucan promotes healthy activities, slow and healthy modes of transport. The proposed development will enhance the Liffey Valley River corridor and is considered wholly consistent with the provision of the NPF.

The National Development Plan (NDP) named Project Ireland 2040 was adopted in 2018 to allocate some €115 billion over the following decade. The NDP has been revised to extend the budget of the NDP over a longer period as committed to in the Programme for Government 2020. The renewed National Development Plan 2021 – 2030 allocates a budget of €165 billion and was published in early October 2021 with “...with a particular focus on priority solutions to strengthen housing, climate ambitions, transport, healthcare, jobs growth in every region and economic renewal for the decade ahead.”

The National Planning Framework (NPF) co-named ‘Ireland 2040 Our Plan’ was adopted in conjunction with the NDP in 2018 and identifies Strategic Outcomes that match Investment Priorities of that NDP. Ireland 2040 Our Plan sets the strategic priorities for investment and chief amongst those is enhanced amenities and heritage which the proposed development directly addresses.

Ireland 2040 Our Plan recognises Ministerial Guidelines as underpinning the policy context for planning decisions. The NPF also recognises the need to provide for a high quality of life and healthy lifestyles – all of which is facilitated in the proposed development.

The proposed boardwalk is very much in line with the above objectives and aim to provide a safe and well designed amenity for Lucan Village. The proposal is therefore strongly supported by the NPF.

#### Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region (RSES) 2020 is relevant in this case. The RSES provides a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework. In supporting the NPF, the RSES prioritises the provision of health communities that protect and enhance the quality of our built and natural environment to support active lifestyles including walking and cycling, ensure clean air and water for all. The subject development supports all these requirements and aspirations.

The RSES seeks to attain healthy placemaking to include the integration of better urban design, public realm, amenities and heritage to create attractive places to live, work, visit and invest in. Focus on placemaking to create attractive and sustainable communities to support active lifestyles including walking and cycling.

The RSES seeks to attain sustainable compact settlements with the 10-minute city and town concepts, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or are accessible by high quality public transport services by connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services. These aspirations are also met in this instance. These aspirations are also met in this instance.

The RSES, like the NPF, promotes healthy communities. The following Regional Policy Objectives are particularly relevant and supportive of the proposed development:



*Greenways, Blueways and Peatways RPO 7.24: Promote the development of a sustainable Strategic Greenway Network of national and regional routes, with a number of high capacity flagship routes that can be extended and /or linked with local greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure, notwithstanding that capacity of a greenway is limited to what is ecologically sustainable.*

*Healthy Placemaking RPO 9.10 In planning for the creation of healthy and attractive places, there is a need to provide alternatives to the car and to prioritise and promote cycling and walking in the design of streets and public spaces. Local authorities shall have regard to the Guiding Principles for 'Healthy Placemaking' and 'Integration of Land Use and Transport' as set out in the RSES and to national policy as set out in 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' and the 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).*

The proposed development is in full accordance with the RSES as a matter of principle and reflective of the flexibility of this regional guidance and the emphasis on delivery, permission should be granted in this instance as being compliant with such national guidance.

#### South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 was adopted on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022. The plan came into effect on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022.

The subject site is zoned 'High Amenity Liffey Valley HA-DM' with the objective "To protect and enhance the outstanding character and amenity of the Liffey Valley".

**Table 1: Use Classes for HA-DM (SDCC Development Plan 2022 – 2028).**

Use Classes Related to Zoning Objective	
<b>Permitted in Principle</b>	Open Space.
<b>Open for Consideration</b>	Agriculture, Allotments, Bed & Breakfast, Car Park, Cemetery, Childcare Facilities, Community Centre, Cultural Use, Doctor / Dentist, Education, Embassy, Guest House, Home Based Economic Activities, Hotel / Hostel, Place of Worship, Public House, Public Services, Recreational Facility, Residential, Restaurant / Café, Rural Industry - Food, Shop-Local, Sports Club / Facility, Traveller Accommodation.

It is reasonable to assume that as this is a proposal for the furtherance of the enjoyment of an area of open space, and is essentially open space infrastructure, that it is 'permitted in principle' under 'open space' as indicated above.

#### Relevant Planning Policy

The following Human Health and Wellbeing policies are considered to be strongly complied with in this instance.

*GI6 Objective 1: To support a hierarchy of accessible open spaces and recreational facilities, appropriate for neighbourhood size and catchment area, which are adaptable and capable of accommodating multiple uses.*

*GI6 Objective 5: To support the provision of new walkways and cycleways in suitable locations to improve the recreational amenity of GI corridors in a manner that does not compromise the ecological functions of the corridors.*

*GI6 Objective 7: To enhance publicly owned open spaces with further appropriate GI including nature-based interventions to improve and diversify the services they provide.*

The proposed development is acceptable in principle therefore and actively supported by GI6 Objective 5 and GI6 objective 7.

The following Natural Cultural and Built Heritage policies are considered to promote the enhancement of the Liffey Valley corridor.

