



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-321232-24

Development	Retention: Change of use of garden centre to container storage facility and all associated site works.
Location	Killahora, Glounthaune, Co. Cork
Planning Authority	Cork County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	245581
Applicant(s)	Titan Containers
Type of Application	Retention Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Titan Containers.
Observer(s)	None.
Date of Site Inspection	23rd September 2025
Inspector	Jennifer McQuaid

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site (1.142ha) is located in the rural townland of Killahora, Glounthaune, Co. Cork. The site is c.465m east of the development boundary for Glounthaune and c.213m west of the development boundary for Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork. There are existing storage container facilities on site. The subject site is accessed from the L3004 via a separate entrance from the Elm Tree entrance. There is a two-way pedestrian and cycle route along the northern side of the L3004. This forms part of Inter-Urban Route 1 with reference to CMATS.
- 1.2. The Elm Tree Restaurant is located to the east of the access road serving the site and to the south of the main site. There is a dwelling to the west of the access road and a commercial yard located to the rear of this dwelling directly adjoins the southern boundary of the subject site.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Retention development is sought for:
- Change of use of former garden centre to container storage facilities (containers vary in size from 6 feet, 8 feet, 10 feet, 20 feet and 40 feet in length)
 - Toilet/office facilities connected to an existing effluent holding tank with 4000 litre capacity
 - Vehicular entrance
 - 8no. 5-metre-high light standards

Permission sought for:

- Connection to public foul and storm sewer
- 5 no. 4-metre-high light standards on posts
- All associated site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Refused for three reasons:

1. Having regard to the location of the site within the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and the nature and scale of the development to be retained it is considered that the retention of this development would materially contravene Objectives RP 5-11, RP 5-12 and RP 5-13 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 which seek to maintain the greenbelt, retain its open and rural character and protect it from inappropriate development which is more suitable for zoned lands within settlements. Furthermore, it is considered that the retention of this development would set an undesirable precedent for other non-conforming uses in the Metropolitan Greenbelt and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. Having regard to the nature and scale of the development to be retained, the location of the site within the “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt” and “High Value Landscape” designation pertaining to the site it is considered that the retention of this development would represent an incongruous form of development within the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt which would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity and character of this rural landscape. It is considered that the retention of this development would materially contravene Objectives GI14-9, GI14-16 and HE16-21 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. Having regard to the nature and scale of the development to be retained and the location of the two-way pedestrian and cycle route (Inter-Urban Route 1 with reference to the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy) adjacent to the site access the Planning Authority is not satisfied on the basis of the information submitted with the application that the traffic generated by the retention of this development would not endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard. It is therefore considered that the retention of this development would contravene Objective TM12-8 of the Cork County Development Plan

2022 and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

- The subject site is located in a rural area defined as “Metropolitan Greenbelt”. The planning history indicates that the site was previously used as a garden centre but does not appear to have operated for some time. The principle of development is not acceptable within the Metropolitan Greenbelt, there are numerous objectives relating to the preservation of the greenbelt, the protection of its character and the prevention of inappropriate development, specifically objective RP5-11, objective RP5-12 and objective RP5-13. The proposal is not in accordance with these objectives. Objective RP5-16 allows for expansion/intensification of long established commercial or institutional uses located within the Greenbelt, the site was previously used as a garden centre but not in recent years (google image from 2020 indicates that the site was overgrown at that time), the subject development is a new business and operating unauthorised since c. late 2023/early 2024. The development represents a significant intensification in the use of the land and significantly exceeds the scale of the garden centre operation in terms of land cover, hardstanding etc.
- Objective RP5-17 recognises that there may be development of a strategic and exceptional nature that may not be suitably located within zoned lands and that such development may be accommodated in Greenbelt locations. The subject development is not considered to be a development of a strategic or exceptional nature. It is also recognised that the applicant has permission on zoned lands located approximately 1km to the southeast of the subject site within Fotapoint Enterprise Park.
- The site forms part of the “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt”, objective GI14-16 seeks to preserve such areas from development. The site is also in a High Value Landscape. The subject site is setback from the public road; ground levels increase from the road to the northern site boundary c.2m

higher than the road level. The tops of the containers are visible from the road (L3004) and light pollution is a significant issue to the local environment. The development is visible when travelling west along the L3004 from Carrigtwohill towards Glounthaune and represents a significant visual encroachment into the Metropolitan Greenbelt. The development is significantly more visually obtrusive than the previous garden centre in the rural landscape. The proposal contravenes Objective GI14-6 which seeks to preserve the “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt”, objective GI14-9 which requires new developments to meet high standards of siting and design, objective HE16-21 which requires development to respect the character of existing places and to fit appropriately into the landscape.

- The development contravenes objective BE15-6 which provides for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the development management process and supports the principle of biodiversity net gain. The development has resulted in the loss of trees/scrub/emerging woodland habitat. The Ecologist requests that compensatory measures shall be implemented. This could involve augmenting existing natural site boundaries or providing additional planting along the western site boundary. A landscaping plan should have regard to principle of biodiversity net gain, utilising native species only.
- No information submitted in relation to the operating characteristics, operational hours, expected traffic generation etc. therefore, it is not possible to fully assess the impact on adjoining residential amenity.
- Access to the site involves crossing the pedestrian and cycle route which forms part of the Inter-Urban Route 1. The access to The Elm Tree Restaurant is located to the immediate east and the access serving the adjoining dwelling and commercial yard to the west also immediately adjoining the site access. The Sustainable Travel Unit raised a number of concerns regarding the safety of the existing inter-urban cycle route and recommends refusal based on traffic hazard.

