

**Kildare County Council  
National Roads Office**



**Carlow & Wexford Bridges Rehabilitation Contract**  
***N11 Glebe Bridge (WX-N11-003.00)***

**Application for Approval in Accordance with Section 177AE  
of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended  
(Appropriate Assessment)**

**SECTION 177AE APPLICATION REPORT**





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## 1.0 Introduction

Kildare County Council, acting on behalf of Wexford County Council under a Section 85 Agreement (Local Government Act 2001), wish to make an application for approval to An Bord Pleanála to carry out bridge rehabilitation works on N11 at Glebe Bridge (Eirspan Structure No. WX-N11-003.00), in the townlands of Edermine and Cooraun in the County of Wexford.

This application for approval is being made in accordance with Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2015 which states:

*“Where a Natura impact statement has been prepared pursuant to subsection (1), the local authority shall apply to the Board for approval and the provisions of Part XAB shall apply to the carrying out of the appropriate assessment”*

This application is being made in accordance with the procedure outlined in Article 249 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2015 and Section 177AE (4)(a) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2015.

## 2.0 Scheme Location

Glebe Bridge carries the N11 National Primary Road over the Edermine Stream approximately 5km south of Enniscorthy, County Wexford at Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) Grid Reference 698202, 634600. The Edermine Stream System drains mixed pasture and arable farmland south of Enniscorthy and discharges into the River Slaney. The location of the bridge is shown in Figure 1 below.