*NCBH7 Objective 1: To restrict development within areas designated with Zoning Objective 'HA-LV' (To protect and enhance the outstanding character and amenity of the Liffey Valley) and to ensure that new development:*

- does not significantly impact on built or cultural heritage assets, on sensitive habitats, species, or ecosystem services;*
- is related to the area's amenity potential;*
- is designed and sited to minimise environmental and visual impacts; and*
- enhances the County's green infrastructure network.*

*NCBH7 Objective 2: Within areas designated 'High Amenity – Liffey Valley' ('HA-LV'), nonresidential development will only be permitted where it:*

- relates to the area's amenity potential or to its use for agriculture or recreational purposes, including recreational buildings; or*
- comprises the redevelopment of or extensions to existing commercial or civic uses or development of new commercial or civic uses within an existing established area of commercial or civic activity; and*
- preserves the amenity value of the river valley including its biodiversity value, its landscape value, and views or vistas of the river valley.*

*NCBH7 Objective 3: To improve and extend the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area Order along the Liffey Valley area in South Dublin from the border with Dublin City administrative area to Kildare County and promote its tourism potential subject to the protection of its biodiversity and ecological value.*

*NCBH7 Objective 5: To ensure that development proposals within the Liffey Valley, including local and regional networks of walking and cycling routes*

- avoid impacts on the Valley's sensitive landscape character and ecological network;*
- maximise opportunities for enhancement of existing features;*
- protect and incorporate natural and built heritage features as part of the County's Green Infrastructure network;*
- do not prejudice the future creation and development of interconnected public parklands.*

The proposal improves the 'HA LV - Liffey Corridor High Amenity Area' zoning by increasing the provision of amenities to enjoy this recreational area and other technical assessments indicate that

the proposal will avoid significant environmental and ecological impacts on the valley park's landscape and ecological network. It will also enhance existing facilities and is of natural material in keeping with its surroundings and rather than prejudicing the future creation and development of interconnected public parklands greatly enhances connectivity and enjoyment of this strategically important green infrastructure which is an important part of the overall network of open space in the county and in the region.

The following policy requirements relating to Open Space have been stated in the CDP and have direct relevance to the proposed development:

*Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Provide a well-connected, inclusive and integrated public open space network through a multi-functional high-quality open space hierarchy that is accessible to all who live, work and visit the County.*

*Quality Public open space should provide for active and passive recreation and should enhance the identity and amenity of an area having regard to the need to conserve biodiversity. It should be designed to be fit for purpose, with appropriate facilities and be easy to access, safe, and appropriately managed and maintained. Different types of open space within the hierarchy perform different functions and provide different levels of facilities.*

*Open space should be designed and located to be publicly accessible by sustainable transport means such as walking, cycling and public transport, depending on the type of open space within the hierarchy. Facilities should be designed to ensure access for all ages and abilities.*

*Age friendly and disability friendly measures should be incorporated into the overall design and layout of public open spaces, such as the provision of appropriate information, suitable path surfaces and seating at appropriate intervals or other types of rest stops. Facilities, equipment and information materials should be accessible for all regardless of age or ability.*

*A number of strategies relevant to public open space, parks and recreation have been prepared by the Council including the TeenSpace Programme (2021) and Sports Pitch Strategy (2020). Parks and open space should encourage the development of a well-connected and integrated public open space network that contributes towards achieving a broad range of policy objectives set out in Chapter 8:*

- *Improving community, health and wellbeing*
- *Enhancing visual amenity*
- *Promoting sustainable development*
- *Promoting climate change adaption and mitigation*
- *Reinforcing Green Infrastructure*
- *Promotion of biodiversity*
- *Supporting culture and heritage*
- *Supporting the local economy, including tourism*

The proposal has been designed with policy COS5 very much in mind. The boardwalk provides an inclusive integrated public open space, enhances the identity and amenity of the area while conserving biodiversity. The ramped boardwalk is much more age friendly and accessible in contrast to what is currently there, which is a steep path. The proposal also aligns

with improving health and wellbeing, reinforces green infrastructure within Lucan Village, promotes biodiversity and enhances the space as a visual amenity.

### *Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Sustainable Water Management*

- *Parks and open spaces should be located to connect with each other so as to create green corridors and optimise their green infrastructure function;*
- *Existing trees, hedgerows and watercourses should be retained to maximise the natural setting of parks and open spaces*

The proposed amendments, which are a modest in nature, bring significant benefits for a use and activities that are already well established on the site, and which are acceptable in principle. The site is located close to the centre of the existing village within a very short walk indeed to shops and services that make this a sustainable and very welcome proposal to provide an enhanced use of the River Liffey corridor.

