



## Chapter 07

# Traffic and Transportation

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# 7. Traffic and Transportation

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the likely significant traffic and transportation impacts associated with the Little Island Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge (i.e., the ‘Proposed Development’) during its Construction Phase, Operational Phase and Decommissioning Phase. This chapter presents the baseline transport environment including reporting on existing traffic volumes based on traffic count surveys carried out on the surrounding public road network. The projected increase in traffic associated with the Proposed Development and its likely impacts on the receiving transportation network are assessed. Finally, appropriate mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potential negative impacts on the surrounding transportation network are presented.

The Proposed Development will function as an active travel link for pedestrians and cyclists to travel from the Little Island train station and surrounds to the Eastgate Business Park and the further surrounds of Little Island and vice versa. It will also promote the use of public transport modes by providing a safe and attractive link for people travelling between Little Island train station and Little Island.

In terms of phasing, the assessment is based on the following assumptions:

- Construction Phase start: 2025; and
- Operation year for traffic assessment: 2026.

Further information on the construction of the Proposed Development is described in **Chapter 5, Construction Strategy**.

## 7.2 Methodology

A detailed description of the Proposed Development in relation to traffic and transportation is provided in Section 7.3. The assessment methodology used in this impact assessment is set out below.

### 7.2.1 Study area road network

The study area shown in **Image 7.1** is the primary zone of influence with respect to the management of traffic during the Construction Phase and Operational Phase of the Proposed Development. It is also the area most likely to experience temporary changes in traffic flow during the Construction Phase and Operational Phase.

The study area considered as part of this transportation assessment includes the following roads:

- N25;
- R623;
- L3004 Glounthaune Road;
- Eastgate Business Park access road (Eastgate Way); and
- Link Q of Dunkettle Interchange.



**Image 7.1: Road network around the Proposed Development**

### 7.2.2 Traffic data collection and collation

Two traffic count surveys completed for two relevant junctions were used in the assessment. The survey for count site 1 was carried out in 2017, while the survey for count site 2 was conducted in 2019. The count sites are shown in **Image 7.1**. The results of both surveys were updated for 2023 by applying industry standard growth rates as per TII's Project Appraisal Guidelines for National Roads Unit 5.3 (TII, 2016).

The time periods assessed as part of this transportation assessment robustly included the morning peak hour and the evening peak hour, with these converted to the 24-hour Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) based on the TII's Project Appraisal Guidelines for National Roads Unit 5.3 (TII, 2016). In terms of future assessment years, the Construction Phase is expected to commence in 2025 (subject to planning consent). The Construction Phase is expected to last for 18 months, with 2026 assessed as the operational year.

## 7.3 Baseline Environment

### 7.3.1 Site location

The Proposed Development will function as an active travel link for pedestrians and cyclists to travel from the Little Island train station and surrounds to the Eastgate Business Park and the further surrounds of Little Island and vice versa. The Proposed Development site and its location are illustrated in **Image 7.1**.

### 7.3.2 Local transport network

#### 7.3.2.1 Road network

The road network in the vicinity of the site is illustrated in **Image 7.1**. A description of each road is provided below.

#### N25

The N25 road is a national primary road, forming the route from Cork to Rosslare Europort via Waterford City. The road is part of the E30 European route and a short section is also part of the E01 European route. It forms part of the proposed Atlantic Corridor route.

Junction 2, where the N25 meets the R623, is the relevant section of N25 for the Proposed Development. The N25 has a width of 33m with three lanes in each direction. The Proposed Development will be built over the N25 and will connect the Little Island train station on its northern side to the Eastgate Business Park on its southern side.

### **R623**

The R623 road is a regional road in County Cork, providing access to / from the N25 and to / from the Little Island Industrial area, located to the south of the N25. The road generally makes provision for one lane per direction, with additional lanes along the wider approaches to junctions to accommodate turning movements. The road is approximately 7 to 10m wide.

### **L3004 Glounthaune Road**

L3004 Glounthaune Road is a local road in County Cork, running parallel to the N25 in an east-west direction. The road provides access to the Little Island train station, along with accesses to some residential and industrial uses. The road has a width of 9.8m, with one lane in each direction.

### **Eastgate Way**

Eastgate Way provides access to / from the Eastgate Business Park and to / from the R623. It is 8m wide and has one lane in each direction.

### **Link Q (Dunkettle Interchange)**

Link Q (Dunkettle Interchange) is a new access road between Little Island and Bury's Bridge Roundabout. A roundabout is located at the southern end of Link Q which meets the R632 at the Little Island access road. Link Q (Dunkettle Interchange) provides access from the L3004 Glounthaune Road to the Jack Lynch tunnel. This tunnel increases connectivity to south and west Cork.

