



An
Bord
Pleanála

S. 4(1) of Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016

Inspector's Report ABP-303137-18

Strategic Housing Development

Construction of 240 residential units,
crèche and all associated site works

Location

Ardarostig, Bishopstown, Co. Cork

Planning Authority

Cork County Council

Applicant

Ardstone Homes Ltd.

Prescribed Bodies

Minister for Culture, Heritage and the
Gaeltacht

The Heritage Council

An Taisce

An Chomhairle Ealaíon

Fáilte Ireland

Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Irish Water
Commission for Energy Regulation
Health and Safety Authority
Cork City Council
Cork County Council Local Childcare
Committee

Observer(s) 9 no submissions/observations

Date of Site Inspection 1st March 2019

Inspector Joanna Kelly

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1.0 Introduction

This is an assessment of a proposed strategic housing development submitted to the Board under section 4(1) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 as amended.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1. The development site is currently located within the jurisdiction of Cork County Council. The lands immediately north of the site are located within the jurisdiction of the City Council where the policies and objective of the City Council Development Plan 2015 are applicable. This area will be located within the jurisdiction of Cork City Council once the urban city boundary has been extended later this year. The subject site, which has a stated area of approximately 9.14 hectares, is located on Waterfall Road, Ardarostig, Bishopstown just south of the N40 and west of the Bandon roundabout. The site is approximately 5km south of Cork city centre and approx. 4kms from Ballincollig.
- 2.2. The northern boundary of the site fronts onto Waterfall Road and there are a number of mature trees/hedgerow along this site boundary. Waterfall road is a narrow rural type road characterised generally with hedgerow and trees on either side. The site is currently in agricultural use and comprises of one large field with hedgerow to the perimeter. This is a visually prominent site, with the levels rising steeply towards the southern boundary. A Seveso site, Irish Oxygen Company, is located approximately 100 metres to the western boundary of the site, which is accessed a narrow c. 3m wide country road which is in poor condition. There are overhead power lines traversing the site. There are detached residential properties either side of the site on Waterfall road.
- 2.3. Mary Mount Hospice is located approximately 600m west of the site and is accessed via a private road. This road, while containing barriers, is currently accessible by the public and provides a through route from Waterfall Road to Curraheen Roundabout. The site is visible from this roundabout and also from various locations within the Halldene housing development north of the site on the opposite side of the N40.

3.0 Proposed Strategic Housing Development

3.1 Table 1: Number of Residential Units proposed

Units Type	No of units	% of each Unit type
Houses		
2 bed	28	11.7%
3 bed	92	38.3%
4 bed	34	14.2%
Total houses	154	64.2%
Duplex Units		
1 bed	18	7.5%
2 bed	34	14.2%
Apartment Units		
1 bed	8	3.3%
2 bed	26	10.8%
Total Apts and duplexes	86	35.8%
Total Apartments	240	100%

3.1. Table 2: Key development details

Detail	Proposal
No. of Units	240 units
Site Area – stated by applicant	9.07ha red-line boundary 6.84ha developable area
Density	35 units per hectare net (stated by applicant)
Building Height	2 to 4 storeys
Public Open Space	13.3% of total developable site area
Dual Aspect Apartments	93%
Childcare Facility	522 sq.m.

4.0 Planning History

There appears to be no recent relevant planning history associated with the development site.

5.0 Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation

5.1. Overview

A section 5 pre-application consultation took place at the office of An Bord Pleanála on 25 May 2018. The main topics raised for discussion at the tripartite meeting were based on the agenda that issued in advance as follows:

- Development Strategy for the site to include consistency with zoning objective and national policy, density, integration of development site with strategic land bank.
- Urban Design to include layout; open space; connectivity/permeability
- Traffic and Transportation
- Irish Water Confirmation of Feasibility
- Drainage including flood risk - service connection via adjoining local authority.
- Archaeology
- Any other Matters

A copy of the Inspector's report and Opinion is on the file for reference by the Board. A copy of the record of the meeting is also available on the file.

5.2. Notification of Opinion

An Bord Pleanála issued notification that, it was of the opinion, the documents submitted with the request to enter into consultations, require further consideration and amendment to constitute a reasonable basis for an application for strategic

housing development. The following is a brief synopsis of the issues noted in the Opinion that needed to be addressed:

1. Density

Further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to the density in the proposed development. This consideration and justification should have regard to, inter alia, the minimum densities provided for in the 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' (May 2009) in relation to such sites. Particular regard should be had to need to develop at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable land usage given the proximity of the site to Bishopstown and Cork City Centre, to established social and community services in the vicinity and to nearby strategic land reserves. The further consideration of this issue may require an amendment to the documents and/or design proposal submitted relating to density and layout of the proposed development.

2. Design, Layout and Unit Mix

Further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to the layout of the proposed development particularly in relation to the 12 criteria set out in the Urban Design Manual which accompanies the above mentioned Guidelines and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. In addition to density which is addressed above, the matters of unit mix; arrangement and hierarchy of streets; the creation of character areas within a high-quality scheme should all be given further consideration. Further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

3. Public Open Space

Further consideration of the documents as they relate to the open space proposed particularly in the context of the quantum of open space proposed, the surveillance of the open space, the usability of the active open space and proposals for passive open space in the context of landscaping proposals. In addition, further

consideration of the documents as they relate to pedestrian and cycle facilities connecting the proposed development with nearby centres, existing transport services and existing amenities and facilities. The further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design rationale submitted.

The Opinion notification pursuant to article 285(5)(b) also referred to specific information that should be submitted with any application as follows:

1. Drainage details, having regard to Pre-Connection Enquiry Report of Irish Water dated 14th August 2018, together with section 4.6 of the Cork County Council report dated 10th August 2018 and 'Drainage Issues' section of response from Cork City Council, dated 23rd August 2018.
2. Archaeological Impact Assessment and Geophysical Survey.
3. Ecological Survey of existing trees and hedgerows which clearly identifies all trees proposed for removal.
4. TIA which considers impact on wider area including potential for creation of rat run-through Marymount Hospice.
5. A phasing plan for the delivery of the proposed development.
6. A site layout plan indicating what areas are to be taken in charge by the planning authority.
7. A report identifying demand for school places likely to be generated by the proposal and the capacity of existing schools in the vicinity to cater for such demand.
8. A Building Lifecycle Report, as per section 6.13 of Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018).
9. A Childcare Demand Report outlining anticipated demand likely to be generated by the proposal and the capacity of existing childcare facilities in the vicinity to cater for such demand.

5.3. Applicant's Statement

The applicant has submitted a statement of response to ABP Opinion's which is briefly summarised as follows:

Item 1

Density

Response

The density of the proposed development is 35 units per hectare which is an increase of the 30 units per hectare on the original layout. This application is accompanied by a planning and design statement which provides the rationale for the proposed density of development having regard to all governing policies and site-specific design considerations.

Item 2

Design, Layout and Unit Mix

Response

The proposed layout has been revised to reflect the feedback from ABP. Section 5 of the planning and design statement includes focused justification on the design approach as it relates to the Urban Design Manual. The layout design includes a clear hierarchy of link streets, local streets, and homes zones.

Item 3

Open Space

Response

Section 6 of the planning and design statement provides detailed commentary on proposed open space, including quantum of that proposed, its quality and usability

and interrelationships with other layout design considerations. The application will provide for the extension of the existing local footpath network on the Waterfall Road.

With regard to the specific additional information required, the applicant has submitted/ responded as follows:

- Details are submitted regarding separate confirmation letters of connection feasibility and design acceptance by Irish Water. In order to connect to the waste water network it will be necessary to upgrade an existing pumping station adjacent the proposed development site. This is an IW owned asset and all design aspects have been agreed with them.
- An Archaeological Impact Assessment and Geophysical Report was requested and has been submitted which indicates no definitive patterns of archaeological character are evident in the survey results.
- An Ecological Survey Report has been submitted.
- A Traffic and Transport Assessment which the applicant indicates deals with the salient traffic considerations has been submitted. The contents of this report were scoped with Cork City Council and County Council Engineering Officials.
- A phasing plan for the development is enclosed.
- A site layout plan which sets out what areas are to be taken in charge is enclosed.
- School Place Demand Assessment is enclosed
- A Building Life Cycle Report is submitted.
- A Childcare Needs Assessment is submitted.

6.0 Relevant Planning Policy

6.1. Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework

The NPF includes a Chapter, No. 6 entitled 'People, Homes and Communities'. It sets out that place is intrinsic to achieving good quality of life. A number of key policy objectives are noted as follows:

National Planning Objective 13 provides that "in urban areas, planning and related standards, including in particular, height and car parking will be based on performance criteria that seek to achieve well-designed high-quality outcomes in order to achieve targeted growth. These standards will be subject to a range of tolerance that enables alternative solutions to be proposed to achieve stated outcomes, provided public safety is not compromised and the environment is suitably protected".

National Policy Objective 33 seeks to "prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location".

National Policy Objective 35 seeks "to increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including restrictions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights".

6.2. **Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines**

The following is a list of section 28 Ministerial Guidelines considered of relevance to the proposed development. Specific policies and objectives are referenced within the assessment where appropriate.

- 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' (including the associated 'Urban Design Manual')
- 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (DMURS)
- 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (including the associated 'Technical Appendices')
- 'Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities'

- ‘Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’
- ‘Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment’, August 2018.
- Urban Development and Building Height, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2018.

Other relevant guidelines include:

- Rebuilding Ireland: Action for Homelessness
- Guidelines for Planning Authority, Appropriate Assessment, NPWS
- Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands 1999.

6.3. Local Planning Policy

6.3.1 The Cork County Development Plan 2014 is the operative County Development Plan for the area. The site is located within the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area. Of particular note are the provisions of the following objectives:

HOU 3-1: Sustainable Residential Communities

a) Ensure that all new development within the County supports the achievement of sustainable residential communities. The Council will have regard to the provisions of the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, in development plan preparation and in assessing applications for development through the development management process.

b) Promote development which prioritises and facilitates walking, cycling and public transport use, both within individual developments and in the wider context of linking developments together and providing connections to the wider area, existing facilities and public transport nodes such as bus and rail stops.

c) Following the approach in chapter 10 of this plan, ensure that urban footpaths and public lighting are provided connecting all residential developments to the existing

network of footpaths in an area and that the works required to give effect to this objective are identified early in the planning process to ensure such infrastructure is delivered in tandem with the occupation.

HOU 3-2: Urban Design

a) Ensure that all new urban development is of a high design quality and supports the achievement of successful urban spaces and sustainable communities. The Council will have regard to the provisions of the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, the accompanying Urban Design Manual and the Council's Design Guide for Residential Estate Development in development plan preparation and in assessing applications for development through the development management process.

b) Provide additional guidance, including principles and policies, on urban design issues at a local level, responding to local circumstances and issues. Where appropriate Local Area Plans will consider the need for the provision of additional guidance in the form of design briefs for important, sensitive or large scale development sites.

c) Require the submission of design statements with all applications for residential development in order to facilitate the proper evaluation of the proposal relative to key objectives of the Development Plan with regard to the creation of sustainable residential communities.

d) Require developers to take account of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).