## **2.5 Planning History**

The National Planning Application Database was consulted on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024 for the purpose of this study and the applications that have been submitted in the past five years (2018-2023) within 500m of the site are summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2: Planning applications within the past five years**

Planning Ref.	Description	Decision
SD15A/0392	New customer order point with canopy to the existing drive thru lane.	Grant Permission
SD218/0012	Development of 2 car parks on the R835 entering Lucan including: Site A: 7 on-street parking spaces; parallel parking spaces of 2.5x6m dimensions; buffer of 1.2m; Removal and relocation of existing low level wall; Removal and replacement all existing trees; Removal and replacement of existing low level hedge; Planting of additional trees along low level wall; Removal and relocation of existing gate; Removal and relocation of existing bus stop; Removal and relocation of existing road traffic signage; Removal and relocation of existing tourism signage; All associated landscape, planting and surface renewal works; All ancillary works. Site B: 10 off-street parking spaces to include 1 Wheelchair Accessible parking space and elderly parking spaces; Construction of permeable paving; Construction of low-level wall at roadside perimeter of carpark; Planting of additional trees/shrubs in car park; Construction of gate to carpark; Provision of bicycle parking facilities; Removal and relocation of existing road traffic signage; Removal and relocation of existing tourism signage; All associated landscape, planting	Part 8 Approved By Council 10/12/2024
SD18B/0225	Single storey extension to side, new window to side gable at first floor level, replacement of front door screen with window, new entrance door and window to side of house, removal of porch roof to front of house, removal of window at first floor level to rear of house, alterations to first floor bedroom window to rear and new boundary wall and side gate to side of house.	SDCC Grant 27 Aug 2018
SD16A/0144	Demolition of existing structures on site and the construction of 5 residential dwellings (total gross floor area c. 654.4sq.m) consisting of: (i) five 3 bed, three storey houses ranging between c.125sq.m and c.135sq.m, (ii) 5 off-street car parking spaces, (iii) landscaping boundary treatment and all associated site development works and site services.	ABP Grant 16 February 2016
SD20B/0050	Single storey extension to the side/rear of the existing house; reinstatement of previously built-up window at ground floor level; conversion of existing ground floor kitchen to bathroom and associated site works.	
SD22B/0522	Demolition of existing sunroom to rear to make provision for new sunroom conversion of existing garage to a new Bedroom, new entrance porch, minor alterations to both ground and first floor external wall insulation to existing house and all associated site works	SDCC Grant 27 March 2023
SD17A/0415	Single storey infill motor showroom extension (70sq.m), located between existing motor showroom building and existing service workshop building, form new opens for glazed screens to front and side of existing building, new single storey office extension (35sq.m) to rear of existing motor showroom, provision of new gate and railings at entrance to existing side compound.	SDCC Grant 24 Jan 2018
SD20A/0310	Internal alterations only which are: at level 2 (ground floor), change existing stairs into storage room and new open reception area change existing reception area into an enclosed office, change 2 existing offices into 2 new bedrooms, provide a nurses station in the physio room and change the existing nurses station into a bedroom. At level 3 (first floor plan) change the existing stairs into a hoist and wheelchair storage room, change an existing 4 bedroom unit into 2 new 2-bed units, change an existing nurses station into a bedroom, change an existing wheelchair storage room into a bedroom. There are no changes proposed to the exterior of the building.	SDCC Grant 01 Feb 2021



<b>SD22B/0522</b>	Demolition of existing sunroom to rear to make provision for new sunroom conversion of existing garage to a new Bedroom, new entrance porch, minor alterations to both ground and first floor external wall insulation to existing house and all associated site works.	SDCC Grant 15 Feb 2023
<b>SD22B/0129</b>	Single storey extension to side & rear of existing dwelling and all associated site works.	SDCC Grant 30 Jun 2022
<b>SD19B/0175</b>	Demolish detached store shed to rear; removal of disability ramps up to front door; relocate front entrance from front side to front left side with new pitched over front to replace flat; a lined feature roof over entrance; single storey rear extension; windows and door on side elevation on both ground and first floor levels; alteration to rear first floor windows to accommodate the peak of new rear extension roof; various internal alteration on ground and first floor levels.	SDCC Grant 24 Jun 2019
<b>SD23B/0265</b>	The development will consist of the construction of a single- storey extension to the front of the property and all associated site works.	SDCC Grant 19 Sep 2023
<b>SD21B/0064</b>	Alterations to existing dwelling to include demolition of existing single storey garage; single storey rear extension and garden shed; removal of first floor dormer and chimney; new external insulation ; new windows and roof windows; new dormer to the west; construction of new two storey extension to the east and a single storey extension to the rear of the site; overall increase of the floor area will be 86.55sq.m; all associated site works.	SDCC Grant 14 Dec 2021
<b>SD18A/0310</b>	Construction of a 25 unit residential housing development on a site extending to 0.96 hectares to the north of the N4 Lucan by-pass and to the east (end of) Ardeevin Avenue, consisting of the following: 1 detached, two and a half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1, 295sq.m); 1 detached, two and half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1a, 270sq.m); 1 detached, two and a half storey 4 bedroom house (Type 1b, 270sq.m); 1 detached, two and a half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1c, 280sq.m); 1 detached, two and a half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1d, 270sq.m); 8 detached, two and a half storey houses (Type 2, 150sq.m each); a two storey, semi-detached block consisting of: 1 two bedroom house (Type 3, 70sq.m); 1 two bedroom house (Type 3a, 74sq.m), 10 semi-detached two and a half storey houses (Type 4, 150sq.m each); all associated site development works including landscaping works, public lighting, ground works, (reduction of existing site level), boundary treatment, roads, footpaths, foul drainage, surface water drainage including attenuation, water main and site entrance piers (with no gates).	ABP Grant 27 October 2019
<b>SD18B/0299</b>	Single and two storey rear extension, internal alterations all with associated elevation changes and siteworks.	SDCC Grant 09 October 2018
<b>SD19A/0165</b>	Detached two storey, two bedroom house in the side garden; 2 site entrances; demolition of garage; all associated site works.	SDCC Grant 09 July 2019