- The development is currently connected to an effluent holding tank with 4,000 litre capacity. No details in relation to disposal of effluent from this tank have been submitted.
- The applicant sought permission to connect to public sewer in the future. The Area Engineer has stated there is no public sewer in the area and this cannot be facilitated.
- Surface water is to be disposed off onsite soakaways, but the location of the soakaways has been indicated on the submitted plans. A Drainage Impact Assessment is required in accordance with objective WM11-15 of the CDP.

Senior Executive Planners Report

- Refusal recommended in line with the Executive Planners comments.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Area Engineer: No objection subject to conditions.
- Water Services: No comments.
- Environment (Waste): No objection subject to conditions.
- Ecology: Further Information requested in relation to lighting, a dedicated lighting plan shall be required in which lighting should be designed to prevent light spillage from the site that could cause disturbance to birds/wildlife within and outside the SPA. A Biodiversity lead landscape plan is also required in respect of compensatory planting required to offset the loss of vegetation, particularly trees lost due to the unauthorised works.
- Sustainable Travel Unit: Refusal recommended on traffic safety grounds.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- No response.

3.4. Third Party Observations

One observation was received. The following concerns were raised:

- The proposal is contrary to the objectives and principles of the Cork County Development Plan 2022. The site is located in the Metropolitan Greenbelt and an area of High Landscape Value.
- The proposal is contrary to objectives RP5-11, RP5-12, RP5-13, RP5-14, RP5-15, RP5-16 and RP5-17 of the County Development Plan.

4.0 Planning History

Enforcement EF/24/002: Unauthorised creation of a container storage facility.

PA Reg: 088123: Permission granted for expansion and subdivision of existing garden centre.

PA Reg: 99349: Permission granted for the construction of horticultural shed

PA Reg: 722032: Permission refused for erection of health studio.

The following planning history relates to the subject development:

PA Reg: 224736: Temporary Permission for 5 years granted to develop a container storage facility with containers varying in sizes from 20 feet to 40 feet in length, container with toilet/office facilities connected to existing services on site, 3m high paladin security fencing around perimeter and all associated site works. Titan Containers.

PA Reg: 217424: Permission granted for 13 no. warehouse/light industrial units and all associated site works.

PA Reg: 175859: Temporary permission granted for approximately 140 storage containers until market condition improves to allow completion of the Fotapoint Enterprise Park granted under planning 115459. Titan Containers.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

The subject site is located within the “Metropolitan Greenbelt” and located within the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt area. The subject site is zoned as High Value Landscape.

Section 5.5 refers to Greenbelts.

Section 5.5.4 refers to Planning Principles for a Greenbelt

Objective RP5-11: County Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt

Maintain the County Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt (as shown on Figure 5.1) which encompasses Metropolitan Towns, Strategic Employment Locations, Villages and Countryside of Metropolitan Cork.

Objective RP5-12: Purpose of Greenbelt

(a) Maintain a Greenbelt for Metropolitan Cork with the purposes of retaining the open and rural character of lands between and adjacent to urban areas, maintaining the clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside, to prevent urban sprawl and the coalescence of built-up areas, to focus attention on lands within settlements which are zoned for development and provide for appropriate land uses that protect the physical and visual amenity of the area.

(b) Recognise that in order to strengthen existing rural communities’ provision can be made within the objectives of this Plan to meet exceptional individual housing needs within areas where controls on rural housing apply.

Objective RP5-13: Land Uses within the County Metropolitan Greenbelt

Preserve the character of the Metropolitan Greenbelt as established in this plan and to reserve generally for use as agriculture, open space, recreation uses and protection/enhancement of biodiversity of those lands that lie within it.

Objective RP5-16: Long Established Uses

Recognise the requirements of long established commercial or institutional uses located entirely within the Greenbelt which may make proposals for expansion/intensification of existing uses. Such expansion proposal of an appropriate scale will be considered on their merits having regard to the overall function and open character of the Greenbelt and where development would be in accordance with normal planning and sustainable development considerations.

Objective RP5-17: Strategic and Exceptional Development

Recognise that there may be development of a strategic and exceptional nature that may not be suitably located within zoned lands and that such development may be accommodated successfully in Greenbelt locations. In such circumstances, the impact on the specific functions and open character of the Greenbelt should be minimised.

Objective RP5-18: Relocating Uses

Recognise that it may be appropriate, in exceptional circumstances, to accommodate some uses in a greenbelt area that are relocating from a town centre site to facilitate redevelopment of a site for other uses, or the regeneration of a wider area, where there is no alternative option available within existing zoned lands/or the development boundary and where no other suitable lands are available. In such circumstances, the impact on the specific functions and open character of the Greenbelt should be minimised.

Objective RP 5-19: Greenbelts around Settlements

(a) Retain the identity of towns, to prevent sprawl, and to ensure a distinction in character between built up areas and the open countryside by maintaining a Greenbelt around all individual towns.

(b) Reserve generally for use as agriculture, open space or recreation uses those lands that lie in the immediate surroundings of towns. Where Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas and other areas of biodiversity value occur within Greenbelts, these shall be reserved for uses compatible with their nature conservation designation and biodiversity value.

(c) Prevent linear roadside frontage development on the roads leading out of towns and villages.

Chapter 8 refers to Economic Development

Section 8.15 refers to The Rural Economy

Objective EC8-13: Rural Economy

(a) Encourage employment growth in County towns to support the population of the towns and their wider rural catchments.

(b) Strengthen rural economies through the promotion of innovation and diversification into new sectors and services including to ensure economic resilience and job creation.

