



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report ABP-321688-25

### Development

Large-scale residential development:  
Construction of 246 residential units, a  
crèche and all associated site works.  
An Environmental Impact Assessment  
Report (EIAR) has been prepared.  
([www.ringwoodphase1lrd.ie](http://www.ringwoodphase1lrd.ie)).

### Location

Ringwood, Shean Upper, Blarney, Co.  
Cork

### Planning Authority

Cork City Council

### Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

2443031

### Applicant(s)

Clockstrike Ltd.

### Type of Application

Large Scale Residential Development.

### Planning Authority Decision

Grant

### Type of Appeal

Third Party

### Appellants

Trevor Daley

Paul Byrne

Rory O'Keeffe

Patricia & Dennis O'Donoghue.

**Observers**

Seamus Mulcahy

Colette O’Gorman

Antoinette Mahon & John Goggin.

**Date of Site Inspection**

13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Inspector**

Peter Nelson

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## **1.0 Site Location and Description**

- 1.1. The site is located on the eastern edge of Blarney and is between Station Road and the N20. The site is approximately 7km northwest of Cork City centre. The site is located within the settlement of Blarney and along with the lands to the north is zoned for new residential neighbourhoods.
- 1.2. The site has a stated area of 8.32 hectares and was formerly part of a larger land holding. The appeal site consists of two undulating fields currently in agricultural use with established boundaries including hedgerows. The overall landholding includes “Ring Wood” which is a circular wood area at the high point of the lands. Ring Wood is on the southern boundary of the appeal site as are other agricultural lands. The appeal site is bounded on its northern and eastern sides by agricultural land. To the west of the site is the Station Road. The western boundary is shared with the rear gardens of the dwellings on Woodville Terrace.
- 1.3. As ancillary works are proposed for Station Road, it has been included in the red line application boundary.
- 1.4. The N20 National Road is approximately 175m east of the appeal site and on the other side of the N20 is the Blarney Business Park, the Cork -Dublin rail line and the future development area of Stoneview.

## **2.0 Proposed Development**

- 2.1. Permission is sought for a Large-Scale Residential Development at a site in Ringwood, Sheen Upper, Blarney, County Cork.
- 2.2. The proposed development consists of a largescale residential development (LRD), representing Phase 1 of the development in the Blarney East / Ringwood Expansion Area, and comprising of 246no. residential dwellings as follows: 101no. apartments and 115no. 2-storey and 3-storey houses.
- 2.3. The proposed development includes crèche with capacity to accommodate 137 no. children. The proposed development will include provision for car parking, including EV charging points, bicycle parking, and motorcycle parking bays, and the provision of an area reserved for future resident car parking to the rear of Woodville Terrace on Station Road.

- 2.4. The proposed development will include the provision of private, communal, and public open spaces; internal roads and pathways with potential for future links to adjacent lands; pedestrian and cyclist routes; hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments; waste storage; plant; signage; a new signalised access onto Station Road and road and footpath improvement works on Station Road and the R617 road; public lighting; 2no. new substations; all associated site development works; and all drainage and foul sewer infrastructure and network works, including nature-based SuDS measures.
- 2.5. The following tables sets or some of the key elements of the proposed development:
- 2.6. **Table 1: Key Figures**

<b>Site Area</b>	8.32 ha
<b>Site Coverage</b>	20%
<b>Plot Ratio</b>	0.39
<b>No. of Units</b>	246
<b>Apartments</b>	101
<b>Duplex</b>	30
<b>Houses</b>	115
<b>Building Heights</b>	2 storey – 4 storeys
<b>Density</b>	40.2 dwellings per hectare (dph)
<b>Public Open Space Provision</b>	16%
<b>Car Parking</b>	333 Spaces
<b>Bicycle Spaces</b>	
<b>Residential</b>	286 spaces
<b>Creche</b>	28 spaces
<b>Motorbike Parking</b>	12 Spaces
<b>Non-residential</b>	

<b>Creche</b>	672 m <sup>2</sup> accommodating 137no. children
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**Table 2 Unit Mix**