None of these developments are considered to generate a cumulative impact with the subject development. The proposed amenity is one that enhances enjoyment of the Liffey Valley Park and appreciation of its ecology and landscape quality without damage to either.

### 3.0 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, outline the requirements for the assessments of the effects of certain projects on the environment.

Section 176 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, provides the initial steps in relation to the criteria for determination of whether an EIA is required. It allows the Minister to prescribe classes of development that require EIA having regard to Ministerial Powers and EIA transposed legislation.

Part 10, Article 92, of the Planning and Development Regulations define ‘*sub threshold development*’ as ‘*development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which does not equal or exceed, the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development.*’

#### 3.1 Project Type

The screening process begins by establishing whether the proposal is a ‘project’ as understood by the Directive (as amended). The development of a boardwalk and associated site works do in

this instance constitute a 'project' as it constitutes a development that requires planning permission under the planning and development statutes.

### **3.2. Thresholds**

The next step to screening is to determine whether the project exceeds a specific threshold. Thresholds are set out in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive, as amended. For this proposal, thresholds in the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended are also relevant.

It must be ascertained whether the proposal is a type where EIA and thus EIAR is prescribed/mandated and whether it exceeds the applicable thresholds or not. The Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment Reports published by the EPA in May 2022 note that projects that at first glance may not appear to come under the Schedule, but on closer examination when the process is further examined, may do so because of the sensitivity or significance of the receiving environment etc.

In this instance the proposal is not of a type, scale or activity at Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, or within Schedule 7 or Schedule 7A of the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 where EIAR is prescribed and does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report due to the activity type proposed.

### **3.3 Mandatory EIAR**

Other categories of specified EIA development are listed in Schedule 5 (Part 1 and Part 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended. These and those in the amended EIA Directive 2014/52/EU (also reference Directive 2011/92/EU) Annex II and Annex III have also been reviewed and it is not considered that the proposed development breaches any relevant threshold.

In the amended EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, Annex I contains projects referred to in Article 4(1) of the Amended Directive. The subject proposal would fall within none of these classes of development and therefore does not represent a form of development considered under Annex I where EIAR is considered mandatory.

In the amended EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, Annex II contains projects referred to in Article 4(2) of the amended Directive. There are various forms of development (including sub-classes) that are referred to in that Annex. The proposal would not fall within any such category and a mandatory EIAR is not required in this instance.

The subject development does not fall within development classes set out in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Schedule 5, Part 2, Section 10(b)(iv) sets out that an EIAR is mandatory for an urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere. The relevant threshold in the present case is 10 hectares as the site is located in an urban area. However, the area of the proposed development is considerably below the appropriate threshold at 0.1ha. A mandatory EIA is not triggered in regard to this site area threshold therefore.

The relevant class/scale threshold for development to be considered is set out in Schedule 5 (Part 2) of the Regulations under Class 10 (Infrastructure Projects) in this case the provision of a boardwalk falls considerably below that threshold.

### 3.4 Screening for Sub-Threshold EIA

Where a project is of a specified type but does not meet, or exceed, the applicable thresholds above, then the likelihood of the project having significant effects on the environment needs to be considered (both adverse and beneficial). This is done by reference to the criteria as specified in Annex III of the amended Directive.

Recital (27) of Directive 2014/52/EU states that:

*“The screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment”.*

The Guidelines go on to state that the project needs to be considered in its entirety for the screening purposes. This means that all elements of an overall project must be considered for significance of impact. Other related projects need to be identified also and appraised at an appropriate level of detail (where appropriate). This will identify the likely significance of cumulative and indirect impacts thus providing the consent authority with a context for its determination.

This screening exercise has determined that the subject application does not meet or exceed the applicable threshold of 10 ha at Schedule 5, Part II, 10 in the present case as the application site measures 0.1ha.

Directive 2014/52/EU introduced a new mandatory article, Article 4(4), which states:

*“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 the 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 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”.*

Article 4(4) introduces a new Annex IIA to be used in the case of a request for a Screening determination for Annex II projects. The information to be provided by the developer is set out below.

