

Comhairle Contae Chorcaí Cork County Council

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An Taisce,
Back Lane,
Dublin,
D08 X2A3.

Our Ref: CCC_RLRDO_177AE_01_24

planningreferrals@antaisce.org

12th April 2024

Re: Application for Approval made under Section 177(AE) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) for rehabilitation works of an existing structure to address corrosion within the bridge structure and deck works at Ardcahan Bridge (R587), Ardcahan, Co. Cork.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Introduction

Pursuant to Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), notice is hereby given that Cork County Council proposes to make an application for approval to an Bord Pleanála for the repair and rehabilitation of the existing structure of Ardcahan Bridge to include a temporary site compound, corrosion repairs and deck works at Ardcahan Bridge, Ardcahan, County Cork.

Site Context

This Section 177 AE application to An Bord Pleanála is in relation to proposed works to be carried out upon the existing structure of Ardcahan Bridge c. 4km north of Dunmanway, Co. Cork.

The Ardcahan Bridge is a six-arch structure with each span width being c. 5-6m. The bridge is located on the Bandon River, traversing the R-587 Regional road, directly downstream of the confluence with the River Caha River. The bridge links the townlands of Ardcahan and Derrylahan, where the land use comprises mostly of agriculture and forestry with the wider area containing dispersed residential and commercial uses mostly associated with agriculture, with a quarry located c. 0.45km to the east.

Description of the Proposed Development

The repair and rehabilitation at Ardcahan Bridge will require the following works according to the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The works will take place over a 6 to 10 week period (July to September inclusive).

1. Temporary Site Compound

During the construction phase, it will be necessary to provide temporary facilities for construction personnel. This project will have 1 no. temporary compound located near the entrance to the site which will include welfare facilities. The location of the temporary site compound is proposed to be set back c. 30m from the south west corner of the bridge, as shown in Figure 3 1. The temporary compound shall be constructed with crushed rock aggregate hard standings with low dust content. Temporary facilities will be removed, and the lands reinstated upon completion of the construction phase.

Facilities to be provided in the temporary site compound will include the following:

- Welfare facility;
- Employee parking;
- Contractor lock-up facility;
- Bottled water for potable supply;
- Water tanker to supply water used for other purposes;
- Fuel storage;
- Diesel generator;
- Storage areas;
- Waste management areas.

The site compound is located in agricultural land within the Bandon River SAC.

2. Corrosion Repairs & Minor Parapet Repairs

- i. To facilitate the installation of the scaffold, vegetation within a 2-meter width on either side of the bridge face will be cut back.
- ii. A scaffold shall be installed to allow access to the underside of the bridge arches.
- iii. Steel beams to be sandblasted to SA2.5 as per detail provided in Drawings P1959-ARDH-0004. Note that one operator will carry out the sandblasting using appropriate sandblasting equipment accessing the beams surface from the scaffold provided. Sandblasting equipment typically consists of a chamber in which sand and air are mixed. The mixture travels through a hand-held nozzle to direct the particles toward the surface of work.
- iv. Welding of additional steel plate at the bottom flange of existing steel beams as shown in Drawings P1959-ARDH-0004. One operative will carry out the welding using portable electric welding equipment accessing the beams surface from the scaffold provided.
- v. A protective paint system to be applied to all exposed steel work, Hempel Hempadur Mastic 45880/1 or similar approved to be applied by brush in 2 coats of minimum 190 micron DFT (dry film thickness). One operative will paint the steel beams accessing them from the scaffold provided.

- vi. Steel Drip Strips will be positioned along the bottom edge of the bridge parapet on both sides of the bridge, the holes will be drilled along the bridge as per the spacing shown in drawing P1959-ARDH-0004 and bolted through with post-fixed mechanical anchors as shown in drawings P1959-ARDH-0004. The position of these elements is shown on drawings P1959-ARDH-0004.
- vii. Cracking at Deck Pier interface to be injected with Epoxy Resin. Prior the injection, the crack and surrounding surface will be cleaned to allow the paste-over to bond to sound concrete. The epoxy resin will be pressure pumped locally (directly into the cracks) to close the cracks at the Deck Pier interface. The deck/pier interface is above the waterline.
- viii. Vegetation on the internal side of the existing parapet and drainage outlets to be cleared from structure.
- ix. Minor repairs to missing sections of render shall be carried out along the parapet as shown in P1959-ARDH-0003. Repairs to be carried out by hand by an operator accessing the parapet surface from the deck/scaffolding level.
- x. New Black PVC drain pipe to be positioned in the existing drainage outlets location and fixed in place with mortar from the deck level.
- xi. Scaffold to be removed.

