
**Appendix A1.3
Informal EIA Scoping
Response Report**



DART+ PROGRAMME

DART+ West

Iarnród Éireann

Informal EIA Scoping Response Report

MAY-MDC-ENV-ROUT-RP-Y-0003

13th May 2021

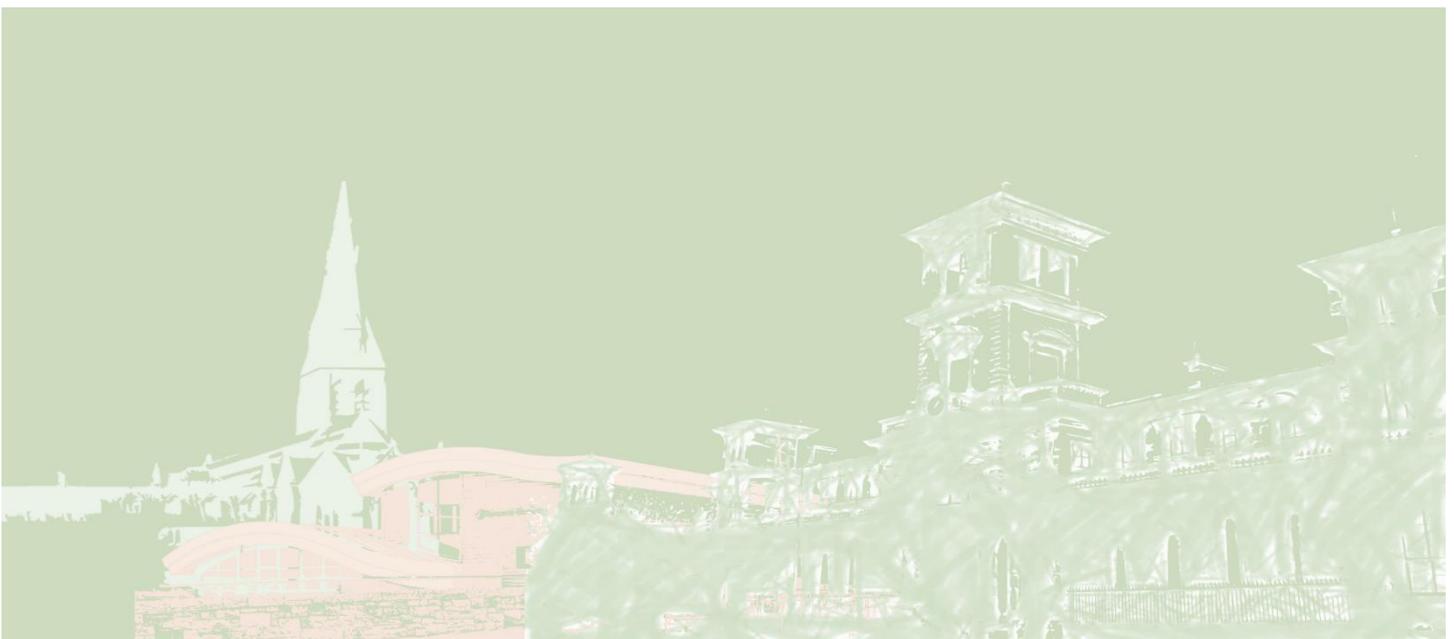


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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening exercise undertaken determined that the proposed DART+ West project requires a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment. This is defined under the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act 2001 (S.I. No. 55 of 2001) as amended. Therefore, a '*statement of the likely effects on the environment*' will be prepared to accompany the application for a Railway Order (RO), this 'statement' is interpreted as an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

The Scoping stage of the EIA process provides an opportunity to consult with stakeholders about the extent of the information required to be contained within the EIAR.

The key objectives of a Scoping Report are:

- Provide a description of the proposed project;
- Identify likely significant impacts which may arise during construction and operation of the proposed project that will be assessed in the EIAR;
- Outline proposed assessment methodologies for completing the assessments;
- Outline the likely contents of the EIAR; and
- Form a basis of common reference for consultation about the scope and methodology for the EIAR.

On the basis of the information provided in the Informal EIA Scoping Report (MAY-MDC-ENV-ROUT_RT-T-0002) views were sought on the scope and level of detail that should be considered in the EIAR, including any additional environmental issues or alternative methodologies that should be taken into consideration when preparing the EIAR. The purpose of this report is to document the submissions received during the scoping consultation and to provide the respective response from the project team which will be brought forward into the EIAR stage.

2. INFORMAL EIA SCOPING REPORT

2.1. Introduction

‘Scoping’ is a process of deciding what information should be contained in an EIAR and what methods should be used to gather and assess that information. The Scoping Report describes the nature, extent and location of the proposed project. The Scoping stage provides an opportunity to consult with stakeholders about the extent of the information required to be contained within the EIAR.

