



Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe  
Galway City Council

## Proposed Wolfe Tone Pedestrian Bridge II

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

April 2022



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## 1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND TO PROJECT

Ryan Hanley was commissioned by Galway City Council to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report for the proposed footbridge at Wolfe Tone Bridge, Co. Galway. The proposed footbridge will be located on the southern side (seaward facing) of Wolfe Tone Bridge located on Father Griffin Road in Galway City. A similar footbridge on the northern side of the bridge was constructed in 2004, for which this proposed footbridge will follow a similar design and construct.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether or not an EIA is required for the project based on criteria listed in Annex II of the EIA Directive (Annex II Projects) and transposed into Irish Planning Law in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

The findings of the EIA screening undertaken by Ryan Hanley are presented in this report.

## 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

The proposed pedestrian footbridge is located on Wolfe Tone Bridge in Galway City. The scheme is located in a predominantly urban environment, with the Spanish Parade located on the eastern bank and fisheries tower on the western bank. Wolfe Tone Bridge traverses over the lower reaches of the River Corrib and Corrib Estuary both of which form part of the Lough Corrib SAC and Galway Bay Complex SAC respectively. The proposed scheme will involve the construction of a pedestrian footbridge on the seaward facing side of the bridge recreating a similar footbridge to that on the opposite side of the bridge which was constructed in 2004.



FIGURE 2.1 LOCATION OF PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE.

## 2.2 PROPOSED SCHEME

The proposed scheme will consist of the construction of a pedestrian footbridge on the southern side (seaward facing) of Wolfe Tone Bridge in Galway City which crosses the lower reaches of the River Corrib and Corrib Estuary. The proposed design will consist of a 2m wide aluminium perforated deck, 1.25m high stainless-steel parapet with LED deck lighting on handrail; the steelwork structure will be galvanised and painted silver (Figure 2.2 to 2.4).

The steelwork supports will be connected to the existing piers and abutments of Wolfe Tone Bridge, tied back through the existing parapet and deck slab and bolted to the existing structure between concrete beams under the deck slab. The steelwork will be further supported and reinforced with concrete, which will be pumped into the space between the steelwork and existing piers. The concrete will be placed through cored holes from the bridge deck into a sealed formwork.

On the eastern and western banks existing services which will be relocated including a streetlight, mini and micro pillars and bins.

The proposed footbridge will cross over an existing concrete stairway currently in place on the eastern bank, adjacent to Spanish Parade.

