



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-319567-24

Development

The development will consist of the change of use from residential convent to tourism accommodation in ten apartment suites and all associated site works. The convent is a protected structure (ref: 91275) and is located within the Trim historical architectural conservation area and the Trim zone of archaeological potential. Trees to be protected are located within the convent site.

Location

Mercy Convent, Emmet Street,
Townparks South, Trim, Co. Meath,
C15 WD62

Planning Authority

Meath County Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

2460076

Applicant(s)

David O'Brien

Type of Application

Permission

Planning Authority Decision

Grant

Type of Appeal

Third Party

Appellant(s)

Saint Mary's Convent Action Group

Observer(s)

None

Date of Site Inspection

2nd December 2025

Inspector

I. McCormack

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.1. The application site is centrally located in Trim town. The site is occupied by the former Sisters of Mercy Convent fronting Emmet Street and connects the parochial house for St Patrick Church to the rear. The site has a stated site area of 0.453ha. The Convent has been vacant for a number of years.
- 1.1.2. The property has had many uses in its lifetime most notably a home for the local community of nuns and a boarding school for girls up until 1968. The convent is a Protected Structure RPS No:91275, NIAH Reg number: 14328030, 'Convent of Mercy – seven bay two storey Gothic Revival convent, completed 1867, designed by William Caldbeck. Five-bay two-storey central block flanked by gabled projecting three-storey terminating bays. The convent chapel with spire to the south. Walls and gates to site.'
- 1.1.3. The site is in the Trim Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and the Trim zone of archaeological potential. There are a number of mature trees to the front of the site. The site is within River Corridor and Estuary Landscape Character Area which is very high value and high sensitivity.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1.1. In summary, the proposed development will comprise:
- the change of use from residential convent to tourism accommodation in ten apartment suites, removal of modern toilet and bathroom block, reconfiguration, refurbishments, repairs and alterations to the internal layout.
 - The ten apartment suites will be available for short term let, which will include, at times, letting out the convent as a whole, including the chapel.
 - The development will include new storage areas, bike store and plant room in existing sheds, new canopy to the rear entrance, changes to the elevations, changes to the site layout, connection to all public services and all associated site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

By Order dated 27/03/2024 Meath County Council issued notification of a decision to GRANT permission for the proposed development.

3.1.1. Planning Reports

Planner Report

- The report provides a summary of the proposed development and submissions received. The report reviews the characteristics of the site and the proposed development and various policies and provisions of the development plan.
- The report notes that under the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 the subject site is zoned as B1 Commercial Town or Village Centre in the CDP. The objective is: 'To protect, provide for and/or improve town and village centre facilities and uses and the proposal for short term tourist accommodation is considered a permitted use.'
- The design and layout is considered acceptable and provides for flexibility of use e.g., Suite 1 can be let as a 1- or 2-bedroom unit or combined with Suite 3 to provide a 3-bedroom unit. Potentially the entire convent could be used for a single party event including the chapel.
- It is noted that all units comply with the apartment standards apart from private open space. The units will be used by tourists and therefore the need for private open space that complies with residential housing guidelines is not applicable in this case/context.
- As regards the works to the Protected Structure it was noted that both the change in use of the building and the physical interventions now proposed are proportionate and appropriate in this case and represent good conservation practice. It was further red that the Conservation raised no objection.
- Access, car parking and bicycle parking considered acceptable.
- It was noted that based on the Meath County Development Contributions Scheme 2024-2029 the proposed change of use was exempt from contributions.
- The submitted from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage set out including conditions be attached to the grant of permission relation to a bat survey.

Conclusion -The proposed development is considered acceptable at this location. The development is for conversion of residential convent to tourist accommodation.

3.2. Other Technical Reports

Conservation Officer - no objections to the proposals –subject to the following conditions: a) Existing cast iron ventilation pipes to remain and not to be removed. Existing cast iron rainwater goods to be refurbished and not replaced. b) All original internal joinery to be retained, doors, screens, shutters and panelling.

Transportation – Report notes that the applicant has proposed 20 no. car parking spaces, including 2 no. accessible spaces in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations. Visitor bicycle parking and a bicycle storage shed have been proposed. It is unclear if the bicycle storage shed complies with the requirements of the New Apartment Guidelines. Details of the bicycle storage shed, demonstrating compliance with the requirements of the New Apartment Guidelines to be submitted.

Transportation (Public Lighting) – No objection.

Environment – Planning Officer note that she spoke with Environment, no issues raised subject to conditions for wastewater and surface water.

Fire Officer – Fire Safety Certificate required.

Broadband Officer – No objection. Condition recommended.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

Department Applications Unit (DAU) - Nature Conservation

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage notes that this development has a potential to disturb the roosting habitat of a significant population of bat species listed under Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the potential to disturb breeding birds (Wildlife Act 1976-2018).

This potential impact would be caused by;

- Reconfiguration, refurbishments, repairs and alterations to the internal layout.*
- Associated site works and landscaping*

In order to mitigate this potential impact this Department recommends that the following conditions be attached to the grant of permission.

- A bat survey should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist during the active bat season.*

- *No tree felling, hedge removal or cutting should take place during the period – 1st March to 31st August.*
- *Any destruction of bat roosting site(s) must be done by a suitably qualified bat ecologist and under license granted by the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.*

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

1 no. observations were made to the Planning Authority. Issues raised in the submissions included inter alia the following:

- The building should be preserved in its current form internally and externally.
- Sightlines are inadequate.
- The proposed use is contrary to the original use. Change of use is unacceptable.
- Protected Structure only suitable for a religious order.
- Site notice not on the main entrance but located on the side gate.