(c) New development in rural areas should be sensitively designed and planned to provide for the protection of the biodiversity of the rural landscape.

Objective EC8-14: Business Development in Rural Areas

The development of appropriate new businesses in rural areas will normally be encouraged where:

- The scale and nature of the proposed new business are appropriate to the rural area and are in areas of low environmental sensitivity.
- The development will enhance the strength and diversity of the local rural economy.
- The proposal will not adversely affect the character, appearance, and biodiversity value of the rural landscape.
- The existing or planned local road network and other essential infrastructure can accommodate extra demand generated by the proposal.
- The proposal has a mobility plan for employees' home to work transportation.
- Where possible the proposal involves the re-use of redundant or underused buildings that are of value to the rural scene.
- The provision of adequate water services infrastructure; and
- Provision of a safe access to the public road network.

Chapter 12 relates to Transport and Mobility

Section 12.11 relates to Traffic/Mobility Management and Road Safety

Objective TM12-8: Traffic/Mobility Management and Road Safety

(a) Where traffic movements associated with a development proposal have the potential to have a material impact on safety and free flow of traffic on National, Regional or other Local Routes, the submission of a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audit will be required as part of the proposal. Where a Local Transport Plan exists, it will inform any TTA.

- (b) Support demand management measures to reduce car travel and promote best practice mobility management and travel planning via sustainable transport modes.
- (c) For developments of 50 employees or more, residential developments over 100 units, all education facilities, community facilities, health facilities, as well as major extensions to existing such uses developers will be required to prepare Mobility Management Plans (travel plans), with a strong emphasis on sustainable travel modes consistent with published NTA guidance to promote safe, attractive and convenient, alternative sustainable modes of transport as part of the proposal. Where a Local Transport Plan exists, it will inform any Mobility Management Plan.
- (d) Ensure that all new vehicular accesses are designed to appropriate standards of visibility to ensure the safety of other road users.
- (e) Improve the standards and safety of public roads and to protect the investment of public resources in the provision, improvement and maintenance of the public road network.
- (f) Promote road safety measures throughout the County, including traffic calming, road signage and parking.
- (g) Co-ordinate proposed zoning designations and/or access strategies in settlement plans with speed limits on national roads.

Chapter 14 relates to Green Infrastructure and Recreation

Section 14.8 relates to Landscape Character Assessment of County Cork

Objective GI14-9: Landscape

- (a) Protect the visual and scenic amenities of County Cork's built and natural environment.
- (b) Landscape issues will be an important factor in all land-use proposals, ensuring that a pro-active view of development is undertaken while protecting the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability.
- (c) Ensure that new development meets high standards of siting and design.

- (d) Protect skylines and ridgelines from development.
- (e) Discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.

Section 14.10 refers to Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt Areas

Objective GI14-16: Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt Map

Protect those prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Greenbelt settlements. These areas are shown on the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt (Figure 14-3), and it is an objective to preserve them from development.

Chapter 15 relates to Biodiversity and the Environment.

Section 15.7 relates to Biodiversity Considerations for New Development or Other Activities.

Objective BE15-6: Biodiversity and New Development

Provide for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the development management process and when licensing or permitting other activities by:

- (a) Providing ongoing support and guidance to developers on incorporating biodiversity considerations into new development through preplanning communications and the Council's Guidance document "Biodiversity and the Planning Process – guidance for developments on the management of biodiversity issues during the planning process" and any updated versions of this advice.
- (b) Encouraging the retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and other features of high natural value within new developments.
- (c) Requiring the incorporation of primarily native tree and other plant species, particularly pollinator friendly species in the landscaping of new developments.
- (d) Fulfilling Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment obligations and carrying out Ecological Impact Assessment in relation to development and activities, as appropriate.

- (e) Ensuring that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation. This includes lakes and ponds, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats.
- (f) Ensuring that the implementation of appropriate mitigation (including habitat enhancement, new planting or other habitat creation initiatives) is incorporated into new development, where the implementation of such development would result in unavoidable impacts on biodiversity – supporting the principle of biodiversity net gain.

Chapter 16 relates to Built and Cultural Heritage.

Objective HE16-21: Design and Landscaping of New Buildings

- (a) Encourage new buildings that respect the character, pattern and tradition of existing places, materials and built forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape.
- (b) Promote sustainable approaches to housing development by encouraging new building projects to be energy efficient in their design and layout.
- (c) Foster an innovative approach to design that acknowledges the diversity of suitable design solutions in most cases, safeguards the potential for exceptional innovative design in appropriate locations and promotes the added economic, amenity and environmental value of good design.
- (d) Require the appropriate landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by using predominantly indigenous/local species and groupings and protecting existing hedgerows and historic boundaries in rural areas. Protection of historical/commemorative trees will also be provided for.

Chapter 18 relates to Zoning and Land Use

Objective ZU18-2: Development and Land Use Zoning.

Ensure that development, during the lifetime of this Plan, proceeds in accordance with the general land use objectives and any specific zoning objectives that apply to particular areas as set out in this Plan.

Volume 4 South Cork refers to the nearest village Glounthaune.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The subject site is not located within a protected site. The closest protected sites of interest are:

- Great Island Channel pNHA (site code: 001058) located 200 metres south of the subject site.
- Great Island Channel SAC (site code: 001058) located 170 metres south of the subject site.
- Cork Harbour SPA (site code: 004030) located 400 metres south of the subject site.