	<b>4-bed</b>	<b>3-bed</b>	<b>2-bed</b>	<b>1-bed</b>	<b>Studio</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Apartments</b>	0	0	60	35	6	101	<b>41%</b>
<b>Houses</b>	32	64	19	0	0	115	<b>47%</b>
<b>Duplex</b>	0	0	15	15	0	30	<b>12%</b>
<b>Total</b>	32	64	94	50	6	246	<b>100%</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

2.7. In addition to the standard plans and particulars, the application is accompanied by the following documents and reports (as updated/supplemented by the further information response):

- LRD Opinion Statement of Response
- Planning Statement
- Statement of Consistency with Development Plan
- Social and Community Audit
- Architectural Design Statement
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Preliminary Operational Waste Management Plan
- DMURS Compliance Statement
- Road Safety Audit
- Quality Audit
- Planning Engineering Design Report ( Including Uisce Eireann Confirmation of Feasibility)

- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Uisce Eireann
- Transportation Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- AA Screening Report
- Daylight and Sunlight Analysis Report
- Climate Action and Energy Statement
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)

### **3.0 Planning Authority Pre-Application Opinion**

- 3.1. Two Section 247 Meetings were held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023. A pre-application LRD Meeting was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and the LRD Opinion was issued by the Local Authority on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. The opinion related to a proposal for the construction of 193no. residential units, a creche and road improvement works on a site of c. 6.16ha.
- 3.2. In summary, the Cork City Council LRD Opinion concluded that the documents submitted do not constitute a reasonable basis on which to make an application.
- 3.3. Pursuant to section 32(D)2 the following areas and issues required further consideration.
  - i. Further information is required in terms of the density of the development so as to accord with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024 and with Strategic Objectives SO1 & SO2, and objectives 2.31, 3.4 & 3.5 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
  - ii. Further consideration is required regarding access to the site. In order to ensure the site has the required physical infrastructure, active travel linkages, to the site, via Station Road, to the R617 should be included as part of the application.
  - iii. Further consideration of the architectural expression of the scheme is required, particularly in terms of placemaking.



iv. Further consideration is required to ensure that the proposed development accords with Strategic Objective SO8, Objectives 9.4, 9.6, 9.8 and sections 11.217, 11.218, 11.260, 11.261 and 11.265 – 11.270 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 relating to sustainable drainage systems and flooding.

3.4. Furthermore, in accordance with Article 16A (7) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the Planning Authority outlined a range of specific information, in addition to the requirements of Article 23, which should be submitted with any application for permission.

## **4.0 Planning Authority Decision**

### **4.1. Decision**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024 Cork City Council requested the applicant to submit 6 points of further information relating to drainage, architecture, the childcare facility, the principle of the development, infrastructure, and a revised EIAR.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 Cork City Council granted permission for the proposed development.

### **4.2. Conditions**

Cork City Council attached 61 conditions to the grant of permission. The majority of these condition are standard construction and planning conditions. Conditions of note include:

Condition No.3 relates to revised plan to shown amended road and footpath details.

Condition No. 4 requiring that the childcare facility be constructed in the Phase 1A of the proposed development.

Condition No. 5 requiring that the enhanced active travel infrastructure be constructed in the Phase 1A of the proposed development.

Condition No.10 requiring that in the event of human remains associated with RIC Constable Walsh be discovered, work to stop in that area and authorities informed.

Condition No.35 requires that the roadway serving Apartment Block A and Apartment Block B along with the 'Reserved Area for future Parking' be included in the areas to be 'Taken in Charge.'

Condition No.36 requires that along Road 009 no more than 1 carparking space shall be assigned to Unit Type H.