4.0 **Planning History**

Site

None.

South of Site

MCC Reg. Ref. TT50014: Board of Management. Permission granted to erect two single storey temporary prefabricated classrooms 70 sqm each, for a period of five years and all associated site works in the grounds of St. Mary's Old School.

MCC Reg. Ref. TT9717: Michael O'Grady. Permission Granted to erect a single storey extension to rear of existing premises to convert existing second storey to commercial use and for change of front elevation.

MCC Reg. Ref. TT130012: The Woodlea Lambskin Self Administration Trust. Permission Granted for the demolition of existing single storey building used as storage, toilets and part lounge which fronts onto Patrick Street and construct new single storey extension to accommodate lounge, bar area together with all associated site works.

East (rear) of Site

MCC Reg. Ref. TT120004: St. Finian's Diocesan Trust. Permission Granted for demolition of existing garage to rear of centre together with metal clad store shed and single storey mono-pitch extension to the side. The development also includes the construction of a new single storey extension to side and rear to accommodate meals on wheels facility, together with general renovation works to the structure - a Protected Structure.

MCC Reg. Ref. TT977: Fr Andrew Farrell. Permission granted for demolition of existing toilets, garage and miscellaneous other sheds for the widening of existing church entrance and for the erection of a new parochial house.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Local

5.1.1. Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

Zoning

The subject site is zoned 'B1' Commercial Town or Village, the objective is to protect, provide for and/or improve town and village centre facilities and uses.

Section 3.4.2 Settlement hierarchy

- Trim is defined as a self-sustaining growth town - Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more Self-Sustaining.

Other Designations

- The subject dwelling is a Protected Structure

Appendix A.06 – Record of Protected Structures -The property is mapped as RPS ref. 91275 and described in Appendix 06 as:

Convent of Mercy – 'Seven-bay two-storey Gothic Revival convent, completed 1867, designed by William Caldbeck. Five-bay two-storey central block, flanked by gabled projecting three-storey terminating bays. The convent chapel with spire to the south. Walls and gates to site.'

- The Convent is included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage – Ref.

14328030, – Regional Importance and Architectural and Social interest.

- The site is within Trim Architectural Conservation Area.
- The site is located in the Zone of Archaeological Potential.

Chapter 4 - Economic Development Strategy

Section 4.26 -Vision for Tourism - The Plan seeks to facilitate the further development of the County as the gateway to Ireland's Ancient East. It is proposed to promote and facilitate the development of sustainable tourism and recreation and support the development of the Boyne Valley Bucket list through the provision of a diverse range of activities, historic sites and accommodation types within the County. Improvements to the tourist experience of the County and increases in overnight stays will positively influence the creation of new and varied employment opportunities throughout the County.

The following policies are considered relevant:

- ED POL 43 To promote the development of sustainable tourism and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to satisfactory location, siting and design criteria, the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas identified as sensitive landscapes in the Landscape Character Assessment for the County. (Refer to Chapter 8 Cultural Heritage, Natural Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure and Appendix 5 Landscape Character Assessment).
- ED POL 45 To encourage new and high-quality investment in the tourism industry in the County with specific reference to leisure activities (including walking, cycling, angling, equestrian and family focused activities) and accommodation in terms of choice, location and quality of product.
- It is the objective of the Council:
- ED OBJ 74 - To support the development of sustainable tourism and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to satisfactory location, siting and design criteria, the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas identified as sensitive landscapes in the Landscape Character assessment for the County. (Refer to Chapter 8 Cultural Heritage,

Natural Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure and Appendix 5 Landscape Character Assessment).

Section 4.29.2 relates to Holiday Homes- With the possible exception of the coastal strip, the County is not under significant pressure for second home or holiday home development. It is recognised that there is a market for small, short term let holiday home complexes associated with a particular tourist attraction in areas such as the equine industry. Applications for such developments will only be considered in suitable locations including towns, villages and rural nodes and where there is an existing established visitor attraction in operation.

It is the policy of the Council;

- ED POL 64 To facilitate the development of a variety of quality tourist accommodation tourist types, at suitable locations, throughout the County.
- ED POL 69 To facilitate, where appropriate, the conversion of former demesnes or estate dwellings and their outbuildings into tourism facilities subject to good Planning and architectural conservation practice. (Refer to Chapter 8 Cultural Heritage, Natural Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure and Appendix 5).
- ED POL 70 To ensure that the provision any accommodation (ED POL 69 refers), shall not be occupied as permanent place of residence. This accommodation type will in any event only be considered favourably in the case of refurbishment and adaptation of a Protected Structure or group of structures within attendant grounds for tourism use.
- ED POL 72 To require new holiday home / self-catering developments to locate within either established settlements or at established tourism / recreation facilities, other than those developments involving the renovation / conversion of existing buildings.

Chapter 8 – Cultural and Natural Heritage Strategy

Section 8.7 relates to Architectural Heritage. The relevant sections of the Act including definitions are outlined.

- HER POL 14 -To protect and conserve the architectural heritage of the County and seek to prevent the demolition or inappropriate alteration of Protected Structures.