IE invited prescribed bodies and key stakeholders to provide submissions on the DART+ West Informal EIA Scoping Report (MAY-MDC-ENV-ROUT_RT-T-0002) and requested views having regard to the following:

- Is the scope of the proposed assessment for the EIAR adequate?
- Is there any additional information that should be considered in the development of the proposed project?
- Are there any additional environmental issues that should be taken into consideration in preparing the EIAR?

2.1 Prescribed Bodies and Key Stakeholders

All prescribed bodies were written to on 29th May 2020. This was an introductory letter advising all Consultees that the project had commenced, provided some background information on the DART+ Programme and provided contact details for further information.

Further to this, on the 12 March 2021, prescribed bodies and key stakeholders were provided with the DART+ West Informal EIA Scoping Report (Document reference no. MAY-MDC-ENV-ROUT_RT-T-0002) as part of the Scoping process and were asked to respond within 6 weeks to make a submission or observation. The list of all the prescribed bodies and the key stakeholders contacted is provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2-1 List of prescribed and un-prescribed bodies consulted

Prescribed bodies under Article 211 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Regulations	
Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government	Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media c/o Development Applications Unit - National Parks Wildlife Service - National Monument Service - Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit
Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications	Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport
Other prescribed bodies under Article 213 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Regulations	
Dublin City Council	Fingal County Council
Kildare County Council	Meath County Council
Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
An Chomhairle Ealaíon (The Arts Council)	An Taisce
Fáilte Ireland	Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly
The Heritage Council	Inland Fisheries Ireland
Waterways Ireland	Irish Aviation Authority
Córas Iompair Éireann	National Transport Authority

Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform	Health Service Executive
Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU)	Commission for Railway Regulation (Railway Safety Commission)
Irish Water	
Other key stakeholders	
Bat Conservation Ireland	Birdwatch Ireland
Minister Public Expenditure and Reform	Dublin Fire Brigade
Dublin Port	Geological Survey of Ireland
Health & Safety Authority	Irish Farmers Association
Irish Landscape Institute	Marine Institute
The Office of Public Works	Dublin Chamber of Commerce
Fingal Dublin Chamber	County Meath Chamber
County Kildare Chamber	IBEC
Construction Industry Federation	Eirgrid
ESB Networks	Bord Gais
Gas Networks Ireland	Irish Wildlife Trust
Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland	Eir Group
Local Government Management Agency	Met Eireann
Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation	Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	

Due to the government restrictions pertaining to the Covid 19-pandemic and closure of workplaces/ people working from home, the majority of the prescribed bodies and key stakeholders received the DART+ West Informal EIA Scoping Report (MAY-MDC-ENV-ROUT_RT-T-0002) in pdf format via email correspondence. Follow up calls with the prescribed bodies was undertaken to ensure they received the report and to request if they wanted a hard copy. Several hard copies were posted to recipients as requested.

2.2 Informal EIA Scoping Responses

A total of 7 responses were received from the prescribed bodies and key stakeholders these include:

Prescribed bodies:

- Fingal County Council
- Meath County Council
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Failte Ireland

Stakeholders

- Office of Public Works
- Gas Networks Ireland

A summary of the submission/ observation as well as the response/ action proposed by the DART+ West project team is provided in Table 2.2.

Table 2-2 Responses received from prescribed bodies and key stakeholders following Informal EIA Scoping Consultation

Prescribed body or key stakeholder	Summary of submission received	DART+ West Response/Action proposed
Prescribed bodies		
Fingal County Council received 22nd April 2021		
Fingal County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In relation to Heritage the EIA needs to address not just individual site-specific impacts on the architectural heritage but also the cumulative impact of the project on the architectural heritage and quantify how many of the heritage assets along the route will be affected by the proposal. <p>Archaeological chapter observations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 20.4 p.104 within County Fingal two Bronze Age ring ditches or barrows are recorded (RMP DU013-018, DU013-047) along with an early medieval burial ground (RMP DU014-095) and a medieval church and graveyard at Clonsilla (RMP DU013- 017001-3). To note DU013-018 the three conjoined ring barrows have been mapped by the NMS in the wrong place. This has been reported to the Archaeological Survey of Ireland for it to be corrected. DU014-095 is in DCC not Fingal. 20.3.3 p.104 The National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht- It is Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. 	<p>DART+ West thank Fingal County Council for their submission. The cumulative impacts on architectural heritage will be addressed in the EIAR and all the observations will be considered and updated accordingly in the respective sections of the EIAR.</p>
Meath County Council received 19th April 2021		
Meath County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meath County Council requests that the Policy Context in the EIAR considers the Draft Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Dunboyne & Clonee Written Statement. Policy context should also have regard to the Dunboyne and Environs Transportation Study (2018) which sets out a package of measures for all modes of movement to deliver a sustainable transport solution for the town. Meath County Council request that a Traffic and Transport Assessment to be carried out in accordance with the relevant guidelines, noting traffic volumes attending the site and traffic routes to and from the site with reference to impacts on the national road network and junctions of lower category roads with national roads. The cumulative traffic impacts should also be considered. As well as any positive traffic and air quality impacts arising from the development of high density residential and employment 	<p>DART+ West welcomes Meath County Council’s submission and recognise the importance of coordinated and continued engagement with key stakeholders including local authorities. The DART+ project team are holding regular meetings with nominated officials within the local authorities to ensure a coordinated approach is adopted. DART+ West team will continue to engage with Meath County Council through the established channels during the design and EIA stages.</p> <p>The EIAR will be prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation and associated guidelines. Likely significant impacts, including potential cumulative effects highlighted by Meath County Council will be assessed in the EIAR.</p>