#### **4.3. Planning Authority Reports**

##### **4.3.1. Planning Reports**

The assessment contained within the first planner's report dated the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024 can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed works on the ZO 20 Lands are minor in nature and will not result in any material change in the land. The principle of the development in the ZO 20 zoned lands is acceptable.
- As Uisce Eireann and the Strategic Transportation Report have not raised any concerns the principle of new residential development of these Tier 2 lands is considered acceptable.
- Further information is required to allow the applicant to quantify that the needs of the proposed development can be catered for in Blarney or consider providing for the required uses within the development.
- Masterplan proposals shown outside the redline boundary will be subject to future applications.
- The density proposed is acceptable as it will allow for a gentle integration of a larger scale development into an established low-density area.
- While generally the proposed layout is acceptable, detailed changes are required.
- The proposed housing mix is acceptable and in compliance with Development Plan and the Apartment Guidelines.
- The proposed development will provide adequate residential amenity for the future residents.

- Acknowledged that the proposed development will have an impact upon the setting in the vicinity of the subject site.
- It is considered that the proposed apartments will not impact unduly upon the privacy of residential in Woodville Terrace and will not have an undue visual impact through overbearance.
- The applicant should be provided with the opportunity to increase the scale of the proposed childcare facility.
- Further Information is required relating to the proposed drainage and access details.
- The Part V details are generally acceptable, contingent on negotiation on a final agreement.
- On balance the proposed development is considered a positive proposal that responds well to the current policy context.
- Further Information required relates to matters of a technical and environmental detail unforeseen at the time of the LRD Opinion.

The second planner's report dated 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024, assessed the Further Information submitted. The main points can be summarised as follows:

- The drainage details were adequately addressed and are deemed satisfactory.
- The additional drawings and the revised detail of apartment blocks have addressed the previous concerns.
- The revised design of the creche accommodating a proposed 137 children is welcomed.
- While the principle of development is now acceptable, any future phases should be developed with or include new community services infrastructure.
- The submitted details relating to the provision of active travel linkages are acceptable.

- The EIAR and the Addendum submitted as further information are high quality and indicate that the revised proposal will not have significant effects on the environment.
- The proposed development accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

#### 4.3.2. Other Technical Reports

- Drainage Report: Dated 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024 recommended further information relating to the number and design of the Attenuation Tanks and the Detention Bases. Second report dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024. Recommend permission subject to conditions.
- Environment Report. Dated 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024. No objection subject to conditions.
- Archaeology Report: Dated 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Recommend grant of permission subject to a mitigation condition.
- Urban Roads and Street (Planning) Reports: Dated 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024 & 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024. No objection subject to conditions.
- Housing Report: Dated 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Part V proposal is acceptable in principle. No objection subject to a condition.
- Strategic Planning Report: Dated 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Recommend Further Information relating to increase capacity in the proposed creche.
- Strategic Transportation Report: Dated 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024. No objection subject to conditions.
- Biodiversity Report: Dated the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Recommends permission be granted subject to conditions.
- Area Engineer's Report: Dated 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024. No objection subject to conditions.
- City Architects Department: Dated 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Concern over the impact of apartment block C and access road on neighbouring houses and issues relating to passive surveillance. Report dated 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024. No objection.

- **Infrastructural Report:** Recommends Further Information relating to inconsistencies in the submitted documents relating to improvement works with Station Road and its junction with the R617 and the Road Safety Audit.
- **Conservation Report:** Dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024. No Objection
- **Cork Childcare Committee:** Concern relating to the lack of childcare facilities in Blarney.

#### 4.4. **Prescribed Bodies**

**Inland Fisheries Ireland:** report received on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Requested that Irish Water/ Cork City Council signifies there is sufficient capacity in the existing treatment facilities to ensure no pollution matters entering waters.

**Transport Infrastructure Ireland:** Report received 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024

States that the proposed development would adversely affect the operation and safety of the national road network due lack of information, concern over the proposed storm water eastern outfall adjacent to the N20, potential impact on the future M20 national road scheme.

**Uisce Eireann:** report received on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

No objection subject to conditions.

#### 4.5. **Third Party Observations**

Twenty-four third-party observations were received on the planning application. A summary of the issues raised include:

- Loss of privacy due to overlooking from proposed apartments.
- Overbearing impact of the apartments on Woodville Terrace.
- Loss of light due to the apartment development.