3. Deck Works

- i. Upon completion of the corrosion repairs it is proposed to repair the road surfacing on this bridge. A road closure and diversion will be required to facilitate these works.
- ii. The existing road surface shall be scarified, and the existing surface shall be removed and the concrete surface of the bridge deck exposed.
- iii. Any defects encountered when deck is exposed to be repaired using an appropriate concrete repair mortar. This will only include small localised repairs with concrete repair mortar, limited to the top side of the deck.
- iv. A trial hole and rebar scan shall be completed to confirm deck reinforcement and strength. The trial hole will be superficial and will not penetrate the entire thickness of the deck. If this investigation is unsatisfactory, Cork County Council may introduce a weight limit to the bridge.
- v. A spray applied bridge deck waterproofing system shall be installed.
- vi. Kerb drain (feeding to new Black PVC drainage outlet) and concrete rubbing strip to be installed by an operator accessing the area from the deck level.
- vii. The pavement surface shall be laid, sand asphalt followed by HRA, high friction colour contract surfacing shall be applied.

Planning and Environmental Assessments

1. Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been carried out to inform the competent authority in completing their statutory obligations in relation to Appropriate Assessment under Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) as implemented in Ireland under inter alia the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended), and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). The NIS has been prepared based on the conclusions of the AA Screening report which accompanies this application. The purpose of the NIS report is to evaluate whether the project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, in view of that European Site's conservation objectives and in view of the best available scientific knowledge. This assessment concluded that in consideration of the best available scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information specific to the conservation objectives and qualifying interests of the relevant European Sites, and by applying the precautionary principle, it cannot be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a likely significant effect on a European Site.
2. An Aquatic Baseline survey report (Appendix 2 Ecological Appraisal Report) evaluates the existing environment in terms of important aquatic species and habitats occurring along site borders, inclusive of connecting and adjoining habitats. This report helps identify and evaluate species and habitats of ecological value utilising the broader site and thus further inform the mitigation for the proposed bridge repair works across Cork county. Specifically, the baseline aquatic surveys aimed to evaluate the fisheries potential (including salmonid and lamprey species), macrophytes, aquatic invasive species and Annex II aquatic species (notably freshwater pearl mussel and white-clawed crayfish) which may use the site and its surrounds.
3. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the proposed repair and rehabilitation works to Ardcahan Bridge, Co. Cork, will be updated prior to construction to take account of any relevant conditions attached to the planning permission and will be implemented for the duration of the construction phase of the project. The CEMP will be a live document and will be subject to ongoing review through regular environmental auditing and site inspections and updated as required. For the avoidance of doubt, all measures stipulated in this CEMP will be implemented in full. The CEMP sets out the key construction and environmental management issues associated with the proposed project and will be developed further at the post-planning and construction stages by the client and on the appointment of the main contractor to the project. The CEMP sets out the key environmental management issues associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed project, to ensure that during these phases of the development, the environment is protected and impacts on the environment are minimised.
4. An Ecological Appraisal Report was conducted to evaluate the proposed repair and rehabilitation works to Ardcahan Bridge. This involved the following:
 - A desktop review of available ecological data for both the receiving environment and greater area, including a review of European sites within 15 km and/or potential zone of influence (Zoi) of the project (as part of the separate Appropriate Assessment Screening Report) and nationally designated sites within 10 km;