#### **7.3.2.2 Public transport network**

The Proposed Development site is served by both train and bus. The Little Island Irish Rail train station is located approximately 150m away from the Proposed Development. In the southbound Midleton-Cobh direction, trains depart the station every 15 minutes between 5.30am and 8.15pm, with services running every 45 minutes after 8.15pm during the week, while the service is reduced during the weekend. For the northbound Cobh-Midleton direction, the first train departs at 6am. There are trains every 30 minutes between 7am and 7.30pm, and every hour between 7.30pm and 11pm. Likewise, the service is reduced during the weekends.

A bus stop is located at the access point to the Little Island train station on the L3004 Glounthaune Road, nearby the Proposed Development. The bus stop is served by Bus Eireann and Barry's Coaches, as follows:

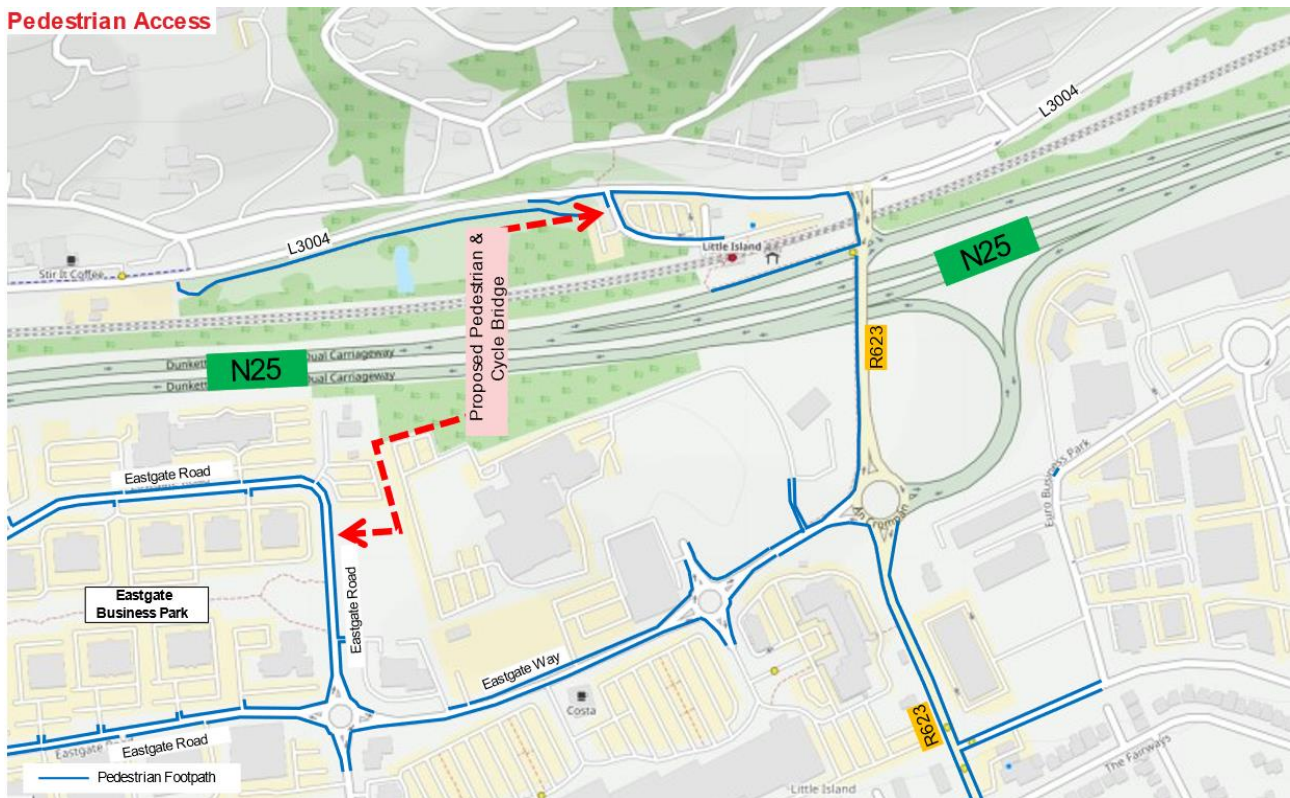
- Bus 240, from Cork bus station to Ballycotton, serves Little Island bus stop three times per day per direction;
- Bus 241, from Cork bus station to Trabolgan, serves Little Island bus stop once per week on a Saturday in an eastern direction and three times per day in a western direction;
- Bus 260, from Cork bus station to Ardmore, serves Little Island bus stop five times per day per direction;
- Bus 261, from Cork bus station to Ballincurra, serves Little Island bus stop once per day in a western direction and twice per day in an eastern direction;
- Bus 210, from Apple Cork Campus to Castlevue, serves Little Island bus stop 16 times per day towards the north and 14 times per day towards the south; and
- Bus 211, from Apple Cork Campus to Castlevue, serves Little Island bus stop five times per day in both directions.

