

EIA – Screening Determination

A. CASE DETAILS		
An Bord Pleanála Case Reference (315820-23)		
Development Summary	92 No. apartments, a Childcare Facility, to be provided in two buildings ranging in height from 5 to 8 storeys, an ESB substation and all associated ancillary development works at Bessborough, Ballinure, Mahon, Cork City. The proposed development includes the provision of a new pedestrian and cyclist ramp access to the site from the Passage West Greenway to the east and vehicular access to the proposed development will be via the existing access road off Bessborough Road. The proposed development is situated within the curtilage of Bessborough House, which is a Protected Structure (RPS 490).	
	Yes / No / N/A	Comment (if relevant)
1. Was a Screening Determination carried out by the PA?	Yes	EIA not required
2. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?	Yes	
3. Has an AA screening report or NIS been submitted?		An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement were submitted with the application. A Bat Assessment Report was also submitted with the application.
5. Have any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment which have a significant bearing on the project been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives – for example SEA		SEA and AA were undertaken in respect of the Cork City Development Plan 2012-2028

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B. EXAMINATION	Where relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of impacts (ie the nature and extent) and any Mitigation Measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact)	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment? Yes/ No/ Uncertain
1. Characteristics of proposed development (including demolition, construction, operation, or decommissioning)		
1.1 Is the project significantly different in character or scale to the existing surrounding or environment?	<p>The site forms part of a historic country house estate which comprises Bessborough House, a Protected Structure set within extensive landscaped grounds and includes a folly, a farm complex, parkland and pleasure gardens. The estate is located in the wider Blackrock/Mahon suburban area of Cork City which is characterised by a mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses. The area is earmarked for higher residential development in conjunction with investment in mass transit infrastructure.</p> <p>The subject site is relatively small at 101 hectares. It comprises grassland, scrub and a treeline along the eastern boundary. It is located c.200m from the main house and c.54m from the folly. Parts of the estate have been subdivided and sold off to separate land-owners. There are no relevant permitted developments in the area. There are two residential developments (SHD) within the estate currently under consideration by ABP (313216 and 313206) to the north and northwest, respectively. These sites, the subject site and a further site to the south are zoned Residential ZO 01 and Area of</p>	No

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	High Landscape Value, but the remainder of the estate is zoned Landscape Preservation Zone ZO17. There are no developments of a similar scale in the immediate vicinity. However, the overall area is one that is in transition.	
1.2 Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works causing physical changes to the locality (topography, land use, waterbodies)?	The proposed residential development has been designed to logically address the alterations in topography on site, resulting in minimal change in the locality, with standard measures to address potential impacts on surface water and groundwaters in the locality. Uses proposed are consistent with land uses in the area and with site zoning.	No
1.3 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy, especially resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Construction materials will be typical for an urban development of this nature and scale. The loss of natural resources as a result of the development are not regarded as significant in nature.	No
1.4 Will the project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substance which would be harmful to human health or the environment?	Construction activities will require the use of potentially harmful materials, such as fuels and other such substances. Use of such materials would be typical for construction sites. Any impacts would be local and temporary in nature and the implementation of the standard construction practice measures outlined in the Outline CEMP, Outline CMP and Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan (CDWMP) would satisfactorily mitigate potential impacts. No operational impacts in this regard are anticipated.	No
1.5 Will the project produce solid waste, release pollutants or any hazardous / toxic / noxious substances?	Construction activities will require the use of potentially harmful materials, such as fuels and other similar substances and give rise to waste for disposal. The use of these materials would be typical for construction sites. Noise and dust	No

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	emissions during construction are likely. Such construction impacts would be local and temporary in nature, and with the implementation of the standard measures outlined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan, Construction & Demolition Waste By Product Management Plan , the project would satisfactorily mitigate the potential impacts. Operational waste would be managed through a waste management plan to obviate potential environmental impacts. Foul water will discharge to the public network. Other operational impacts in this regard are not anticipated to be significant.	
1.6 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Operation of the standard measures listed in the Construction Environmental Management Plan, Construction & Demolition Waste By Product Management Plan will satisfactorily mitigate emissions from spillages during construction and operation. The operational development will connect to mains services and discharge surface waters only after passing through fuel interceptors and SUDS. Surface water drainage will be separate to foul services within the site.	No
1.7 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	There is potential for construction activity to give rise to noise and vibration emissions. Such emissions will be localised and short term in nature, and their impacts would be suitably mitigated by the operation of standard measures listed in the Construction Environmental Management Plan. No operational impacts in this regard are anticipated.	No
1.8 Will there be any risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution?	Construction activity is likely to give rise to dust emissions and surface water runoff. Such construction impacts would be temporary and	No

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	localised in nature and the application of standard measures within the Construction Environmental Management Plan would satisfactorily address potential risks on human health. No significant operational impacts are anticipated.	
1.9 Will there be any risk of major accidents that could affect human health or the environment?	No significant risk is predicted having regard to the nature and scale of the development. The issue of flood risk has been satisfactorily addressed in the submitted SFRA. Any risk arising from demolition and construction will be localised and temporary in nature. There are no Seveso/COMAH sites in the vicinity.	No
1.10 Will the project affect the social environment (population, employment)	Development of this site would result in an increase in population in this area. The development would provide housing that would serve towards meeting an anticipated demand in the area. However, the scale of the population increase would be small in the context of the wider urban area. No social environmental impacts anticipated.	No
1.11 Is the project part of a wider large scale change that could result in cumulative effects on the environment?	Yes, the proposed SHD developments to the north and northwest, 313216 and 313206, respectively are for the construction of 280 apartments and a creche and 140 apartments and a creche, respectively. These developments are outside of the control of the applicant and decisions on these cases are still pending. A further development of 2 apartment blocks is proposed for the site to the south, which is owned by the applicant, but which has not as yet been submitted for approval. Cumulative effects are considered in respect of visual/landscape, water, drainage, traffic and in the NIS.	No