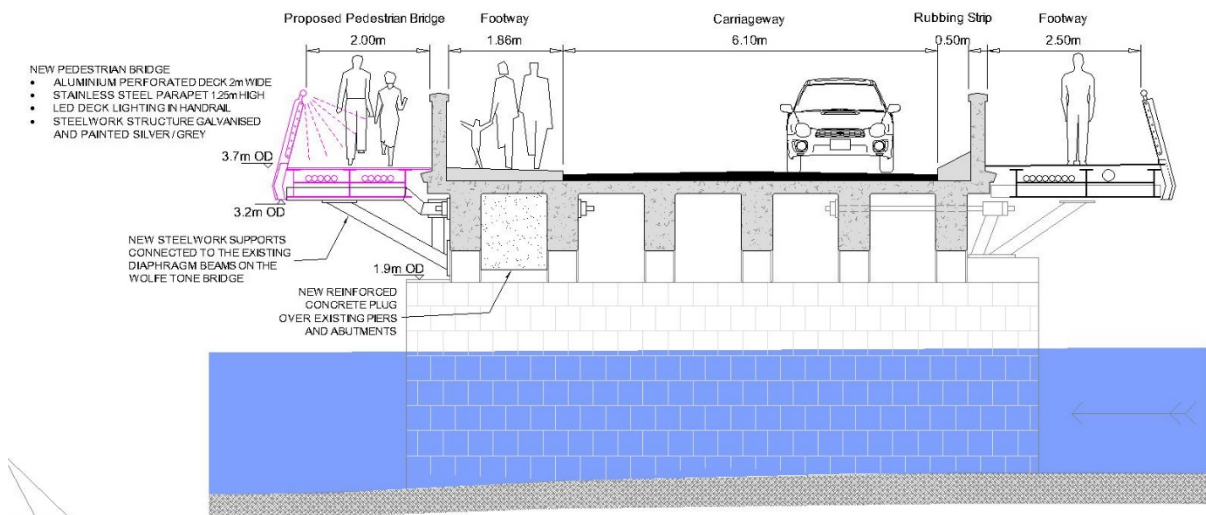


FIGURE 2.2 PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE – INDICATIVE DESIGN

LEGEND	
EXISTING	PROPOSED
1. Wolfe Tone Bridge	20. Pedestrian Bridge II
2. Pedestrian Bridge	21. Relocated Street Light
3. West Bank	22. Bollard
4. East Bank	23. Relocated Mini-pillars
5. River Corrib	24. Relocated Bins
6. Fisheries Tower	25. Controlled Pedestrian Crossing with Tactile Paving
7. Pedestrian Bridge	26. Crossing Signals
8. Riverbank Walk	27. Combined Crossing Signals and Street Light
9. Jury's Hotel	
10. Eglinton Canal & Claddagh Basin	
11. Spanish Parade	
12. Mini-pillars	
13. Light Pole	
14. Bins	
15. Sign Pole	
16. Columbus Monument	
17. Lost Mariners Memorial	

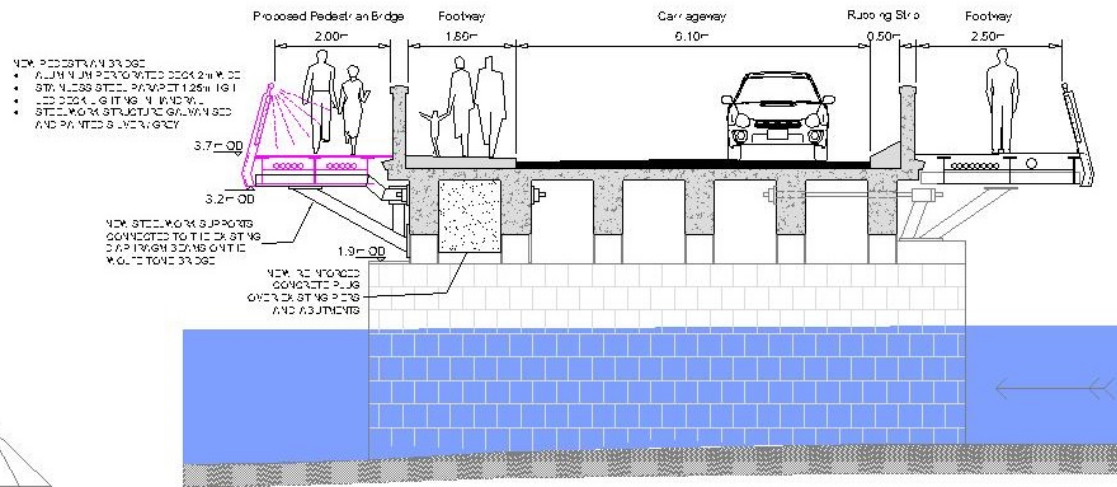


FIGURE 2.3 PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE (PINK) LOCATED AT WOLFE TONE BRIDGE.