Majority of the site is located within a High Value Landscape- Policy GI 6-1 and GI 6-2 applies- Landscape Character Type 1 'City Harbour and Estuary' with landscape importance of 'National'. The location, siting and design of large scale developments within these areas will need careful consideration.

6.3.2 Ballinacollig Carrigaline LAP 2017

The site is located within the development boundary of the Cork City South Environs.

Zoning: Residential Zoning-Medium B (12-25 units per hectare)

Relevant Objectives:

SE-R-10- Medium B density residential development which will be restricted to the low-lying northern portion of the site and will include appropriate improvements to the local road network. Development will be serviced by a single estate road access and there will be no access from individual properties on to the local road. The southern portion of the site should be landscaped and developed as a usable public or private open space

6.4 Applicant's Statement of Consistency

The applicant has submitted a statement of consistency with relevant policy required under Section 8(1)(iv) of the Act which provides, *inter alia*:

- The proposal is consistent with all strategic aims and objectives contained in the NPF. The development accords with the NPO 2a, 4 and 8 which aim to increase Cork City and suburbs to a minimum population of 314,000 by 2040. The site is close to existing population centres, and local services with a District Centre at Wilton and Local and Neighbourhood centres identified in the current Cork City Development Plan 2015. The proposal will contribute to the positive increase in residential density in the area. It will contribute directly to the realisation of compact growth and provide a critical mass of population to underpin the viability of public transport, provide sustainable mobility across the site and to other areas and deliver a new childcare facility.
- The location and suitability of the site as well as the proposed mix of dwellings ensures that the proposal will contribute positively to meeting the pillar three objective of Rebuilding Ireland.
- The proposal is in accordance with the identified policy requirements contained in the 2018 Apartment Guidelines. The proposed mix is consistent with the standards identified in SPR1 and SPPR3 in relation to minimum floor areas. 93% of the duplex units will be at least dual aspect as per SPPR4.

- With regard to the Urban Design Manual, the development will act as a natural and planned extension to southern edge of Cork City. The proposed density of 35 units per hectare is an appropriate scale of development having regard to site constraints, the local grain of development and policy requirements to make the most efficient use of zoned development lands. Provision for efficient and convenient connections and linkages throughout the site is made. The layout is shaped by the central arterial route which runs through the site linking to a number of distinct neighbourhoods. The site is a short distance from a range of public amenities and employment centres including Wilton Shopping Centre, Bishopstown/Curraheen, Cork University Hospital and Cork IT including other sporting grounds and recreational facilities. The variety of house types and quality of all public spaces will provide for an inclusive development. It is proposed to provide 22 no. different house/apartment types and a number of different 'Character Areas'. Due to the elevated nature of the southern portion of the site a unique recreational opportunity exists at this location for an amenity walk and wider landscape views.
- The proposed development promotes walkability and sustainable transport patterns by way of location and layout.
- The design and layout of the proposed open spaces will contribute to an enhanced sense of place and will serve as nodes for communal activities.
- The retention and supplementation of existing hedgerows and planting will contribute to the preservation of the existing character of the site and wider area of Ardarostig.
- The proposed street hierarchy promotes a safe environment for all users.
- The site is located outside any identified flood risk area. The inclusion of policy objectives under section 1.8 of the LAP corroborates the overall consistency in approach with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.
- The application includes a proposal for a 60 child creche to meet potential future needs.
- The proposal is consistent with the overall population growth and sustainable development in the southern region.

- The lands are located in a strategically prominent location in the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- The South City Environs has been identified as an area which requires appropriate population growth to allow the Cork Gateway to compete for investment and jobs in the future.
- The site is within walking distance of high frequency urban bus services, within the 208 route going from Marymount to Mayfield via the City Centre and the 205 going from the CIT campus to Kent Train Station.
- The proposed development is also primed to benefit from a number of improvements to local connectivity including connection to the City South West Greenway (CSW-GW4). The extended CSW-GW4 will connect with the proposed Ballincollig Greenway (BC-GW2) at a Gateway location, approximately 400m from the site. Approximately 400m to the east of the site entrance is the CSW-U23, a proposed secondary route with a mixed street on-road environment. This will act as a link between CSW-GW4 and CSW-GW5B, the disused Kinsale Rail Line Greenway. (For clarity, these routes contained in the Cork Cycle Network Plan)
- While the zoning objective for the land and local policy would suggest a target density for the lands of 12-25 per hectare, national guidelines encourage a density of 35 dwellings per hectare on zoned residential lands.
- It is proposed to transfer 20 no. units to meet the Part V requirement.
- The proposal provides 0.92ha or 13.45% of useable public open space within the developable site area. The development provides for 3 no. local play areas and 4 no. neighbourhood play areas throughout the development.
- As per Objective SC 1-1 a range of community and multi-use facilities will be provided.
- Private open space provision for dwellings is in accordance with standards and guidance outlined in the documents referenced.
- The proposed development promotes walkability and pedestrian movements within the site and within the wider context. The Future Connections map illustrates how the site will function within its overall context.

- The site itself is accessible on foot from the south of the city via an existing overpass and footpath traversing the N40 which is a short walk to the east of the site. An existing footpath terminates near the northeast corner of the site. This will be extended to provide direct pedestrian access to and from the site.
- A strong emphasis has been placed on the needs of cyclists within the development. The site is uniquely positioned to capitalise on a number of proposed cycle infrastructure upgrades in the coming years.
- The site is within walking distance i.e. up to 15 minutes of high frequency urban bus services, with the 208 route running from Marymount to Mayfield via the City Centre and the 205 operating from the CIT campus to Kent Train Station.
- A TTA assesses the potential for effects on the surrounding road network and key junctions in the vicinity of the site which will serve occupants of the proposed development
- A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and Traffic and Transport Assessment has been prepared. All vehicular movements will be accommodated via a singular access which can provide adequate sightlines.
- The proposal accords with all bicycle and parking requirements as per the CDP standards.
- The site is not located in a flood risk area and is not in the vicinity of a Natura 2000 site.
- One of the key factors of the proposed development is the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment. Existing hedgerows along the western, southern and eastern boundaries are to be retained.
- An archaeological assessment confirms that no recorded archaeological sites exist within the development site.
- The layout, materials and design of the proposed buildings are in accordance with Objective HE 4-6. The modern approach of building design compliments the existing character of the area and the retention and supplementation of existing field boundaries will assist in providing a contemporary and sustainable residential development which integrates with the surrounding landscape.

- The subject site is located within an area identified as a ‘High Landscape Area’ in the CDP. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment including photomontages accompanies the application.
- The subject site cannot be viewed from the two scenic routes in the vicinity of the site.
- The site is included within Zoning Objective SE-R-10 of the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017. The proposal complies with the policy and objective for the site insofar that development is omitted from the elevated southern portion of the site.

7.0 Observer Submissions

A total of 9 no. observations were received in respect of the proposed development. A brief summary of each submission received is set out hereunder:

1. Mr. Pat Desmond on behalf of Heatherfield Waterfall Management Company Ltd.

- Cork County Council in its Metropolitan Cork Strategic Land Reverse Site Assessment Report stated that major water services infrastructure requirements, as well as major local road and junction lands are not well placed to deliver housing in the short/medium term.
- Given existing congestion in the area and pending the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy development of these SLR lands is considered premature at this time.
- Local road network is deficient, lacking in footpaths and public lighting.
- Significant upgrading of the N71 to dual carriageway standards would be required.
- Development of the SLR6 West is more difficult as it does not have suitable access to the local road network. The site is not within the catchment of high frequency bus services and proposals for connectivity to the local cycle network.
- Locality is zoned for lower density housing which is more in-keeping and sympathetic to the environs.
- There are no provisions in the proposal for required widening of the road to accommodate a bus stop. The nearest bus stop is 15 mins walk away and it is

proposed to extend the existing footpath to establish connectivity with this public transport.

- No provisions for a cycle path is provided.
- The traffic assessment completed was done on a Bank Holiday weekend and was not completed to the west of the Marymount Hospice private road.
- The impact of the traffic turning right from the Waterfall Road into the proposed development has not been addressed.
- The issue of storm water run-off from the high ground to the south of the site does not appear to have been addressed in site drainage or flood risk assessment report.
- The road still floods several times a year resulting in loss of pedestrian and cycle access and also vehicular access.
- Proposal will increase demand for school places.
- The proposed green areas are south of the site where topography is steepest.
- The apartment structures are not in keeping with the semi-rural character of the locality.
- Photomontages of the site do not accurately reflect the visual impact from viewpoints 1,3,4 and 5.
- Request that the application is refused.

2. Michael Daly on behalf of the Rise Residents Association

- Waterfall road is not sufficient to cater for increased traffic arising from the proposal.
- There is an unauthorised rat run from Waterfall Road to Curraheen Road and the N22 via Marymount Hospice. Closure of this road would result in a significant increase in daily traffic through The Rise Housing Estate.
- Given existing congestion in the area and the pending nature of the Cork Metropolitan Transport Strategy the proposal is premature pending the delivery of significant road and public transport improvements.
- The local road is deficient.
- The development of SLR6 West south of the proposed development is more difficult as it does not have suitable access to the local road networks and is not within the catchment of high frequency bus services.

- The options for connecting the proposed development site to the wider area are either non-existent or are significantly constrained.
- Traffic hazard will arise from the proposed development.
- Alternatively there should be a condition attached that the Bandon Road/Waterfall Road junction should be improved at the applicant's expense prior to the first occupation of the proposed development.

3. McCutcheon Halley on behalf of Denis Maher

- Mr. Maher's property adjoins the south-west boundary of the site.
- It is requested that the Board implement a condition in any grant of permission ensuring that all potential future links as proposed and illustrated are carried out to the boundary line to safeguard Mr. Maher's property and allow for easily readymade connection points particularly given that the lands to the south-east are ear marked as a strategic land reserve and will fall within the Cork City boundary in May 2019.

4. McCutcheon Halley on behalf of Pat Coveney

- Mr. Coveney owns lands (outlined in Figure submitted) to the north of the development site.
- The development will form part of the City Council in 2019.
- The development proposed shares the same local access road as the Coveney land i.e. Waterfall Road. The application indicates that there has been relatively little consultation with Cork City Council on traffic and transportation issues.
- The traffic assessment does not include the specific cumulative impact of parallel development of the Ardstone and Coveney lands. This impact ought to be considered.
- The status of Strategic Land Reserve (SLR) is not clear at present.
- The application fails to address the planning objectives for the Coveney land which is currently zoned for residential development.
- The principle of consistency with the current planning policy context requires that both the application and the Coveney lands should be developed in a coordinated way for similar density and within similar timeframes.