1. A description of the project including, in particular:
  - (a) A description of the physical characteristics of the whole project, and where relevant, of demolition works,
  - (b) A description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected,
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the project on the environment resulting from,
  - (a) The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste where relevant; and,
  - (b) The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land water and biodiversity.
4. The criteria of Annex II shall be taken into account, where relevant, when compiling the information in accordance with points 1 to 3.

The criteria for determining whether or not Sub Threshold EIA is required are set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) including the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 and Annex III of the EIA Directive as amended.

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, lists criteria for determining whether development listed in part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an environmental impact assessment by virtue of the following as per Annex III of the EIA Directive as amended:

- I. Characteristics of Proposed Development
- II. Location of Proposed Development
- III. Type & Characteristics of Potential Impacts

I. Characteristics of Proposed Development

The characteristics of project, with particular regard to:

- the size and design of the whole project,
- cumulation with other existing and / or approved development,
- the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- the production of waste,
- pollution and nuisances,
- the risk of major accidents and / or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate changes, in accordance with scientific knowledge,
- the risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

II. Location of Proposed Development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:

- the existing and approved land use,
- the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
- the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
  - (a) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
  - (b) coastal zones and the marine environment;
  - (c) mountain and forest areas;
  - (d) nature reserves and parks;
  - (e) areas classified or protected under national legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC,
  - (f) 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,
  - (g) densely populated areas,
  - (h) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

III. Type & Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 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:

- the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the nature of the impact;

- the transboundary nature of the impact,
- the intensity and complexity of the impact,
- the probability of the impact,
- the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.
- the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and / or approved projects;
- the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

As per the requirements of the 2014 Directive, this Screening Report provides details of the information specified in Annex IIA, taking account of the criteria in Annex III. The screening statement sets out information under the headings provided for under Schedule 7 of the 2001 Regulations. In effect, this ensures that all of the information required under Schedule 7A has been furnished. It also presents the information in a manner that facilitates the competent authority in its screening assessment.

This report will now review the proposed development project under these three main criteria.

### **3.5 EIA SCREENING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

Key EIA legislation includes the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (together, the EIA Directive) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment is designed to ensure that projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are subject to a comprehensive assessment of environmental effects prior to development consent being granted. The objective of the Directive (2014/52/EU) is to “ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, through the establishment of minimum requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), prior to development consent being given, of public and private development that are likely to have significant effects on the environment”.

The environmental assessment must identify, describe and assess the direct and indirect significant impacts of the project on specified environmental factors (Article 3 (1) of the Directive and 171a(b) and 172 of the Planning and Development Act 2000).

The requirements of the EIA Directives apply only in relation to projects listed in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive which is clear from Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Directive which provides that “before consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects on the environment (EIA). Those projects are defined in Article 4”. Article 4 provides that projects listed in Annex I shall be subject to a mandatory EIA and projects listed in Annex II shall be subject to determination as to whether an EIA is required through (a) case-by-case examination or (b) subject to thresholds or criteria set by the Member State.

In Ireland, EIA provisions relating to planning permissions are contained in the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended (Part X) (hereafter referred to as “the Planning Act”), and in the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended (Part 10) (“the Regulations”). Projects requiring an EIA are listed in Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Regulations. Where a project is listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 but is classed as “sub-threshold” development, planning authorities under article 103 of the Regulations may request an EIAR where it considers the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Schedule 7 and 7A of the Regulations must be considered in the decision as to whether a proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. “Sub-threshold” development “means development of a type set out in Schedule 5 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development”. The prescribed classes of development for the purpose of section 176 of the Act are set out in Schedule 5.



The outcome of the EIA process does not, in itself, determine the outcome of an application for development consent for a project. The Planning Authority and An Bord Pleanála must consider each application for development consent on its own merits, taking into account all material considered, including conclusions in respect of EIA, before making its decision to grant with or without conditions, or to refuse consent.

### 3.6 EIA Guidelines

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) revised the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, in August 2018. These updated Guidelines deal with the legislative provisions resulting from the 2014 EIA Directive and the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) and how they are to be addressed in practice.

Recently the EPA published draft Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (May 2022), which includes guidance on preparing an EIAR and the screening process. In addition, both the European Commission and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment\* (IMA) have published guidance on various aspects of the EIA process which includes guidance on screening.

This report has been prepared with reference to each of the above documents.

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) has issued guidance in the form of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, Practice Note (PN02) in June 2021 which aids Planning Authorities as the Competent Authority in this area. The practice does not duplicate or replace any existing guidance or advice but focuses on the EIA screening exercise. It provides a step-by-step (3 step) approach to the process of screening for EIA.

For all sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, under Article 103(1) of the Regulations, where EIAR is submitted or EIA determination is requested, a screening determination exercise is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, of preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effect on the environment.

Article 103(1)(b)(i) – (iii) and 109(2)(b)(i) – (iii) of the Regulation states.

*(a) Where planning applications 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 in such preliminary examinations, 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".*

## 4.0 REQUIREMENTS OF ANNEX II(A) OF 2014/52/EU

### 4.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The planning application proposes a very modest scale of development namely a timber boardwalk from the existing plaza to the existing river side path.