5.3. EIA Screening

5.4. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices 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.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

A first party appeal was received, and the following concerns were raised:

- Planning History: A garden centre was originally established at the subject site in the mid-1970s and permission for its expansion and reordering was approved in 2008. However, the permission was never pursued and the buildings on site were not demolished, and the new permitted units were not constructed. The garden centre closed in 2013. The Elm Tree public house is

located to the south and east of the subject site and the car park was extended to the side and rear of the subject site.

- **Ecology:** The site is for retention development and does not involve any construction. A query was raised in relation to potential light spill onto the nearby estuary. However, the site is at some distance, and a permanently illuminated car park is located between the subject site and the estuary. The proposal will be fitted with motion sensors and timed lighting system which illuminates for approximately 10 minutes corresponding to the average stay, therefore, it is highly unlikely that there would be an impact on the nearby estuary/SPA. The site is of low ecological value, a landscaping plan will be implemented and if the Board wish, the roofs of the containers will be covered with sedum matting.
- **Principle of Development:** The subject site and adjacent business including a public house, construction company and a separate transport company and associated dwelling are long established commercial uses within the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt. Objective RP5-16 recognises the need for established businesses in such area to expand in a sustainable manner providing they are of appropriate scale and having regard to the overall function and open character of the Greenbelt. The former site was a garden centre and formed part the Elm Tree business cluster. The scale and layout of the site is unlikely to significantly affect the open character of the greenbelt due to the topography and elevated backdrop of the site and its setback from the road behind a busy car park which is characterized by flag posts, light standards and significant levels of screen planting. The site is almost completely screened by planting.
- **Visual amenity:** The site is not visible from any public road to the north or west, including from the adjacent new Harper's Creek residential development to the west. It is not visible from the elevated national route (N25) to the south. It is noted that the site is in a High Value Landscape designation and extends on both sides of the N25 from Middleton to Glanmire, taking in Fota, Carrigtwohill, Harper's Island, Johnstown, Little Island and Glanmire to hillsides north and south of the River Lee outside the Cork City boundary.

- **Traffic:** The use of the site will likely increase traffic even if it was returned to garden centre. Prior to the applicant occupying the site, the access roadway was used for car parking until the entrance was blocked. The entrance is established and located within a 60km speed limit. The security gate is set back sufficiently for vehicles to wait in a space which is clear of the pedestrian/cycle route. Visibility appears to be excellent. Traffic control markings have been introduced, with a pedestrian crossing at the entrance to the Elm Tree site and a dedicated right turning lane for vehicles arriving from the east into the Elm Tree complex and the subject site. Other businesses cross the pedestrian/cycle route. It is assumed that the previous permission for an extended garden centre which included a permitted 112 parking spaces, would have generated traffic concentrated between the opening hours of 9am and 6pm, 7 days a week, with a likely concentration at weekends. The subject site is mainly used for small local businesses and households, no articulated vehicles or large HGVs can be accommodated, therefore, traffic will consist of domestic vehicles and smaller commercial vehicles. Customers have full access to their containers 365 days per year and therefore there is no peak rush hour. The site is operating at 76% occupation, and the applicant has provided vehicle numbers for November 2024.
- **Mapping Error:** The Development Plan and the Planning Viewer mapping are inconsistent at different zoom levels in respect of the “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt (MGB)” areas coloured green. If you zoom into the subject site, the MGB area disappears but is clearly defined if you zoom out. This leads to confusion in respect of the designation of certain lands, which on the small area view does not include the MGB areas but only as Metropolitan Green Belt and High Value Landscape. We request that this is considered in review of the planning application.

6.2. Applicant Response

- As above.

6.3. Planning Authority Response

- The Planning Authority considers that all issues raised in the appeal submission have been comprehensively addressed in the Planner and Senior Executive Planner Report.
- The Planning Authority wish to confirm that the site does form part of the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt as per Cork County Development Plan 2022.

6.4. Observations

- None

6.5. Further Responses

- None

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Visual Impact
- Traffic
- Material Contravention
- Other issues – Mapping error
- Appropriate Assessment
- Water Framework Directive

7.2. Principle of Development

- 7.3. The subject site is located in a rural area outside of any designated area or zoned lands. The subject site is located within the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt. Objective RP 5-11 of the CDP (Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028) seeks to maintain the County Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt. Objective RP 5-12 of the CDP outlines the purpose of the greenbelt which includes maintaining the open and rural character of the lands between and adjacent to urban areas, maintaining the clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside, to prevent urban sprawl and the coalescence of built-up areas, to focus attention on lands within settlements which are zoned for development and provide for appropriate land uses that protect the physical and visual amenity of the area. Objective RP5-13 of the CDP seeks to preserve the character of the Metropolitan Greenbelt as established in the CDP and to reserve generally for use as agriculture, open space, recreation uses and protection/enhancement of biodiversity of those lands that lie within it. The Planning Authority refused retention permission as the site is located within the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and the nature and scale of the development is considered to materially contravene objectives RP5-11, RP5-12 and RP5-13 of the CDP. It is also considered that the retention development would set an undesirable precedent for other non-conforming uses in the Metropolitan Greenbelt.
- 7.4. The grounds of appeal state that originally the subject site was used as a garden centre and permission for its expansion was approved in 2008. However, the permission was never pursued. The garden centre closed in 2013. The subject site along with the adjacent businesses including a public house, a construction company, a separate transport company and associated dwelling are long established commercial uses within the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt. Objective RP5-16 of the CDP recognises the need for established businesses in such area to expand in a sustainable manner providing they are of appropriate scale and having regard to the overall function and open character of the Greenbelt. The scale and layout of the site is unlikely to significantly affect the open character of the greenbelt due to the topography and elevated backdrop of the site and its setback from the road behind a busy car park which is characterised by flag

posts, light standards and significant levels of screen planting. The site is almost completely screened by planting.