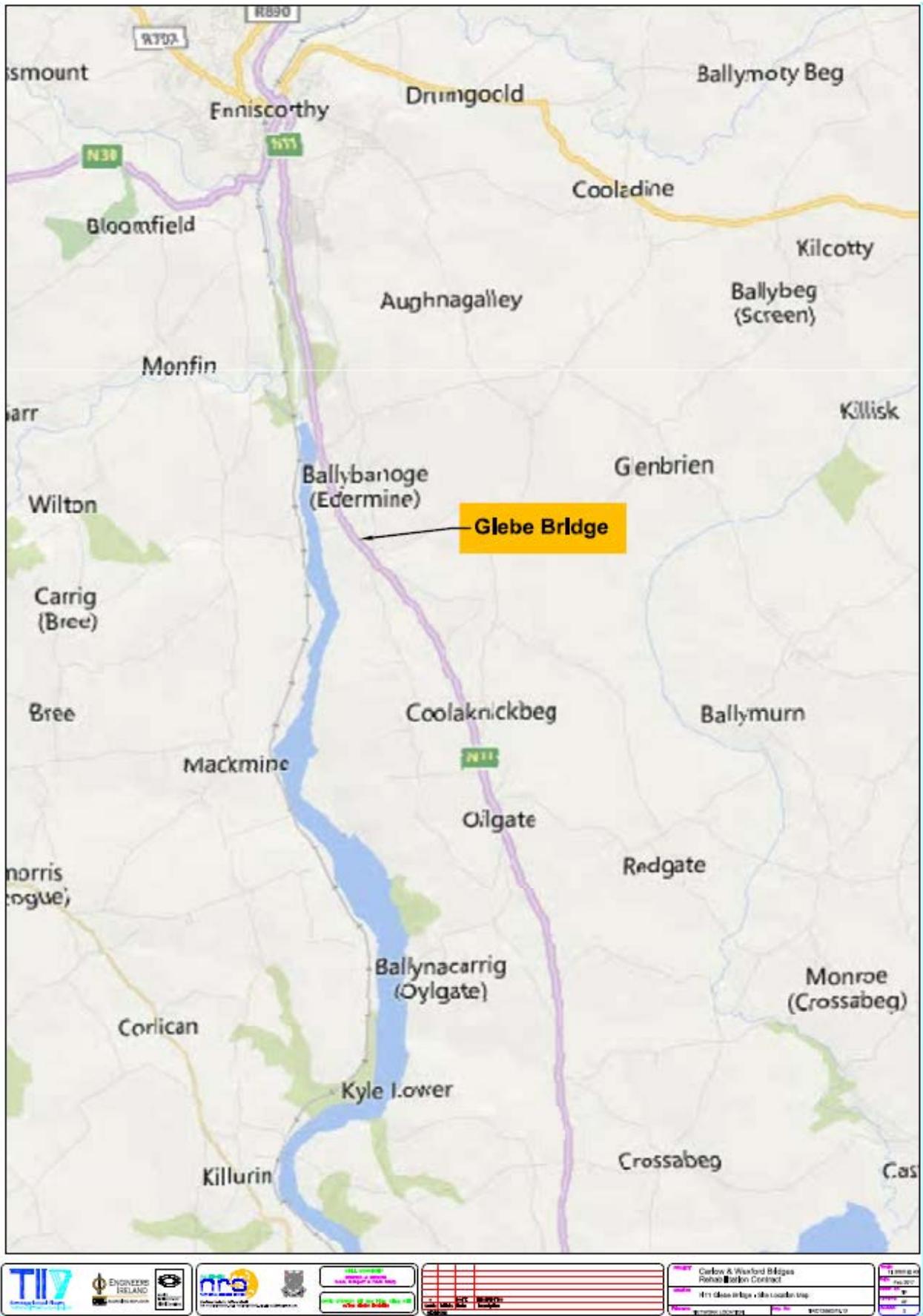


Figure 1: Glebe Bridge Location Map

### 3.0 Background

Glebe Bridge comprises a 3.69m single span masonry arch bridge extended to the east with an in-situ concrete culvert with a span of 3.05m. The masonry arch and concrete culvert components of the bridge are 11.66m and 27.36m long respectively giving an overall length (elevation to elevation) of 39.02m. The N11 carriageway crosses the concrete culvert section of the bridge only. The masonry arch section carries a densely vegetated sloped verge including some mature trees. Both sections of the bridge are considered to be buried structures with a depth of fill varying from 0.6 to 5.2m.

The findings of a Principal Inspection of the structure undertaken in 2015 state that the structure is in poor condition with some significant defect to the structure observed which are as follows;

- The embankments were found to be in fair condition with erosion of the river bank observed over an 11m length.
- A number of significant circumferential cracks were observed extending from abutment to abutment via the arch barrel. These cracks were up to 40mm in width.
- A number of significant crack were observed in the reinforced concrete abutments.

Roughan & O'Donovan – Aecom Alliance (ROD) were appointed by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) as part of the EIRSPAN Bridge Management Framework, to undertake the design of refurbishment works to 8 no. bridges across Counties Wexford and Carlow. This contract, '*Carlow & Wexford Bridges Rehabilitation Contract*', includes the rehabilitation works to the subject site, Glebe Bridge. The Eirspan Bridge Management Section for the Leinster Region, located within Kildare County Council, are project managing this contract on behalf of TII.

### 4.0 Description of the Project

The scope of rehabilitation works at Glebe Bridge was determined following a site inspection and structural investigation and a number of remedial measures were recommended and subsequently designed as follows (See Appendix A – '*Glebe Bridge Contract Drawings*' and Appendix B – '*Inspection & Rehabilitation Report*' for further details):

- Repairs/reshaping and provision of rock armour to the downstream embankments that have been eroded/scoured away;
- Repairs to cobbled riverbed where it has broken up approx. 2 m downstream of the structure, which may include the installation of a rock ramp system constructed from 4–5 rock bar bed check weirs in the river channel over a 2–3 m length at this location;
- Repointing/pressure-grouting of wide cracks in the arch barrel;
- Resin-injecting of cracks in concrete section of structure;
- The installation of grouted tie-back anchors at the downstream end of the structure to prevent the outlet spandrel wall (headwall) from overturning (this will involve coring through the spandrel wall and inserting an anchor through which grout can be

pumped); and,

- Vegetation clearance on the embankment above the masonry arch section of bridge.

Works are due to commence in July 2017 and the anticipated construction sequence for the works is presented below:

- Stage 1: Set-up Site Compound.
- Stage 2: Remove trees and vegetation over extents shown on drawings.
- Stage 3: Temporary diversion of river.
- Stage 4: Excavate embankment on south side to allow for scour protection works.
- Stage 5: Construct new boulder bar bed check weir system.
- Stage 6: Repair cracks to reinforced concrete culvert.
- Stage 7: Repair cracks to masonry arch barrel.
- Stage 8: Install new ground anchors on south spandrel wall.
- Stage 9: Repair/re-point/re-grout any defects in masonry arch barrel and spandrel walls
- Stage 10: Lay new topsoil along embankments, reseed area and install new timber post and rail fence on northern end of culvert.