- HER POL 15 - To encourage the conservation of Protected Structures, and where appropriate, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and sites in a manner compatible with their character and significance. In certain cases, land use zoning restrictions may be relaxed in order to secure the conservation of the protected structure.
- HER POL 16 -To protect the setting of Protected Structures and to refuse permission for development within the curtilage or adjacent to a protected structure which would adversely impact on the character and special interest of the structure, where appropriate.
- HER POL 17 -To require that all planning applications relating to Protected Structures contain the appropriate accompanying documentation in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) or any variation thereof, to enable the proper assessment of the proposed works.
- HER POL 18 - To require that in the event of permission being granted for development within the curtilage of a protected structure, any works necessary for the survival of the structure and its re-use should be prioritised in the first phase of development.

Chapter 9 – Rural Development Context

- Section 9.10 - Tree Preservation, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) have been made for a number of sites (Map 9.3).

Chapter 11 -Development Management Standards and Land Use Zoning Objectives

- Section 5 – Residential Development Standard.
- Section 11.4.4 Trees and Hedgerows -Trees and Hedgerows are an important consideration with all developments and it is considered that the retention of trees and hedgerows should be considered as part of any relevant planning application. (Please refer to policies contained in Section 8.9.7 Woodlands, Hedgerows and Trees in this regard).

DM OBJ 11: Existing trees and hedgerows of biodiversity and/or amenity value shall be retained, where possible.

Volume 2 – Written Statement and Maps

3.0 - Vision for Trim - *For Trim to be an attractive heritage town with a diverse modern*

economy and a vibrant centre complementing its nationally significant cultural heritage and picturesque setting adjacent to the historically significant Trim Castle and the River Boyne’.

12.0 Tourism -The Economic Strategy for County Meath has also identified the potential to develop Trim as part of a tourism cluster. Tourism is identified as being of critical importance to the future economic development of Trim and this sector must capitalise on its cultural heritage appeal within the most densely populated region of the country. Other sectors not specifically heritage related such as water-based tourism have significant potential to increase visitor numbers.

TRIM POL 1 -*To continue to support the consolidation of Trim as an attractive heritage town with a diverse economy and a vibrant centre complementing its nationally significant cultural heritage and picturesque setting.*

5.2. National

5.2.1. National Planning Framework (2025)

- National Policy Objective 63- Support the coordination and promotion of all-island tourism initiatives through continued co-operation between the relevant tourism agencies and Tourism Ireland, pursue the further development of sport, and invest in the diverse heritage, arts and cultural and linguistic traditions of the island.

5.2.2. Climate Action Plan, 2025

- The approved Climate Action Plan 2025 is the third statutory update to the plan since the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. This plan builds upon the 2024 plan and outlines how Ireland will accelerate climate action to meet its goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and achieving climate neutrality by 2050.
- The Plan acknowledges investment in emissions reduction is growing as the urgent need to act is increasingly being recognised and as the benefits of the transition to a low carbon society become clearer.
- The Climate Action Plan 2025 action no. AD/25/3 seeks to develop Sectoral Climate Adaptation Plan for the Tourism Sector.

5.3. Other relevant Section 28 Guidelines

- Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht 2011.
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2023). (Application made prior to 9th July 2025 therefore having regard to the 'transitional arrangements' the 2025 Guidelines do not apply in this instance).
 - Par. 3.39 set out that '*Private amenity space standards for apartments are set out in Appendix 1. For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha , private amenity space requirements may be relaxed in part or whole, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality.*'

5.4. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.4.1. The site is not located within or adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites, the closest such sites being the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA, which are within approx. c300m north and c 290m northwest of the site.

5.5. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

- 5.5.1. The proposal is for the conversion of existing convent building into tourist accommodation. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment, please refer to Appendix 1: Form 1 of this report. Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

5.1. Water Framework Directive (WFD) Screening

- 5.1.1. Please refer to Appendix 2 of this report. The River Boyne (IE_EA_07B041400-BOYNE_090) is located c. c300m north and c 290m northwest of the site (moderate water body status) and the groundwater body is IE_EA_G_002 - Trim - Groundwater body (good water body status).

- 5.1.2. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 5.1.3. It appears that based on the information available to me that there is sufficient capacity within the WWTP serving the Trom agglomeration and subject to a condition precluding the commencement of development until a full connection agreement has been secured from Uisce Éireann, the proposed development would not result in a deterioration in water quality or aquatic habitats degradation arising from an overall increase in biological loading from treated effluent discharges.
- 5.1.4. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of the development including the connection to public water supply, public sewer and storm sewer, and
 - lack of hydrological connections.
- 5.1.5. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

6.0 The Appeal

One no. third party appeal was received from Saint Mary's Convent Action Group. The grounds of appeal can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns that Meath County Council only briefly mentioned the concerns raised in their original observation.
- The planners choose to ignore all the material on the late Fr. O'Connell and

that fact that he is buried in the convent chapel. The church considers the ground within the catholic cemetery sacred and that there could be a bone/ relic of a saint buried underneath the alter. The grounds are considered an extension of the Catholic Church, and the convent should be retained as a religious house.

- In addition, and contrary to the above, referring to proposed car parking, it is set out that Fr. O'Connell's grave needs to be identified, the remains exhumed and interred in consecrated church grounds.
- Concerns raised about sightlines at the proposed entrance.
- It is set out that the applicant is silent on how the building will operate.
- Query location of the site notices on the pedestrian gate.
- Query re. newspaper notice in The Herald not Meath Chronicle.
- Query re. pre-planning and the point of public engagement if the planning authority ignores important aspects.
- St. Mary's Convent is an important and unique building, and it is essential that it be conserved in its current form and retained as a convent. There is a current demand from contemplative orders seeking permission in Ireland.