The site is located to the northwest of Lucan Village at the Sluice Carpark. The area is characterised as greenfield with intense shrubbery. The boardwalk is 105m in length, ranging from 150mm to 900mm in elevation, and generally 2m in width, widening in places up to 3m. There are railings proposed to assist the less able. There are no significant earthworks required to accommodate the proposed development with excavation being done by hand and non-mechanical means.

Further details of the proposed development are set out in the attached landscape statement by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Landscaping.

### 4.2 Location of the Proposed Development

As indicated above, the **location** is characterised as edge of urban, or peri-urban, given the proximity of the existing car park, the Leixlip Road (R835) and dwellings on the other side of that road and given the proximity of Lucan Village to the Sluice Carpark, where the proposal will be accessed. The application site is characterised as greenfield with intense shrubbery.

The current park access to the Liffey Valley Park consists of a steep tarmac path from the carpark to the riverside pathway.

The site is near a variety of amenities such as retail services, education, healthcare facilities, sports and recreational grounds within Lucan Village.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor an Architectural Conservation Area, nor within any archaeological protection area. It is located within a sensitive landscape designated as LV HA Liffey Valley High Amenity Area.

The Flood Risk Assessment carried out by Tobin Consulting Engineers concludes that the proposed development area is conservatively considered appropriate in Flood Zone B (less than 0.1% AEP). The boardwalk proposed adjacent to the River Liffey (Boardwalk Site) is considered open space/ outdoor recreation, and is therefore 'water compatible' and suitable in any flood zone.

The Ecological Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment screening was carried out by Faith Wilson Consultant recommends that all mitigation measures should be carried out including the implementation of the Construction Management Plan in order to sensitively approach the development.

The Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment carried out by AMS anticipates that slight direct negative impact will be linked to Lucan House Demesne, to bridge CH02 and to the demesne wall CH05. However these slight direct negative impacts can be reduced by incorporated by introducing key mitigation measures that will be undertaken to avoid, prevent, reduce remedy or offset the adverse effects.

#### Noise and Vibration

This is not a particularly noise sensitive location being so close to the main road and the outskirts of Lucan village. The proposed development will not lead to any significant noise or vibration impacts during operational or construction periods given its period relative remoteness to what could be termed noise sensitive receptors.

#### **Landscape and Visual**

The application site is located within a designated high amenity area but the proposal itself is relatively low key with minimal construction and a very short construction period of just one or two weeks at most. There is considered to be no significant visual or landscape impact. The scheme will replace an alien surface of existing tarmacadam with a natural material of timber raised above ground with space for regrowth underneath. The proposed development will not give rise to any temporary landscape or visual impacts to during the construction phase given the topography of the site. There are no protected landscapes or views in proximity to the site. When constructed, the proposed development will be low in landscape and visual impact terms, as this is a secluded location, and will not be visible from distance in any direction.

#### **4.3 Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts**

There are likely to be positive and negative potential environmental impacts from the proposed development proceeding, none of which are anticipated to be significant.

The most likely significant positive effects are likely to be an increase in use of this section of the River Liffey path.

The most likely negative impacts are likely to include the following:

- Construction traffic that may result in traffic congestion on the local road network for a relatively short period
- Possible noise disturbances during construction

None of these are considered to be significant given the relatively modest scale of development proposed (a boardwalk).

The following is proposed, or can be provided, by way of mitigation set out below:

- Construction Management Plan
- Provision of landscape screening
- Noise and vibration controls during construction

#### **4.4 Expected Residues and Emission and the production of waste**

residues and emissions from the construction period are related to construction or demolition waste and emissions from construction plant. No unusual residues or emissions are expected during the construction period and the Construction Management Plan will mitigate likely impacts of construction works.

No residues are anticipated during the operational phase of development. Emissions will be linked to heating systems and will be within the appropriate standards and regulations for modern residential developments.

Operational waste that will be generated by the proposed development will be domestic in nature and scale. All domestic waste will be disposed of by a licensed waste contractor.

#### **4.5 Use of natural resources including soil, land, water and biodiversity**

The application site is defined as 'greenfield' in planning terms. Use of water will not occur from the proposed development. Natural resources may be used in the construction phase including gravel and water. There will be no use of natural resources during the operational phase of development.



## 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANNEX III EU DIRECTIVE 2014/52/EU AND SCHEDULE 7 AND 7A OF THE REGULATIONS

In considering whether the proposed sub-threshold development is likely to have significant environmental effects, it is necessary to have regard to the criteria set out under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, including the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 or Annex III of the EIA Directive.

As indicated above the criteria set out in Annex III are grouped into three categories:

- (i) Characteristics of Proposed Development (Project),
- (ii) Location of the Proposed Development (Project) and
- (iii) (Type and) Characteristics of Potential Impacts.

