

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: Irish School Programme III

Project Number: 2016-0202

Country: Ireland

Project Description: The project comprises the renovation, extension and construction of 43 primary schools, 8 special schools and 20 post primary (secondary) schools in Ireland. 49 schools will be either rebuilt or have significant new extensions to them and 22 schools will be refurbished, providing over 294 000 m² of improved school facilities. It supports the latest multi-year investment programme of the Irish Department of Education and Skills (DES), aimed at providing additional school capacity to respond to the rapid demographic growth. The project aims to deliver circa 44 700 places including circa 14 900 new additional places. The project investments are heavily focused on increasing energy efficiency and bringing up to norms out of date school facilities.

EIA required: Certain sub-projects could be subject to an EIA. If required by the competent authority, the Promoter shall make the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) available to the EIB.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise: no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The actual project concerns the new construction as well as modernisation and rehabilitation of several primary and post-primary schools across most of the counties of Ireland. Schools and education institutions of this kind are not specifically mentioned in the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended, though the project is covered by Annex II of the Directive in relation to urban development. The Promoter confirmed that where possible new construction works will be executed on an existing campus or closely linked to the existing school buildings. However, all projects are fully covered by an approved land use plan which can only be set up with a public consultation and the approval of the competent authority. At the time of appraisal the Promoter was seeking clarity on whether an EIA is needed for the sub-projects. If required by the competent authority, the Promoter shall provide to the EIB, the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the assessment.

The Promoter, the Department for Education and Skills, targets the achievement of A3 Building Energy Rating (BER) for new build schools. The A3 BER specifically focuses on energy efficiency measures being employed to reduce carbon emissions. Achieving A3 BER means that schools are twice as energy efficient as schools built to current Irish building regulations. For a typical primary school, this equates to an energy saving of 42.5 kWh/m²/year or 18.7 kg/CO₂/m²/year. 49 new schools will be designed and constructed to achieve this target, with one school in County Galway being designed to have near zero energy performance. A further 22 schools will be refurbished. Sub-projects involving refurbishment will also aim to achieve A3 BER, however due to the complexity of these sub-projects some are likely to achieve a BER within the B-range. This performance would still represent a significant improvement in the energy efficiency for those schools.

Four of the sub-projects, 76085N, 76173K, 15040T and 19429V, either contain a protected building within the site and is part of the works or the site is in close proximity to a protected or historical building. In order to carry out renovation and/or refurbishment works on listed or protected buildings, the owner needs to obtain a special building consent in addition to normal planning permissions. The Promoter is cognisant of their responsibility to obtain the special building consent as part of the planning permission process for the affected sub-projects. The Promoter has in addition made provision for the expected higher costs of retaining and renovating such protected buildings within their cost plan to preserve and modernise these buildings.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the renovation and refurbishment of the outdated and protected buildings will improve the health, safety and accessibility for staff and students alike. Due to the use of new materials and technologies, the new and modernised buildings will increase the overall energy efficiency. By enabling a more efficient use of the existing buildings and the addition of the new school facilities, the Department for Education and Skills will be able to consolidate and optimise the provision of school places and facilities contributing to the enhancement of teaching and learning environments in Ireland.

The new schools will create additional CO₂ emissions that will be compensated by the reduction of emissions of the refurbished school buildings and demolition of poorly performing buildings. One school being developed in County Galway will be a research pilot for achieving a near zero energy performance design.

In light of the above, the overall environmental and social rating of the project is therefore considered to be acceptable with minor negative residual impacts; the project is therefore eligible for the Bank's financing.