6.1. Planning Authority Response

In a response dated 9th May 2024 the Planning Authority (PA) is satisfied that all matters were considered in the course of its assessment of the planning application as detailed in the Planning Officer Report dated 25th March 2024 and section 10.8 of the Planning report addresses the issues raised by third parties. The Planning Authority 'respectfully requests that An Bord Pleanala uphold the decision to Grant permission for the said development.'

6.2. Observations

None

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1. Having inspected the site and examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, and having regard to relevant local/national policies and guidance, I consider

that the main issues in this appeal can be addressed as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Impact of Built and Cultural Heritage
- Sightlines
- Other Matters

7.2. Principle of Development

Proposed Development

- 7.2.1. The proposed development comprises the change of use from residential convent to tourism accommodation in the form of 10 suites for short-term visitors with a maximum stay of 3 months. The layout has been planned to allow flexibility in letting out, for example Suite 1 can be let as a 1 or 2 bedroom unit or combined with Suite 3 to provide a 3 bedroom unit. It is envisaged that the entire convent could be let to a single party of visitors who could make uses of the chapel if they wished.
- 7.2.2. The convent was Built c1867 and is a seven-bay, two-storey, gothic revival house designed by the architect, William Calbeck. The Commission will note that the existing convent is a Protected Structure RPS No:91275, and on the NIAH, reg number: 14328030, Convent of Mercy. The site is located within the Trim ACA and the zone of Archaeological Potential.
- 7.2.3. As set out in the documentation on file as the proposal is designed for short-term stays the layout of interconnecting suites will not be suitable for conventional apartments. No private open spaces/balconies will be provided, and a landscaped courtyard will provide a suitable communal shared amenity space for the short term residents.
- 7.2.4. Existing pedestrian and vehicular entrances will be maintained as they are and the protected trees on site will be retained and protected during construction works. 20 no. car parking spaces will be provided to the rear of the site.
- 7.2.5. Water, wastewater and surface water will connect to existing public infrastructure servicing the site.
- 7.2.6. The convent has been vacant for some time and was purchased by the current owner in 2021.

Zoning

- 7.2.7. The Commission will note that the subject site is zoned 'B1' Commercial Town or Village, the objective is to protect, provide for and/or improve town and village centre facilities and uses. Chapter 11 - Development Management Standards and Land Use Zoning Objectives, of the CDP 2021-2027 section 11.14.6 sets out that 'the primary land use in B1 zones is employment generating, service and retail provision. In order to achieve balanced development and create vibrant urban communities, residential use can also be considered on these lands...' B & B / Guest House, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities are all permitted uses within 'B1' zoned lands. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposed use as tourist accommodation is permissible with the zoning provision 'B1'.
- 7.2.8. Further to the above, section 3.4.2 Settlement hierarchy of the MCDP 2021-2027 defines Trim as a self-sustaining growth town – '*Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services.*'. Volume 2 – Written Statement and Maps of the MCDP sets out that the vision for Trim – '*is to be an attractive heritage town with a diverse modern economy and a vibrant centre complementing its nationally significant cultural heritage and picturesque setting adjacent to the historically significant Trim Castle and the River Boyne.*' Section 12.0 Tourism establishes that the Economic Strategy for County Meath has identified the potential to develop Trim as part of a tourism cluster and that tourism is identified as being of critical importance to the future economic development of Trim and this sector must capitalise on its cultural heritage appeal within the most densely populated region of the country. This is supported by TRIM POL 1 -*To continue to support the consolidation of Trim as an attractive heritage town with a diverse economy and a vibrant centre complementing its nationally significant cultural heritage and picturesque setting.* The provision of tourist accommodation is therefore required to facilitate the development of tourism in Trim.
- 7.2.9. Having regard to the above, I am satisfied that the adaptative re-use of a vacant and prominent town centre site and the provision of an alternative form of tourist accommodation will support the development of Trim as a self-sustaining town and enhance and support the tourism offerings in Trim and is therefore acceptable, in my opinion, subject to detailed consideration below.

Proposed Use/Operating Model

- 7.2.10. The third party has raised concerns that the applicant is silent on how the building will operate and contend that St. Mary's Convent is an important and unique building, and it is essential that it be conserved in its current form and retained as a convent and that there is a current demand from contemplative orders seeking permission in Ireland.
- 7.2.11. In the first instance the Commission will note that the existing building is vacant and was sold in 2021 and now in private ownership. Therefore, any use by a religious order ceased when the building was sold. An alternative use to accommodate contemplative orders as suggested by the third party is not the subject of this application and therefore not a matter for consideration as part of this appeal. I will address the heritage impacts separately in section 7.3 of this report.
- 7.2.12. Regarding concerns raised about the operating model and the lack of information, the applicants cover letter details the operating model proposed as set out in 7.2.1 above. I further note that the application was accompanied by a Market and Feasibility Proposal document which sets out details of the proposal including the unique selling points:
- *'Architectural Heritage: The property's protected structure status and commitment to preserving its original character.'*
 - *Location: the prime location in the historical town of Trim, with easy access to landmarks like Trim Castle and the River Boyne.*
 - *Restoration Story: We will showcase the meticulous restoration process to connect guests with the property's rich past.*
 - *Located close to three of Co. Meath's hotels, bringing lots of opportunities for extended stays e.g., destination weddings.*
 - *40 minutes to Dublin airport*
 - *Within 30 minutes of all Boyne Valley sites.'*

All of the above establish the suitability of the site for development and I agree with the applicant that the convent building itself is an attractive selling point for the scheme which in itself is a reflection of the history of Trim, in addition to the site's location and accessibility to other attractions.