- Insufficient green area in the immediate vicinity of the proposed apartments.
- Apartments should be located to the central area of the site.
- The proposed density is not appropriate for the village of Blarney.
- Increased noise level from residential traffic.
- Loss of the view of the Ringwood.
- Devaluation of properties on Woodville Terrace.
- The proposed development will result in residents experiencing large volumes of traffic congestion and delays.
- Difficulty of exiting dwellings on Woodville Terrace due to increased traffic on Station Road.
- Issues of traffic safety, noise levels, debris due to construction traffic using Station Road.
- There is no provision for improvements in the junction of Station Road and the R617.
- The traffic report did not include agricultural machinery.
- An alternative entrance should be considered.
- The proposed ramp to the development will cause parking at the entrance at Station Road.
- The proposed entrance on Station Road should be for pedestrian and cycle access only.
- Concerns relating to the design of the proposed pedestrian/cycleway.
- Noise from construction works.
- The public sewerage system has never been upgraded.
- Concern over the infrastructural capacity for wastewater and sewerage for the proposed development.
- Problems with the existing sewage plant in Woodfield.
- Parking issues of construction workers.
- Lack of a masterplan.
- Issues of landownership and consent.

- Recent flooding event has cause flooding in the Woodfield Estate.
- Limited consultation with local residents.
- The housing mix will result in families being frozen out.
- Inaccuracies in the drawings and application details.
- Concern over the maintenance of the grass verge to the rear of the Woodville Terrace and potential for antisocial behaviour.
- A separate roadway is required for the Woodville Terrace to access the rear of their properties.
- Insufficient green and play area proposed.
- The existing lack of sporting facilities on Blarney.
- The proposed development needs to provide sporting facilities for the future residents.
- There will be a negative impact on the natural environment of the Ringwood.
- Requesting that the boundary with Woodville Terrace be stone or blockwork, not timber as proposed.
- Any development in proximity to the Ringwood should be suitable screened to avoid adverse impact on views in this direction from Blarney Castle.
- Recommendation of landscape measures to screen the proposed development from Blarney Castle.
- Any connection paths to the Ringwood should be permeable and carried out with excavation.
- A condition should include management of Ringwood informed by both a Woodland Management Plan and Historic Landscape Assessment.

## 5.0 Planning History

**ABP. Ref: PL 04.221478**

Permission granted after a third-party appeal on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008 for the following:

- (a) a grade separated 'dumbell' interchange incl. a bridge,
- (b) extension of the N20 dual-carriageway northwards,
- (c) removal of southbound ramps between N20 & Blarney Business Park,
- (d) widening the north side of the bridge at the N20 Blarney Interchange,
- (e) a 2-lane single-carriageway distributor rd. (Shean Road Lr.)
- (f) a 4-lane single-carriageway distributor rd. (Shean Upper Rd.),
- (g) removal and realignment of sections of ex. roads within Blarney Business Park,
- (h) a 3-lane single- carriageway Stoneview Upper Distributor Rd including a bridge
- (i) a 3-lane single-carriageway Stoneview Lower Distributor Rd. including a bridge.
- (j) realignment of part of ex. Station Rd and restriction to a single northbound lane.
- (k) a 2-lane single-carriageway Stoneview Upper Collector Rd.
- (l) a 2-lane single-carriageway Stoneview Lr. Collector Rd.
- (m) a Park Access Rd,
- (n) a single carriageway 2-lane Stoneview Northern Access Rd to Park Access Rd,
- (o) all associated structures/works

## **6.0 Policy Context**

### **6.1. National**

#### **6.1.1. The National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040, (2018).**

This document sets out the Governments strategic national plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland for the period up to 2040.

Of note National Strategic Outcome 1 (Compact Growth), sets out the focus on pursuing a compact growth policy at national, regional, and local level. From an urban perspective the aim is to deliver a greater proportion of residential development within existing built-up areas of cities, towns, and villages; to facilitate



infill development and enable greater densities to be achieved, whilst achieving high quality and design standards.