- 7.5. Firstly, I need to establish whether there was an operating commercial use on the subject site prior to the applicant operating as a storage container business. I note there was a garden centre building in the centre of the site in 2013 from google earth pro aerial images, however, in 2020, the site was overgrown, and the building is surrounded by trees. The applicant has also confirmed that the garden centre closed in 2013. It is in my opinion, I consider that there was no operating commercial enterprise on site prior to the applicant operating on site and the retention development cannot be considered as an expansion to an established business, as the previous garden centre had ceased operation for a number of years. In this regard, I do not consider that the retention development complies with objective RP 5-16 of the CDP which relates to established businesses and recognises the need to expand in a sustainable manner providing they are of appropriate scale and having regard to the overall function and open character of the Greenbelt. The retention development is not an expansion to an established business; the retention development has taken place on a former garden centre site with no active business activity or planning permission on site.
- 7.6. Secondly, I have reviewed Objective RP 5-13 of the CDP which outlines general land uses within the metropolitan greenbelt that are acceptable and these include agriculture, open space, recreation uses and protection/enhancement of biodiversity. In this regard to use as storage containers is not in compliance with objective RP 5-13 and does not comply with the acceptable uses.
- 7.7. Thirdly, The purpose of the metropolitan greenbelt is to retain the open and rural character of lands between and adjacent to urban areas, maintaining the clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside, to prevent urban sprawl and the coalescence of built-up areas, to focus attention on lands within settlements which are zoned for development and provide for appropriate land uses that protect the physical and visual amenity of the area as per objective RP 5-12 of the CDP. The retention development does not comply with this objective as the retention development has continued urban sprawl into the rural area. The objective also outlines that development focus is on lands within settlements that are zoned. I note from the planning history that the applicant has permission under planning reference

22/4736 (albeit temporary for 5 years) for the container storage units on zoned lands within the settlement boundary of Carrigtwohill outside the metropolitan greenbelt.

- 7.8. Having regard to objectives RP 5-11, RP 5-12 and RP 5-13 of the CDP, it is in my opinion that the retention development does not comply with the objectives. The retention development is not an expansion of an established business, the use is not considered acceptable within the metropolitan greenbelt, and I consider the retention development will set a precedence for urban sprawl in the rural area whereby the development could be accommodated on zoned lands within a nearby settlement. Therefore, the retention development does not protect the physical and visual amenity of the area and materially contravenes objectives RP 5-11, RP 5-12 and RP 5-13 of the CDP.

7.9. Visual Impact

- 7.10. The subject site is located within an area designated as High Value Landscape and Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt as per CDP. Objective GI 14-9 of the CDP protects the visual and scenic amenities of the County, landscape issues are noted as important factor while ensuring a pro-active view of development while protecting the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability, ensure new development meets high standards of siting and design, protect skylines and ridgelines from development, discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments. In addition, objective GI 14-16 of the CDP seeks to protect prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Greenbelt settlements. The objective is to preserve them from development. The Planning Authority refused permission as the retention development would represent an incongruous form of development within the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt which would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity and character of this rural landscape and would materially contravene objectives GI 14-9, GI 14-16 of the CDP. The Planning Authority also refused permission as the retention development will contravene objective, HE 16-21 of the CDP, which relates to the design and landscaping of new buildings.

- 7.11. The grounds of appeal state that the site is not visible from any public road to the north or west, including from the adjacent new Harper's Creek residential development to the west. It is not visible from the elevated national route (N25) to the south. It is noted that the site is in a High Value Landscape designation and extends on both sides of the N25 from Midleton to Glanmire, taking in Fota, Carrigtwohill, Harper's Island, Johnstown, Little Island and Glanmire to hillsides north and south of the River Lee outside the Cork City boundary.
- 7.12. I note the subject site is located within the "Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt" and within a "High Value Landscape" designations. Any development in these landscapes should have regard to objectives GI 14-9 and GI 14-16 of the CDP. I have assessed the subject site in regard to its location, the site is set back from the public road to the rear and west of Elm Tree public house, however, the site rises to the rear, and the top of the containers are slightly visible from local road L3004. I also note there are a number of lighting poles around the site which are visible and will impact the lighting in the area although noted as sensor lighting. There are trees along the northern and southern boundary along with a sloping earth bank. An earth embankment along the western boundary is noted. The eastern boundary is flanked by the rear of the storage containers. I note from previous google earth images that substantial trees and hedgerows have been removed from the site which contravenes part "e" of objective GI 14-9 which seeks to discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments. As part of the planning appeal, I note the applicant has submitted a detailed landscaping plan, however I consider due to the nature of the retention development which covers the entire site of 1.142ha with 397 self-contained steel containers and hardstanding area that the development is substantive for a rural location and offer no aesthetic design or integration for a rural area nor within an area of "Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt" and "High Value Landscape". Therefore, I do not consider that the retention development meets the high standards of siting or design.
- 7.13. The subject site is slightly visible when travelling west along the L3004 from Carrigtwohill towards Glounthaune as the site rises to the rear of the Elm Tree public house and in my opinion, it negatively impacts the visual amenity of the metropolitan greenbelt and high value landscape of the area and does not comply with objective

GI 14-9 which seeks to protect the visual and scenic amenities of County Cork. In addition, objective GI 14-16 seeks to protect prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and those areas from strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main greenbelt settlements. The retention development is located on a prominent open hilltop and in my opinion, negatively impacts views along the local road and deteriorates the greenbelt distinction between towns. Therefore, I do not consider that the retention development complies with objectives GI 14-9 or GI 14-16.