- It could be argued that, in the event that both schemes could not be serviced in the short term, priority should be given to the development of the Coveney lands which are closer to the built-up area and more suitable for higher density.
- With regards to water infrastructure it is set out that the proposal to upgrade an existing foul sewage pumping station to accommodate the development and then pump sewage via an existing main to the IW network to the north-east of the site is not the most sustainable option as it would not facilitate the Coveney lands.
- The use of the Coveney pump-station site and rising main to Halldene can be designed to accommodate both sites and is more sustainable.
- It is requested that ABP require co-ordination of development by the two landowners/developers.

5. Brian Ronayne on behalf of Mr Aby Thomas.

- Client's property is approximately 29m west of the south-western corner of the development site.
- Concerns about impact of the development on his property.
- Privacy will be reduced.
- Consider the design of the development on the south-western corner to reduce the negative impact that the development will have.

6. Jack Purcell on behalf of Sean Murphy

- Folio Maps are enclosed which indicates that the thin strip of ground which forms part of the Folio abuts the public road and the lands the subject of the application.

7. Tom and Mary Hayes and Others

- Reference is made to the Metropolitan Cork Strategic Land Reserve Site Assessment Report indicating that there are significant infrastructural constraints to the development of SLR6 in the vicinity of the proposed development and have been determined to be premature by the County Council.
- The design of the proposed apartment buildings are unsympathetic to the character of the existing properties to the north.
- The suggestion that the development site is within walking distance of a multitude of bus routes is misleading. 15mins walk to a bus service is not acceptable.

- The applicant does not propose any dedicated external cycle connectivity as part of the proposed development.
- The applicant should provide pedestrian and cycle connectivity from the proposed site to Marymount Hospice to catch the no. 208 bus as well as the planned Greenway to the west.
- Existing residents would never walk on the Waterfall Road as it is extremely dangerous.
- The applicant's proposals for connectivity with the SLR lands are questionable and connections are generally over-stated. Permission should be refused on this basis.
- ABP should consider current deficiencies of the Waterfall Road in terms of width, alignment and capacity and whether or not it is sufficient to cater for a further 433 no. cars arising from the proposed development.
- RFC would be more pronounced at the Bandon Road/Waterfall Road has the applicant taken the existing unauthorised rat run into account through Marymount Hospice.
- No solution has been proposed by the applicant to address the increased level of traffic accessing Waterfall Road from the Bandon Road.
- Permission should be refused as a consequence of the traffic hazard that will arise from the proposed development. Alternatively, a condition should be attached that the Bandon Road/Waterfall Road junction should be improved at the applicant's expense prior to the first occupation of the proposed development.
- Surface water frequently flows from the proposed site onto the Waterfall Road. The Council installed a holding tank in 2010 in the vicinity of Waterfall Road, however, the issue of surface water run-off persists.
- The Flood Risk Assessment considers the risk of groundwater flooding to be low, despite there being no site investigation data available to assess this.
- Have serious reservations that the proposal will remove a large natural surface water storage areas which will lead to increased waterlogging of adjoining properties on the north-western boundary.
- Request that ABP consider the nature and extent of the proposed development site as currently viewed from the rear private space of the existing dwellings located to the north-west.

- The nearest proposed dwelling is just 14.3m to the east of the existing residences on Waterfall Road and that house no. 78 is c. 3m higher than the existing residences.
- It is also noted that the FFLs of houses 79-96 are c. 6m higher than the existing residences to their immediate north. This is exacerbated by the three-storey height of the house no's 93-96.
- The proposal will have a significantly overbearing and overlooking impact on the existing residential amenities of the properties along the north-western boundary of the development site.
- Units 51, 78 and 79-96 should be omitted as a minimum to protect the amenities of the existing properties.
- The location of the proposed lattice steel mast structure c. 40 feet in height adjacent to the southern boundary of one of the existing residential properties should be relocated to the east of that property in the area where the proposed house no. 51 and 78 are to be omitted.
- The apartment blocks fail to make any contribution to the overall design of the proposed development. The design approach should be re-considered.
- The extent of ground works required to facilitate the development is of great concern. There is a history of subsidence in the area. The extent of cut is not quantified.
- The photomontage report does not appear to illustrate the visual impact of the entire development in particular its south-eastern extent i.e. house no's 173-186 as well as house no's 79-100. With FFLs of up to 44.5m and ridge heights of 52.5m it would be expected that these units would be visible at least from viewpoint 4 notwithstanding the significant cut.
- The application does not represent proper planning and sustainable development.

8. G O Corrain

- Proposal represents leap frogging rather than sequential development of the Metropolitan area.
- Proposal would result in an overly prominent built-up island of development on a hill surrounded by fields and will have serious and adverse effects on the landscape character of the rural area.

- Development would create a precedent in terms of housing sprawl onto unsuitable elevated lands on the southern side of the south link.
- Proposal will involve quarrying and extensive changes to land levels because of its topography. It appears that the buildings will break the skyline exacerbating the adverse effects on the rural landscape character of the area.
- Proposals are contrary to the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and accompanying Design Manual.

9. Earls Well Residents Team

- The Traffic and Transportation Assessment was undertaken on a Saturday, Sunday and Monday and included both a weekend and a bank holiday weekend.
- The TTA refers to the potential closure of a private link (Marymount Hospice) but does not address the impact the closure of this road would have on traffic patterns and volumes. The closure of this road would result in a significant volume of traffic being diverted onto the Bandon Road/Waterfall Rd junction.
- Opposed to any new large-scale development until a feasible and scalable plan is developed for surrounding road network.

8.0 Planning Authority Submission

8.1. Overview

The planning authority, Cork County Council has made a submission which was received by ABP 5th February 2019. The report notes the 9 observations/submissions received and summarised the issues raised.

8.2 Summary of Views of Elected Members

A synopsis of the comments/views in respect of the proposed development is set out as follows:

- While the need for housing is acknowledged, there are serious concerns about the proposed development
- The site is isolated and remote in terms of its location and lacks the required connectivity to community facilities and local services rendering it car dependent and unsustainable
- The proposed development has no regard to the zoning objective of the site as per the Ballincollig Carrigaline LAP 2017
- The density proposed is too great particularly having regard to its edge of settlement location
- Infrastructure that is appropriate and timely is needed to support this development
- The road serving the proposed development is narrow and completely unsuitable to cater for the traffic which will be generated by the development
- The distance to bus stops and local shops from the site is too great for pedestrians and will result in unsustainable traffic movements
- There is a lack of amenities and schools in the area to serve the proposed development
- The protection of Cork's ridges has been a long-standing policy of Cork County Council and the proposal due to density fails to protect the ridge and would result in a visually obtrusive development
- Permitting housing developments without the required infrastructure is not acceptable as trying to retrospectively install the services is difficult and takes a long time and generally this represents bad planning. The estate in Lehenaghmore is cited as an example of same where 10 years on infrastructure deficiencies are still being addressed
- The number of two bedroomed houses proposed is insufficient to cater for the needs of smaller families
- Some of the public open space areas would be attractive for anti-social behaviour
- Proposals for duplex units should be reconsidered as they are not appropriate for Irish weather (steps become dangerous in wet and icy weather),

8.3 Planning Analysis

The report which sets out the principle planning considerations and response to issues raised is summarised as follows:

Principle of the development and Compliance with County Development Plan and Local Area Plan

- Site located within the settlement of Cork City South Environs as identified in the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District LAP 2017.
- Cork City South Environs is identified as a 'Main Town' in the settlement hierarchy.
- Site is zoned for medium density B and informed by the Cork CDP 2014-2020.
- The specific zoning of the site is SE-R-10.
- The density of the proposed development is 35.1 units per hectare which does not comply with the specific density requirements as set out in policy objective SE-R-10.
- If the total site area figure is used (9.07) the density is still in excess of the range identified in HOU 4-1 although only marginally at 26.5 units per ha.
- The proposal is contrary to SE-R-10 of the LAP and HOU 4-1 of the CDP.
- It is considered that part of the development has encroached into the southern portion of the site and has not been restricted to the low lying northern portion and represents a contravention of the zoning objective.
- The proposed development does include improvements to the local road network with provision of a pedestrian footpath. It is also served by a single estate road access and the southern portion of the site is proposed as a public open space. In this regard, the proposed development complies with this element of the zoning objective.

Density and quantum of development

- It is acknowledged that in Hou 4-1 it states that in the Medium B category, densities between 25 and 35 dwellings/ha will be considered where an

exceptional market requirement is identified. The appropriate density for this site, should be informed by the actual tangible character of the area within which it is located.

- Regard should be had to the Metropolitan Cork Strategic Land Reserve Site Assessment Process (Oct 2018) document and in particular SLR-6 (pg. 19) which is located in Ardostig/Chetwynd and where a number of constraints to development were identified and where Cork County Council concluded that development of this site may be premature at this time and lands are not well placed to deliver housing in the short/medium term.
- Density is not appropriate. Linkages to public transport are too far away and have been over-estimated in the application document. It has not been adequately demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity in local schools to accommodate population generated by the proposal. Nearest shops are 15 minutes away. There is poor cycle connectivity. Finally, there is serious concern that the road network needs significant improvement to accommodate the proposed development and there seems to be no clear commitment or timeframe for the provision of these improvements.

Quality of the Layout/Design including Open Space Provision

- It is considered that the distinctiveness of the character areas do not really come across in the proposal.
- Other than the immediate front part of the site which contains apartments which have an urban feel and identity, the remaining two thirds of the site have similar density, are characterised by long rows of housing bookended by shorter rows and which are serviced by similar sized roadways. There is a strong emphasis on linear development in an east-west axis of housing which is remarkably similar.
- The size and location of open space areas pocketed throughout the development fail to achieve a sense of hierarchy.
- It is the Council's opinion that three storey apartment blocks at this location do not integrate well with the surrounding development particularly the adjoining

detached single storey dwellings to the east. The rural character of the road in terms of width and vegetation also sets the character and apartment blocks of this design and layout would represent a disconnected form of development in the area.