**NPO 3a:** Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements.

**NPO 3b:** Deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the five Cities and suburbs of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, within their existing built-up footprints.

NPO 35: Increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights.

6.1.2. Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland to 2030, 2021.

The government's housing plan to 2030. It is a multi-annual, multi-billion-euro plan which aims to improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs.

6.1.3. National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBPA) 2023-2030

The 4th NBAP strives for a “whole of government, whole of society” approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. The aim is to ensure that every citizen, community, business, local authority, semi-state and state agency has an awareness of biodiversity and its importance, and of the implications of its loss, while also understanding how they can act to address the biodiversity emergency as part of a renewed national effort to “act for nature”.

This National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 builds upon the achievements of the previous Plan. It will continue to implement actions within the framework of five strategic objectives, while addressing new and emerging issues:

- Objective 1- Adopt a Whole of Government, Whole of Society Approach to Biodiversity
- Objective 2 - Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs
- Objective 3 - Secure Nature's Contribution to People
- Objective 4 - Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity
- Objective 5 - Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives

#### 6.1.4. Climate Action Plan, 2024.

Implements carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. By 2030, the plan calls for a 40% reduction in emissions from residential buildings and a 50% reduction in transport emissions. The reduction in transport emissions include a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, significant increases in sustainable transport trips, and improved modal share.

#### 6.2. **Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines**

The following Section 28 - Ministerial Guidelines are considered of relevance to the proposed development. Specific policies and objectives are referenced within the assessment where appropriate.

- Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).
- Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2007) and the accompanying Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities.
- Urban Development and Building Heights - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018).
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2023).
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, including the associated Technical Appendices (2009).
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019).
- Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001).
- Cycle Design Manual (2023).
- Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands 1999.
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (including associated Technical Appendices) 2005

- Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines 2012
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, August 2018 (updated 2019)
- EPA Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports 2022.

### 6.3. Regional Policy

#### 6.3.1. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region, 2020

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region provides for the development of nine counties (Cork, Clare, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford) including the Cork City area, and supports the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP). Cork City and suburbs is the largest settlement in the Region with a population of over 208,000. Cork City is one of three cities categorised as Metropolitan Areas. Blarney is located within the designated metropolitan area of Cork. One of the Guiding Principles outlined in the Cork MASP is to ‘promote consolidation of Cork City and suburbs, refocus on the development of brownfield and infill lands to achieve a target of a minimum 50% of all new homes within the existing built-up footprint in Cork and 30% in other metropolitan settlements’. More specifically, Blarney is expected to provide 3,555 units including 2,600 at Stoneview Urban Expansion Area.

#### 6.3.2. Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2040

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040 (CMATS) (2020) reaffirms the preceding two decades of planning policy for Blarney regarding the development of a new rail station and associated Park and Ride facility to support sustainable growth. CMATS envisages enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure for Blarney, including the Blarney Greenway Route, which will abut Castlevue lands to the south, as well as a Core Radial Bus Network to serve the town, all of which will facilitate connectivity between Blarney and the wider metropolitan area.

#### 6.4. Development Plan

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 is the operational plan for the area. The plan was adopted by resolution of the Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and took effect on the 8<sup>th</sup> August.

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 is subject to a Ministerial Direction issued on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 relating to 8 zoning objectives.

##### Land Use Zoning

The majority of the site is zoned **ZO 2 New Residential Neighbourhoods** where the objective is: 'To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.'

##### ZO 2.2

*'This zone covers primarily greenfield, undeveloped lands for new sustainable residential areas. Development in this zone, while primarily residential, must provide an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures along with the amenity, social, community and physical infrastructure required to promote compact growth, balanced communities and sustainable, liveable communities.'*

In the Cork City Growth Strategy these ZO 2 lands are in Tier 2. Tier 2 sites are zoned land that are considered serviceable by physical infrastructure within the life of the Development Plan.