Prescribed body or key stakeholder	Summary of submission received	DART+ West Response/Action proposed
	<p>lands in close proximity to both M3 Parkway train station and Dunboyne train station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EIAR should assess the potential traffic and parking issues of the M3 Parkway Car Park and Dunboyne train station car park where the temporary construction compounds is proposed. The EIAR to include results of the ecological surveys, detailing the methodology and timing. The final design should seek to integration and enhancement of existing biodiversity/ecological and landscape features where possible by minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats and by including mitigation/compensation measures as appropriate. The impact of the proposed project on birds is required to be appropriately assessed and that a proposed 50m buffer zone may be insufficient to adequately assess impact on birds and should be expanded to ensure any bird risk is appropriately assessed. The submission also requests that Meath Biodiversity Plan 2015-2020 to be referred to when carrying out the EIAR. Any works proposed to lower the track (Dunboyne bridge) should not undermine the base foundations and structural integrity of the bridge. DART+ West should be assessed with consideration to future interactions between The Navan Rail Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DART+ West supports the future expansion and development of the rail network and services including those between Dublin and Navan. The EIAR biodiversity assessment is currently being undertaken as per the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Ecological Impact Assessment Guidelines (2019). The EIAR will include the details, methodologies, timing and results of all ecological surveys undertaken to inform the assessment. An NIS is also being prepared in respect of the proposed development. A Biodiversity Net Gain approach is being adopted in the design of the proposed development which includes for the minimisation and avoidance of impacts to existing habitats and the addition of compensation and enhancement measures where appropriate. Potential impacts to birds arising from the proposed development are currently being assessed in the EIAR and NIS. An appropriate Zone of Influence and Zone of Impact will be defined in the EIAR and NIS which will account for the sensitives of birds. The Meath Biodiversity Plan 2015-2020 will be referenced in the EIAR. For existing bridges with the preferred solution of lowering the track, the information on the geometry, dimension and level of the foundation has been included in the Ground Investigation (GI) survey and design development. Any potential impacts on any structures will be reported in the EIAR. DART+ West supports the future expansion and development of the rail network and services including those between Dublin and Navan.
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) received 06th April 2021		
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TII note that the Dart+ West interacts with TII assets and projects, these include: LUAS assets, the proposed Metrolink) proposed Luas Finglas, National roads such as the N3-M50 to Clonee and N4 Maynooth to Leixlip DART+ West project inputs associated with grid connections, construction traffic management, post construction maintenance issues and a signage strategy would create potential impacts for TII. 	<p>DART+ West welcomes TII's submission and recognise the importance of coordinated and continued engagement with key stakeholders including TII. The DART+ project team are holding regular meetings with nominated officials in these organisations to ensure a coordinated approach is adopted. DART+ West team will continue to engage with TII through the established channels during the design and EIA stages.</p>