- It is acknowledged that the area is in transition and will eventually become urbanised. However, it is still considered that the proposed apartments and the design of character area 1 has not taken enough cognisance of the context it lies within.
- The front of the site could be seriously impacted if the requirements outlined in TII submission, Cork City and County Council's respective Roads Design and Traffic and Transportation Reports are taken into account.
- There is a difference of 9.37m between roof/ridge line of the proposed apartment block H1 and that of the ridge line of the existing house 75m to the east. This is excessive.
- The proposed footpath along the northern side of the site appears to contain a number of steps to breach the level changes in the site. It is not clear if this path can facilitate buggies, etc. Although it is noted that the proposed public footpath could be used as an alternative.
- The duplex blocks and apartment blocks are all very similar in design and offer a very domineering elevation to the front of this estate.
- There is concern regarding the quality of the private amenity space serving the ground floor apartments in Duplex Blocks A and B.
- It is considered that the layout and design at the main and only vehicular entrance into the site could be vastly improved. On approach into the estate, the viewpoint is framed by a triumvirate of three storey buildings. There is parallel parking on both sides of the entry road. Visually and practically this does not work.
- The Duplex A3 unit access to the garden with the ground floor apartment is through the master bedroom. The private amenity space serving the ground floor apartments are also directly overlooked by the kitchen/living room windows of the duplex units at first and second floor.

- Units 17 to 50 occupy a sloping part of the site ranging in contour levels. The quality of private amenity space is questionable given the potential for overlooking from units at higher levels.
- It is considered that Character Area 1 lacks usable open space provision. Character area 2 has a large open space area but it has a level difference of 4m from northeast to southwest. There is a Neighbourhood Play Area and two local Play areas in character area 2 but the two LPAs are too close together.
- The hill to the south is so elevated that it cannot be considered as usable open space and hence not included in the calculation for same. The presence of a viewing platform at the proposed location is not advisable as experience indicates that these become areas for anti-social behaviour.
- The issues relating to the corner duplex units are applicable for all these units – overlooking of ground floor amenity space and accessibility to same.
- Rear windows of units 78 and 77 have potential to overlook the private back garden of the house immediately west of the site.
- Given the elevated nature of row with unit numbers 79 to 96 and the proximity of the third party private amenity space, it is questionable whether these units should have been orientated in this manner.
- It is proposed to construct two 12m high type F lattice pylons on the site. These structures have not been included in the architectural site section drawings. The southern structure in particular would be at a very elevated position. The position of the proposed pylon 6m south of an existing property is also inappropriate and there are concerns about the visual impact and devaluation of property.
- The site sections particularly section A show the dramatic extent of excavation required of existing ground levels to accommodate development on the steeply sloping southern section of the site. The proposed development does not respect the existing contour lines.
- ABP may wish to consider omitting units 97 to 112, the LPA and the parking area to avoid this level of excavation and scarring on the hillside. It is noted

that the zoning objective of the site requires development to be restricted to the low lying northern portion of the site.

- Part of this site is extremely prominent being one of those prominent hilltops which defines Cork's character and there is serious concern that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity and character of this part of the Cork area.

Visual Impact and Landscape

- The site has the highest designation of landscape protection as identified in the Cork County Development Plan. It is located in a 'High Value Landscape' and has a Character Type 1 described as 'City Harbour and Estuary'. This means the landscape has a very high value and sensitivity and is of National importance.
- Policy Objective GI 6-1 Landscape of the CDP requires protection of skylines and ridgelines from development and discourages proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amount of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments. Policy Objective GI 6-2 seeks to minimise the visual and environmental impact of development.
- The viewpoints in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage report do not necessarily correspond. The conclusions of the LVIA are questionable. (I refer to detailed response within my assessment so as to avoid duplication).
- A tree survey has been submitted. Ideally tree no's 1957 and 1956 would not be within private rear gardens/or nearby same as these oak and ash trees are in good condition and are both mature so their spread may cause excessive shade in rear gardens and are in danger of being felled.
- The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on this High Value Landscape and would have a long-term negative impact on the visual amenities and visual character of the area.

Integration with the Character and Pattern of Development in the Area

- It is difficult to see how this proposal will not look 'dropped in' and alien to its surroundings.

- However, the site is zoned and the area is in transition so it is likely that any new residential development would be difficult to integrate well until other urban developments are constructed in the vicinity.
- Cognisance must be had to existing residents who have a right of privacy and whose properties should not be devalued as a result of the proposal.
- It is considered that reducing the density, increasing the open space provision to at least 15% and omitting some of the more urban type elements such as apartment blocks/duplexes would help soften the development and integrate it better with the existing pattern of development.
- This site is located on the southern side of the N40. The Bishopstown area is located on the northern side of the N40. There are no zoned lands to the west or the south so this would represent an outer/edge of settlement location which is severed from the 'City' area by a motorway. It is therefore crucial to provide adequate paths, cycle-paths, and roadways which would connect the proposal to the main development area to the north.
- The provision of a footpath along the northern boundary is welcomed.
- There are no proposals to provide a cycle path from the site to connect it to the rest of the settlement area. This represents a serious and fundamental flaw which undermines the proposal.
- The omission of road widening of the Waterfall Road and the failure to allow for road widening in the future could threaten the sustainable development of the area.
- Future connections are indicated and roads should be brought right up to the red-line boundary.

Housing Mix

- Housing mix is dominated by three bed houses which represent 39% of the overall total. There should be a greater number of 2 bed houses rather than proposing two bed apartments.

Recreation and Amenity

- A development of this scale requires the provision of facilities equivalent to 40 points (240/6) of which a minimum of 30% (12 points) of the total points requirement to be provided on site and the remainder provided off site by way of monetary contribution.
- The development proposes a total point provision of 13 points on site. This represents a deficit of 27 points. Section 6.5.2 of the Planning and Design Statement submitted with the application makes no comment on how the deficit is to be provided. As no agreement is in place with the PA it is considered that the proposal does not comply with the Council's Recreation and Amenity Policy.
- The location and practicality of some of the play areas proposed should be re-considered. The NPA adjacent to the crèche is not well placed as it is immediately adjacent a bin store and private amenity area. This could result in a conflict in terms of odour and noise pollution.
- The NPA in the northwest corner of the site would be immediately adjacent to the front of the site. A 1.1m high guard rail is proposed to separate the play area from the planted embankment below it. There is a concern that this may not be high enough given the 4m level difference between the top of the embankment and the public road.
- The LPA to the south of units 35-40 appears to be split level and accessible on one side by steps. It is also surrounded on three sides by roads.

Part V

- No objection to Part V proposals

Crèche

- It is not clear whether proposal complies with the car parking standards outlined for childcare facilities in Appendix D of the CDP.

- Detail relating to the play area associated with the childcare facility is lacking in terms of boundary proposals and how these would visually tie in with the front of the estate.

Servicing/Estate Management

- All boundaries to the public spaces should be solid walls or existing ditches preserved and supplemented as much as possible.
- It is recommended that a condition be attached requiring the formation of a Management Company to cater for the shared needs of the residents of the apartment blocks.

Water/ Wastewater/Surface Water and Flooding Issues

- The DOSA Infrastructure report outlines that there is an existing pumping station serving four houses adjacent to the proposed development. In order to connect to the wastewater network, it will be necessary to decommission this and construct a new pumping station to pump wastewater within the confines of the existing pumping station compound across the N40 into the Cork City sewer network.
- The sewer network in this area of the city is stated to be currently at capacity and upgrades to the network will be required to facilitate the connection.
- The report from Cork County Council's Estates Department and Area Engineer require Cork City Council to clarify if there is capacity in the public sewer to take the run-off from this site.
- No issue in relation to flooding.

Traffic and Transportation

- A number of issues have been identified in terms of the TTA submitted. There appears to be issues with data collection, forward visibility distance to right turning at the proposed access, measures to reduce speeds, junctions, construction phase impact and mitigation measures, pedestrian provision, cycling provision and public transport provision.

- There is a discrepancy between the dates and days of the traffic counts and as such do not include school or college traffic representing a fundamental flaw in the analysis.
- Measures to ensure compliance with speed limit of 50 k/ph on Waterfall Road have not been confirmed and should include re-alignment on both sides of the Waterfall Road.
- With reference to Table 10.6 of the TTA, the assessment of the impact on Ardrostig Cross identifies over 100% increase in junction delays for the opening year 2020 in the PM peak and over 40% in the AM peak as a result of the proposed development. No mitigation appears to have been identified.
- Given the existing congestion and queuing in the area, it is likely that queuing would increase considerably and could impact on the National Road network.
- The submission from TII also highlights this issue and notes that the influence of the proposed signalised junction is not accounted for within the junction analysis presented with the TTA.
- Consideration of impact and mitigation measures for the operation of the national roads network needs to be addressed. The applicant has provided none.
- The application does not comprehensively address the issues surrounding the junction on the Waterfall Road with the Marymount Hospice.
- The proposal does not include sufficient detail of enhanced pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the subject site and existing bus stops.
- The development is deficient in terms of cycle connectivity to the wider area.
- Site is poorly served by existing bus routes.

Parking provision. Cycle Parking

- There is an issue with the location and dispersal of car parking particularly in relation to apartments and duplex units.

- Duplex Blocks A and B and Apartment Block H2 have no basement parking. A total of 32 apartments would generate a requirement for 40 spaces and there would appear to be a deficit of 13 spaces to serve these blocks.

Other Engineering Considerations

- Solutions for issues raised in the Road Safety Audit have not been detailed and submitted particularly in relation to the issue of the discontinuous pedestrian facilities on the Waterfall Road.
- Phasing plan considered acceptable.

Archaeological Issues

- The Archaeological Assessment concludes that given the existence of a potential feature coupled with the potential to reveal previously unknown archaeological remains, it is recommended that a programme of geophysical survey followed by a programme targeted archaeological testing on any anomalies identified be carried out prior to commencement of development.
- The County Archaeologist concurs with the recommendations of the report.

Appropriate Assessment/ Ecological Issues

- Particular consideration may want to be given to proposals for waste water disposal in the context of water quality conditions in Cork Harbour and the operational capacity of the Carrigrennan WWTP as well as its level of compliance with the discharge license conditions.
- Cork County Council Ecologist recommends that a condition that the hedgerow on the northern boundary only be removed under ecological supervision and only outside the bird nesting season.

Environmental Issues

- The Construction and Waste Management Report does not deal in detail with the principle elements for a C & D Waste Management Plan. Contents and details are too general and not site specific.
- The significant quantities of surplus topsoil, subsoil and bedrock will require appropriate on-site management as well as collection and transportation off site.
- A surface water run-off Management Plan for controlling sediment and erosion during the Construction Phase of the development has not been submitted.
- EIAr is not required in this instance.

Recommendation

- Cork County Council does not support this application. The site is zoned as Medium B residential development. It is located in a 'High Value Landscape' with prominent views from a wide catchment. Having regard to the density proposed, the design, layout and associated views of same, the identified traffic impacts and lack of mitigation measures to address same, the proposal is not consistent with the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.
- It is recommended that permission be refused for three reasons pertaining to prematurity by reference to the existing deficiencies in the local road network including adverse use of and contribution to congestion on the national road network; development is contrary to policy objective SE-R-10 of the LAP and would not be in accordance with the guidance outlined in national guidelines. The proposal would be highly prominent and obtrusive feature on this High Value Landscape where it is the policy objective of GI-6-1 of the CDP to protect skylines and ridgelines from development.
- 73 no conditions are recommended if ABP is minded to grant permission. It is noted that a special contribution in addition to the general contributions is recommended.