- 7.2.13. I further note the PA included condition no. 2 which stipulated that *'the proposed 10 tourist units hereby permitted shall be used as self-catering accommodation (maximum holiday stay period of 1 month), or as Class 6, and for no other class within Part 4 of Schedule 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2023 and shall be maintained as a single planning unit and not give rise to any subdivision or individual sale of units unless otherwise authorised by a separate grant of permission. For the avoidance of doubt this permission does not include uses as permanent residential accommodation.'* In the event that the Commission is minded to grant planning permission I recommend that this condition be included in any schedule of conditions. While the applicant has indicated stays of up to 3 months, having regard to the intended use as tourist accommodation (i.e., short term in nature), I agree with the PA that a maximum stay of 1 month is appropriate. This approach is consistent with ED POL 70 *'to ensure that the provision any accommodation shall not be occupied as permanent place of residence.....'*
- 7.2.14. While I am satisfied the applicant has addressed the operating model as regards the accommodation and this can be further controlled by condition as detailed above, I do not consider that applicant has adequately addressed the future use/s of the church. The documentation is light in this regard and would imply that any use would be linked to the accommodation offering, however embedded in the documentation is reference to weddings. Therefore, full details as regards the future use of the church requires clarification, in particular, if it is intended to utilise the church for private functions independent of the convent rental accommodation. I am satisfied that this matter can be addressed by way of condition having particular regard to the fact that the documentation is clear that no works (with the exception of the removal of the later addition radiators) are proposed to the church and therefore any use would be would not alter this context.
- 7.2.15. On balance, I am satisfied that proposed use and operating model is acceptable in principle and in accordance with Development Plan policies including, HER POL 15 – *'To encourage the conservation of Protected Structures, and where appropriate, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and sites in a manner compatible with their character and significance. In certain cases, land use zoning restrictions may be relaxed in order to secure the conservation of the protected structure'*, ED POL 64 - *'To facilitate the development of a variety of quality tourist accommodation tourist*

types, at suitable locations, throughout the County’, and ED POL 72 – ‘To require new holiday home / self-catering developments to locate within either established settlements or at established tourism / recreation facilities, other than those developments involving the renovation / conversion of existing buildings.’

Conclusion

- 7.2.16. The development of the site is guided by the zoning principles of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. I am satisfied that the proposed development is consistent with the land use zoning objectives of the MCDP 2021-2027 and that there is policy support for the proposed development and the proposed development is acceptable in principle.

7.3. Built and Cultural Heritage

Built Heritage

- 7.3.1. The Commission will note that while no specific concerns were raised about the impact of the development on the built heritage of the convent. As regard the adaptative re-use the application was accompanied by a Conservation Impact Assessment. The PA in their assessment set out that the Development Plan fully supports the sensitive restoration and re-use of Protected Structures subject to compliance with conservation best practice and the preservation of the special character of the structure. In addition, the MCC Conservation Officer raised no objection subject to the retention of specific original features. Section 7 of the Conservation Impact Assessment details proposed works and assessment of Impacts.
- 7.3.2. I am satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in the context of architectural heritage and seeks to retain and restore significant features of merit and provides for an appropriate adaptative re-use of the structure to ensure the on-going protection and longevity in accordance with best conservation practice. It is of note that much of the intervention works carried out while the convent was occupied by the nuns included the subdivision/partitioning of rooms at the first floor level to accommodate individual rooms for the nuns. Therefore, much of the original layout has already been altered. The Commission will also note that the Conservation report sets out that for the most part the intervention works proposed in the context of the adaptive reuse have been evaluated as positive overall and proportional and acceptable in this case. I would agree.

- 7.3.3. I note reference in the submission to the border accommodation at attic level. Site inspection determined that the attic accommodation is essentially two large rooms either side of an access stairs which accommodates sinks and a small bathroom. The attic rooms will be retained and redecorated. The only significant intervention is the replacement stairs, the existing stairs is narrow and not fit for purpose. The new stairs will be an extension of a new 'stair zone' for the entire building and while the proposed new stairs is a significant intervention it is necessary to facilitate the development and for safe access to the building across all levels. I am satisfied that this intervention is acceptable, and any loss of original features is balanced against the overall redevelopment of the site and associated consolidation and protection of the Protected Structure.
- 7.3.4. While I note the third party concerns that the grounds are considered an extension of the Catholic Church, and the convent should be retained as a religious house. The Conservation report sets out, and I would agree, that the convent has outlived the purpose for which they were first conceived, education, and this was later exacerbated by falling vocations and decline in the religious community who have traditionally resided here. Therefore, the adaptive re-use is the most appropriate alternative to ensure the protection of the buildings. The Commission will also note that the Conservation report sets out that for the most part that the intervention works in the context of the adaptive reuse have been evaluated as positive overall is proportional and acceptable in this case. I would agree. In addition, the external appearance of the building will remain intact and as such the building will continue to read as a former convent structure.
- 7.3.5. Overall, I am satisfied that the approach is consistent with Section 8.7 *Architectural Heritage* of the MCDP, HER Policy 15, HER Policy 17 and HER Policy 18 and the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 which states that 'on the whole, the best way to prolong the life of a protected structure is to keep it in active use, ideally in its original use. Where this is not possible, there is a need for flexibility within development plan policies to be responsive to appropriate, alternative uses for a structure.'