The assessment for this sub threshold development is as follows:

EIA assessment criteria	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts
1. Characteristics of proposed development The characteristics of the proposed development, in particular:		
(a) The size and design of the whole project	<p>The proposed development comprises the replacement of a steep tarmac path with an accessible timber boardwalk.</p> <p>The proposed development is consistent with the zoning of the site contained in the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028. The zoning is 'High Amenity Liffey Valley HA-DM'</p> <p>There will be no significant impact during the construction phase. The construction works are confined to an area of 0.1ha. A Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan will be in place for the construction phase.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are likely during the construction phase.</p>	<p>The proposal is not out of scale or design that would be impactful in a significant manner during the operational period. It is not out of keeping given it's scale and design which replaces a tarmac path.</p> <p>The construction period is expected to run over a period of weeks rather than months.</p>
(b) Cumulation with other existing and /or	A search of the South Dublin County Council planning register indicates that there are no proposed or recent construction	The proposed development is located in

proposed development	<p>projects in close vicinity of the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed development has been designed to ensure there will be no adverse impact on the residential amenities of the area. In fact, the amenity of existing residents will be enhanced by the proposed development.</p>	<p>an edge of urban location, on a green site at the edge of an extensive regional scale park but unaffected by and unaffected other developments and there is no cumulative effect anticipated.</p> <p>The development will connect to Lucan Village via the R835 Leixlip Road.</p> <p>It is not considered likely that the operation of the proposed development will result in significant cumulative environmental impacts there and above the use of the existing path or with other developments existing or proposed.</p>
(c) The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	<p>Energy, including electricity and fuels, will be required during the construction phase. Raw materials will be used during the construction process but this usage will not be significant over that period.</p> <p>Wood is a natural resource to be used in this instance and is more sustainable than the tarmac which it replaces. There is less likelihood of straying from the boardwalk because of the proposed rails than off the existing path that it will replace.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are likely.</p>	<p>There will be no significant use of natural resources during the operation phase.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are anticipated.</p>
(d) The production of waste	<p>The construction process will result in some demolition or removal related waste due to removal of the existing tarmac path. This will be disposed of in compliance with the Preliminary Construction Erosion</p>	<p>No operational waste will be generated.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>

	<p>Sediment Control Plan that will be in place prior to construction.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>	
(e) Pollution and Nuisances	<p>There is potential to cause nuisance related to noise, dust and vibration impacts to ecology for a limited time (the period of construction will be 4-6 weeks). The Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan detail measures to mitigate likely impacts.</p> <p>The proposed development will be subject to planning conditions limiting construction hours to protect the residential amenity of the area.</p> <p>Implementation of mitigation measures will ensure that no negative impacts are likely during the construction phase.</p>	<p>There will be no significant pollution or nuisances generated from the operation of the development.</p> <p>Parking is provided at the Sluice Carpark adjacent to the site to prevent traffic congestion and the site is accessible to local bus.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts during operation of the proposed development are predicted.</p>
(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	<p>No major accidents are anticipated given the modest scale of development proposed. There will also be strict compliance with regulations and environmental controls.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>	<p>No major accidents or disasters are anticipated.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>
(g) The risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any likely impacts associated with noise, dust or pollution from the construction process.</p> <p>The board walk is removed from the water's edge and is no closer than the existing footpath.</p> <p>With mitigation measures in place no significant</p>	<p>No risks to human health are anticipated.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are anticipated.</p>

	negative impacts are anticipated.	
<p>2. Location of proposed development</p> <p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by proposed development, with particular regard to:</p>		
(a) The existing and approved land use	<p>This proposal is an enhancement of the River Liffey Corridor and aligns with the zoning is 'High Amenity Liffey Valley HA-DM.'</p> <p>The proposal is an enhancement to the existing amenities including replacing a tarmac path.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>	<p>The completed development will provide a walkway close to Lucan Village.</p> <p>The proposed use is compatible with the predominant existing land use in the area (ie recreational amenity).</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are anticipated.</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>This is a greenfield site along the River Liffey.</p> <p>The area of the proposed development is considered less sensitive than the surrounding area given the existing path and there is no development in the river. A Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan accompanies the application. An ecological assessment has also been undertaken indicating no significant impacts on ecology generally or on the environment. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>	<p>The proposed operational phase will not have any significant impact on natural resources. A wooden structure is proposed.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>
(c) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying attention to the following areas: (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;	<p>In respect to item (i-v) The proposed development of itself is not predicted to result in changes to the patterns of surface water runoff that currently exist. A screening statement for Appropriate Assessment</p>	

<p>(iii) mountain and forest areas, (iv) nature reserves and parks, (v) areas classified or protected under national legislation, Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive, (vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union 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>has been prepared by FEW and it was found that no likely significant effects on the conservation management objectives of European Sites. An ecological assessment has also been undertaken indicating no significant impacts on ecology generally or on the environment. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>In respect of item (vi), there are no direct or indirect effects identified for the project and potential risks to these surface waters of the River Liffey Estuary. The volumes of surface water represent a miniscule fraction of the volumes discharging to the River Liffey and Dublin Bay. There are no potential impacts identified for water quality or alterations to hydrological streams. The project does not result in likely significant effects on water resources in the environment.</p> <p>In respect of item (vii), The project site is adjacent to an established urban area and given its minor size and scale, no negative effects are identified in relation to this criterion.</p> <p>In respect of item (viii), given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment, no such effects are identified.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any significant impact on any of these items during the operational phase of development.</p>
<p><b>3. Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts</b> Likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 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:</p>		