8.3 Inter-Departmental reports

Area Engineer

Storm water attenuation proposed to green field is acceptable. Cork City Council to confirm there is capacity in the public sewer to take the runoff from site.

Sightlines appear to be acceptable and in accordance with DMURS

Estate Engineers Report

Cork City Council to confirm capacity of existing storm line. Report recommends 31 conditions.

Housing Department

Part V has been agreed with the Developer.

County Archaeologist

Recommends a geophysical survey is carried out followed by a programme of archaeological testing. The archaeologist shall excavate test trenches at regular intervals. Where archaeological material is shown to be present, redesign/avoidance, preservation in situ, preservation by record and/or monitoring may be required.

Ecologist

The proposed development does not lie within or close to any Natura 2000 site and has limited connectivity to any such site. One condition is recommended where a detailed Landscape Management Plan for agreement is submitted including incorporation of the recommendations of the Hedgerow Report, and should provide details for long term protection, management and maintenance of boundary hedgerows.

Public Lighting Engineer

Conditions are recommended. Of note the 4 no. PL drawings submitted is at a scale of 1/500 at A1 size. This is not acceptable and in order to allow a review of public lighting design the overall site must be on a single or two drawings on an AO drawing.

Traffic and Transport Report

Report concludes that proposal does not include sufficient detail of enhanced pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the bus stops, adjacent employment areas and subject site. Measures to ensure compliance with reduced speeds consistent with an urban area have not been confirmed. This should include realignment of both sides of Waterfall Road.

Mitigation measures commensurate with predicted delays due to traffic generation from the development have not been proposed for Ardostig Cross.

Recommendation is a grant of permission subject to conditions.

Environmental Department – 3 reports prepared

The first report recommends 3 conditions in the event of a grant of permission.

A further report regarding air and noise impact was prepared and recommends 3 no. conditions.

The third report recommends conditions 8 no. conditions in relation to waste and waste management.

9.0 Prescribed Bodies

9.1 Irish Water

IW confirms that subject to a valid connection agreement being put in place the proposed connections to IW networks can be facilitated.

9.2 Cork City Council

The site is located in the transfer area of Cork County Council which will be subsumed into Cork City Council jurisdiction, upon the extension of the city boundary in 2019. An outline of the planning context is provided in the report. It was recommended that to avoid visual impact on views from the N40, development should be omitted from the highest and most prominent part of the site and that the higher apartment buildings should be positioned on the lower part of the site. Having regard to the site-specific policy of this site in the LAP to use the southern section of the site for public open space and landscaping, and the significant visual impact of any development on this section of the site, it is considered reasonable to omit this portion of land from the “developable” area of the site. The proposed net density of 35.1 units/ha is considered acceptable. The proposed variety of housing types/mix is welcomed with the onsite childcare facility.

A number of internal reports were appended to the report which are briefly summarised as follows:

Roads Design Department The traffic counts utilised for the junction analysis appear to be in period before October Bank holiday weekend. If counts did occur then, they should be re-commissioned for a neutral month. Given the imminent revised status of the Waterfall Road from rural to urban the applicant should also ensure that the 85%tile vehicle speeds on Waterfall Road along the development site frontage are less than 50km/h. The applicant is required to demonstrate how they will ensure that appropriate vehicle speed is built into the proposed road design. Applicant is requested to clarify the requirement for a right turning lane into the development proposed access junction. It is recommended that the applicant include the junction of Waterfall Road with Marymount facility as part of the junction analysis to determine the impact of the development on the local road network. Applicant to provide a pedestrian crossing on Waterfall Road in advance of the termination of the footpath on the southern side of the Waterfall Road. Applicant to provide a minimum 2m side cycle track along the developments frontage on the southern side of the Waterfall Road along with a space for a setback bus stop along the development’s frontage. Applicant to review the extent of raised tables through the internal road layout and demonstrate the gradients at the development access junction to facilitate movements of vulnerable users.

Views of elected members

- Development of housing is supported in principle, but must be in tandem with the delivery of appropriate infrastructure.
- Concerns regarding the capacity of the road network to accommodate the additional traffic. Waterfall Road needs to be widened.
- Proposal will exacerbate existing traffic congestion.
- No public footpaths along Waterfall Road. Public lighting required.
- Unclear if the “through road” from Waterfall Road to Curraheen Road and the N40 past Marymount Hospice is a public roadway which will facilitate access to the proposed development site from the N40.
- Need for a north-south corridor to the west of Bishopstown to link areas to the south of the N40 including the proposed development site to Model Farm Road and beyond.
- No public transport links to the site.
- Concerns re existing waste water, water and storm water infrastructure.
- Construction traffic will cause disruption in the area and Waterfall Road should be upgraded before development commences.
- Development should be built to ‘taking-in -charge’ standard.

9.2 Development Applications Unit

- Given the results of the geophysical survey and the largescale nature of the proposed development, the Department concurs with the archaeological mitigation strategy outlined in section 6 (pg. 19) of the Archaeological Impact Assessment. It is strongly recommended that the wording of the condition be retained to ensure that the appropriate archaeological mitigation is carried out and understood by the relevant professional. An archaeological monitoring condition is not appropriate in this instance.

9.3 Transport Infrastructure Ireland

- The N40 provides an important strategic link to port and airport locations and carries significant volumes of traffic. The N71 provides onward connection to West Cork and is an important regional and tourist route providing the principal means of access to markets whilst also providing access for more peripheral communities.
- The subject development will result in an intensification in use of a number of local road junctions in close proximity to the N40 corridor in particular the busy and non-standard Waterfall Road /R849 Bandon Road junction.
- The influence of this signalised junction is not accounted for within the junction analysis presented within the TTA. This junction is located in close proximity to the N40/N71 junction.
- TII advises it is aware of queueing that can stack back through the Waterfall Road/R849 Bandon Road junction during AM and PM peaks which impacts the N40/N71 junction. Therefore, consideration of impact and mitigation measures for the operation of the national roads network needs to be addressed.
- The applicant has provided no mitigation or improvement proposals to address this deficiency (Junction J2 reaching capacity in the 2020-2025 time period) nor identifies any road measure proposed by the roads authority to ensure that the development can proceed complementary to safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network in the area.
- It is a concern that the TTA that accompanied the application does not include reference to required mitigation and/or transport intervention which is identified as necessary in the TTA.
- It is considered that consultations with the roads authority and a revised Transport Assessment should be undertaken to include an assessment of the impact of the subject development on the national road network in the area and in particular to identify and provide for required mitigation and transport interventions.
- Public and sustainable transport including pedestrian/cycling offer in the vicinity of the site is limited and likely to have a major influence on the use of the private car.

- The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy is being prepared by the NTA with the Cork local authorities. As yet, the Strategy has not been finalised. However, it would be prudent that the views of the NTA are ascertained in this circumstance.

9.4 Health and Safety Authority

- The development has been determined to be located partially within the middle zone and partially within the outer zone of a Control of Major Accidents Hazards(COMAH) establishment.
- The category level of the development is determined to be sensitivity level 2.
- The Authority does not advise against the granting of permission in the context of Major Accidents Hazards.

10.0 Environmental Impact Assessment

An EIA Preliminary Examination for this application has been undertaken dated 4th December 2018 and is attached to the file. It is concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.

11.0 Assessment

Pursuant to site inspection and inspection of the surrounding environs including the road network, examination of all documentation, plans and particulars, and submissions/observations on file, the following are the relevant planning considerations of this application:

- Zoning and Density
- Urban Design and Layout
- Open Space and boundary treatment
- Visual Impact
- Residential Amenity

- Services and Flood Risk
- Movement and transportation
- Other issues
- Appropriate Assessment

11.1 Zoning and Density

11.1.1 The site is located within the ‘Cork City South Environs’ in the CDP’s Network of Settlements and in the County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area as identified in the Core Strategy Plan. The stated strategic aim of the City Environs is “growth in population and employment so that the Cork Gateway can compete effectively for investment jobs. Develop to complement and consolidate the development of the city as a whole and providing enhanced potential to rebalance the City through new development in the north”.

The CDP indicates that the population target for the County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area is 213,891 to 2022. This compares with a figure of 315,000 at least in Cork City and suburbs in the NPF. A parcel of land consisting of 9.07 ha is zoned ‘residential’ and identified as SE-R-10. The SLR6 lands are located to the south of the site and include the steeper sloping lands.

11.1.1. There is a specific local objective pertaining to the development site contained within the Ballincollig / Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.

SE-R-10 Medium B density residential development which will be restricted to the low-lying northern portion of the site and will include appropriate improvements to the local road network. Development will be serviced by a single estate road access and there will be no access from individual properties onto the local road. The southern portion of the site should be landscaped and developed as a usable public or private open space.

11.1.3 The development site, as stated heretofore, is located within the Metropolitan area of Cork. The NPF advocates compact, smart, sustainable growth in national policy objective 3. National Policy Objective 3b seeks to “deliver at least half (50%) of all

new homes that are targeted in the five Cities and suburbs of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, within their existing built-up footprints”. The proposal before the Board is, in my opinion, consistent with this national objective. National Policy Objective 11 provides “in meeting urban development requirements, there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieved targeted growth”. In this regard, I am satisfied that the proposal would contribute to targeted growth within the Cork metropolitan area in line with national policies and would also help increase the population in an area close to the city. The Board will be aware that the boundary of Cork City will change this year. The location of the new boundary is highlighted on p.12 of the Planning and Design Statement. The consequence for this development site is that it will fall within the remit of Cork City Council, thus emphasising the strategic location of the site relative to the City.

11.1.4 The County Development Plan provides that the upper limit for this category is proposed at 25 dwellings/ha (35 in smaller towns outside Metropolitan Cork) allowing a wide range of densities to be constructed and creating an overlap between the upper limit of this category and the lower limit to the Medium Density ‘A’ category. National guidelines seek to maximise densities at appropriate locations in the interests of supporting sustainable and inclusive communities. The Sustainable Urban Development, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, encourage increased residential densities in cities and town centres to make more sustainable use of infrastructure. As stated heretofore, the site is located within the Cork Metropolitan area and is approx. 5kms from the city centre. As such this is an area where increased densities should be encouraged and therefore I consider should be at minimum 35 units per hectare on the developable area of the site.