Vegetation removal will be necessary for site access and construction at overgrown sections of the Works. Under Section 40 of the Wildlife Acts, 1976–2012, in the course of road or other construction works or in the development or preparation of sites on which any building or other structure is intended to be provided is exempt from restrictions in regard to clearance of vegetation. However, if vegetation removal is required during the restricted period (1st March to 31st August), a site inspection by a suitably qualified Ecologist (Ecological Clerk of Works) prior to and during clearance at these locations is considered best practice to ensure reasonable efforts are undertaken to comply with other requirements of the Wildlife Acts and allow Works to proceed.

In-stream activities will be required as part of the Works in order to repair the embankments and cobbled riverbed and to gain access underneath the bridge. In stream works will be restricted to the period from 1st July to 30th September in accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland requirements. Furthermore, prior to construction, electrofishing shall be undertaken to remove any individuals from the area to be dewatered.

Tracked coring plant may be required at the masonry end for the installation of tie rods and pattress (anchor) plates.

## **5.0 Appropriate Assessment**

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), as amended by Directive 97/62/EC, for any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on an internationally important site for nature conservation, i.e. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), also known as Natura 2000 sites. The proposed scheme is not located directly within a Natura 2000 site however the scheme is located in close proximity to two Natura 2000 sites i.e. Slaney River Valley SAC (closest proximity to scheme c.125 metres) and Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA (closest proximity to the scheme c.450 metres).

### **5.1. Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment**

An AA Screening Assessment for the proposed Glebe Bridge rehabilitation works was undertaken (presented in Appendix C) which identified the relevant Natura 2000 sites and provides information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives.

The Screening assessment determined that:

- (i) due to the distance between the Works and the Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA, no pathways of risk from the Works to those SCIs were identified and the possibility of significant effects on this Natura 2000 site arising from the Works was, therefore, excluded, and;
- (ii) an Appropriate Assessment of the Works is required as it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Works, either on their own or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Slaney River Valley SAC.

The rationale for the determination at (ii) above has regard to the structure and function of features of interest at Natura 2000 sites, notably in this case that:

- Areas of habitat important for the survival of the Qualifying Interests within the Slaney River Valley SAC will be modified, fragmented, destroyed or isolated; and,
- A potentially meaningful proportion of the Qualifying Interests of the Slaney River Valley SAC may be impacted through loss, damage or deterioration in habitat quality.

Therefore, applying the Precautionary Principle and in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, the proposed bridge rehabilitation scheme was brought forward for a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared for the scheme.

### **5.2. Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment – Natura Impact Statement**

The Natura Impact Statement (presented separately) prepared for the scheme identified that the proposed refurbishment works at Glebe Bridge provide for localised short and long-term interference with the Slaney River Valley Special Area of Conservation and that, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures, significant adverse effects on the Qualifying Interests of the Slaney River Valley Special Area of Conservation and their respective Conservation Objectives are likely to arise from the refurbishment works.

The NIS has proposed appropriate mitigation measures intended to eliminate these effects or, where this is not possible, to minimise these effects such that they can no longer be judged to be significant. These measures include:

- In-stream activities being restricted to the period from 1st July to 30th September,
- Removal of individuals of those species listed in the NIS by electrofishing from the area to be dewatered prior to the commencement of construction; and,
- Implementation of a Construction Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

Any residual effects remaining after the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed have been assessed as being insignificant in light of the site's Conservation Objectives.

The NIS concluded that, having had due regard to all current guidance on the assessment of plans and projects that would be likely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites and having prepared the Screening for Appropriate Assessment report and this Natura Impact Statement, the proposed refurbishment works and installation of a rock ramp fish pass at Glebe Bridge, either on their own or in combination with other plans and projects and given strict adherence to best practice guidelines and implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, would be unlikely to give rise to any direct or indirect significant effects on the Slaney River Valley Special Area of Conservation or any other Natura 2000 site for nature conservation.

## **6.0 Planning Context**

The proposed Glebe Bridge rehabilitation works are considered as maintenance works to an existing public structure, necessary to ensure the integrity of the structure and prolong its safe and effective use. In addition, the anticipated cost of the works is approximately forty thousand euro. Therefore, the works are not considered to constitute 'development' under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended and are not subject to the requirements of Part 8 – *'Requirements in Respect of Specified Development by, on behalf of, or in Partnership with Local Authorities'* of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

Glebe Bridge is also not listed as a Protected Structure in the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019, Volume 2 – Record of Protected Structures.

## **7.0 Further Information**

Further information describing the particulars of proposed works, the likely effects of the works on the environment and ecology (including relevant ecological studies) and copies of relevant statutory documentation and notices are presented in Appendices D-K in support of this application.

## **Appendices**