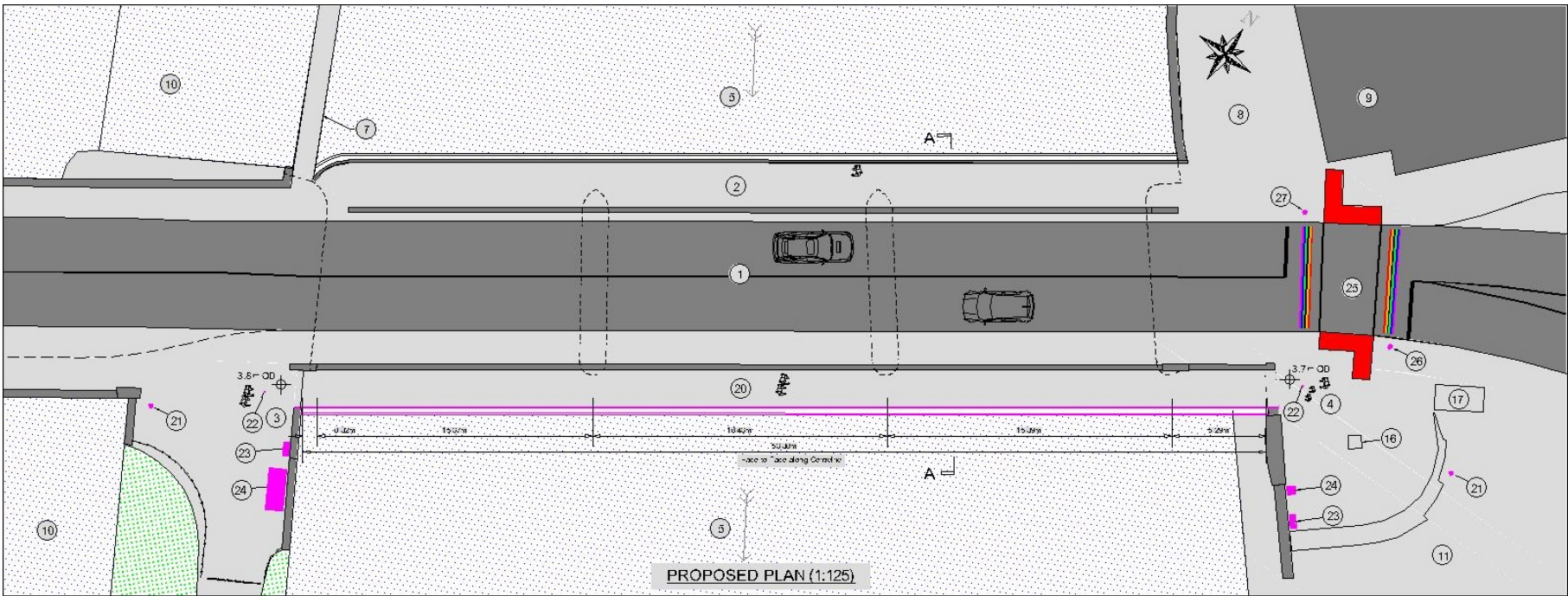


FIGURE 2.4 PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE (PINK).

### 3 REQUIREMENT FOR EIA

#### 3.1 EIA LEGISLATION

The EIA Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effect of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification), as amended by EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, sets out the process by which the likely significant effects of a project on the environment are assessed. The relevant requirements of the EIA Directive have been implemented into Irish law pursuant to the provisions of, inter alia, the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The provisions of Schedule 5 of the EIA Regulations 2001 - 2015 identify the requirement of EIA for different project types.

Part 1 of Schedule 5 identifies projects of a class that will always have the potential for significant environmental effects and therefore will always require an EIA. Part 2 of Schedule 5 identifies projects that may have an environmental impact and, therefore, thresholds or criteria have been set by member states for the requirements of EIA.

The EIA Amendment Directive states that

*“In order to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health, screening procedures should take account of the impact of the whole project in question, including where relevant, it’s subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and where relevant demolition phase.”*

Further:

*“When determining whether significant effects on the environment are likely to be caused by a project, the competent authorities should identify the most relevant criteria to be considered and should take into account information that could be available following other assessments required by Union legislation in order to apply the screening procedure effectively and transparently. In this regard, it is appropriate to specify the content of the screening determination, in particular where no environmental impact assessment is required...*

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

Annex III of the EIA Directive provides the Criteria used to determine whether the project listed in Annex II should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. Annex III of the EIA Directive and has been replaced by a new Annex III in the 2014 Amendment Directive. (See **Appendix A** of this report).