11.1.5 The applicant has indicated that the layout of the proposed development has been directly informed by the requirement to try and achieve national standards with regards to density. The net developable area identified by the applicant is 6.84ha which results in a density of 35 dwellings per hectare. The provisions of Appendix A: Measuring Residential Density provides that net density measures should include access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping and children’s play areas where these are to be

provided. There are a number of locations which have been excluded and which in my opinion should be included for the purposes of calculating net density mainly the access road to the basement car park and parking at this location; side gardens associated with units 79, 112 to the western boundary and 51 and 78 to the north-western boundary. Hence, the net density as proposed is marginally below the 35 units per hectare. While higher densities would be preferable in city locations, I consider that the proposed density is generally reasonable having regard to the site characteristics and that the focus in this instance should be on the quality of the new residential neighbourhood that is being created.

11.1.6 I note that some Observers have raised concerns regarding the status of the SLR 'Strategic Lands Reserve'. However, in this instance the site is zoned 'residential' and immediately abuts SLR lands. The status of the SLR lands is therefore not of relevance to the development of this site per se.

11.2 Urban Design and Layout

Planning and Design Statement

11.2.1 A planning and Design Statement has been submitted with the application. This statement provides a contextual analysis for the site which comprises of one large single field across which levels vary from +20 OD rising to +60 OD at its highest point. It is set out that the local area can be described as 'edge of city'. The site is located adjacent the strategic road network and near to employment, recreation and service centres. The statement sets out that the topographical nature of the site and the context surrounding it with an intention to increase density has informed the layout concept for this site. Apartment block units and duplexes are orientated to address the streetscape and create a distinct urban edge along the site entrance. The statement sets out that the site itself is divided into three main character areas with units characterised by a change in elevational treatment, brick colour or house type.

Layout and design

11.2.2 With regard to concerns regarding the loss of the rural character of the area, the area in which the site is located is in transition due to the zoning of the site and proposed City Council boundary extension later this year. Therefore, urbanisation of the landscape is inevitable. The existing rural character of the area is not reason enough to promote unsustainable low-density development or promote continued suburban type developments. The layout, in particular the three storey apartment blocks do provide a stronger urban form along Waterfall Road to that which was originally proposed at the pre-app stage, however, the remainder of the layout is, in my opinion, typically suburban with the two-storey semi-detached units dominating the coverage of the site.

11.2.3 The Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide which is a companion document to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, uses 12 criteria that are designed to encapsulate the range of design considerations for residential development. The ABP Opinion that issued required “further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to the layout of the proposed development as they relate to the 12 criteria. In addition to density, unit mix, arrangement and hierarchy of streets, the creation of character areas within a high-quality scheme should all be given further consideration.”

The statement of consistency provides a response to the criteria and sets out that the proposed development makes provision for efficient and convenient connections and linkages promoting walkability and allowing a safe environment for cyclists. It is set out that the variety of house types and quality of public spaces will provide for an inclusive development. It is also set out that it is proposed to provide 22 no. different house/apartment types and a number of different character areas which will assist in creating a diverse neighbourhood. In this regard, I consider that the proposed three character areas do not provide distinct neighbourhoods as referred to in the documents. While character area no. 1 is considered urban in form the remaining two areas are suburban with little difference in the unit type and finishes proposed.

The open space provided between units 97-100 and corner duplex units A1 and A2 has the potential to be a focus area at this location however straddles two character areas. The main central area of open space in character area 2 is considered suburban in character and dominated by roads with suburban housing overlooking same. The issue of connectivity is discussed in more detail later in this report.

11.2.4 There should be a greater transition between the character areas which clearly provide distinctive features or use existing site characteristics to reinforce the character or distinctiveness of the individual areas. Architecturally, the design of the residential units is considered acceptable, however, given the linear format and layout of the scheme, the streetscapes are somewhat repetitive in nature and design and dominated by the provision of semi-detached units. I would also question the extensive use of render in terms of durability and the consequential maintenance issues that may arise. I note a residential development on the opposite side of the N40 where render has been used extensively and staining is evident detracting from the overall quality of the scheme.

11.2.5 I note that the Chief Executive's report refers to the dramatic extent of excavation required to existing ground levels to accommodate development on the steeply sloping southern section of the site. There is approx. 8m of cut required at its deepest as indicated on the cross sections submitted. I note the reference to 15m by the planning authority. The planning authority indicate that the Board may wish to consider omitting units 97 to 112, the local play area and parking at this location to avoid this level of excavation. The site, while zoned, undoubtedly, presents a challenge in terms of its development. I accept that there is a significant degree of 'cut and fill' associated with this development and that more innovative design solutions could have been explored to minimise the degree of excavation. The degree of 'cut and fill' has not been quantified and should be provided so to adequately inform the construction, environmental and waste management plans for the site.

11.2.6 The provision of a local play area to the south-west immediately adjacent the south sloping part of the site is, in my opinion, of value as it will encourage the use of the pathway on the steep slope and enhance the passive surveillance in general in this section of the site. I do, however, have concerns regarding the treatment of the steeper lands located behind the existing residential units on Waterfall Road and between the neighbourhood park to the western end of the site in front of units 82-85 approx. The lands in question appear to be designed so they are detached from the main residential area as these lands are located between two walls thereby becoming 'no-man's land'. A 3-4m retaining wall is proposed at this location as indicated on drawing no. 0013 Drawing Title: Retaining Wall Schematic and Sections. The location of a neighbourhood area immediately adjacent such steeply sloping lands is inappropriate.

11.2.7 With regard to the transition from the single storey dwelling to the H1 block on Waterfall Road which the planning authority raise concerns about, I do not consider that the existing development form should dictate any proposed urban form but rather the design response should be cognisant of the need to protect existing residential amenities of the area in the first instance while allowing for development of active urban streetscapes. There is adequate separation distance between Block H1 and the existing dwelling to ensure the existing amenities of this dwelling are protected. I do, however, have concerns regarding the quality of the public realm area in this corner of the site. This area is referred to as a home-zone. However, I consider that a high place value should be placed on areas identified as home-zones combined with low movement priority. The DMURS document describes 'homezone' as a type of shared surface street in a residential area which may also include items of street furniture that would normally be used within areas of open spaces. This area is not, in my opinion, a 'homezone' in that this area functions as the main access to the basement car-park. Parking has been provided to the residual area

with little or no value to this area in terms of providing residential amenity to residents. The area has poor passive surveillance.

11.2.8 I am also satisfied that the proposal would not have an overbearing impact on the property located on the opposite side of Waterfall Road which is approx. 20m from the proposed building line.

11.3.0 Future Residential Amenity

11.3.1 While I acknowledge that the applicant has attempted to provide a stronger urban form to Waterfall road with the introduction of duplex units, I would have serious concerns regarding the residential amenity associated with these units, namely the ground floor units associated with units numbered 197-216. Approximately 16.5sq.m. of private amenity space is indicated to the rear of these units. However, this space is located below the existing ground level and is self-contained thus having a 'bunker' feel to the amenity space which is unacceptable. The duplex units over are accessed via steps which are located over part of this amenity space resulting in a section of rear amenity space associated with the ground floor units being covered over, significantly reducing daylight to the window directly below the stairwell on the rear elevations. Further, the outlook from the main living area to the rear private amenity space would be meagre and is unacceptable. Although not a planning consideration, compliance with building control may also be an issue with specific regard to fire safety and means of escape.

11.3.2 The Chief Executive's report rightly raises concerns about access to private amenity space from the corner duplex units i.e. A1, A2 and A3. Access from the ground floor units to the amenity space is via a bedroom in these blocks. The area identified to serve the remaining units (although the numbering scheme on the layout plan indicates the amenity space to serve all 4 units contained within) will be accessible only by one unit via a living area directly onto the space while the remaining units will have to access the area via a side entrance. The layout and configuration of these

units are awkward and unacceptable vis-à-vis the provision of appropriate access to the rear amenity space and overlooking/privacy associated with the proposed layout. Consequentially, the value of the private amenity space to serve these units is significantly diminished. I note that private balconies are provided to the upper floor units.

11.3.3 Further, access to the bin storage areas serving the A1, A2 and A3 duplex units require people to pass by bedroom windows at ground floor level of the unit which, in my opinion, has an undue negative impact on the privacy of these residential units. The bin storage areas serving the duplex blocks also appear small for the number of units they are proposed to serve. In general, I consider that the bin storage areas should be re-located to more appropriate locations directly out of the main desire lines into the development and to ensure ease of accessibility to all and without unduly detracting from the residential amenity of any one property.

11.3.4 There are two 12m high lattice structures proposed in close proximity to residential units i.e. no. 92 and 100. It is considered that the location of the steel lattice in close proximity to no. 92 and opposite the duplex block at this location could have been better sited. I concur with the planning authority that the cross section submitted do not indicate these structures which will be highly visible. The photomontages also do not include these structures. While there is an undergrounding of services and generally a visual improvement due to the removal of some overhead power lines, the visual impact arising from any new proposed steel lattice structures should be considered.

11.3.5 Both national and local planning policies emphasise the need for qualitative design responses. Objectives Hou-3-1 and HOU-3-2 sets out that all new urban development should be of high design quality and supports the achievement of successful urban spaces and sustainable communities. While contours are a challenge on the site, it is considered that a more innovative layout and design

response is required ensuring the development of attractive neighbourhoods with public realm areas forming an integral element in the design of the development and where each home offers future occupants high quality residential amenity.

11.4.0 Open Space and boundary treatments

11.4.1 The Chief Executive's report sets out that the size and location of open space areas pocketed throughout the development fail to achieve a sense of hierarchy with the open space provision falling short of the 15% recommended in the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas'. I do not consider that the quantum of open space is an issue but rather the qualitative nature of the space provided. The disposition and hierarchy of public open space could have benefited from further consideration. The central area of open space located in character area 2, considered to be the more active space is dominated by roads. Four neighbourhood play areas are proposed along with three local play areas dispersed through the site. The local play area provided along the main spine road serving the development could have been better located to avoid the area with the most traffic movement for reasons of amenity and safety. Observers raise concerns that some of the public open space areas would attract anti-social behaviour. There are areas pertaining to the more steeply sloping areas that I consider could have been better designed to ensure more passive surveillance. As mentioned the proximity of play areas to steeply sloping section of the site is inappropriate.

11.4.2 The open space area to the south-west of the site has been excluded from the developable area calculations due to its steep topography. It has, however, been designed to provide a community benefit through the provision of a walkway/path with a viewing point. The footpath network will also function as an exercise trail with outdoor gym stations. The provision of this equipment should be conditioned as part of any permission to ensure the amenity value of this area is delivered.