### 7.3.2.3 Active travel

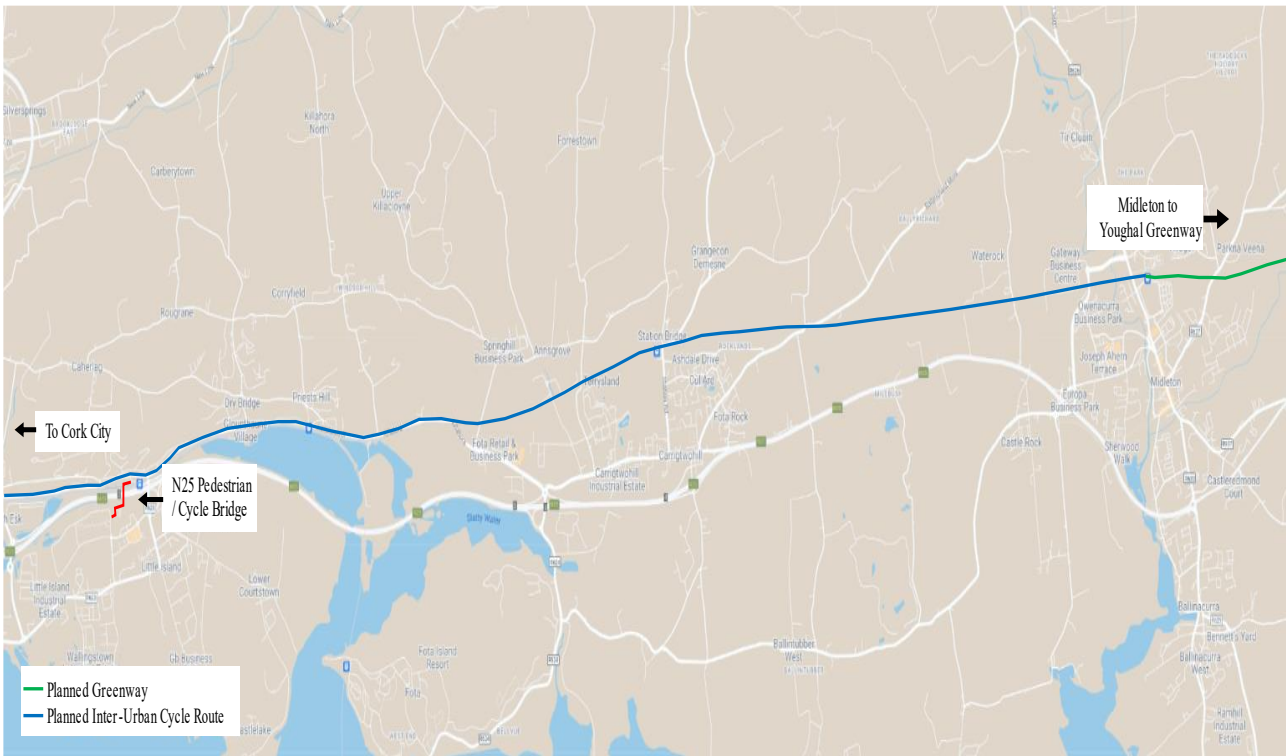
Walking infrastructure within the study area comprises footpaths along the N25, R623, L3004 Glounthaune Road and Eastgate Way on both sides of the road for the most part. There are currently noticeable pedestrian movements between the Little Island train station and Eastgate Business Park and vice versa. **Image 7.2** illustrates the nearby walking infrastructure.

The Dunkettle to Carrigwohill pedestrian and cycle route is located to the north of the Proposed Development. Having recently become operational, this will bring more users to and from the Little Island train station.

The Dunkettle to Carrigwohill pedestrian and cycle route forms part of the wider inter-urban cycleway to Midleton, which when complete, will link to the proposed Midleton to Youghal Greenway, approximately 12.5km to the east of the Proposed Development. This 23km greenway will be accessible for both pedestrians and cyclists upon full completion in early to mid-2024. This will increase sustainable connectivity throughout towns and villages in East Cork, namely Midleton, Mogeely, Killeagh and Youghal, and will be complementary to the Proposed Development. Refer to **Image 7.3**.



**Image 7.2: Walking infrastructure around the Proposed Development**



**Image 7.3: Existing / proposed cycle route and greenway in the vicinity of the Proposed Development**

### 7.3.3 Existing travel patterns

To assess the potential impact of the Proposed Development on the future traffic operations of the local public road network, an examination of current baseline traffic operations was carried out. As described in Section 7.2.2, traffic count surveys for two junctions were carried out in 2017 and 2019, with these being adjusted to be reflective of 2023 conditions using the TII Project Appraisal Guidelines (TII, 2016) growth rates.

