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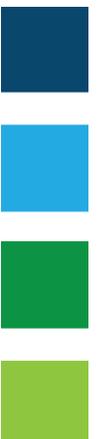
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Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Cahir Town Centre Car Park

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report



PROJECT NAME: Cahir Town Centre Car Park

REPORT NAME: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

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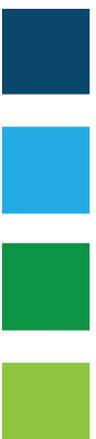


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening for a new car park in Cahir, Co. Tipperary (hereafter referred to as the proposed development) against the criteria set out under Annexes I, II and III of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive) and as transposed into Irish law. EIA Screening is the stage which ascertains whether the effects of a development on the environment are expected to be significant and determines whether an EIA is required as per the EIA Directive. It should be noted that the screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment and the whole project must be considered.

The purpose of this review is to determine the applicability of the EIA Directive to the proposed development and whether the proposed development is likely to result in significant effects, thereby requiring that an EIA is carried out.

This EIA Screening has been completed by TOBIN Consulting Engineers and takes due notice of the following regulations and guidance documents:

- Planning and Development Acts and Regulations 2000 – 2021;
- EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive);
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (August 2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on Carrying out EIA (the 2018 Guidelines);
- Environmental Protection Agency (Draft - August 2017) Revised Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (the Draft EPA Guidelines); and
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (the EC 2017 Guidance).

2.0 REGULATORY CONTEXT

The EIA Directive is European Policy on the environment and is based on the precautionary principle, requiring that effects on the environment are considered as early as possible during planning and decision-making processes.

The EIA Directive is set out under Annexes I - III of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive). Annex I lists developments for which EIA is mandatory and Annex II lists projects which require a determination of their likely significant effects. Criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA is set out in Annex III.

These annexes are broadly transposed into Irish legislation under a variety of Acts and Regulations. For the purpose of the proposed development, the relevant legislation to consider is Schedule 5 Parts 1 and 2 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2001, as amended, EIA is mandatory for Part 1 developments where thresholds are met or exceeded, but also for Part 2 developments where the national thresholds are met or exceeded. A screening determination is required for all sub-threshold developments for both Part 1, where not covered by Part 2, and for Part 2 developments.

The criteria to determine whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA are set out under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Schedule 7A lists information to be provided for the purpose of an EIA Screening. Under Article 103 of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations, as amended the planning authority can request the submission of an EIA Report, if it is of the view that sub-threshold development would likely result in significant effects on the environment.

The EIA 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, its subsurface and underground, during the construction, operational and where relevant demolition phase. When determining whether significant effects on the environment are likely to be caused by a project, the competent authority should identify the most relevant criteria to be considered and should take into account information that could be available following other assessments required by EU legislation in order to apply the screening procedure effectively and transparently.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND EXISTING SITE

The proposed development will be carried out on properties in Church Street, Cahir and Old Church Street, Cahir, Co. Tipperary, Eircodes E21 WK44 and E21 WD89 and adjacent lands in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary. The location and layout of the proposed development can be viewed in Figures 3-1 and 3-2 below. The proposed development will consist of the following works set out below.

Nature and Extent of Proposed Development:

- I. The demolition of an existing structure (the former Castle Court Hotel), associated outbuildings and boundary walls.
- II. Demolition and reconfiguration works to outbuildings to the rear of the Market House Building (Protected Structure S241).
- III. The construction of a new carpark, access road and junction onto Church Street including all site accommodation works. Vehicular and pedestrian access is to be provided off Church Street with a provision provided for an additional future pedestrian link through the adjacent Market House Building site onto Old Church Street.
- IV. The carpark will comprise of 91 spaces in total including 86 no. car parking spaces (including 3 no. disabled spaces and 4 no. Electric parking spaces), 3 no. standard bus and 2 no. minibus parking spaces and bicycle parking facilities.
- V. The provision of 2 no. twin electric charging points to accommodate 4 no. electric car charging spaces onsite.
- VI. All ancillary site works including retaining walls, bicycle parking, public lighting, bollards, landscaping, surface water drainage, connections to public services, signage, etc.
- VII. The provision of electric parking capacity signage at the main entrance to the carpark.
- VIII. Alterations to Church Street, including the provision of a raised table section of carriageway, provision of paved pedestrian areas and the relocation / removal of street furniture, road markings and street parking and all associated siteworks.