11.4.3 The interface of the development with Waterfall Road is important in terms of creating a lively and pleasant urban streetscape. It is proposed to provide a footpath along the development site frontage to Waterfall Road. There is a difference of approx. 1.8m between the public path and the site in front of Block H1 (as indicated on section D-D). The ground level at this point is being raised. Section C-C (through duplex Block A) indicates a difference of approx. 1m while further along Waterfall Road Section B-B (through Apartment Block H3) there is little difference in levels. The landscaping details submitted indicate the provision of a stone wall to the site frontage however there appears to be a discrepancy between the architects plans and levels indicated and the landscaping plans (prepared by different company) which is fundamental to the quality of the streetscape being created. In any event, notwithstanding the difference in levels, I consider that a 1.5m high stone wall with 0.8m high powder coating railing over same for the full length of the site on Waterfall road is inappropriate. While there is a need for a retaining structure along sections of the site frontage, opportunities exist to provide a more pleasant boundary treatment which will contribute to the qualitative nature of the new urban street and creating visual connections through the development so as to enhance a sense of surveillance and security along this streetscape. The extent of wall frontage reinforces the function of Waterfall Road as a road rather than a street.

11.4.4 I draw the Board's attention to the proposed use of 'metal palisade fencing' as indicated on the plans through-out the development which is considered inappropriate. This fencing is also proposed to the eastern elevation of Apartment Block H1 and it is unclear why it is required.

11.5 Visual Impact

11.5.1 The development lands are located within a high value landscape as identified in the Cork County Development Plan and the details on file indicate that the site is not readily visible from designated scenic routes in the wider area. The site is identified as being located within a 'City Harbour and Estuary' landscape character area

comprising a mix of 'rural and intensely urban areas combined with a large expansive harbour'. This area could be described as, being in transition and will become more urbanised with the extension of the Cork City boundary. A landscape and visual impact assessment has been submitted. A baseline description of existing landscape conditions is provided. The site is highly visible from Halldene Avenue and the N40 flyover and pursuant to site inspection and inspection of the environs is generally visible in the wider area due to the topography of the site. The landscape assessment indicated that there will be a predicted medium and neutral significance of impact on Landscape Character. This conclusion acknowledges that while the character of the site itself will be radically changed by the transition from agricultural to residential use, the design strategy for the site is based on minimising impacts on the most prominent and sensitive elevated portion of the site. A planting strategy for the site has been enclosed.

11.5.2 The Chief Executive's report makes a number of observations regarding the photomontages which are of particular relevance:

- Lack of control by the applicant over existing vegetation outside the confines of the site.
- Viewpoint 2 does not show the proposed works to the front of this property which will alter this roadway.
- Viewpoint 3 does not indicate the proposed pylon or excavated paths on the slope
- Viewpoint 4 is quite dramatic and the viewpoint sensitivity is considered high, the proposed houses on the western part of the site have elevations significantly exposed in views from the N40.
- Viewpoint 5 demonstrates the prominence of the ridge tops of the proposed development.
- Viewpoint 6 – only existing view is provided so no comparison possible. Despite distance, the proposed development would still be visible at this location.

- Viewpoint 7 – there are sections of the road immediately north and south of this view which have high ground levels. The viewpoint may have been taken in a dip in the road.
- Viewpoint 8 – only existing view has been submitted despite result of the assessment giving a viewpoint sensitivity of ‘high’ and degree of change ‘medium’.
- Viewpoint 9 – difficult to believe only a glimpse of a roof would be possible from the entire length of the laneway running west of the site.
- Viewpoint 10 – Despite the proposed development and changes in the character of the area, the visual impact is high neutral in the short to medium term. The view represents a complete change in the character of the area from rural to urban.

The Chief Executive’s report concludes that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on this High Value Landscape and would have a long-term negative impact on the visual amenities and visual character of the area having regard to design, position, layout proposed and the level of excavation required to accommodate same.

11.5.3 I consider that while the impact on the landscape could be described as significant, that having regard to the extent of zoned lands in conjunction with the existing permitted development in the wider area and the extension of the urban area westwards the impact would not be detrimental. The site is located within the designated area identified for development and later this year will be located within the jurisdiction of Cork City Council. Serviced land is a scarce resource and as such needs to be developed in a coherent and sustainable manner from the city centre out. I am satisfied that the impact in this instance can be sustained and mitigated through the proposed landscape strategy and in time will be absorbed into the existing landscape which will be more urban than rural. However, the use of high quality finishes to ensure durability and a low level of maintenance of the structures is a key consideration.

11.5.4 Artist impressions of the development have been submitted. I would caution that the impressions are not wholly accurate. The impression for character area 1 indicates perpendicular parking to the front of the duplex block where the site layout plan indicates parallel parking. Character areas 2 and 3 don't appear to correlate with the proposed layout and also fail to depict the level changes across the site.

11.6 Infrastructural Services including Flood Risk

11.6.1 Water and Waste Water

It is proposed to connect to the public water and foul sewer network. There is an existing pumping station serving four houses adjacent to the proposed development. In order to connect to the wastewater network it will be necessary to decommission this and construct a new pumping station to pump waste water within the confines of the existing pumping station compound across the N40 South link road into the Cork City sewer network. The sewer network in this area is currently at capacity and upgrades to the network will be required to facilitate this connection. The Confirmation of Feasibility provides an Appendix which highlights approximately 300m of this sewer which will have to be upgraded from 375mm to 525mm diameter. Irish Water has indicated that a network connection can be facilitated.

11.6.2 Surface water Management

The engineering report submitted indicates that with regards surface water management and use of SuDs techniques that the concrete attenuation structures were decided upon as being the most feasible. The flows will be attenuated in the surface water system by adopting floor storage detention tanks along with a restricted outlet. The maximum permitted surface water outflow will be restricted to that of the existing greenfield site by using two underground tanks. I note concerns raised by observers regarding surface water however no concerns have been raised by the planning authority in this respect. A flood risk assessment has been submitted. No concerns have been raised by the Drainage Department with regards to flooding or surface water management on site.

11.7 Movement and Transportation

11.7.1 Traffic and Transport Assessment

A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) has been submitted with the application. Observers and the Planning Authority have raised concerns about the dates on which the counts were conducted that informed the TTA. The traffic counts took place on 27th, 28th and 29th October 2018 with the heaviest trafficked day taken as the worst case for modelling purposes. These days were a Saturday, Sunday and bank holiday Monday which would not have given an accurate reflection of normal trip generation or traffic patterns. I note that the TTA refers to these days being a Thursday through to Saturday. In any event, the fact that the counts were undertaken when should have been on a mid-term break gives rise to a flaw in the data collected. I also note a number of errors contained in the TTA regarding proposed unit numbers and trip generation rates. The figures presented in the text do not correspond with the figures contained in tables. I also note that the peak period used is between 800-900 hours in the AM and 1700 and 1800 hours in the PM. While this may be the case, I note that the junction traffic volume 12-hour count flow profile (see Figure 10.3) indicates a peak around 1615 hours which may be higher if the counts were undertaken for weekdays when schools were in session. The summary of the Picady results for each junction is provided and indicates a 25% increase in the ratio to flow capacity of junction 1 in 2035. The assessment concludes that the impact of this delay and maximum queue of just 0.3 vehicles is not significant and will occur on the internal estate road. With regard junction J2, this junction reaches capacity in the 2020-2025 time period for both with and without development scenario in the PM peak.

11.7.2 The Opinion that issued requested that a TIA which considers impact on wider area including potential for creation of a rat-run through Marymount Hospice be submitted. The TTA acknowledges a private link road located within the Marymount care site which connects Waterfall Road to Curraheen Road/N40 east. This link road has not

been assigned development traffic in this assessment due to its private status, where the road if closed off would cause development traffic to reroute eastward to J2. While I concur with this approach, I consider that the TTA fails to establish how much traffic currently travelling from Waterfall Road in an easterly direction uses this private lane as a 'rat-run' to connect to the N40 at the Curraheen Road roundabout. This figure is important as it would contribute to additional traffic movements travelling passed the site should the Marymount private road be closed. While the site is zoned and located within an urban context where congestion is a feature, I do consider that the TTA should provide count details which were undertaken on weekdays when schools were in session and provide details of current number of vehicles that use the 'rat run' which if closed off would have to continue passed the site so as to provide an accurate account of likely traffic movements in the area and impacts on nearby junctions.

11.7.3 Strategic Road network

The Transport Infrastructure Ireland submission refers to the strategic nature of the road in the vicinity of the site and that the subject development will result in an intensification in use of a number of local road junctions in close proximity to the N40 corridor in particular the busy and non-standard Waterfall Road /R849 Bandon Road junction. The influence of this signalised junction is not accounted for within the junction analysis presented within the TTA which I consider important to consider given that the analysis of J2 which leads to this junction indicates a 17% increase RFC by 2025 with the development. This figure does not account for additional traffic that would use these junctions should the private road to the Hospice be closed. The TII submission also set out that it is a concern that the TTA that accompanied the application does not include reference to required mitigation and/or transport intervention which is identified as necessary in the TTA. I note that section 12.2 refers to realignment of Junction 2 which would provide for safe pedestrian crossings.

11.7.4 Public Transport and connectivity

The TIA provides details with regard to public transport. It is set out that the location of the 208 bus corridor along Curraheen Road provides connectivity for the residents of the proposed development to the city centre. The Bandon roundabout is serviced by the 236, 237 and 239 buses which travel to the West Cork towns of Skibbereen, Glengariff and Bandon. While there is availability of public transport in the area, there are poor pedestrian facilities along Waterfall Road. It is proposed as part of this application to provide a footpath along the site frontage and to also remove a third-party boundary wall on lands immediately north-east of the site and provide a set-back to allow for a new footpath connection to the proposed site. While Drawing No. 5181-0019 has been submitted indicating the set-back no details of the height of the new boundary wall has been indicated other than stating 'to match existing'. There is a steep embankment at this location and the precise details of the proposed boundary wall is important. I note that while a 2m wide footpath is proposed by the applicant it will connect into an existing 1.5m wide footpath which is inadequate to serve increased pedestrian movements at this location. No provision has been made for a bus to serve this development into the future.

11.7.5 The Chief Executive's report sets out that the proposal does not sufficiently detail enhanced pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the development site and existing bus stops, adjacent employment areas such as CIT, Cork Science and Innovation Park. It is set out that there is a fundamental requirement for pedestrian connectivity to bus stops at CIT and Curraheen Road to the east. While I agree that pedestrian connectivity is important, a measured approach needs to be taken as to what the developer can actually provide. The pedestrian connections eastwards over the N40 onto the Bishopstown Road is considered the most important connection.