7.14. The Planning Authority also refused retention permission based on objective HE 16-21 of the CDP which relates to the design and landscaping of new buildings. As noted above the design is substandard and offers no aesthetic value to the area. The applicant has not proposed any additional landscaping or any design ideas on how to integrate the retention development into the rural landscape. The container storage units are extensive and industrial appearance which would be better located on zoned industrial lands with a settlement boundary.

7.15. Having regard to the location of the subject site within a “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt” and within a “High Value Landscape” designations, it is in my opinion that the retention development does not comply with objectives GI 14-9, GI 14-16 and HE 16-21. I consider the retention development will negatively impact the visual amenity of the rural area; the design and siting of the retention development is not suitable for this highly sensitive location.

7.16. **Traffic**

7.17. The subject site is accessed off the L3004, the entrance gate is set back from the public road in order to allow vehicles to pull in safely and wait for the gate to open. The site is located to the rear and west of Elm Tree public house which has a separate entrance to the east. The dwelling and commercial yard are accessed via a separate access point to the west of the subject site. Along the L3004, there is a pedestrian and cycle route which forms part of the Inter-Urban Route 1.

7.18. The grounds of appeal state the use of the site will likely increase traffic even if it was returned to garden centre. Prior to the applicant occupying the site, the access roadway was used for car parking until the entrance was blocked. The entrance is established and located within a 60km speed limit. The security gate is set back

sufficiently for vehicles to wait in a space which is clear of the pedestrian/cycle route. Visibility appears to be excellent. Traffic control markings have been introduced, with a pedestrian crossing at the entrance to the Elm Tree site and a dedicated right turning lane for vehicles arriving from the east into the Elm Tree complex and the subject site. The subject site is mainly used for small local businesses and households, no articulated vehicles or large HGVs can be accommodated, therefore, traffic will consist of domestic vehicles and smaller commercial vehicles. Customers have full access to their containers 365 days per year and therefore there is no peak rush hour. The site is operating at 76% occupation, and the applicant has provided vehicle numbers for November 2024.

- 7.19. I have assessed the subject site access point; the entrance is located between the entrance for Elm Tree Public House and the dwelling and commercial yard to the west. I note the Area Engineer of Cork County Council (CCC) had no objection to the retention development subject to standard conditions including sight distances of 70 metres in both directions. However, I note Sustainable Travel Unit (STU) of CCC raised a number of significant concerns including; no details in relation to the access point, no sightlines have been provided, no details regarding how articulated lorries can access the site and whether reversing in, or out, of the development would be required, no potential traffic numbers only stating it will be the same as the previous garden centre. The STU have significant concerns regarding the safety of the existing inter-urban cycle route and recommended refusal.
- 7.20. The applicant has provided additional details in the appeal submission in relation to traffic. It is stated that the subject site is mainly used for small local businesses and households, no articulated vehicles or large HGVs can be accommodated, therefore, traffic will consist of domestic vehicles and smaller commercial vehicles. Customers have full access to their containers 365 days per year and therefore there is no peak rush hour. The site is operating at 76% occupation at present, and the applicant has provided vehicle numbers for November 2024 which shows that the site is predominately accessed by cars and vans, however, four truck movements were noted in that month, although no details have been provided as to the size of the truck. I have reviewed the site layout plan and carried out a site visit and I note there is no turning area for trucks or articulated lorries, due to the separation distance between the containers and as such trucks or articulated lorries may need to reverse

into the subject site and therefore potentially impacting traffic and pedestrian/cyclist crossing along the L3004. I also have concerns regarding sightlines to the west of the access point exiting onto the L3004, I consider sightlines are impacted by the existing boundary wall and hedgerow in the adjacent property. The applicant has not provided any details in relation to the sightlines along the L3004; therefore, I consider the retention development could potentially negatively impact the traffic safety along the L3004. Although, I do consider that these issues could be dealt with by way of a further information request, however, given the substantive issues raised above, a further information request is not necessary.

7.21. In regard to the access along the L3004 which crosses a pedestrian and cycle route, whereby limited information has been submitted by the applicant, the sightlines along the L3004 have not been provided and no details in relation to the potential vehicles using the site along with the omission of a turning area, it is in my opinion that the retention development as presented could potentially negatively impact traffic along the L3004.

7.22. Other Issues (Mapping error)

7.23. The appellant has raised concerns in relation to the mapping for “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt” (MGB) areas. The County Development Plan and the Planning Viewer mapping are inconsistent at different zoom levels in respect of the “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt (MGB)” areas coloured green. If you zoom into the subject site, the MGB area disappears but is clearly defined if you zoom out. This leads to confusion in respect of the designation of certain lands, which on the small area view does not include the MGB areas but only as Metropolitan Green Belt and High Value Landscape.

7.24. I note the concerns raised in relation to the mapping for “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt (MGB)” and I recognise that you need to zoom out of the map to see the MGB areas, however, I am satisfied that this did not prevent the concerned party from making representations. The above assessment represents my de novo consideration of all planning issues material to the proposed development.