A section of the site to the south which contains the proposed surface water infrastructure is zoned **ZO 20 – City Hinterlands** where the objective is *'to protect and improve rural amenity and provide for the development of agriculture.'*

##### ZO 20.1

*'The primary objective of this zone is to preserve the character of the City Hinterland generally for use as agriculture, rural amenity, open space, recreational uses, green and blue infrastructure and to protect and enhance biodiversity. Rural-related business activities which have a demonstrated need for a rural location are also*

*permissible. Any development associated with such uses should not compromise the specific function and character of the City Hinterland in the particular area.'*

#### Other Relevant Sections/Policies

The following policies are considered relevant to the consideration of the subject proposal:

#### **Chapter 2, Section 2.1 Strategic Objectives for Growth**

The following Strategic Objectives for Growth are outlined:

**SO 1:** Compact Liveable Growth - Deliver compact growth that achieves a sustainable 15-minute city of scale providing integrated communities and walkable neighbourhoods, dockland and brownfield regeneration, infill development and strategic greenfield expansion adjacent to existing city.

**SO 2:** Delivering Homes and Communities - Provide densities that create liveable, integrated communities by using a mix of house types, tenures and sizes linked to active and public transport. Provide amenities, services and community and cultural uses to enable inclusive, diverse and culturally rich neighbourhoods.

**SO 8:** Environmental Infrastructure - Ensure efficient and sustainable use of water services, enhance water quality and resource management. Manage waste generation and treatment and support the principles of the circular economy. Improve air quality and promote pro-active management of noise. Enable the sustainable delivery of digital infrastructure, renewable energy and environmental improvements.

**SO 9:** Placemaking and Managing Development - Develop a compact liveable city based on attractive, diverse and accessible urban spaces and places. Focus on enhancing walkable neighbourhoods that promote healthy living, wellbeing and active lifestyles, where placemaking is at the heart. Follow a design-led approach with innovative architecture, landscape and urban design that respects the character of the city and neighbourhood.

#### **Chapter 2, Core Strategy**

The Core Strategy identifies Blarney as an urban town centre with a population growth target of 3,688 for 2028.

### ***Chapter 2, Section 2.57 Objectives for City Growth***

Blarney is identified as an urban town which will help to deliver the Core Strategy as follows: Phased delivery of strategic sites by targeting growth proportionate to the existing population within the four urban towns. All development shall focus on prioritising walking, cycling and public transport use. Apply a mixed-use approach to regenerating key underutilised locations. Use a range of designs and densities that reflect and enhance the individual character of each town.

### ***Chapter 3, Delivering Homes and Communities***

#### **Objective 3.4: Compact Growth**

Cork City Council will seek to ensure that at least 66% of all new homes will be provided within the existing footprint of Cork. Cork City Council will seek to ensure that at least 33% of all new homes will be provided within brownfield sites in Cork.

#### **Objective 3.5: Residential Density**

Cork City Council will seek to:

- a. Promote compact urban growth by encouraging higher densities throughout Cork City according to the Cork City Density Strategy, Building Height and Tall Building Study and resultant standards set out in Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development and Mapped Objectives; and
- b. Ensure that urban density is achieved by development proposals providing for high quality sustainable residential development, ensure a balance between the protection of the established character of the surrounding area and existing residential amenities;
- c. Ensure that urban density is closely linked to creating successful neighbourhoods and ensuring that neighbourhoods are integrated and permeable to ensure short trips are possible to urban centres, local services and amenities;
- d. Ensuring high-quality architectural, urban and public realm design. Guidance is set out in Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development.

#### **Objective 3.6: Housing Mix**

Cork City Council will seek to:

- a. Implement the provisions of the Joint Housing Strategy and HNDA as far as they relate to Cork City;
- b. Encourage the development of an appropriate mix of dwelling types to meet target residential densities, utilising a range of dwelling types and density typologies informed by best practice with combinations of houses, stacked units and apartments.
- c. Within all new residential developments it will be necessary to ensure an appropriate balance of housing tenure and dwelling size to sustain balanced and inclusive communities, including a balance of family sized units and smaller dwellings tailored to suit the location;
- d. Deliver at least 20% below-market priced housing across Cork City and ideally within each new residential neighbourhood;
- e. Encourage the provision of housing for one and two person households in all neighbourhoods to meet the needs of all age groups, including providing for downsizing to release family housing units;
- f. Update Development Plan policy as necessary to reflect emerging national guidance with regard to housing standards.