The proposed development will be located to the rear of existing terraced development, within the town centre of Cahir, County Tipperary. The site is currently derelict with no active use and comprises a mixture of vacant structures, partial hardstanding and overgrowth/vegetation. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of town centre uses and developments such as residential, retail and commercial. The proposed development is located within Cahir Town Architectural Conservation Area and is located adjacent to Protected Structure No. S241 and S246.

Vehicle and pedestrian access to the proposed development will be provided east off Church Street (R670) with an additional pedestrian access provided through Market House to Old Church Street (R640).

The proposed development will use an attenuated surface water drainage system with controlled discharge to the existing drainage network.

The demolition of structures on site is required to provide access to the proposed development and will involve the removal of the existing Castle Court Hotel building and associated outbuildings. The works will also require part demolition and reconfiguration works to outbuildings to the rear of the Market House Building.

It is anticipated that the proposed construction works will commence Q2 2022 and last for an approximate duration of 140 days.

Fig 3-1: Cahir Town Centre Car Park Site Location Map



Figure 3-2: Cahir Town Centre Car Park Site Layout Plan



4.0 SCHEDULE 5 PROJECT TYPE APPLICABILITY

This section considers the full proposed construction of the proposed development with respect to Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The proposed development is located in an urban environment and involves the construction of a new 91 space car park. The proposed development does not meet or exceed Schedule 5 Part 1 or Part 2 thresholds or criteria, and as such, EIA is not mandatory.

A consideration of sub-threshold has been carried out and as per the ruling of the European Court¹, it is recognised that the EIA Directive has a *'wide scope and a broad purpose'* when determining if EIA is required. A review of Part 1 confirms that there are no applicable Classes, hence the proposed development is not considered a Part 1 sub-threshold development.

Part 2 Class 10 (b)(ii), applies to the *"construction of a car park providing more than 400 spaces other than a carpark provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development"* and is of relevance. The proposed development however seeks to provide 91 spaces and is not of a size or scale that could provide 400 spaces or above.

Part 2 Class 10 (b) Infrastructure Projects and in particular, (iv) Urban development is of relevance. This Class is applicable to 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."* As the proposed site is located in Cahir town centre, which is mixed use in character, the proposed development could be considered to be located within a business district, *"a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use."* The size of the proposed site however is approximately approx. 0.4ha hectares and therefore is substantially less than the applicable threshold of 2 hectares.

Part 2 Class 14, Works of Demolition, requires consideration as it stipulates *"Works of demolition carried out in order to facilitate a project listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of this Schedule where such works would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7."*

Class 15 should also be noted as this is applicable to *"any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7."*

On review, the proposed development is for the construction of a new 91 space carpark within an urban environment. The proposed development will involve the construction of a standalone car park which will include the demolition of structures to provide access/egress to/from the car park. Recognising the requirement to apply a *'wide scope'* it is considered the proposed development should be subject to a sub-threshold development as it is considered to fall within the project meaning of Part 2 Class 10 (b) (iv) & (ii), as well as under Part 2 Classes 14 & 15. An EIA Screening determination is required for sub-threshold developments as per the 2001 Regulations, as amended and a screening assessment is provided in Section 5 of this report.

¹ Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment August 2018, August 2018

5.0 SCHEDULE 7 EIA SCREENING

This section provides an EIA Screening against the appropriate criteria as established by the EIA Directive Annex III and as transposed into Irish law under Schedule 7 of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations, as amended.

It should be noted that under the EIA Directive, the EIA Screening process balances two objectives, in determining if a project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore be made subject to an assessment of its effects on the environment; and it should ensure that EIA is only carried out for those projects which is thought that a significant impact on the environments is possible².

Table 5.1 below screens the proposed development against the Schedule 7 criteria. Information pertaining to Schedule 7A of the 2001 Regulations, as amended is provided herein and is further supplemented with an AA Screening Report (August 2021).

² Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU), European Union 2017

Table 5-1: Cahir Town Centre Car Park Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria

Screening against Schedule 7 Criteria	
1. Characteristics of project	Consideration of the proposed development
<p>The characteristics of projects be considered, with particular, regard to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the size and design of the whole project; b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects c) the nature of any associated demolition works d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity; e) the production of waste; f) pollution and nuisances; g) the risk of major accidents having regard in particular to substances or technologies used and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge; h) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution). 	<p>There is no likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development having regard to the characteristics of the project, as set out below:</p> <p>The project is not significant in terms of design or size and is wholly contained within an existing derelict site, situated to the rear of existing mixed use terraced development. The proposed development seeks to provide a new 91 space car park and will involve the demolition of structures and removal of vegetation for the provision of car parking services and utilities, 1 no. vehicle access and 2 no. pedestrian access points. The proposed development will use an attenuated surface water drainage system with controlled discharge to the existing drainage network.</p> <p>A review of planning applications within 500 metres of the site for the years 2016 – 2021 indicates that there are no significant development proposals within the vicinity of the site that could act in cumulation with the project. In addition, the small-scale nature and operation of the proposed development is unlikely give rise to any significant cumulative environmental effects. The following projects are of note: Reg. Ref.: 16600776, located on the eastern boundary of the proposed development site has been granted an Extension of Duration permission for the provision of retail store, approx. 3742m² in size. In addition, Reg. Ref.: 17600911, is located approx. 325m southeast of the site has received planning approval to construct a new primary school.</p> <p>The proposed development will involve the demolition of an existing derelict and fire damaged building. Wastes produced from demolition will involve standard construction materials that will be manage in accordance with approved removal practices and adopted Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan. The Contractor will be required to use licenced and permitted waste management facilities within the Southern Waste Region (SWR), which can accept construction and demolition waste generated during the construction phase.</p>

There are no elements of the proposed development that will make use of any natural resources during construction or operation other than the re-use of the derelict site for the purpose of car parking and associated clearance of overgrowth/vegetation on site.

The production of wastes on site during construction relate primarily to the demolition of an existing derelict fire damaged building. As set out above, wastes produced from demolition will involve standard construction materials that will be managed in accordance with approved removal practices. There will be no production of wastes on site during the operation of the car park.

To ensure the protection of the environment during construction, a detailed construction management plan will be prepared by the Main Contractor. This will ensure the containment of any pollution on site during construction.

The proposed development during construction and operation will not result in significant pollution or nuisance. The proposed works will generate noise during construction from general building works. The permissible hours of operation of a building site within Tipperary County Council are Monday to Friday 07.00 – 18.00, and Saturday 08.00 – 14.00, with no noisy work permissible on Sundays or bank holidays. The construction works will be subject to applicable standards including BS 5228:2009 and A1:2014 “Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites” and Tipperary County Council Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control Unit.

Construction and operation lighting will be provided in accordance with hours of construction and the proposed hours of operation of the proposed development. Light spill associated with construction lighting will be minimised where possible.

Standard construction measures will be adopted to minimise the impact of any dust generated during construction. The closest human receptors are located in properties along the north-eastern, eastern and southern boundaries at a distance of approximately 15m from the proposed site boundary. Any impacts arising from dust is expected to be of short duration. It is anticipated that the proposed construction works will commence Q2 2022 and last for an approximate duration of 140 days.

With respect to construction traffic, the R640 and R670 will be used for access to and from the proposed development site. Turning of construction vehicles will take place within the proposed development site and drivers will be informed of site working hours. No parking will be permitted by suppliers at the site entrance. Parking will be provided within the proposed development site boundary. Any increase in construction traffic