11.7.6 With regards to cycleways, it is noted that there are currently none in the vicinity of the site. While the applicant references proposed improvements as identified in the Cork City Plan, no connections are proposed in this application. TII has highlighted that the public and sustainable transport including pedestrian/cycling offer in the

vicinity of the subject site is limited and likely to have a major influence on the use of the private car. The applicant indicates that the development layout has been prepared to maximise connectivity between key local areas/nodes through the provision of a high degree of permeability and legibility for all network users. However, I am unconvinced of this. No cycling paths are proposed as part of this development which I consider is a missed opportunity. The record for the pre-app consultation indicates that ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on this issue. The Opinion specifically required “further consideration of the documents as they relate to pedestrian and cycle facilities connecting the proposed development with nearby centres, existing transport services and existing amenities and facilities.” I accept that there is a general lack of cycle paths in the immediate vicinity of the site thus making the ability to connect more difficult. However, this is the first residential development other than single one-off housing to be constructed along Waterfall Road and cycling facilities should be provided notwithstanding the difference in levels. The statement of consistency response to the 12 criteria makes no mention of cycling. Internal cycle paths within the development should be provided for particularly along the main spine road and to the amenity lands to the south, which in themselves provide an opportunity for cyclists to use the route despite the terrain.

11.7.8 Parking and linkages to adjoining lands

The applicant is proposing two no. car parking spaces to each house and has provided parking for the apartment/duplexes at a rate of 1.25 per unit and 1 space per 4 units for visitor parking. A total of 135 space has been provided for the duplex/apartment element of the development. Under croft parking is provided to H1 block. I note that a significant number of pedestrian crossings are located in a manner that does not provide direct linkage to the proposed footpath. Pedestrians would be required to manoeuvre around parked cars due to location of parking spaces which encroach on the crossing routes. Section 4.4.9 of the DMURS document sets out that perpendicular parking should generally be restricted to one side of the street to encourage a greater sense of enclosure and ensure that parking

does not dominate the streetscape. The street behind the proposed duplex units contains perpendicular parking on both sides. A bin storage area is also located between two spaces which is inappropriate.

11.7.9 Potential future access points are provided along the eastern boundary which should be conditioned to be developed right up to the party boundary to avoid ransom strips. Furthermore, a gate should be provided as a boundary treatment at these locations to avoid any perception that these roads are to be permanent cul-de-sacs.

11.7.7 A road safety audit report is submitted with the application and while a number of recommendations are contained therein it is not clear if these have been considered in the final layout.

11.7 Other Issues

11.7.1 Part V

Part V details have been submitted and it is indicated that 24 no. units are proposed to be provided to Cork County Council consisting of 12 no. three and 12. no. two bed town houses. The proposal is acceptable to the Housing section. A Part V condition should be attached to any grant of permission.

11.7.2 Building Life Cycle Report

A building life cycle report has been submitted. I note that the report sets out that maintenance costs can only be evaluated after the detailed design and construction of the development and is not included in the report. I refer to the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2018, specifically section 6.12 which sets out that “consideration of the long-term running costs and the eventual manner of compliance of the proposal with the Multi-Unit Developments Act, 2011 are matters which should be considered as part of any assessment of a proposed apartment development.” Accordingly, the building lifecycle report should include an assessment of long term running and maintenance costs as they apply on a per

residential unit basis and demonstrate what measures have been specifically considered by the applicant to effectively manage and reduce costs for the benefit of residents. In this regard, the proposed extensive use of render finish should be considered.

11.7.3 Phasing and taking in charge

A phasing plan and taking in charge plan has been submitted. I note that the plan indicates that the Council would take all open spaces including those serving the apartment/duplexes in charge.

11.7.4 Archaeology

An archaeological assessment has been submitted. It concludes that a number of discrete features of slight archaeological potential were noted during the geophysical survey which include five small possibly pit-like features spread across the site and an amorphous area towards the southwest corner of the field and an area (ITM S63112, 568810) within the proposed development was noted as possibly representing evidence of in-situ burning and as such possesses a heightened archaeological potential. It is, therefore, recommended that a licensed programme of targeted archaeological testing undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist takes place prior to commencement of development. A submission from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has been received and recommend an archaeological condition which should be worded as per the submission to ensure that the appropriate archaeological mitigation is carried out and understood by the relevant professional. It is set out that an archaeological monitoring condition is not appropriate in this instance.

11.7.5 Childcare and school place demand assessment

A childcare needs assessment has been submitted indicating that there is a requirement for a 40-place childcare facility to cater for the proposed development. No details or assessment of other facilities within the area have been submitted. A 60-place childcare facility is proposed within the development, located at within Block H1 with a floor area of 522sq.m. A school place demand assessment has been submitted and indicates that the proposal would generate potential for 77 and 55 places in primary and post primary schools respectively. While details of the schools have been submitted, no details as to their existing capacity has been enclosed which negates the purpose of the assessment in the first instance.

11.7.6 Land Ownership

An observer has indicated that there is a strip of ground which forms part of the application site abutting the public road which are within the Observer's ownership. I note that the folio in question makes reference to a right of way along the site frontage. The applicant has indicated that he owns the subject site and as such I am satisfied that substantial legal interest has been established to make the application and that the matter in question is a civil issue.

11.8 Appropriate Assessment

Screening report

11.8.1 The applicant has submitted an AA screening report which provides a description of the proposed development, project and Natura 2000 sites. It is set out that the site comprises of one relatively large field that is currently subject to arable agricultural management with largely native hedgerow/treeline habitat along its boundary apart from a section adjoining gardens associated with some private residences that include non-native planting. The proposed development site does not support habitats/species that are qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 sites under consideration or of particular ex-situ ecological value for such qualifying interests.

11.8.2 The report identifies two Natura 2000 sites within 15km radius of the site. There are

no sites located either within or directly adjacent to the proposed development site. There is a potential pathway arising from the site via the public sewer network and the Glasheen (Cork City) river to the Cork Harbour SPA. Hydrological links are not considered relevant to the Great Island Channel SAC as it is not downstream of the public stormwater sewer network due to its location within Lough Mahon. The report sets out that when the site is connected to the public foul sewer network, construction and operational stage waste water/foul effluent from the proposed development will be collected via sewer infrastructure at site that will connect to the existing public foul effluent infrastructure for discharge and treatment at Cork City Wastewater treatment plant where sections of Cork Harbour SPA are downstream of the WWTP discharge point. The report sets out that the treatment plant is currently non-compliant regarding emission limits set out in its discharge licence in relation to total phosphorus and nitrogen due to the fact that the WWTP was not designed for such nutrient removal. It is submitted that while improvements are currently under consideration in relation to the treatment plant, ambient monitoring of receiving transitional and coastal waters indicates that the discharge from the WWTP does not have an observable negative impact on its water quality. Water quality is not a specific attribute / target for any of the qualifying interests of Cork Harbour SPA although the qualifying interests are nonetheless dependent on the aquatic ecosystem. The WWTP currently has ample capacity with a remaining organic capacity of 87,452 p.e. The Screening report concludes that no elements of the project are likely to impact on the Natura 2000 sites.

11.8.3 Identification of sites

Table 3: Natura 2000 sites within 15km range of site

Natura 2000 Code	Site Code	Distance to site (as crow flies)	Qualifying Interests
Cork Harbour SPA	004030	6.85km east of site	A004 Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> A005 Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> A017 Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> A028 Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i> A048 Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> A050 Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i> A052 Teal <i>Anas crecca</i> A054 Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i> A056 Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i> A069 Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i> A130 Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> A140 Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> A141 Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> A142 Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> A149 Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> A156 Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i> A157 Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i> A160 Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i> A162 Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i> A179 Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> A182 Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i> A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i> A193 Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> A999 Wetlands
Great Channel SAC	001058	13.83km south east of site	1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)

As identified in Table 3 above there are two European sites located within a 15 kilometre range of the proposed project. Site synopsis and conservation objectives for each of these Natura 2000 sites are available on the NPWS website. In particular the attributes and targets of these sites are of assistance in screening for AA in respect of this project.

11.8.3 Assessment of likely Significant Effects on Designated Sites

The potential for likely significant effects should be assessed in the context of the relevant sites' conservation objectives. The development site in question is not part of or located adjacent to any of the designated sites. Having regard to the 'source-pathway-receptor' model, there are no known direct hydrological links to either of these Natura 2000 sites. Having regard to the lack of direct entry of surface and waste waters to any of the Natura 2000 sites, the use of best construction practices as an integral component of the development and the treatment of waste waters prior to discharge, the proposal either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects could not be considered to have likely significant effects in view of the sites' conservation objectives.

AA screening – Conclusion

11.8.4 I have had due regard to the screening report and data used by the applicant to carry out the screening assessment and the details available on the NPWS web-site in respect of the Natura 2000 sites identified as being within 15km radius of the development site, including the nature of the receiving environment and proximity to the nearest European site. I consider it is reasonable to conclude that on the basis of the information on the file which includes inter alia, AA screening report submitted by the applicant and all of the planning documentation, which I consider adequate in order to issue a screening determination, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site, in view of the said sites' Conservation Objectives, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (and submission of a NIS) is not therefore required.

11.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission be **refused** for the proposed development for the following reasons and considerations.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the location of the site in a high value landscape as identified in the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and in particular Objectives 'Hou- 3-1' and 'Hou 3-2' regarding creation of sustainable residential communities and urban design and the general provisions of the Sustainable Urban Design, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, it is considered that by reason of overall design, predominant suburban layout and unit mix, poor disposition and integration of public realm areas within the residential scheme and the proposed interface of the development with Waterfall road, the proposed development would fail to provide an appropriate urban design solution and would militate against the creation of an attractive residential environment. The proposed layout does not, in any meaningful way, establish a sense of place with distinguishing features to each of the character areas or provide good quality public realm. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The Board has serious concerns regarding the future residential amenity of the proposed apartments and duplex units. The ground floor units of the Duplex Blocks A and B have limited daylight/sunlight to the rear of these units, poor quality private amenity space and poor outlook from the main living accommodation to the private amenity space. The configuration and access to private and semi-private amenity space serving the corner duplex units, A1, A2 and A3 is inappropriate and would be prejudicial to the residential amenity of the future occupants of these units. The proposed development would set an undesirable future precedent for inappropriate private and semi-private amenity space provision. The proposal would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. It is considered that the proposed interface of the development with Waterfall Road would militate against the creation of an attractive and active urban streetscape. The provision of a stone wall in conjunction with a railing for the entire length of the site frontage, notwithstanding the difference in road levels across the site frontage, is considered to detract from the passive surveillance and creation of an active urban streetscape reinforcing the function of Waterfall Road as a road which is contrary to the principle of Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. The proposal would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. It is considered that inadequate information has been submitted within the Traffic and Transportation Assessment to allow a comprehensive assessment of potential impacts on the road network, particularly the strategic road network in the vicinity of the development site. Further, in the absence of meaningful pedestrian and cycle connections to existing public transport services in the area, it is considered that the proposed development would give rise to a predominantly car dependent development and as such would be contrary to the principles of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets which promotes, inter alia, improved accessibility to public transport and improved connectivity by assigning higher order to pedestrian and cyclists. The proposal would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Joanna Kelly

Senior Planning Inspector

7th March 2019