Prescribed body or key stakeholder	Summary of submission received	DART+ West Response/Action proposed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TII request careful coordination between IE and TII ensuring the safeguarding of the existing and future national roads and light rail network assets. TII advise that the development of DART West and EIAR process investigate means of avoiding or minimising the impacts on TII assets. <p>Recommendation actions: A briefing session on DART+ West with focus on the locations and matters highlighted in the response and; the establishment of clear points of contact to facilitate appropriate information exchange and dialogue.</p>	<p>The EIAR will be prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation and associated guidelines. Likely significant impacts, including potential cumulative effects which may affect TII assets/ projects will be assessed in the EIAR.</p>
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland received 21st April 2021</p>		
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was highlighted that the DART+ West corridor will transect a number of important river systems, some of which support species listed under Annex II and V of the EU Habitats Directive. It is recommended that the IFI's '<i>Guidelines on protection of fisheries during construction works in and adjacent to waters</i>' published in 2016 should be consulted when planning to undertake works near any relevant rivers and streams. The specific details of any works directly affecting watercourses or riparian habitats must first be submitted to IFI for assessment. IFI should be consulted directly in relation to any proposal to manipulate surface water channels in this area (including production of a works method statement) and once due consideration is given, requests that it be informed at least 3-4 weeks in advance of any diversion work to be carried out. If any bridging is to be implemented, the structures must be fish passable and preferably in the form of clear span designs to minimize in stream impact. Consultation with IFI will be essential in order that a fisheries-sustainable solution is determined and incorporated in the final works programme. A comprehensive and integrated approach for achieving estuary and river protection during construction and operation should be implemented through environmental construction management planning. 	<p>DART+ West welcome Inland Fisheries Ireland's submission and guidance. DART+ West EIAR will be prepared in accordance with all of the relevant legislation including the EIA Directive and associated guidelines and will include an assessment of Biodiversity as part of the Biodiversity impact assessment as appropriate. The DART+ West team will continue to consult directly with Inland Fisheries Ireland through the project and to inform the respective design development and impact assessments.</p>

Prescribed body or key stakeholder	Summary of submission received	DART+ West Response/Action proposed
Failte Ireland received 19th April 2021		
Failte Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failte Ireland's submission is titled 'EIA Guidelines for the Consideration of Tourism and Tourism Related Projects'. The submission refers to EIA legislation and guidance documents which are included as part of DART+ West Scoping Report and how these related to the assessment of Tourism in EIARs. • Failte Ireland highlight that tourism is influenced by many of the EIA environmental factors which are required to be considered in the EIAR. The submission refers to the importance of tourism to the economy and the environment. • Failte Ireland includes sources of information which may be consulted including Failte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, CSO, Local and regional authorities, and refers to the consideration of tourism and tourism related projects 	<p>DART+ West welcome Failte Ireland's submission and guidance. DART+ West EIA will be prepared in accordance with all of the relevant legislation including the EIA Directive and associated guidelines and will include an assessment of Tourism as part of the Population impact assessment as appropriate.</p>
Key stakeholders		
Office of Public Works (OPW) received 19th April 2021		
Office of Public Works (OPW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Public Works (OPW) referred to Flood Risk Management (FRM) and that reference should be made to the Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (DHPLG/OPW, Nov 2009) issued under Section 28 of the Planning Acts • The submission highlights specific flood risk management issues for consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The OPW Flood Risk Management Plans and online Flood maps ○ DART+ West is required to have full regard to the proposed development of flood relief schemes in Maynooth, Leixlip and Lucan to Chapelizod) ○ Consideration of climate change impacts ○ Arterial drainage schemes and drainage districts ○ Land protected by agricultural embankments ○ Impacts on other areas ○ Natural water retention measures ○ Bridges and culverts over watercourses 	<p>DART+ West welcome the OPW's submission and guidance. The EIA will be prepared in accordance with all of the relevant legislation including the EIA Directive and associated guidelines and the OPW guidelines.</p> <p>A site-specific flood risk assessment(s) as per OPW Guidelines (The Planning System and Flood Risk Management- Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009) is currently being undertaken for the entire scheme to inform the project and the results of same will inform the design and EIA as appropriate.</p>

Prescribed body or key stakeholder	Summary of submission received	DART+ West Response/Action proposed
Gas Networks Ireland received 15th March 2021		
Gas Networks Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas Network Ireland (GNI) advised DART+ West to the presence of the GNI infrastructure in the vicinity of the proposed project. Drawings (in the general area of interest) of the following were provided: GNI Gas Transmission Pipelines, GNI Gas Distribution Network. The contact details for Wayleave consent were provided. 	DART+ West welcome GNI for their informative response and continued engagement with the project team. The presence of the GNI infrastructure within the vicinity of the project is being considered during the design phase and close consultation with GNI is ongoing. The impact on utilities including GNI infrastructure will be assessed as part of the Material Assets - Utilities chapter of the EIAR.

3. CONCLUSION

The Informal EIA Scoping report presented the proposed DART+ West project, the proposed scope and level of detail that will be contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The DART+ West project team appreciate all of the submissions, observations and feedback given by the prescribed bodies and key stakeholders. The feedback received will inform the design team and the preparation of the EIAR including the scope and the level of detail that will be included in the EIAR. The EIAR will present the findings of the various environmental impact assessments as required by the EIA Directive, national legislation, and associated guidance. The EIAR will accompany the Railway Order Application to An Bord Pleanála.