#### 3.2 EIA SCREENING METHODOLOGY

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared to document the appraisal as to whether the proposed pedestrian footbridge at Wolfe Tone Bridge would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The information used to inform this report includes desk studies and site assessments.

In addition, the following legislation and guidance documentation has been used:

- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (August 2003), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development;
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment;

- Environmental Protection Agency (Draft - August 2017) Revised Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports;
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2019;
- European commission (2015) Interpretation of definition of project categories of Annex I and II of the EIA Directive;
- EIA (Amendment) Directive 2014/52/EU; and
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects. Guidance on Screening.

EIA is required in one of three circumstances:

- a) The proposed development is of a class specified in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and exceeds any specified relevant quantity area or other limit specified; or
- b) The proposed development is of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and exceeds any specified relevant quantity, area or other limit as specified; or
- c) The proposed development is of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), does not exceed the relevant quantity area or other limit, but having conducted a screening it is determined that the proposed development would nevertheless be likely to have significant effects on the environment as determined by reference to criteria specified in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

### 3.3 EIA SCREENING – CONSIDERATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR MANDATORY EIA

In respect of public realm and infrastructure related projects, Schedule 5, Part 2 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, requires that the competent authority should carry out an EIA in respect of the following relevant projects as detailed in **Table 3.3:**

**TABLE 3.3: SCREENING MATRIX FOR EIA**

Mandatory Threshold	Statutory Reference	Screening conclusion
Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.	<i>P&amp;D Regs 2001-2019 Schedule 5, Part 2 Section 10 (a) (iv)</i>	The proposed works do not exceed 2, 10 or 20 hectares in a built-up area. Therefore, <b>does not require a mandatory EIA.</b>

Mandatory Threshold	Statutory Reference	Screening conclusion
<p>Changes, extensions, development and testing</p> <p>(a) Any changes or extensions of development already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension referred to in Part 1) which would: -</p> <p>(i) Result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and</p> <p>(ii) Result in an increase in size greater than – 25 per cent, or - An amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold. Whichever is greater.</p>	<p><i>P&amp;D Regs 2001 - 2019</i></p> <p><i>Schedule 5, Part 2, Section 13</i></p>	<p>There are no major changes to the development which will lead to the development being of a class requiring an EIA.</p> <p>Therefore, <b>does not require a mandatory EIA.</b></p>

### 3.4 EIA SCREENING CHECKLIST

Annex III of the EIA Amendment Directive outlines the criteria to determine whether the projects listed in Annex II should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.

In consideration of Screening for EIA, cumulative impacts of existing and proposed developments are included in the assessment. The criteria and the likelihood of significant impact is outlined in **Table 3.4** below.

**TABLE 3.4 EC GUIDELINES SCREENING CHECKLIST**

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>Brief Project Description</p>	<p>The proposed pedestrian footbridge will be located on the southern side (seaward facing) of Wolfe Tone Bridge. The proposed design will consist of a 2m wide aluminium perforated deck, 1.25m high stainless-steel parapet with LED deck lighting on handrail, the steelwork structure will be galvanised and painted silver.</p> <p>Existing services on the eastern and western bank will be relocated including a streetlight, mini and micro pillars and bins.</p>	