<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) The nature of the impact</p>	<p>The site size is 0.1ha and the impact, if any, is considered to be local and construction related over a period of weeks not months or years. There are no significant impacts currently anticipated due to the nature, scale and abbreviated construction period anticipated.</p> <p>With mitigation measures no significant negative impacts are predicted.</p> <p>The construction impacts have potential to cause minor nuisance associated with noise, dust and traffic but these will be limited, temporal and not significant given the relatively small scale of development proposed and the limited demolition or more precisely the removal of the existing tarmacadam path required to accommodate the proposed development.</p> <p>The Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan sets out stringent measures to ensure no significant environmental impacts during construction and there will be limited construction over a relatively short period of weeks rather than months or years.</p> <p>With mitigation measures in place no significant negative impacts are predicted during the light construction required.</p>	<p>The scale of development is modest for an urban environment at an appropriate density in an appropriate location on a site that is zoned to protect and enhance the River Liffey amenity area.</p> <p>The proposed scale of development is considered insignificant.</p> <p>The operational phase will result in the development of a carefully designed and visually softer boardwalk to the existing tarmacadam path. The nature of the use is appropriate to the location and to the scale of the surrounding and existing park.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts are predicted.</p>
<p>The transboundary nature of the impact</p>	<p>There are no construction phase transboundary impacts.</p>	<p>There are no operational phase transboundary impacts.</p>
<p>The intensity and complexity of the impact</p>	<p>The intensity, duration and complexity of the construction phase is not considered significant.</p>	<p>The operational phase of the development is modest in scale, not intense nor is</p>

	No significant negative impacts are predicted.	the impact predicted likely to be complex or significant.  No significant negative impacts are predicted.
The probability of the impact	Non-significant construction impact is probable. This will be short term and not significant. Any impacts will be mitigated by the Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan and be approved prior to construction.	The operational phase will bring probable impact of a non-significant nature. Measures will be put in place to avoid, reduce, or mitigate any likely negative impacts.
The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact.	Construction impacts will commence within a period of 4-6 weeks from the grant of planning permission given the limited engineering works required most of which will be done by hand. The construction impacts will be restricted by planning condition in terms of the hours of construction. No permanent or irreversible negative impacts are anticipated as a result of the construction phase. No significant negative impacts are predicted.	The development will be used all year round.  Impacts which will be non-significant will be irreversible.
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and / or approved projects;	No other adjacent major construction projects are known or identified which will have an impact cumulatively with the proposed development during construction.	The proposed development is in character with the area and surrounding development.
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	The Preliminary Construction Erosion Sediment Control Plan will aim to avoid, reduce and mitigate construction impacts during the period of construction which will be relatively short.	The predicted impact is not significant, and the reduction of impacts is neither needed nor proposed in this instance.



## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

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The proposed development is assessed to fall outside of the requirement for mandatory EIA by virtue of the below threshold size of the site, its developed context and proposed activity typology. Having regard to the **characteristics of the proposed development** sub threshold EIA is not considered to be required, due to scale and type of development.

The Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that subject to the grant of planning, the design and build contractor should employ the services of qualified licenced archaeologist to advise on the proposed works, this must be monitored while works are ongoing. The CHA also states that protective barriers and/or fencing must be erected to avoid accidental damage to the bridge (CH02) and to the demesne wall (CH07).

The Ecological Assessment carried out by Faith Wilson concludes that the scheme has been assessed from the perspective of ecology and detailed mitigation measures have been given to reduce potential impacts on lands in the vicinity of the proposed development. The assessment recommends that all mitigation measures should be carried out including the implementation of the Construction Management Plan in order to sensitively approach the development. The Appropriate Assessment carried out indicates that the proposed development, either on its own or cumulatively, with any other project or plan will have no significant impact on any European Designated Site.

**Characteristics of the potential impacts** of the proposed development are unlikely to be significant in this location. Any impact associated with noise, vibration, air, and traffic are likely to be insignificant during the construction and operational phases. The construction period is anticipated to be short covering a period of weeks or a few months. The works are not considered extensive and replace an existing tarmacadam path with an elevated wooden boardwalk with railings to prevent users straying into more ecologically sensitive areas. There are minimal trees lost and minimal disturbance to existing and potential natural habitats.

Having regard to the criteria outlined in Section 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, it is concluded that the proposed development will have no likely significant effects, indirect or direct, on the receiving environment, either on its own or cumulatively with other development. It is our professional opinion that no adverse impacts occur such as to warrant an Environmental Impact Assessment for a sub threshold development.

In summary, the proposed development has been screened to determine whether an **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** is required, and it has been concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, either on its own or in combination with other projects, and that an EIA is not required in this instance.