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2. Location of proposed development		
<p>2.1 Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or have the potential to impact on any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) European site (SAC/ SPA/ pSAC/ pSPA) b) NHA/ pNHA c) Designated Nature Reserve d) Designated refuge for flora or fauna e) Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation/conservation/ protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ LAP/ draft plan or variation of a plan 	<p>The nearest European sites are Cork Harbour SPA c. 170m to the south and the Great Island Channel SAC at 4.7km to the east. The Conservation Objectives for these sites relate to wintering wetland birds and coastal habitats. A ground/surface water pathway has been identified. The NIS concluded that the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of these European sites. Other designated sites are referenced in the application AA Screening Report & NIS. The potential for significant effects on Natura 2000 sites has been screened out. Refer to Section 9.0 of the Inspector's Report.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, for example: for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be significantly affected by the project?</p>	<p>No habitats or species of conservation significance identified within the site or in the immediate environs. The proposed development would not result in significant impacts to protected, important or sensitive species</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.3 Are there any other features of landscape, historic, archaeological, or cultural importance that could be affected?</p>	<p>Yes. The site is located within a former demesne landscape associated with a Georgian country house, with landscape/historical features of importance. The site is within the curtilage of Bessborough House, which is a Protected Structure and contains a Folly which is listed on the NIAH and an ice-house which is listed on the RMP. Much of the estate is zoned Landscape Protection Zone and the subject site is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value. The grounds of Bessborough were also used as a Mother and Baby Home between 1922 and 1999 and has been the subject of a Commission of Investigation, which concluded (2021) that there is potential for unrecorded</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>burials of human remains within the lands associated with the former Mother and Baby Home.</p> <p>The proposed development will be highly visible due to its height and location within a predominantly grassland and low-rise location. As discussed in Section 8.0 of the Inspector's Report, the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact on the setting of the Protected Structure and historic landscape, by reason of the height, scale and design of the development. Pre-commencement conditions regarding any sub-surface archaeology would be required but the potential for unrecorded burials to be present on the site could not be established in the absence of an excavation to determine the location. However, these impacts would not be so significant as to affect the wider receiving environment warranting an Environmental Impact Assessment. Part of the proposed services infrastructure will pass through the Landscape Protection Zone and within the zone of notification for the Recorded Monument, Icehouse, ((CO074-051). These services will be underground and no impact on the LPZ is anticipated subject to the implementation of proposed mitigation measures.</p>	
2.4 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, for example: forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	No such features are in this outer-urban location, with the site separated from agricultural areas by intervening urban lands and road infrastructure	No
2.5 Are there any water resources including surface waters, for example: rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or groundwaters which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	The development will implement SUDS measures to control surface water run-off. The development would not increase risk of flooding to downstream areas with surface water to discharge at greenfield runoff rates. No surface water features in the vicinity of the site. Subject to the proposed	No

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	mitigation measures as part of the Construction and Environmental Management Plan and Flood Risk Assessment, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in significant impacts to water resources.	
2.6 Is the location susceptible to subsidence, landslides or erosion?	No	No
2.7 Are there any key transport routes(eg National primary Roads) on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	The site is served by a local road network. The N40 South Ring Road is located to the south and Passage West Greenway to the east. There are sustainable transport options available for future residents. No significant contribution to traffic congestion is anticipated to arise from the proposed development. No significant impacts anticipated.	No
2.8 Are there existing sensitive land uses or community facilities (such as hospitals, schools etc) which could be significantly affected by the project?	The site is located within lands which include various community facilities and services including some residential services operated by the HSE. However, no significant impacts on these uses are anticipated as a result of the proposal.	No
3. Any other factors that should be considered which could lead to environmental impacts		
3.1 Cumulative Effects: Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulative effects during the construction/ operation phase?	No existing or permitted developments have been identified in the immediate vicinity that would give rise to significant cumulative environmental effects with the subject project. Proposed schemes on sites to the north (313216), northwest (313206) and Phase 2 of the applicant's lands to the south have been considered in the submitted documents. However, they are not considered to give rise to significant cumulative effects in combination with the subject project.	No

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3.2 Transboundary Effects: Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No	No
3.3 Are there any other relevant considerations?	No	No

C. CONCLUSION

No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	Agreed	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	EIAR Not Required
Real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

D. MAIN REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Having regard to

- The nature and scale of the proposed development, which is below the threshold in respect of classes 10(b)(i), 10(b)(iv) of Part 2 to Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022;
- The location of the proposed residential development on zoned lands where the proposed uses are either permitted in principle or open for consideration, within the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 as 'ZO 01 - Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods' with a stated objective 'to protect and provide for residential uses and amenities, local services, community, institutional, educational and civic uses', and the results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Development Plan;
- The nature of the existing site and the pattern of development in the surrounding area;
- The availability of mains water and wastewater services to serve the proposed development;
- The location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in Article 109(4)(a)(v) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as revised;
- The guidance set out in the 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development', issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003);
- The criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as revised, and;
- The features and measures proposed by the applicant that are envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise be significant effects on the environment, including measures identified to be provided as part of the project Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan, the Outline Construction Management Plan, the Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan, the Archaeological and Architectural Heritage Impact Statement and the Engineering Services Report.

It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report would not, therefore, be required.

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Inspector _____

Date _____

Approved (DP/ADP) _____

Date _____