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
1. Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?	No. Construction will involve alterations to existing bridge infrastructure. No demolition or decommissioning will be conducted.	No. The proposed works will be conducted on existing infrastructure. No change to the physical environment will occur during construction or operation.
2. Will construction or the operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	Yes. Natural resources including building materials, energy, etc. are required.	No. Required volumes are not significant and resources are not in short supply.
3. Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes. Some substances will be used during construction e.g., concrete, diesel, oils etc.	No. Appropriate procedures for use and storage will minimise potential for impact.
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes. Produced waste during the construction phase will include stone and concrete from the bridge, the quay walls, the piers and the abutments during construction. No waste will arise during operation. Decommissioning waste will include the metal structure which can be demounted and repurposed or recycled.	No. Waste volumes are not considered significant (total waste produced will be less than 10m <sup>3</sup> ). A Waste Management plan will be implemented.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC)?	No. Some dust will be produced during construction. An Air Quality/dust minimisation plan will be implemented.	No. Impact on air quality will not be significant and will not exceed Air Quality Standards.
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes. There will be some noise and vibration disturbance during construction.	No. Minimisation measures and monitoring will be required. Construction noise will be temporary only.
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes. Risk of potential runoff of materials into watercourses during construction.	No. A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be in place to minimise any minor risks to ensure no impact to the receiving environment. Use of hazardous materials (i.e. concrete) will be done in sealed formwork.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project that could affect human health or the environment?	Yes. Potential risk of accidents with regard to human health during construction on site.	No. No high-risk activities required during construction. Appropriate Health and Safety plan and Construction Environmental Management Plan in place to minimise risk.
9. Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes. The proposed project is being designed to facilitate safe pedestrian movement across the Wolfe Tone Bridge which will be a positive environmental social change. The construction will also provide temporary local employment opportunities.	No. There will be no significant lifestyle, demography or social changes. Positive changes will result via the improved pedestrian movement across the bridge in addition to temporary employment opportunities will arise from the development.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>10. Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?</p>	<p>No. All future plans for development of the area are identified within the Development Plans.</p>	<p>No. All future plans for development of the area are identified within the Development Plans. This was also assessed in the Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening and no cumulative impacts from other plans/projects were identified.</p>
<p>11. Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes. There are three nearby European Sites: 1. Galway Bay Complex SAC; 2. Lough Corrib SAC; and 3. Inner Galway Bay SPA.</p>	<p>No. It is not anticipated that there will be any adverse effect to the sites as a result of the project. An AA screening has been conducted and it was concluded that there is no potential for a significant impact to occur.</p>
<p>12. Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes. The River Corrib and Corrib Estuary are adjacent to the works and fall under the Lough Corrib SAC and Galway Bay Complex SAC respectively. The nearby watercourses have been noted as otter and harbour seal habitat.</p>	<p>No. No impact will occur to nearby watercourses due to the construction methodologies adopted and due to the works being of minor scale. An AA screening has also ruled out any impact which may arise.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>13. Are there any areas on or around the location that are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The nearby watercourses have been noted as otter and harbour seal habitat by NPWS. The presence of bat species Soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>) and Daubenton's bats (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>) were noted during a 2013 survey, and during a survey in 2022 where old bat droppings were noted and one roosting pipistrelle bat was noted. The nearby Inner Galway Bay SPA is designated for Annex I bird species Black-throated Diver (<i>Gavia arctica</i>), Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>), Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>), Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>), Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) and Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) which may use the surrounding environment at Wolfe Tone bridge. The River Corrib and Corrib Estuary will be utilised by various fish species including salmon and trout.</p> <p>A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be in place to minimise any minor risks.</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>An AA screening has been conducted to ensure no impact on European Sites.</p> <p>Bat boxes will be erected during construction if required. Following the precautionary principle approach a derogation licence will be requested from the NPWS before proposed works commence. Although the bat roosts will not be altered the possibility exists for bats to be disturbed during the construction phase. Any additional measures requested will be implemented in full. The construction phase will be completed outside the bat active season (May-Sept) and an Ecological Clerk of Works will be on hand to ensure no bats are impacted. Should action be required as a result of the bat survey, then Galway City Council will consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and appropriate action will be undertaken.</p> <p>Means of ensuring no risk to waterbodies from hazardous substances (i.e. concrete) will be integrated into the design by means of sealed formworks.</p> <p>A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be in place to minimise any minor risks to ensure no impact to the receiving environment.</p> <p>Seasonal restrictions regarding fishery spawning (Oct – Jan) times will be in place.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The lower reaches of the River Corrib and Corrib Estuary are adjacent to the proposed works.	Yes. If scaffolding is erected within the riverbed, it will be temporary and short-term in nature (total of 6 week duration). Construction methodologies will be conducted in a means to ensure no impact to water quality and the below riverbed.
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The area has been classified as High landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment conducted by Galway County Council.	No. The works will be conducted on existing infrastructure in a predominantly urban environment and will not impact the scenic value of the surroundings. The works will also be temporary in nature.
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The works are adjacent to the Corrib Estuary and lower reaches of the River Corrib which are utilised as recreational walkways, angling and kayaking. However, the works will improve pedestrian crossing and movement at Wolfe Tone Bridge.	No. Access will be maintained through traffic management plans. Construction works will be temporary in nature. The proposed works aim to improve the pedestrian facilities presently in place.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The footbridge will be located on the Wolfe Tone Bridge which Father Griffin Road traverses.	No. A traffic management plan will be put in place and stakeholders and local residents will be communicated with prior to the commencement of works.
18. Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes. The proposed works are located in a busy urban environment in Galway City Centre.	No. There will be no negative visual impact from the works and they will be short term and temporary in nature.