Cultural Heritage

- 7.3.6. A primary concern raised by the third party relates to the remains of the late Fr. O'Connell which the third party contends are buried in the convent chapel. The third party submission sets out that Fr. O'Connell built the convent, the parochial house and also founded various schools on Trim. Concern is raised that the planners choose to ignore all the material on the late Fr. O'Connell and that fact that he is buried in the convent chapel. Concern is also raised that there could be a bone/ relic of a saint buried underneath the altar as this was a practice.
- 7.3.7. In the first instance the Commission will note that the Conservation report clearly sets out that the chapel and ancillary spaces are to be retained with minimum intervention. The only interventions proposed are the redecoration of the existing finishes and removal of non-original radiators. Building services will be upgraded in situ and existing established pipe runs and conduits will be re-used to ensure no disruption to existing fabric. The report acknowledges that the chapel space is the '*single most significant space within the convent building. It is not proposed to carry out any works in this space with the exception of the removal of the non-original radiators.*' There are two ancillary spaces off the chapel, and these are to be similarly preserved as an entrance/exit and vesting area. They will be decorated and tidied without any loss of existing fabric. No significant works are proposed to the church including no structural works. The altar will remain in situ and protected and any remains that maybe interred in the altar or any bones or relics will remain untouched.
- 7.3.8. I note the PA and MCC Conservation Officer did not address Fr. O'Connell in their assessments, similarly the Conservation report does not include reference to Fr. O'Connell. The Commission will note that no recorded historical evidence that Fr. O'Connell is buried in the church or on the grounds of the site (noting reference by the third party to the car parking on site) accompanied the planning appeal from the third party. I further note that no external ground works are proposed to the rear car parking area. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in this instance based on the evidence presented as part of this appeal.

Conclusion

- 7.3.9. There is no doubt that the site is of significant cultural and heritage value and the redevelopment of the site will alter the site context as a result of the development, and

this is a default consequence but not a negative consequence of developing the site. On balance, I am satisfied that the proposed redevelopment of this site including the adaptative reuse of the Protected Structure and the introduction of holiday accommodation resulting in the active use of the site is acceptable and in accordance with Section 8.7 *Architectural Heritage* of the MCDP 2021-2027 and the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011.

I am satisfied that the design strategy, in particular, the adaptive reuse constitutes a viable and sustainable use of the site and would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the introduction of tourist accommodation will revitalise the area, through the restoration of the vacant convent site which will reflect a positive impact on the protected structure and the wider Architectural Conservation Area.

7.4. Sightlines

- 7.4.1. The third party raised concerns about sightlines at the entrance and that the proposed development will generate more traffic than the original use.
- 7.4.2. In the first instance vehicular access to the site is via the existing entrance serving the site off Emmet Street. There is also a separate pedestrian access serving the site with direct access onto Emmet Street. I accept that sightlines has not been indicated on the drawings submitted with the application. However, as stated above the site is accessed via the existing entrance serving the site and site inspection indicated a yellow hatch area fronting the entrance which extends to serve the adjoining entrance directly south of the entrance. This extended hatched area combined with the vertical bollards at both entrances and the traffic speed in the town centre serve to both highlight the location of the entrance and restrict vehicular manoeuvrability and by default speed into and out of the site. I am satisfied in the context of the urban setting and the provisions in place to reduce vehicular speed, that the proposed access arrangements are acceptable. The narrow width of the gate means that only one vehicle can access/egress the site at any one time thereby reducing vehicular movements at the entrance. Furthermore, to widen the entrance gates would alter the original fabric of the boundary wall and would be an unnecessary intervention. The retention of the entrance is consistent with the conservation practice of minimum

intervention. I further note the report from the Transportation section of MCC raised no concerns in this regard.

- 7.4.3. As regards any increase in traffic generated by the development, in light of the proposed use as tourist accommodation, multiple daily access/agrees movements are unlikely. In any case the site is located in the town centre where additional traffic movements are an acceptable norm.

Conclusion

- 7.4.4. I am satisfied that the proposed access/egress arrangements are acceptable at this location. The site is located in the town centre and will be served via the existing access serving the site and the PA raised no concerns in this regard.

7.5. Other Matters

Engagement

- 7.5.1. The third party raised a number of concerns with respect to engagement including the location of the site notices on the pedestrian gate, the placing of the newspaper notice in The Herald and not Meath Chronicle and pre-planning advice and the point of public engagement if the planning authority ignores important aspects.
- 7.5.2. In the first instance pre-planning is advised on planning policy and a general discussion on drawings and documents etc required to accompany a planning application only.
- 7.5.3. The planning application was subject to public observation. Having regard to the fact that a number of submissions were made to MCC when the application was made, I am satisfied that the location of the site notice, nor the placing of the newspaper advertisement in The Herald did not prejudice third parties from making submission/observations. I further note that The Herald is on MCC's list of approved newspapers for notices.
- 7.5.4. Surrounding properties and the public have had the opportunity to comment on the proposals. Accordingly, I am satisfied that adequate opportunity has been afforded for comment on the proposed development in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Fauna – Bats & Birds