## ***Chapter 4, Transport and Mobility***

### **Objective 4.3 Strategic Location of New Development**

To ensure that all new residential, employment and commercial development are focused in areas with good access to the planned high frequency public transport network.

### **Objective 4.4 Active Travel**

To actively promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy, and environmentally friendly modes of transport by securing the development of a network of direct, comfortable, convenient, and safe cycle routes and footpaths across the city.

To support the 15-minute city concept and walk able neighbourhoods with adequate walking and cycling infrastructure connected to high-quality public realm elements, including wayfinding and supporting amenities (benches, water fountains, bike stands).

#### **Objective 4.5 Permeability**

All new development, particularly alongside the possible routes identified for public transport improvements, shall include permeability for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport so as to maximise its accessibility.

### ***Chapter 6, Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity***

#### **Objective 6.11 Landscape and Development**

To ensure that the management of development throughout Cork City will have regard for the value of the landscape, its character, distinctiveness and sensitivity in order to minimize the visual and environmental impact of development, particularly in designated areas of high landscape value where higher development standards (layout, design, landscaping, materials) are required.

### ***Chapter 9, Environmental Infrastructure***

#### **Objective 9.2 Waste Water**

- a. To require all new proposals for development to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system and to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in so far as practical.
- b. As part of new proposals for development, evidence of consultation with Irish Water should be submitted as part of a planning application, demonstrating that adequate water services are available to service the development and that existing water services will not be negatively impacted.

#### **Objection 9.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)**

To require that all planning applications for new development incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in so far as possible. Such proposals



shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SUDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.

#### **Objective 9.10 Development in Flood Risk Areas**

To restrict development in identified flood risk areas, in particular flood plains. All new development proposals should comply with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Department of Environment, Community and Local Government Circular PL2/2014, in particular through the application of the sequential approach and the Development Management Justification Test.

#### **Objective 9.19 External Lighting**

To require that external lighting proposals minimise the harmful effects of light pollution, are energy efficient, and do not have an excessive impact on residential or visual amenity, biodiversity or result in the distraction of road users.

### ***Chapter 10, Key Growth Areas & Neighbourhood Development Sites***

#### ***Objective 10.63 Blarney East / Ringwood Expansion Area***

To support the compact growth and development of Blarney East / Ringwood Expansion Area as a strategic City consolidation and expansion area, as identified in the Core Strategy. All development shall be designed, planned and delivered in a co-ordinated and phased manner, using a layout and mix of uses that form part of an emerging neighbourhood integrated with the wider area.

#### **Objective 10.65 Stoneview Framework Masterplan**

During the lifetime of this Plan Cork City Council will seek to provide and implement a framework for a transit-oriented mixed-use and residential development at Stoneview through the coordinated provision of infrastructure, services, land use, movement, urban design and development.

## **6.5. Natural Heritage Designations**

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the boundary of the appeal site nor are there any Natura 2000 sites directly abutting the appeal site it or within the immediate

context of the site. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 00430) which is located c.10.8 km to the south-east of the appeal site.

## **7.0 The Appeal**

### **7.1. Grounds of Appeal**

Four Third Party appeals have been received from Trevor Daly, Paul Byrne, Rory O’Keeffe, Patricia & Denis O’Donoghue. The main points of appeal can be summarised as follows:

#### Principle of Development

- The Minister of Housing requested Cork City Council to change land at Ringwood from ZO 2 New Residential Neighbourhood zoning back to ZO 21 City Hinterlands and Longer Term Strategic Development Lands.
- The subject LRD lands could not be considered to represent a sequential progression from the town centre of Blarney.
- The applicant and the Council have ignored the Collaborative Town Centre Health Check for Blarney.
- The application is premature as no masterplan for the Village Centre as required in the Development Plan has been carried out.