## 7.4 Potential Impacts

### 7.4.1 Do-Nothing scenario

If the Proposed Development does not proceed, the traffic volume is expected to remain at its current levels. Representative traffic count information for the morning peak hour, evening peak hour and 24 hour Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) are presented in **Image 7.4**, **Image 7.5** and **Image 7.6** for the study area public road network.

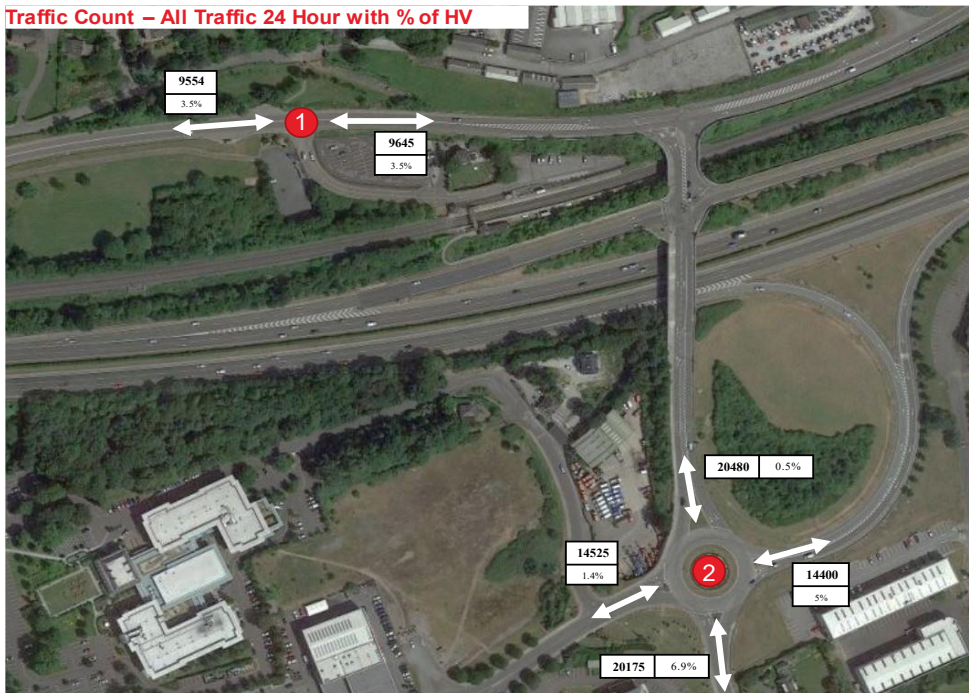


Image 7.4: AM peak hour traffic volume estimates for 2023



Image 7.5: PM peak hour traffic volume estimates for 2023





**Image 7.6: 24-hour traffic volume estimates for 2023**

### 7.4.2 Construction Phase

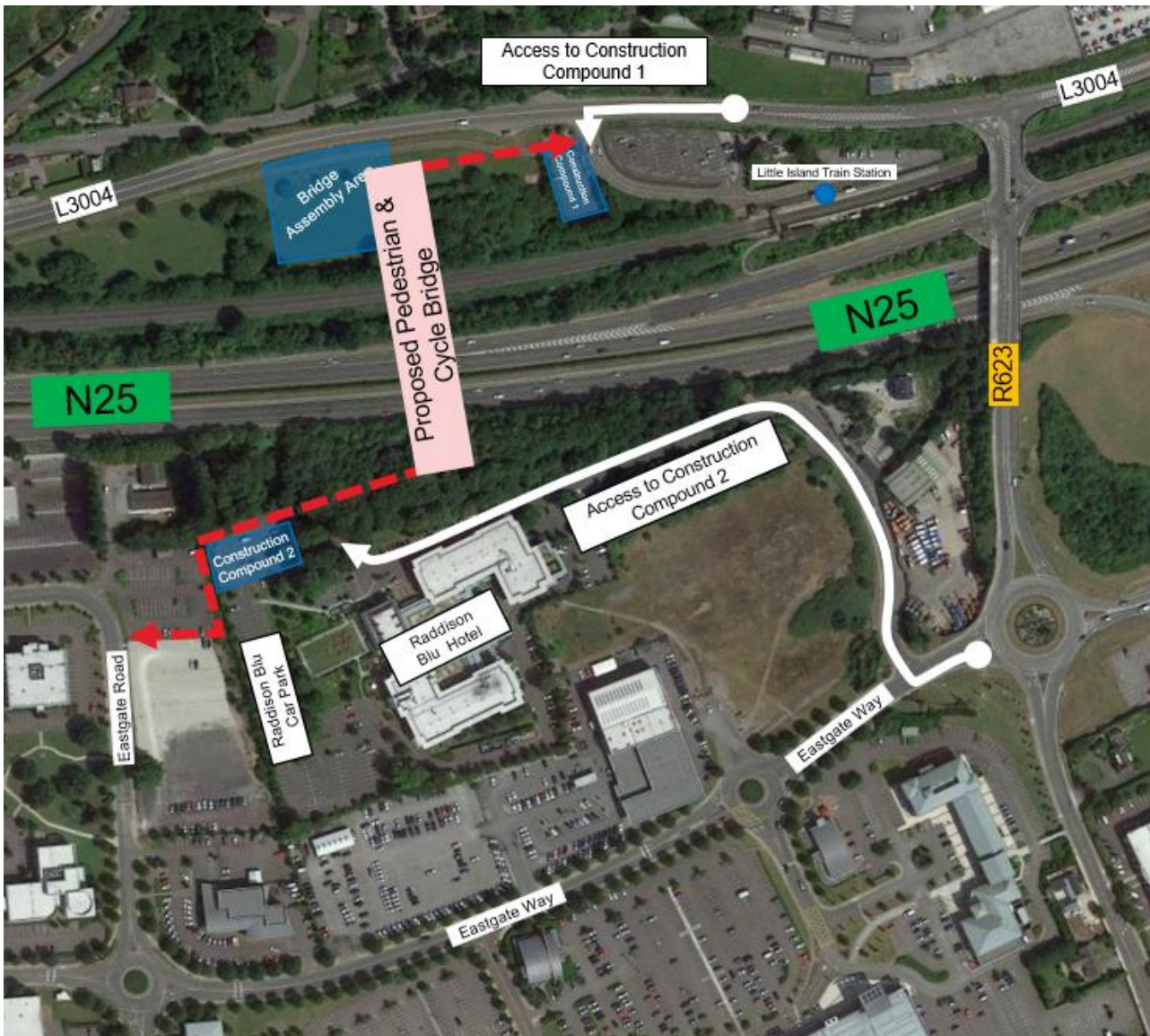
Subject to obtaining planning approval, the Proposed Development will commence construction in 2025, with the Proposed Development becoming fully operational in 2026. Access to both construction compounds and the bridge assembly area will be from the local road network. Local roads to the construction compounds will be accessible via the N25 dual carriageway using the Little Island junction 2 (R623) to avoid excessive traffic on the surrounding local public road network.

Site access to construction compound 1 (northern construction compound) will be via the existing car park entrance to the Little Island train station.

Site access for the bridge assembly area will be via a temporary access directly off the L3004 Glounthaune Road.

Site access to construction compound 2 (southern construction compound) will be via the western end of the Radisson Blu Hotel car park, which is accessible from Eastgate Way and the Radisson Blu Hotel local access road. The southern construction compound will be located in a dedicated area of the car park, with parking restrictions and management measures implemented within the car park as necessary to ensure that the functioning of the car park is maintained and to avoid any site parking overspill issues.

**Image 7.7** illustrates the construction compound access points.



**Image 7.7: Construction compound access points**

#### 7.4.2.1 Traffic generation

The volume of construction traffic activity is based on:

- The scale of the expected import and export of earthworks;
