

**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER:670/21**  
**BLESSINGTON eGREENWAY**  
**EIA SCREENING DETERMINATION**

Wicklow County Council is proposing to develop the Blessington eGreenway located in the Counties of Wicklow and Kildare. The proposed development of the greenway will link the historic town of Blessington to the Palladian mansion of Russborough House and continue adjacent to other local villages of Valleymount, Ballyknockan and Lacken in a 'loop' around the lake of Blessington. The provision of this greenway will act as sustainable transport route around the Blessington Lake and will provide a safe cycle and walking facility for visitors and for the communities of the towns and villages along the route. A detailed description of the proposed development has been provided in Section 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report.

It is intended to place the plans and particulars for this development on public display in accordance with the requirements Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to 2011 (as amended). Given that the proposed project to develop a greenway is considered to be a "road development" under the meaning of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended), the requirements for an EIA Screening under this legislation was followed.

Having regard to EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and Section 50(1) as set out in the Roads Act 1993 (as amended by S.I. No 279 of 2019), the proposed project does not meet or exceed the thresholds outlined in Section 50(1)(a) to trigger the threshold for a mandatory EIA/EIAR. Section 50(1)(b) to (f) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) set out the requirement for EIA Screening report.

Given that the proposed project is interpreted under the legislation as the "construction of a public road" and given the proximity of the proposed development to the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA and pNHA, as well as the potential for significant effects on water quality and biodiversity it was determined a sub threshold assessment was required for the Proposed Development to identify if an EIA was required.

Having regard to the EIA directive and Roads Act 1993 (as amended) an EIA Screening report was prepared by Aecom on behalf of Wicklow County Council.

The EIA Screening Report has been carried out giving full considering to the EIA Directive and the project was assessed on a case-by case basis in accordance with the criterial for determining whether or not a development would or would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment as outlined within Annex III of the EIA Directive. It is further considered that the EIA Screening Report contain a fair and reasonable assessment of the likelihood of significant effect of the project on the environment, having regard to the foregoing and in particular:

- The character of the proposed development
- Location of the proposed Development and
- Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Section 3 of the EIA Screening report provides a reasonable description and assessment of the types and characteristics of the potential impacts of the proposed development in respect of each heading.

It is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in likely significant effects on the environment provided that the mitigation measures laid out in the EIA Screening report and within the various reports the application adhered to a implemented during the construction and operational phases of the project and that the report has determined that this project, individually, and in combination with other plans and projects, does not require an EIA.

The report of Declan O'Brien, Executive Engineer, which was endorsed by Margaret Hartnett, Senior Executive Engineer, recommended the following -

1. An appropriate order (CE/DOS) be prepared stating that:

***"That Wicklow County Council as the Competent Authority having considered the EIA Screening report prepared by Aecom, hereby makes the determination that the proposed Blessington eGreenway would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the proposed project does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment."***

2. The EIA determination is made available for inspection by the members of the public and make an electronic version of the decision available on the County Council website in accordance with Section 50(1)(f) of the Roads Act 1993 (As amended).
3. Aecom Consulting Engineers are notified of the Councils determination on the need for an EIA so that such correspondence is included in the EIA Screening report.

Michael Nicholson, Director of Services endorsed the above recommendations.

**ORDER:**

In light of the above and for the reasons, as set out in the EIA Screening Report, by virtue of the powers vested in me, I hereby order that Wicklow County Council as the Competent Authority having considered the EIA Screening report prepared by Aecom, hereby makes the determination that the proposed Blessington eGreenway would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the proposed project does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Also, I hereby order the EIA determination is made available for inspection by the members of the public and make an electronic version of the decision available on the County Council website in accordance with Section 50(1)(f) of the Roads Act 1993 (As amended).

And finally I hereby order that Aecom Consulting Engineers are notified of the Councils determination on the need for an EIA so that such correspondence is included in the EIA Screening report.

SIGNED



DATED:

21/12/21

FRANK CURRAN

WICKLOW CHIEF EXECUTIVE