- Undertake ecological field surveys of the receiving environment;
 - Identify flora and fauna and any invasive species present within the footprint of all elements of the project and;
 - Appraise the potential impacts of the project on the ecology of the receiving environment.
5. A Bat Report is provided based on assessments of the Ardcahan Bridge site. Even though there is no evidence of bats roosting within the Ardcahan Bridge, the site is identified as having moderate roosting potential. There are no proposals to remove the potential bat roosting features in the pier faces. As a precautionary measure, the bridge will be subject to a preconstruction endoscope survey (licensed) and emergence surveys (2 rounds) to re-confirm baseline conditions, and if any new roosts are found during these surveys, a relevant bat derogation licence shall be sought prior to construction works commencing and works will be carried out under the terms of the relevant derogation licence (a derogation license will be sought from NPWS to allow works to proceed in a manner which minimises disturbance and ensures no bats are harmed). An Annex IV assessment and report shall be completed in the event that bats are present in the bridge, with relevant guidance including the NRA (2006) Guidelines and Marnell et al. (2022) will be followed. If bats are found to be present, the ECoW will supervise works (accompanied by a bat specialist if required) to ensure they are carried out in a manner which minimises disturbance and ensures no bats are harmed. Bat boxes will be installed under the bridge to enhance roosting potential and increase roosting options and capacity. It is noted that the bridge is located in an area which presents opportunities for foraging bats, but roosting opportunities in the bridge may be limited in terms of variety/conditions.
6. An Environmental Impact Assessment report (EIAR) presents an assessment of whether or not the proposed scheme should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This assessment is based upon the EPA (2022) Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR) - as well as the other guidance documents set out in planning application documents ((Planning Statement - Section **Error! Reference source not found.**), and considers the characteristics of the proposed scheme and the likely significant effects on the environment.

Site and Newspaper Notices

1 no. site notice has been erected in relation to the proposed works, with 3 no. photographs of same included within Appendix 1 of the application documentation Cover Letter to An Bord Pleanála. The site notice will be monitored on a regular basis by the Applicant to ensure, to the best possible extent, that they remain in situ. In the event that notices are removed or tampered with, the Applicant will ensure that they are replaced as quickly as possible.

Planning Application Documentation

To inform An Bord Pleanála, the following documentation is enclosed in accordance with article 249 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) in support of this application, these include:

- The site notice;
- The newspaper notice;

- The Planning Application Cover Letter to An Bord Pleanála;
- The Planning Application Notification Letter to Cork County Council;
- The Planning Application Notification Letter to each Prescribed Body;
- The Schedule of Drawings;
- The Planning Application Drawings;
- The Planning Statement;
- AA Screening;
- NIS;
- CEMP;
- Ecological Appraisal Report;
- Bat Report;
- EIAr;
- Electronic Version (USB) of the NIS.

In addition, the NIS, together with plans and particulars of the proposed development, will be available for inspection free of charge or may be purchased on payment of a small fee (which fee shall not exceed the reasonable cost of making such a copy) during normal office hours 09.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), during the period from 17th April 2024 to 29th May 2024 inclusive, at the following locations;

- The Offices of An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, Monday – Friday during working hours. Note: Due to COVID-19, it is recommended that persons contact the Office to arrange viewing of the application in advance (Phone: (01) 858 8100 or Lo-call 1890 275 175).
- Cork County Council, Planning Department, Ground Floor, County Hall, Carrigrohane Road, Cork. Eircode: T12 R2NC between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm, (except May 6th 2024),
- Cork County Council Municipal District Offices – Swimming Pool Complex, Bantry Road, Dunmanway, Co. Cork, P47 EV67 - between the hours of 9.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00 pm to 5.00pm
 - Or
- Online at: <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/resident/planning-and-development/public-consultations/active-part-xab-development-consultation/active-part-xab-development-consultation>

In determining the proposed works, the Applicant furnished copies of the planning application to each of the prescribed bodies listed below.

Each of these bodies was notified on **12th April 2024**:

- Cork County Council;
- Minister for Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- The Heritage Council;
- Office of Public Works;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service;
- An Taisce;
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon;
- Fáilte Ireland;
- Inland Fisheries Ireland;
- Waterways Ireland.
- Uisce Éireann

Conclusion

Submissions or observations regarding the proposed development may be made in writing to An Bord Pleanála in relation to:

- i. the likely effects on the environment of the proposed development;
- ii. the implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the area in which it is proposed to situate the proposed development; and
- iii. the likely significant effects of the proposed development on a European Site, if carried out.

Submissions or observations should be made in writing to **An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, D01 V902**, not later than **5:00pm on 30th May 2024**.

We trust that the documentation provided is in order and is sufficient for your consideration of these proposed repair and rehabilitation works. Should you have any further queries in relation to any of the information enclosed, please do not hesitate to contact:

**Mr. Brian Lawlor, Executive Engineer,
Cork County Council,
Floor 3,
County Library Building,
Cork
T12 K335
Tel - 021 – 428 5298
Email: brian.lawlor@corkcoco.ie**

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**Liam Ahearn,
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Encls.