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Recorded Archaeological Monument (RMP): GA094-100058 - Quay (Fish Market)</p> <p>Protected Structures (RPS): 8501 – Galway City Rivers &amp; Waterways including bridges, walling, embankments, piers and other associated infrastructure (In this instance, this includes the stone steps on the eastern quay wall). 13202 – Wall mounted cast-iron plaque. Plaque is attached to the south parapet wall of the reinforced bridge. Painted with Irish script. 2206 – Claddagh Quays (Ballyknow Quay) Mid &amp; late 19<sup>th</sup> -century quays, piers &amp; locks.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>It is proposed to remove a wrought-iron hand-rail on a set of cut stone steps (part of RPS: 8501 and RMP GA094-100058) on the eastern quay wall.</p> <p>The proposed pedestrian bridge will make the existing steps redundant and the hand-rail would pose a safety hazard.</p>
<p>20. Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>The works will be completed on existing bridge infrastructure in a predominantly urban environment.</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>Works will be completed on existing infrastructure in an urban environment.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>21. Are there existing land uses within or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The proposed works are located in an urban environment, nearby land uses include: Jurys Inn Hotel, New Ireland Building (offices and apartments), public open space (Spanish Parade), recreational walkways along River Corrib, tourism region (Spanish Parade, Arch and Claddagh), restaurants, shops, residential properties.</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>There will be no significant impact on the surroundings land uses. The works will be temporary in nature will aim to improve the passage of pedestrians over Wolfe Tone Bridge. A traffic management plan will also be put in place to ensure access to surroundings continue during the works.</p> <p>Privately owned properties will not be affected by the works.</p> <p>Recreation facilities such as walkways will remain open and unaffected.</p> <p>Access to the pedestrian footbridge on the opposite side will be maintained throughout the works.</p> <p>Hotels, apartments, shops will not be affected by the works.</p> <p>Tourism areas such as Spanish Parade, Arch and Claddagh will be unaffected and undisturbed by the works.</p>
<p>22. Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>All future plans for development of the area are identified within the Galway City Development Plan (assessed during AA screening). The plan also aims to improve pedestrian networks in the city.</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>There will be no impact from the proposed works on any future developments in the area. The works are of local and small scale and temporary in nature.</p> <p>The proposed works will support the Development Plans via the improvement of pedestrian movement.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>23. Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes. The proposed works are in a predominantly urban area in Galway City. Nearby buildings include apartments, hotels, restaurants, shops.</p>	<p>No. The works are located at a sufficient distance from any residential properties, hotels, shops and restaurants and there will be no direct impact. The works will also be temporary in nature and will improve pedestrian passage over Wolfe Tone Bridge.</p>
<p>24. Are there any areas within or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>No. The immediate area and closest buildings to the works include apartments/offices/hotel. The closest sensitive land use is a church located c. 162m south-west.</p>	<p>No. There are no sensitive lands in the vicinity of the works. Access to the church will be maintained if accessed via Wolfe Tone Bridge. A traffic management plan will be put in place and stakeholders and local residents will be communicated with.</p>
<p>25. Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>Yes. The River Corrib is a designated salmonid river. The Salmon Weir lies c. 600m upstream and is a prolific salmon fishery area. The River is primarily used by anglers (brown trout, salmon).</p>	<p>No. Fishing activities will not be impacted. Angling primarily takes place further upstream of the works. The proposed works will also be temporary and short term in nature and will be conducted outside of the fishery spawning season (Oct – Jan).</p>
<p>26. Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>No. Corrib Estuary status is unpolluted. Salmon weir bridge – Q-value status is good. Point pressures included a nearby combined stormwater overflow (CSO) c. 28m upstream.</p>	<p>No. This project will not contribute to or cause pollution or environmental damage.</p>