	<p>to and from the site is expected to be of short duration. It is anticipated that the proposed construction works will commence Q2 2022 and last for an approximate duration of 140 days.</p> <p>The management of surface water run off during construction phase will be carried out in accordance with the CIRIA C698 publication Site Handbook for Construction of SUDS.</p> <p>A traffic assessment has been carried out with analysis of the existing junctions within the Square and the proposed access junction included. The analysis indicated that there will be no adverse effect on the operation of the existing junctions and that the proposed carpark access junction on Church Street will operate well within capacity with little to no queueing predicted.</p> <p>A Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit was conducted for the site by Road Safety Matters and is submitted as part of the planning application. The issues identified in the audit were addressed as part of the overall design for the site. The Audit identified a small number of items with the proposed design which were reviewed and amendments incorporated into the overall design strategy for the carpark.</p> <p>The proposed development will not result in a risk of major accidents and/or disasters including those caused by climate change or flooding. The proposed development will be wholly contained within an existing derelict site and will involve works small scale in nature that are not likely to have a significant impact on the surrounding environment.</p> <p>Regarding climate change, the proposed development has been designed to be resilient against flooding through the construction of site surface water drainage and connection to existing drainage including the provision of attenuation and controlled discharge to existing storm network. Therefore, the design and operation of the proposed development is not likely to result in water contamination. There are no operations on site during construction or operation that could result the generation of air pollution.</p> <p>The proposed development is not a COMAH site (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) nor is the site location near a nuclear installation.</p>
<p>2. The Location of Project</p>	<p>Consideration of the proposed development</p>
<p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, with particular regard to: -</p>	<p>There are no geographical areas with environmental sensitives likely to be affected by the proposed development. In consideration of the location of the project, there are no anticipated significant environmental effects arising with regards to:</p>

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	The proposed development will be wholly contained within an existing derelict site, situated to the rear of existing mixed use terraced development and will consist of the re-use of the site for the provision of a new 91 space car park. The new car park will be open 24 hours. The proposed development is zoned as part of the "Town Centre."
c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: -	The project is not likely to have a significant impact on the relative abundance, availability, quality, or regenerative capacity of natural resources. The proposed development will be provided on a derelict site, situated within an urban area. It current consists of a mixture of hard surfaces, derelict structures and overgrowth/vegetation.
i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	There will be no impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment. A review of Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study maps (CFRAMS) confirms that the River Suir is located approx. 60m west of the site. The proposed development site is located within the Suir Water Framework Catchment (ID_16) and within the Suir Sub Catchment SC_120 (ID_16-8) and Suir Water Framework Sub Basin (Suir 140).
ii. coastal zones and the marine environment;	A Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development, which indicates that the proposed development site is located in Flood Zone C in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (OPW/DoEHLG, 2009). It states that there is no identified flood risk for the site and surface water arising on the site will be managed by a dedicated stormwater drainage system, designed in accordance with SuDS. In addition, it is predicted that the proposed development will not increase flood risk elsewhere.
iii. mountain and forest areas;	There are no open surface water conduits located on the proposed development site. There is an existing public combined main drainage sewer located on Church Street for existing building connections. The proposed on-site stormwater drainage system will discharge at a controlled rate to the main storm sewer at 1 no. location as indicated by the engineering design.
iv. nature reserves and parks;	The proposed development is not situated within a coastal zone, mountain, forest or nature reserve and there are no likely direct or indirect effects arising from the proposed development on the natural environment.
(v) areas classified or protected under Member States' national legislation; special protection Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;	A screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development which has concluded that potential impacts associated with the proposed development, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, will not result in likely significant effects on any European Site in view of their conservation objectives. A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.
(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation have already been exceeded and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	
(vii) densely populated areas	
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	

Having regard to densely populated areas, the project will involve short-term construction work associated with the construction of the new 91 space car park. In the long term the project has been designed to prevent contamination of waterbodies. The project therefore is not considered to have a negative impact on local population.

The proposed development will not have any direct or indirect impact on any sites of historical, cultural, archaeological or architectural significance, due to the discrete siting and scale of the proposal, as well as location within an existing derelict site.

The proposed development will be located within the Cahir Architectural Conservation Area and is indicated as a zone of Archaeological Potential. The proposed development will be located east of the following Protected Structures:

RPS Ref: S246 Description: Two Storey Mid Terrace Building

RPS Ref: S246b Description: Two Storey Mid Terrace Building

RPS Ref: S246c Description: Two Storey Mid Terrace Building

RPS Ref: S246f Description: Two Storey Mid Terrace Building

RPS Ref: S241 Description: Cahir Town Library

A review of the National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey Database indicates the following recorded Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments (SMR) located within 500m from the site:

Code: TS075-048010- Class: Weir - fish

Code: TS075-048011- Class: Graveyard

Code: TS075-048003- Class: Church

Code: TS075-048006- Class: Bridge

Code: TS075-048007- Class: Architectural Fragment

Code: TS075-048- Class: Historic Town

Code: TS075-048008- Class: Memorial Stone

Code: TS075-048001- Class: Castle - Anglo-Norman masonry castle

	<p>Code: TS075-048017- Class: Stone sculpture Code: TS075-048016- Code: House - 18th/19th century</p> <p>Code: TS075-048005 Class: Mill – Unclassified Code: TS075-048012- Class: Bullaun Stone</p> <p>Code: TS075-048015- Class: Graveyard Code: TS075-048004- Class: Ritual Site – holy well</p> <p>Code: TS075-048002- Class: Religious house - Augustinian canons</p> <p>The following records of National Inventory of Architectural Heritage are located adjacent to the site:</p> <p>Reg. No.: 22111035 Name: Looby/ Mc Carthy Solicitors</p> <p>Reg. No.: 22111047 Name: Cahir Town Library</p> <p>An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment Report has been undertaken and indicates that the proposed development will ensure that the building will have a renewed purpose and prolong the use of the building for many years. The report proposes a number of mitigation measures to ensure the impact of individual and overall impacts are mitigated and any loss of fabric will be retained by record to an internationally acceptable standard.</p>
<p>3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact</p>	<p>Consideration of the proposed development</p>
<p>The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b) (i) (I) to (V) of the definition of ‘environmental impact assessment report’ in section 171A of the Act, taking into account:</p> <p>a) the magnitude and special extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);</p> <p>b) the nature of the impact;</p>	<p>There are no anticipated likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development, taking the following into account:</p> <p>The magnitude and spatial extent of impacts associated with the proposed development are considered not significant.</p> <p>The proposed development will involve the construction of a new 91 space car park on an existing derelict site. The proposed development has been designed to mitigate against water contamination and is not considered at risk of flooding. The proposed development will not result in flooding elsewhere.</p> <p>The nature of impacts during construction will be temporary in that on site construction work, noise, dust and traffic and lighting, will have a temporary effect on existing surrounding uses.</p>

c) the trans frontier nature of the impact;	During operation, the project when complete will result in a positive long-term effect through the provision of off-street parking and re-use of an existing derelict site.
d) the magnitude intensity and complexity of the impact;	The project will not result in transboundary impacts.
e) the probability of the impact;	As set out above, impacts arising during construction will be temporary and managed through best practice construction guidelines with respect of excavation, soil removal, dust, traffic and lighting. Waste generated during the construction process will be controlled through measures adopted in a waste management plan.
f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	Regarding the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impacts, it should be noted that no significant impacts are anticipated with respect to construction or operation of the facility. Impacts associated with construction are expected to last approximately 140 days, during standard and regularised construction hours of operation. Impacts associated with operation, such as lighting, noise and traffic will be in line with the proposed operating hours.
g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;	The Tipperary County Council planning databases was searched to determine if any nearby plans or projects were likely to result in potentially significant cumulative impacts. The most notable approved or planned developments are located adjacent to the site, along the eastern boundary. Reg. Ref.: 16600776 has been granted an Extension of Duration permission for the provision of retail store, approx. 3742m ² in size. In addition, Reg. Ref.: 17600911, is located approx. 325m southeast of the site has received planning approval to construct a new primary school. Therefore, there are no anticipated cumulative impacts arising from the proposed development in combination with existing or approved projects.
h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	With respect to the possibility of effectively reducing the impact the design of the project has been optimised to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised as much as possible. These impacts are not considered significant and do not result in a requirement for EIA.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed development does not meet or exceed Schedule 5, Part 1 or Part 2 thresholds and criteria, and as such, EIA is not mandatory.

The proposed development can be considered a sub-threshold project under Part 2 Class 10 (b) (iv) & (ii), as well as under Part 2 Classes 14 & 15. A screening determination is required for a sub-threshold development.

An EIA screening has been carried out considering the nature of the proposed development, its size and location having due regard to the criteria listed in Schedule 7 and the relevant information listed in Schedule 7A. It is concluded that the proposed development will not result in significant effects on the environment. Furthermore, the proposed development is anticipated to result in long term positive effects due to the proposed re-use of an existing derelict site and provision of off-street parking (vehicle and bicycle) facilities.

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