- 7.5.5. No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning appeal. However, the PA in their recommendation to grant included a condition requiring a Bat Survey be carried out on site on foot of the report received from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage which notes that this development has a potential to disturb the roosting habitat of a significant population of bat species listed under Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the potential to disturb breeding birds (Wildlife Act 1976-2018).
- 7.5.6. No survey accompanied the planning application. However, site inspection determined that in the intervening period since the application was made the site has been subject to on-going maintenance works in consultation with MCC Conservation Officer including works to the roof. Site inspection on 2/12/2025 including roof access did not indicate evidence of bats on site. While I accept that detailed surveys are the only available course in establishing the potential presence or absence of roosting bats and characterising roosts where they are found to occur, having regard to my onsite observations, the absence of any evidence of bats, I am of the opinion that, in the event the Commission is minded to grant planning permission a condition requiring a pre-works baseline survey would be acceptable in this instance based on onsite observations and the regular activity within and around the building. Where the Commission does not agree, they may seek to address this matter by way of further information. However, and of significance in the event that bats are found on-site subsequent to a pre-works baseline survey this does not negate the developer's legal obligation to seek a derogation licence in compliance with S 51 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.
- 7.5.7. On breeding birds, a suitable condition stipulating works be carried out outside of the breeding season (March- August) can be attached to any grant of permission, should the Commission be minded to grant permission.

Trees

- 7.5.8. The trees to the front of the site are referenced by the PA as being subject to Tree Protection Orders (TPO's). However, a review of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) Map 9.3 of the MCDP 2021-2027 did not identify the trees as being TPO'd. In any case the Commission will note that it is proposed to retain the trees on site, these trees are attractive mature trees and part of the setting of the Convent and should be retained and protected in accordance with objective DM OBJ 11: *'Existing trees and hedgerows*

of biodiversity and/or amenity value shall be retained, where possible.' A suitable condition to address the protection of these trees should be included in any landscaping plan, should the Commission be minded to grant planning permission.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment

- 8.1.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.
- 8.1.2. The subject site is located approximately approx. 300m north and 290m northwest River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA, (site code 002299 and site code 004232).
- 8.1.3. The proposed development comprises the change of use from residential convent to tourism accommodation in ten apartment suites and all associated site works. The site is currently served by existing connections to the public water, sewer and surface water network.
- 8.1.4. No nature conservation concerns relating to the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA, (site code 002299 and site code 004232) or their qualifying interests were raised in the planning appeal.
- 8.1.5. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:
- Scale and nature of the development
 - lack of connections to nearest European site
 - Taking into account screening report by Planning Authority

I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

9.0 Conditions of the MCC Decision

The conditions included in the planning authority's decision are considered in the following table.

No.	Summary of Condition(s)	Comment
1	Documents and drawings	Standard condition to apply.
2	The proposed 10 tourist units hereby permitted shall be used as self-catering accommodation (maximum holiday stay period of 1 month), or as Class 6, and for no other class within Part 4 of Schedule 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2023 and shall be maintained as a single planning unit and not give rise to any subdivision or individual sale of units unless otherwise authorised by a separate grant of permission. For the avoidance of doubt this permission does not include uses as permanent residential accommodation.	Agreed.
3	Cast iron pipes to be retained.	Agreed – to be addressed in conservation condition.
4	Lighting	Agreed.
5	Design and Finishes	As per condition no. 1
6	Bat Survey	Condition recommended.
7	Surface water	Agreed. Similar condition to be attached.

8	Construction Environmental Monitoring Plan (CEMP)	Standard Condition to apply.
9	Waste Management Plan (WMP)	Standard Condition to apply.
10	Dust Emissions	Agreed. Can be addressed in line with condition no. 8 above.
11	Hours of operation	Standard Condition to apply.
12	Landscaping shall be carried out as detailed on the site plan submitted on 02/02/2024 unless otherwise agreed	Agreed. Revised condition recommended to include lighting and protection of trees..

10.0 Recommendation

Having regard to the residential land use zoning of the site, the nature and scale of the proposed development, and the provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the development would not detract from the character and setting of the Protected Structure, would not seriously injure the residential amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity nor would it represent a traffic safety issue. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having read the appeal and submissions on file, had due regard to the provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, carried out a site visit and all other matters arising. I recommend that permission is granted subject to the conditions set out below.

12.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application on the 2nd of February 2024, except as may

otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. The proposed 10 tourist units hereby permitted shall be used as self-catering accommodation (maximum holiday stay period of 1 month), or as Class 6, and for no other class within Part 4 of Schedule 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2023 and shall be maintained as a single planning unit and not give rise to any subdivision or individual sale of units unless otherwise authorised by a separate grant of permission. For the avoidance of doubt this permission does not include uses as permanent residential accommodation.

Reason: In the interest of clarity and in the interest of proper planning and orderly development.

3. The Prior to the commencement of development the applicant/developer shall submit for the written agreement of the planning authority confirmation that:
 - (a) the development will be monitored by a suitably qualified architect with conservation expertise and accreditation, and
 - (b) all existing cast iron ventilation pipes to remain and not to be removed. Existing cast iron rainwater goods to be refurbished and not replaced and all original internal joinery to be retained, doors, screens, shutters and panelling. Details to be submitted for agreement with the Meath County Council Conservation Officer.
 - (c) competent site supervision, project management and crafts personnel will be engaged, suitably qualified and experienced in conservation works.

Reason: In the interest of the protection of architectural heritage (in accordance with the provisions of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities).

4. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant/developer shall submit for the written agreement of the planning authority a pre-works baseline Bat Survey carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist during the active season.