Questions to be considered	Yes / No? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant impact? Yes / No? - Why?
<p>27. Is the Project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the Project to present environmental problems?</p>	<p>Yes. The lower reaches of the River Corrib and Corrib Estuary are susceptible to flooding incidents primarily during high tide events as this region is tidal influenced. The region of Spanish Parade is historically and seasonally liable to flooding.</p>	<p>No. The proposed works will not be impacted by nor result in flooding. Construction works will be conducted during dryer months to ensure there is no likelihood of flooding. The works will also be temporary and short term.</p>

## 4 CONCLUSION

This screening report has been carried out in accordance with a methodology that is based on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development (EPA, 2003) and The European Commission Guidelines on EIA Screening (2017). Based on Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2019, the proposed pedestrian footbridge at Wolfe Tone Bridge does not exceed any of the thresholds prescribed in the Regulations that would trigger a mandatory requirement to conduct an EIA and prepare an EIAR. In consideration of sub-threshold projects (Schedule 5, Part 2) the proposed project is not listed in Part 2 of the Regulations and therefore does not fall under the requirement for sub-threshold projects.

Impact on bats have been assessed with the reference to the Irish Wildlife Manual Vol 25. The overall impact on bats following the implementation of the outlined recommendations is negligible as the proposed development will not impact on the roosting bats and will likely increase the suitability of the bridge as a roosting site for bats, thus resulting in a likely “Net Positive” biodiversity effect.

Having regard for the proposed works this report concludes that this proposal is not one which is likely to have significant effects on the environment, either by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, and that an EIA and subsequent Report (EIAR) is not required in relation to this project.

An Appropriate Assessment screening has been conducted under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), which concluded that a full Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement for the project was not required, as there is no potential for significant impact on Natura 2000 sites from the proposed project.

It is therefore concluded that there is no requirement for the Planning Authority to request an EIA in respect of this project and there is no requirement on Galway City Council to prepare and submit an EIA Report in relation to this project.

## **APPENDIX A - 2014 AMENDMENT DIRECTIVE - ANNEX III**

**Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment**

Annex III

Selection criteria referred to in Article 4(3) (criteria to determine whether the projects listed in Annex II should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment).

1. Characteristics of projects

The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:

- (a) the size and design of the whole project;
- (b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;
- (c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- (d) the production of waste;
- (e) pollution and nuisances;
- (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; and
- (g) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location of projects

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

- (a) the existing and approved land use;
- (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil; Land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;
- (c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
  - (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
  - (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;
  - (iii) mountain and forest areas;
  - (iv) nature reserves and parks;
  - (v) areas classified or protected under national legislation; natura 2000 areas designated by member states pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and directive 2009/147/EC;
  - (vi) 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:
- (vii) densely populated areas; and

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

### 3. Type and characteristics of the potential impact

The likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in points 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:

- (a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- (b) the nature of the impact;
- (c) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- (d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- (e) the probability of the impact;
- (f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects; and
- (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.