- Other material and equipment deliveries to site;
- Staff movements; and
- Service trips (i.e., construction compound set up, maintenance, external third-party visitors, etc.).

The construction of the Proposed Development will be completed using a combination of construction methods and in a number of stages. Construction will be undertaken using best current practice. The likely stages of construction are as follows:

- Site access, clearance and tree removal, setting up of construction compounds and construction surfacing;
- Utility diversion;
- Bridge superstructure fabrication and precast concrete element casting;
- Northern approach ramp embankment and foundation construction;

- Irish Rail structures construction;
- Northern approach ramp elevated section deck construction;
- Southern approach ramp foundation and elevated section deck construction;
- Bridge foundation and abutment construction;
- Bridge assembly;
- Bridge erection;
- Ramp and bridge deck finishing; and
- Completion of works.

#### *7.4.2.2 Construction trip generation and construction phasing*

Construction traffic generated will vary depending on the stage of work. **Table 7.1** and **Table 7.2** show the amount of additional traffic that will be generated as a result of the different phases of construction work from month 1 to month 18, when the construction ends.

During months 2 and 3 and for site access, clearance, tree removal, set up of construction compounds and construction surfacing, 58 no. daily journeys to / from construction compound 1 (northern construction compound) and 25 no. daily journeys to / from construction compound 2 (southern construction compound) will be made, which is the largest number of trips during the entire Construction Phase. It is assumed that there will be approximately 20 no. two-way staff journeys and 10 no. two-way service journeys in months 2 and 3 per day, resulting in a total of 113 no. additional daily journeys during that period.

However, since these are estimates of trips to / from the construction compounds, the actual numbers may differ. Hence, a range of 100-120 has been considered as the maximum number of daily journeys during the Construction Phase, with the calculations adjusted accordingly.