In the event that bats are found a derogation licence in compliance with S 51 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 is required. Any destruction of bat roosting site(s) must be carried out by a suitably qualified bat ecologist and under licence granted by the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Reason: In the interest of the protection of the environment during construction and operational phases of development.

5. The applicant /developer shall ensure works will not disturb breeding birds (Wildlife Act 1976-2018). All works shall be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (March- August).

Reason: In the interest of the protection of the environment during construction and operational phases of development.

6. A comprehensive landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority, prior to commencement of development. This scheme shall include the following:

- (a) details of all proposed hard surface finishes, including samples of proposed paving slabs/materials for footpaths, kerbing and road surfaces within the development;
- (b) proposed locations of trees and other landscape planting in the development, including details of proposed species and settings;
- (c) details of measure to protect trees on site;
- (d) details of proposed external seating, if proposed,
- (e) details of proposed lighting as per "Meath County Councils; Public Lighting Technical Specification & Requirements" document, details shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Conservation Officer and Lighting Section of Meath County Council prior to the commencement of development,

The landscape scheme shall be implemented fully in the first planting season following completion of the development, and any trees or shrubs which die or are removed within three years of planting shall be replaced in the first planting season thereafter. This work shall be completed before the accommodation and tea rooms are made available for occupation/use.

Reason: In the interest of the preservation of the character and setting of the Thatch House and to ensure the satisfactory landscaping of the site in accordance with proper

planning and sustainable development.

7. Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of public health and surface water management

8. A plan containing details for the management of waste (and, in particular, recyclable materials) within the development, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of the waste and, in particular, recyclable materials shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Thereafter, the agreed waste facilities shall be maintained, and waste shall be managed in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: To provide for the appropriate management of waste and, in particular recyclable materials, in the interest of protecting the environment and the amenities of properties in the vicinity

9. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer or any agent acting on its behalf, shall prepare a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021) including demonstration of proposals to adhere to best practice and protocols. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be measured and monitored for effectiveness; these details shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record. The RWMP must be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commencement of development. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the agreed RWMP shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development

10. The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Construction Management Plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including:

- a. Location of the site and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse;

- b. Location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;
- c. Details of site security fencing and hoardings;
- d. Details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers;
- e. Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, to include proposals to facilitate the delivery of abnormal loads to the site;
- f. Measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network;
- g. Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on the public road network;
- h. Alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public road or footpath during the course of site development works;
- i. Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;
- j. Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained. Such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater;
- k. Off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;
- l. Means to ensure that surface water run-off is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local surface water sewers or drains.
- m. A record of daily checks that the works are being undertaken in accordance with the Construction Management Plan shall be available for inspection by the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection, residential amenities, public health and safety, and environmental protection.

11. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Friday inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times

will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of property in the vicinity.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion of the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Irené McCormack

Senior Planning Inspector

15th December 2025

Appendix 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	319567-24
Proposed Development Summary	The development will consist of the change of use from residential convent to tourism accommodation in ten apartment suites and all associated site works. The convent is a protected structure (ref: 91275) and is located within the Trim historical architectural conservation area and the Trim zone of archaeological potential. Trees to be protected are located within the convent site.
Development Address	Mercy Convent, Emmet Street, Townparks South, Trim, Co. Meath, C15 WD62
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in <u>Part 1</u>, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1 . EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	N/a
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed	

road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.	<i>Not of a Class</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.	

4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Appendix 2 - Water Framework Directive Screening Determination

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
An Coimisiún Pleanála ref. no.	319567-24	Townland, address	Mercy Convent, Emmet Street, Townparks South, Trim, Co. Meath, C15 WD62
Description of project		The development will consist of the change of use from residential convent to tourism accommodation in ten apartment suites and all associated site works. The convent is a protected structure (ref: 91275) and is located within the Trim historical architectural conservation area and the Trim zone of archaeological potential. Trees to be protected are located within the convent site.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		The application site is located in Trim town. There are no watercourses on site. The River Boyne is located c. 300m from the site.	
Proposed surface water details		Application form identified connection to the public network	
Proposed water supply source & available capacity		Application form identified connection to the public network. A review of the Uisce Eireann Capacity website on 1/12/2025 indicated that potential capacity is available in Trim	
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available		Application form identified connection to the public network.	

capacity, other issues			The Commission will note that a review of the Uisce Eireann Capacity website on 1/12/2025 indicated spare capacity available at the Trim WWTP.			
Others?			N/A			
Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection						
Identified water body	Distance to (m)	Water body name(s) (code)	WFD Status	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk	Identified pressures on that water body.	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g., surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)
River	c.300 from the site	IE_EA_07B04 1400-BOYNE_090	Moderate	Monitoring	Urban run-off	No pathway linkage exists.

Groundwater waterbody	Underlying Site	IE_EA_G_002 - Trim - Groundwater body	Good	Review	No pressures	No discharge to ground proposed.	
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Water body receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
1.	Surface	IE_EA_07B 041400- BOYNE_09 0	No pathway exists	None	None	No	Screened out
2.	Ground	IE_EA_G_0 02 - Trim -	Drainage	Hydrocarbon Spillages	standard Constructio	No	Screened out

		Groundwater r body			n Measures / Condition		
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
3.	Surface water run- off	IE_EA_07B 041400- BOYNE_09 0	None	None	None	No	Screened out
4.	Discharges to ground	IE_EA_G _002 - Trim - Groundw ater body	None	None	None	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA