



PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING NOTE

Project reference	220943
Date and time	27/03/2025
Subject	Proposed Repair Works at Markievicz Bridge, Co. Sligo
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Introduction

MKO has been commissioned by Sligo County Council (SCC) to carry out an environmental assessment of the proposed repair works at Markievicz Bridge (Proposed Development), Sligo Town, Co. Sligo.

The Proposed Development will include the repair of the Bridge pier footings and the immediately adjacent riverbed which have been eroded. Additionally, de-vegetation works will be undertaken on the surfaces of the bridge which will also include steam cleaning and mortar joint repointing.

The purpose of this Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Note is to determine whether the Proposed Development is considered as a class of development requiring EIA having with regard to Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations (as amended) and to assess whether further detailed screening is required.

Statement of Authority

This briefing note has been prepared by Conor Jackson and reviewed by Tom Madden and Eoin O'Sullivan, all of MKO.

Conor is a Graduate Environmental Scientist who has been working with MKO since September 2024. Conor holds a B.Sc. in Geography and Geosystems from the University of Galway. Since starting with MKO, Conor has worked on Construction and Environmental Management Plans, Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Reports, fee proposals and GIS mapping for a number of projects ranging from wastewater treatment plants, solar grid connections, quarries and residential developments. Conor's role in MKO is Graduate Environmental Scientist.

Tom Madden is an Environmental Scientist with over 4 years' experience in professional environmental consultancies. Tom holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from the University of Limerick. Tom's key strengths are in compilation of various types of environmental reports such as EIAR Chapters, Construction & Environmental Management Plans, Construction Waste Management Plans. Tom is also proficient in conducting environmental sampling such as groundwater, surface water, noise, and odour.



Eoin O'Sullivan is a Project Director at MKO with over 15 years of experience in the assessment of a wide range of energy and infrastructure related projects and working in the fields of environmental and human health risk assessment, waste management, waste policy and permitting. Eoin holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science & Technology and a MSc in Environmental Engineering. Eoin is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management and Chartered Environmentalist with the Society of Environment.

Legislative Context

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU) as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, aims to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, through the establishment of minimum requirements for EIA, prior to consent being given, of public and private developments. EIA screening is the initial step in the EIA process and determines whether a specified proposed development requires a full EIA.

Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) identifies the types of development that require an EIA. If a proposed development meets or exceeds the thresholds set out under Schedule 5 (Part 1 and Part 2), a mandatory EIA is required and, as such, there is no screening determination required. Where a proposed development falls under a class included in Schedule 5 but is sub threshold, it shall be subject to a Preliminary Examination to determine whether the project may have significant environmental effects. If required, a more detailed Screening Determination is conducted to determine if it would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and whether a full EIA is necessary.

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018)¹ state:

Where, based on a preliminary examination of the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, the competent authority concludes that, having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, this should be recorded with reasons for this conclusion stated, and no EIA required, or formal determination made. The recording of the competent authority's view should be brief and concise, but adequate to inform the public. In many cases this considered view will be included in the planner's/inspector's report on the planning application and this may be cross-referenced in the competent authority's decision. Normally, this will be published at the time of the decision of the competent authority.

Where, based on the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, and having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, the competent authority must determine that an EIA is required.

¹ Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. (2018). Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment. Available at: [gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie/en/publications-and-resources/publication/2018-guidelines-for-planning-authorities-and-an-bord-pleanala-on-carrying-out-environmental-impact-assessment/)



The main reasons for this determination should be recorded and notified to the developer and an EIAR required. Revised public notices will be required upon submission of the EIAR.

Where, based on the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, the competent authority, having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), forms the view that there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment, the competent authority must proceed to a further examination to determine whether EIA is required. This requires the applicant to submit the information specified in Schedule 7a to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) in order to facilitate a formal Screening Determination. The applicant may have submitted this with the application, and where he/she has not done so, the competent authority must request the information to enable the further examination to be undertaken and a formal determination made.

In the event that a formal screening assessment is required the applicant may need to engage the services of an appropriately qualified consultant (i.e. MKO) to assist with same.

This Preliminary EIA Screening Note has been prepared to help the applicant determine whether the Proposed Development falls under a class of development that requires an EIA.

Pre-Screening

Site Location	Markievicz Bridge is located in the centre of Sligo town, Co. Sligo. The coordinates of the bridge are Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) X 569282, Y 835960. The R286 Regional Road encompasses Markievicz Bridge, which provides southward passage over the Garavogue River. The area surrounding the bridge is predominantly urban in nature and includes shops, restaurants and businesses.
Proposed Development	<p>The Proposed Development involves scour repairs on the base of the piers of the bridge and de-vegetation. The Proposed Development will require dewatering along sections of the riverbed to allow for repair works to be carried out. It is estimated that the Proposed Development will take approximately 3 months to complete. The Proposed Development will involve the following:</p> <p>Scour repair</p> <p>Reverse current and prevent future local scour effecting the structural integrity of the bridge by extending the pier footings further below ground level. Reverse the current contraction scour and delay its recurrence by rehabilitating the channel bed in the vicinity of the bridge.</p> <p>De-vegetation</p> <p>During detailed inspection, the vegetation on both elevations of the bridge was determined to be minor in nature and not affecting structural condition of any bridge component. Advanced vegetation growth can impact structural integrity; therefore, it is advisable to remove the vegetation before it progresses to this stage to maintain the structural condition of the bridge.</p>



Site Context		<p>Markievicz Bridge is located within the Lough Gill Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (001976) and the Lough Gill Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) (001976) and is approximately 240m hydrological distance from the Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC (000627) and Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) pNHA (000627).</p> <p>The Natura Impact Statement (NIS), included in the planning application, provides a full list of relevant European Sites.</p> <p>The NIS concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.</p> <p>Markievicz Bridge (Record No. 32007110) is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). According to the NIAH website, the bridge was constructed in 1648. There are no registered archaeological monuments in the vicinity of the bridge. The closest Sites and Monument Record (SMR) to Markievicz Bridge is a wall monument (SL014-292), which is located approximately 80m south-east of the southern end of the bridge.</p>	
Does the Development constitute a class of development requiring EIA having regard to Schedule 5 of the Regulations?		Yes: No: ✓	
If YES, is the development meeting or exceeding a threshold set out in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations?			
Select	Threshold	Comment	Result
No	n/a		No EIA is Required
Yes	Exceeds	n/a	No Environmental Impacts Assessment Report is Required
	Is Equal to	n/a	
	No Threshold	n/a	EIA Screening - Preliminary Examination or Screening Determination <i>Required</i>
	Sub Threshold	n/a	
Conclusion			
<p>Pre-screening for the requirement for EIA has been carried out for the Proposed Development. It has been concluded that the Proposed Development does not constitute a class of development requiring EIA having regard to Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations (as amended). Given the limited nature of the Proposed Development and the mitigation measures proposed in the accompanying</p>			



Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and NIS, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The need for environmental impact assessment can, therefore, be excluded at this stage and a preliminary examination or screening determination is not required.