Where no numbers are present in **Table 7.1** and **Table 7.2**, a minimum of 10 no. daily journeys from the construction compounds were considered for assessment outside of the main delivery periods.

**Table 7.1: Construction traffic generated by phase – north**

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Month 13	Month 14	Month 15	Month 16	Month 17	Month 18
Tender award																		
Bridge fabrication planning and approval																		
Site access, clearance and tree removal. Set up of construction compounds and construction surfacing.		58	58															
Utility diversion																		
Bridge superstructure fabrication and precast concrete element casting (off site)																		
Northern approach ramp foundation construction, removal of piling spoil				15	15													
Irish Rail structures construction				13	13													
Northern approach ramp elevated section deck construction																		
Southern approach ramp foundation construction, removal of piling spoil																		
Southern approach ramp elevated section deck construction																		
N25 bridge foundation and abutment construction, removal of piling spoil																		
N25 bridge foundation and abutment construction																		
N25 span assembly (offline)																		
N25 span erection																		
Ramp and bridge deck finishing (installation of lights, parapets, handrails, surfacing etc.)																		
Construction of southern embankment ramp																		
Removal of construction surfacing material																	57	57

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Month 13	Month 14	Month 15	Month 16	Month 17	Month 18
Tie in footway / cycleway construction and final landscaping / tree planting																		
<b>Total</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>												<b>57</b>	<b>57</b>

**Table 7.2: Construction traffic generated by phase – south**

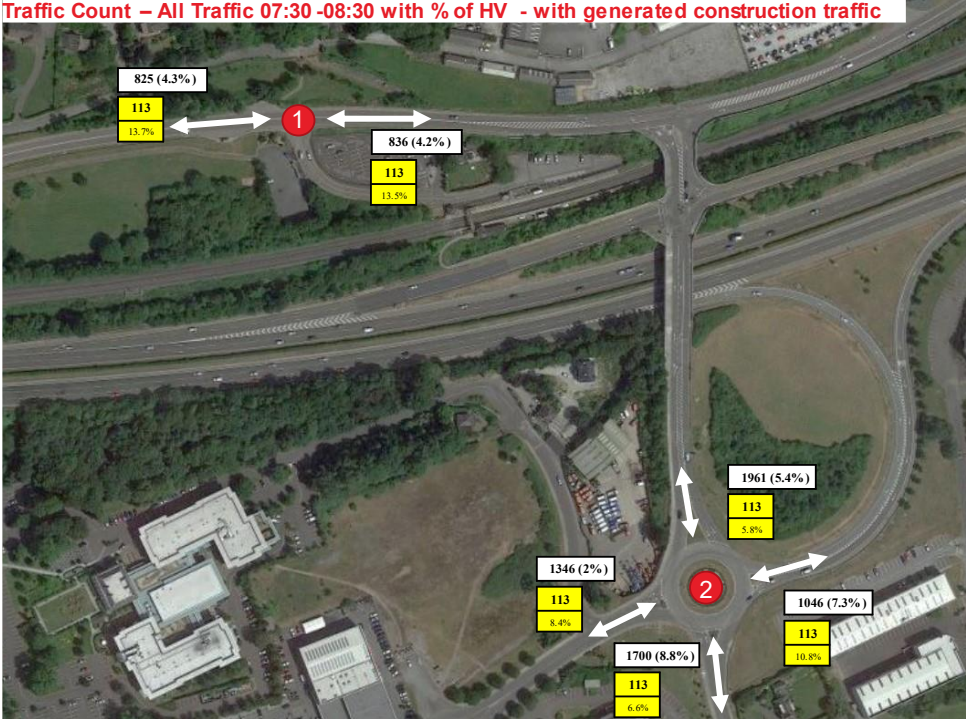
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Month 13	Month 14	Month 15	Month 16	Month 17	Month 18
Tender award																		
Bridge fabrication planning and approval																		
Site access, clearance and tree removal. Set up of construction compounds and construction surfacing.		25	25															
Utility diversion																		
Bridge superstructure fabrication and precast concrete element casting (off site)																		
Northern approach ramp embankment construction																		
Northern approach ramp foundation construction																		
Irish Rail structures construction																		
Northern approach ramp elevated section deck construction																		
Southern approach ramp foundation construction						14	14											
Southern approach ramp elevated section deck construction																		
N25 bridge foundation and abutment construction																		

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Month 13	Month 14	Month 15	Month 16	Month 17	Month 18
N25 span assembly (offline)																		
N25 span erection																		
Ramp and bridge deck finishing (installation of lights, parapets, handrails, surfacing etc.)																		
Construction of southern embankment ramp																		
Removal of construction surfacing material																	21	21
Tie in footway / cycleway construction and final landscaping / tree planting																		
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>			<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>										<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>

The maximum amount of construction traffic generated for the morning peak hour, the evening peak hour and all day for the study area public road network is illustrated in Image 7.8, Image 7.9 and **Image 7.10**, respectively.

For the purpose of a robust assessment, two worst case scenarios were assessed. It was assumed that the total daily generated traffic (113 no.) could potentially travel to / from the study area in the AM peak hour only or in the PM peak hour only. In addition, a scenario where the total daily generated traffic travel to / from the study area throughout the day was also assessed.

**Traffic Count – All Traffic 07:30 -08:30 with % of HV - with generated construction traffic**



ARUP

**Image 7.8: AM peak hour generated construction traffic**

**Traffic Count – All Traffic 16:00 -17:00 with % of HV - with generated construction traffic**



ARUP

**Image 7.9: PM peak hour generated construction traffic**



Image 7.10: 24-hour generated construction traffic

In relation to required car parking, both construction compounds will provide adequate spaces for the anticipated demand during the Construction Phase. There will therefore be no extra demand for the Little Island train station car park (compared to the time prior to the construction). Furthermore, none of the parking spaces within the Little Island train station car park will be lost as the result of the construction works.

However, to facilitate the southern construction compound, a total of 70 no. car parking spaces will be lost during construction, including 38 no. car parking spaces from the Radisson Blu Hotel car park and 32 no. car parking from the Eastgate Business Park car park. The impact of this parking loss during the construction phase will be short-term, negative and imperceptible.

The maximum generated construction traffic related to construction compound 1 (northern compound) that would require access through the Little Island train station car park entrance is 88 no. trips per day during months 2 and 3. The construction traffic will park at construction compound 1 and will not utilise the parking area at the Little Island train station car park for parking. Access to the Little Island train station car park is currently underutilised and it would be possible to accommodate the additional trips to / from construction compound 1 from a capacity point of view.

#### 7.4.2.3 Construction trip distribution and assignment

It is likely that most trips will access the construction compounds via the N25 and the R623 interchange, which would provide adequate capacity. However, in the unlikely event that construction traffic needs to access the study area via regional and local roads, the impact was assessed assuming a worst-case scenario, whereby all the journeys could potentially utilise any of the road links in the study area network to access the construction compounds. Therefore, a total of 113 no. extra journeys were added to each link in the assessment.

The resultant percentage of change to the baseline traffic flow was calculated. It was determined that the highest percentage increase in traffic (13.7% in the AM peak hour, 13.1% in the PM peak hour and 1.2% in the 24-hour period) could be along the L3004 Glounthaune Road. Due to the nature of this low increase in traffic volume, the impact on the surrounding public road network is considered as short-term, negative and imperceptible.



### 7.4.3 Operational Phase

As a result of the Proposed Development, 12 no. car parking spaces will be lost from the Radisson Blu Hotel car park and 32 no. car parking spaces will be lost from the Eastgate Business Park car park. Considering the existing total number of car parking spaces in the Radisson Blu Hotel and Eastgate Business Park, the impact of the loss of these car parking spaces is assessed as permanent, negative and imperceptible.

It is expected that the Proposed Development will provide efficient pedestrian and cycle connectivity between Little Island train station and the Eastgate Business Park. It will also promote sustainable transport modes while minimising impacts on the surrounding area and environment. Eastgate Business Park is a relatively dense employment zone within Little Island. Providing improved access to this area from the Little Island train station and the Dunkettle to Carrigtwohill pedestrian and cycle route will strongly encourage an increase in trips by sustainable transport modes. The Proposed Development will provide greater walkability for the area and reduced walking and cycling times between the Little Island train station and Eastgate Business Park. Hence, the overall impact of the Proposed Development during the Operational Phase is assessed as permanent, positive and significant.

The Little Island Sustainable Transport Interventions (LISTI) project is an ongoing initiative focused on establishing various sustainable transport facilities. These include the addition of new bus routes, bicycle lanes and footpaths on both the western and eastern sides of the Proposed Development site. The LISTI project is currently under construction and is expected to reach completion by 2025, prior to construction of the Proposed Development commencing. The integration of the Proposed Development and LISTI is seen as mutually beneficial, as they will collectively encourage the adoption of sustainable modes of transport.

### 7.4.4 Decommissioning Phase

The Decommissioning Phase of the Proposed Development is likely to be similar to the Construction Phase but of reduced scale and corresponding impact on the receiving traffic and transportation networks within the study area. There will be a temporary, negative and not significant impact on traffic and transportation in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

## 7.5 Mitigation and Monitoring

### 7.5.1 Mitigation

#### 7.5.1.1 Construction Phase

The following mitigation measures are proposed for the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development:

- Overnight traffic management on N25 junction 2 eastbound off ramp slip lane to allow site clearance;
- Blocking a small area of only one lane on the eastbound off ramp for access for construction of the N25 span northern abutment for 6-10 weeks;
- Overnight lane closures and traffic management on N25 junction 2 eastbound off ramp slip lanes and adjacent traffic lanes to facilitate erection of south span of the precast concrete portal frame structure over Irish Rail land. It is expected that a single eastbound lane can remain open;
- Overnight / weekend closure of the N25 to allow for steelwork erection of the N25 span;
- Weekend closure of Irish Rail track in agreement with Irish Rail to allow for construction of precast concrete portal frame structures;
- Provision of a temporary bus service covering the same route and stops, in order to reduce the impact of the closure of the Irish Rail track, in consultation with Irish Rail and Bus Eireann;
- A temporary road widening and right turn pocket will be provided along the L3004 Glounthaune Road for right turning construction traffic to / from construction compound 1;
- Overnight partial closure of N25 for maintenance repainting of bridge soffit in a sequential fashion for 6-10 nights;

- Provision of adequate parking spaces in the construction compounds during the Construction Phase should be ensured;
- Parking restrictions and management measures at the Radisson Blu Hotel and Eastgate Business Park car parks will be reviewed and implemented as necessary in agreement with the local businesses and Cork County Council (CCC) to ensure that the functioning of the car parks is maintained and to avoid any site parking overspill issues; and
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be developed by the contractor when updating the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (refer to **Appendix 5.1** in **Volume 4** of this EIAR) and presented to CCC for approval prior to commencement of the construction works.

#### 7.5.1.2 *Operational Phase*

As there are no significant negative impacts predicted on traffic and transportation during the Operational Phase of the Proposed Development, no mitigation measures are proposed.

#### 7.5.1.3 *Decommissioning Phase*

The mitigation measures described for the Construction Phase in Section 7.5.1 will be updated to reflect best practice at the time and will be implemented for the Decommissioning Phase.

### 7.5.2 **Monitoring**

#### 7.5.2.1 *Construction Phase*

A CTMP will be developed by the contractor when updating the CEMP and presented to CCC for approval prior to commencement of the construction works. Refer to the CEMP in **Appendix 5.1** in **Volume 4** of this EIAR for further details.

The effectiveness of the CTMP will be continually monitored to ensure that impacts on traffic flows and road users on the surrounding public road network are minimised and additional mitigation measures are introduced, as required. The monitoring regime will consider all modes of traffic, including pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

#### 7.5.2.2 *Operational Phase*

As there are no significant negative impacts predicted on traffic and transportation during the Operational Phase of the Proposed Development, no monitoring measures are proposed.

#### 7.5.2.3 *Decommissioning Phase*

The monitoring measures described for the Construction Phase in Section 7.5.2.1 will be updated to reflect best practice at the time and will be implemented for the Decommissioning Phase.

## 7.6 **Cumulative Impacts**

A review of CCC, An Bord Pleanála (ABP) and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) online planning records has indicated that other projects have been permitted or proposed within the surrounding area that may give rise to cumulative impacts in combination with the impacts of the Proposed Development. The list of projects is included in **Chapter 20, Cumulative and Interactive Impacts**.

At the time of writing, limited information was available regarding crucial factors such as the estimated traffic volumes generated by the different stages of these projects and their detailed construction timelines. While these circumstances hindered the possibility of conducting an accurate quantitative assessment of the cumulative impact of these projects on the operation of the road network and traffic volumes around the Proposed Development, a negative, short term cumulative impact is nonetheless expected during the Construction Phase should the Construction Phase of these projects overlap with that of the Proposed Development.

In order to minimise this impact, it is crucial that the mitigation measures proposed in this EIAR and, where required, in the planning documents for the other permitted / Proposed Developments in the vicinity, are implemented during the Construction Phase.

## **7.7 Residual Impacts**

### **7.7.1 Construction Phase**

Following the adoption of mitigation measures for the Construction Phase, the additional traffic associated with the construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to have a short term, negative and not significant impact on the public road network and its users for the duration of the construction works. Construction traffic management will be carried out in accordance with CTMP. The CTMP will ensure that impacts on the local public road network during construction are minimised.

### **7.7.2 Operational Phase**

No significant negative residual impacts on traffic and transportation are envisaged during the Operational Phase. The overall impact of the Proposed Development during the Operational Phase is assessed as permanent, positive and significant.

### **7.7.3 Decommissioning Phase**

The Decommissioning Phase will require less extensive works than the Construction Phase but will nevertheless require similar mitigation measures. Following the adoption of mitigation measures for the Decommissioning Phase, the additional traffic associated with the decommissioning of the Proposed Development is anticipated to have a temporary, negative and not significant impact on the public road network and its users for the duration of the decommissioning works.

## 7.8 References

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) (2016). Project Appraisal Guidelines for National Roads Unit 5.3 - Travel Demand Projections.

TII (2014). Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.