7.25. Material Contravention

- 7.26. The Planning Authority have refused permission for the proposed development and have stated material contravention of policy objective RP 5-11, RP 5-12 and RP 5-13, GI 14-9, GI 14-16 and HE 16-21 of the CDP.
- 7.27. Policy Objective RP 5-11, this policy refers to retaining the identity of towns and to ensure a distinction in character between built up areas and the open countryside by maintaining a greenbelt around all individual towns, reserving such lands generally for use as agriculture, open space or recreation uses and is in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act.
- 7.28. Policy objective RP 5-12 relates to maintaining a greenbelt for Metropolitan Cork and to retain the open and rural character of the lands between and adjacent to urban areas, maintaining the clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside, to prevent urban sprawl and the coalescence of built-up areas, to focus attention on lands within settlements which are zoned for development and provide for appropriate land uses that protect the physical and visual amenity of the area and is in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act.
- 7.29. Policy objective RP 5-13 relates to the preservation of the character of the Metropolitan Greenbelt as established in the CDP and to reserve generally for use as agriculture, open space, recreation uses and protection/enhancement of biodiversity of those lands that lie within it and is in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act.
- 7.30. Policy objective GI 14-9 relate to the protection of visual and scenic amenities of County Cork’s built and natural environment, protect in line with the principles of sustainability, ensure development meets high standards of siting and design, protect skylines and ridgelines form develop and discourage removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary

treatments and is in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act.

7.31. Policy objective GI 14-16 relates to protection of prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Greenbelt settlements. These areas are shown as Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt and it is an objective to preserve them from development and is in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act.

7.32. Policy objective HE 16-21 which encourages that new buildings should respect the character, pattern and tradition of existing places, materials and built forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape, foster an innovative approach to design that acknowledges the diversity of suitable design solutions in most cases, safeguards the potential for exceptional innovative design in appropriate locations and promotes the added economic, amenity and environmental value of good design, require the appropriate landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by using predominantly indigenous/local species and groupings and protecting existing hedgerows and historic boundaries in rural areas and is in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act.

7.33. I do not consider that the retention development complies with any of the circumstances of Section 37 (2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, as amended. The retention development is not of strategic or national importance, the objectives are clearly stated and do not conflict, the retention need not be granted having regard to regional planning guidelines for the area, guidelines under section 28, policy directives under section 29, the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area, any relevant policy of the Government, the Minister or Minister of the Government or in regard to the pattern of development and permission granted in the area since the making of the development plan.

8.0 AA Screening

- 8.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The proposed site is not located within a designated site, Great Island Channel SAC (site code: 001058) located 170 metres south of the subject site. Cork Harbour SPA (site code: 004030) located 400 metres south of the subject site.

The retention development comprises of container storage facility and all associated site works. The Ecologist of CCC is generally satisfied that the proposal will not result in significant effects, however, concerns were raised in relation to the lighting and requested further information to ensure that light spillage does not arise which could cause disturbance to birds/wildlife within and outside the SPA. In the appeal, the applicant has provided information in relation to the lighting provided on site, the lighting is on a motion sensor and only operates when someone enters the storage facility for ten minutes. I consider the lighting will not impact birds/wildlife within and outside the SPA.

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 size of the retention development to the rear of an existing operating public house
- Distance to the nearest European site Great Island Channel SAC (site code: 001058) at 170 metres south of the subject site. Cork Harbour SPA (site code: 004030) located 400 metres south of the subject site which was of concern to the Ecologist of CCC.
- The lack of connections to the SPA & SAC.
- The proposed inclusion of motion sensors and timed lighting system which illuminates for approximately 10 minutes corresponding to the average stay.
- Disposal of wastewater to a storage facility which will be removed off-site.

- Disposal of surface water to onsite soakaway.

Taking into account the Planning Authority's AA screening, 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 Water Framework Directive

- 9.1. The subject site is located in a rural area, approximately 2km east of Glounthaune town, Co. Cork. The nearest river is Tibbotstown, and it is located approximately 230 metres south of the subject site. The retention development comprises of container storage facility and all associated site works. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the appeal.

I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seeks 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.

- Scale and size of the retention development to the rear of an existing operating public house
- Distance to the nearest watercourse at 230 metres.
- The lack of connections to the SPA.
- The lack of pathways to the SAC.
- Disposal of wastewater to a storage facility which will be removed off-site.
- Disposal of surface water to onsite soakaway.

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.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1. I recommend that retention permission should be refused for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. The subject site is located in an area zoned as “Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt (MGB) areas” as identified in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, where objective RP 5-11 is to maintain the County Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt, objective RP 5-12 is to maintain a Greenbelt for Metropolitan Cork with the purposes of retaining the open and rural character of lands between and adjacent to urban areas, maintaining the clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside, to prevent urban sprawl and the coalescence of built-up areas, to focus attention on lands within settlements which are zoned for development and provide for appropriate land uses that protect the physical and visual amenity of the area and objective RP 5-13 which is to preserve the character of the Metropolitan Greenbelt and to reserve generally for use as agriculture, open space, recreation uses and protection/enhancement of biodiversity of those lands that lie within it. These objectives are considered reasonable. It is the policy of the Planning Authority, as set out in the plan, to maintain the Metropolitan greenbelt and preserve the character of the Metropolitan greenbelt. The retention development of container storage units would constitute piecemeal development and the encroachment into the greenbelt area would erode Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt (MGB) areas. Therefore, contravene materially the development objectives as set out in the Cork

County Development Plan 2022-2028 and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The site of the retention development is located in an area designated High Value Landscape and in the Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 for the area. The zoning objective GI 14-9 for the area, is to protect the visual and scenic amenities of County Cork's built and natural environment and objective GI 14-16 seeks to protect prominent and strategic Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt, this objective is considered reasonable. The retention development, which is not related to the amenity potential of the area or the use of the area for agriculture, mountain or hill farming, in addition, the retention development contravenes objective HE16-21 which seeks to provide appropriate design and landscaping for new buildings, it is considered the retention development would contravene materially the development objectives GI14-9, GI14-16 and HE16-21 as indicated in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 for the use primarily of the area for the purpose of protecting and improving high value landscapes. The retention development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. It is considered that the potential traffic turning movements generated by the retention development would tend to create serious traffic congestion. The retention development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on 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.

Jennifer McQuaid
Planning Inspector

30th September 2025

Appendix A: Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ABP-321232-24
Proposed Development Summary	Retention for change of use from garden centre to container storage facility and all associated site works. Note: the use of garden centre ceased prior to the construction of a container storage facility.
Development Address	Killahora, Glounthaune, Co. Cork
	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? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2. ☐ No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here
☒ 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?	
☐ 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. No Screening required.	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	
☒ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	Class 1 (a) Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011, where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50hectares. Class 10(b)(iv) Urban Development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere. Class 10 (dd) All private roads which would exceed 2000 metres in length. The retention subject site size is 1.142ha. The applicant is utilising an existing access road off the L3004, and length is approximately 70 metres. No restructuring of land holding is required. Trees and hedgerows partially removed along the site boundaries and within the site of 1.142ha. The retention development is well below the thresholds as outlined above.

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 ☐	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix A: Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	ABP-321232-24
Proposed Development Summary	Retention for change of use from garden centre to container storage facility and all associated site works. Note: the use of garden centre ceased prior to the construction of a container storage facility.
Development Address	Killahora, Glounthaune, Co. Cork
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	The retention development consisted of typical construction and related activities and site works. No excavation works are proposed or carried out. The works proposed do not result in the production of significant waste, emissions or pollutants. The hardstand area will be stoned, surface water will be disposed off via soakaway on site, wastewater will be collected in a tank and disposed of site.
Location of development (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	The proposed site is located within a rural area; there are no significant sensitivities in the immediate area. The subject site is not located within a designated site, the nearest are as follows: • Great Island Channel pNHA (site code: 001058) located 200 metres south of the subject site. • Great Island Channel SAC (site code: 001058) located 170 metres south of the subject site. • Cork Harbour SPA (site code: 004030) located 400 metres south of the subject site. My appropriate assessment screening concludes that the proposed development would not likely have a significant effect on any European Site. The subject site is located within a flood risk area.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary,	The site size measures 1.142ha. The size of the development is not exceptional in the context of a rural environment. There are existing dwellings and commercial business adjacent to the subject site. No concerns were raised from the public in relation to the development.

intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	The retention development is a relatively small development in the rural context. There is no real likelihood of significant cumulative effects within the existing and permitted projects in the area.
Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

DP/ADP: _____ Date: _____

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

Appendix B: Water Framework Directive Screening

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
An Bord Pleanála ref. no.	ABP-321232-24	Townland, address	Killahora, Glounthaune, Co. Cork
Description of project		Retention for change of use from garden centre to container storage facility and all associated site works. Note: the use of garden centre ceased prior to the construction of a container storage facility.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		The site is located within the rural area of Glounthaune, Co. Cork; the site is located adjacent existing dwellings and commercial enterprises. The hardstand area will be stoned, surface water will be disposed off via soakaway on site, wastewater will be collected in a tank and disposed of site. There are no water features on site or adjacent the subject site. The site is not within a flood risk area.	
Proposed surface water details		Surface water will be disposed via via soakaway on site.	

Proposed water supply source & available capacity	Public mains are available.					
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues	Wastewater will be collected in a tank and disposed of site					
Others?						
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)
Groundwater	The site is on the	Groundwater Midleton	Groundwater status is described as	Groundwater is described as Review.	None Identified	Potential surface water run-off.

River	groundwater.	IE_SW_G_058	Good (period for GW 2016-2021)			
	The site is located 230m north from Tibbotstown_010 River	Tibbotstown_010 Code:IE_SW_19T250870	River status is described as Good (period for GW 2016-2021)	River is under review.	None Identified	Potential surface water run-off.
Transitional Water	The site is located 420m northeast from Lough Mahon (Harper's Island)	Lough Mahon (Harper's Island) IE_SW_060_0700	Transitional Water status is described as Moderate (period for GW 2016-2021)	Transitional water is described as at risk.	None identified.	

							Potential surface water run-off.
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	Tibbotstown_010	Located appropriately 230metres south of	Spillages	Standard Construct	No due to separation distance	Screened Out

		Code:IE_SW_19T250870	subject site. No noted drainage ditches to river.		ion practice		
2.	Ground	Midleton IE_SW_G_058	Pathways through drainage underground	Spillages	Standard Construction practice	No	Screened Out
3.	Transitional	Lough Mahon (Harper's Island)	Located appropriately 420metres southwest of subject site. No noted	Spillages	Standard Construction practice	No	Screened out

		IE_SW_06 0_0700	drainage ditches to coast.				
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
3.	Surface	Tibbotstown_010 Code:IE_SW_19T250 870	Located appropriately 230metres south of subject site. No noted drainage ditches to river.	Spillages	Soakaways on site, wastewater collected on site and removed.	No	Screened Out

4.	Ground	Midleton IE_SW_G_058	Pathways exist through drainage underground & seepage.	Spillages/seepage	Soakaways on site, wastewater collected on site and removed	No	Screened Out
5	Transitional	Lough Mahon (Harper's Island) IE_SW_060_0700	Located appropriately 420metres southwest of subject site. No noted drainage ditches to transitional waters.	Spillages	Soakaways on site, wastewater collected on site and removed	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	N/A						