#### Density

- The density of the proposed development is in excess of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines 2024.
- The proposed density is almost double that of other developments in the area and would not safeguard the established character of the surrounding area.

#### Masterplan

- The application does not contain a masterplan that is available for public viewing.
- There appears to be an element of project splitting.

- The overall landholding as per Land Direct is 47.9ha, there is no master planning documents to demonstrate how this remaining land will be master planned.
- In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development a full masterplan must be submitted.

### Ownership

- There is no transparency in the ownership of the site.
- The folio for the main section of the site is not registered to the applicant Clockstrike and is registered to a different owner.
- The main folio for the section of land at the proposed entrance also crosses house numbers 15 & 16 Woodville Terrace, the owners of which are under a 999 year leasehold.
- No consent from the owners of these properties has been included in the application.
- The consent letter from Cork City Council does not include a red line to outline the lands in question.
- It would appear that Cork City Council does not have clean title to the lands in question.
- Permission should be refused on the grounds of inadequate title details provided by the applicant and the City Council.

### Residential Amenity

- The apartments, located behind the existing houses in Woodville, will be overpowering and out of scale with the existing dwellings on Station Road and will create overlooking and overshadowing of the properties on Woodville Terrace.
- The apartments should be located to another part of the site which is lower lying as there would be less impact on the existing dwellings.

- Request that Apartment Block A&B be omitted or relocated to the western edge of the site.
- Multi-storey apartments are out of scale with the pattern of development in the area.
- The introduction of apartments of the proposed height will create a disproportionate impact on the local skyline in Blarney and alter the character of the local neighbourhood.

#### Housing Mix

- Family purchasers are being frozen out of the proposed housing mix.
- There is a shortage of family orientated property in Blarney Village.
- There is an improper mix of housing in the proposed development which does not match the housing pattern or mix in Blarney.

#### Traffic

- Concern relating to construction traffic and the increase in residential traffic on Station Road.
- The current layout of the junction of Station Road and the R617 is over capacity, does not meet the current demand load and is deficient as it does not have a signalised junction or dedicated right hand turn with filter lane.
- Residents of Station Road and adjoining estates currently face increasing tailbacks each midweek day at rush hours and school drop-off/collection times.
- An access from R617 would reduce traffic pressure in Station Road and at its junction with the R617.
- The increase in traffic on Station Road will cause delays and disruptions which would significantly impact residents, commuters, tourists and local business.
- The 2021 Draft Blarney Masterplan states that '*Station Road is unsuitable for high volumes of Traffic.*'

- The proposed entrance on Station Road will negatively impact the residents of Assumption Terrace ability to access Station Road.
- Ask An Bord Pleanála to consider limiting the access on Station Road to access for pedestrians and cyclist only.
- The application does not have a coherent plan that deal with the increase in traffic from the proposed development.
- The application has not considered the several agricultural vehicles that use Station Road on a daily and season basis.
- The application is deficient in detail relating to Station Road with no detail of the road north of the proposed entrance or any works.
- The sightlines to the north of the proposed junction have not been adequately considered.
- There is a lack of detail for the proposed footpaths and cycleways on Station Road.
- The reduction in width of Station Road and the car parking lane is contrary to Development Plan.
- The houses on Station Road will be left with inadequate parking, no disabled or EV parking and inadequate sightlines.
- Until a dumb bell junction on the N20 in the vicinity of the Blarney Business Park or a distributor road at the Killard Road are constructed the proposed development is premature.
- Previous concerns about Station Road have been ignored.
- The main entrance should be via the Killard Junction.
- The three houses facing Station Road at the entrance with parking to the rear should be omitted as they will lead to parking at the entrance junction.
- There is no additional parking available in the village of Blarney.
- Inaccuracies and omissions in the Road Safety Audit

- Blarney is currently poorly served with public transport, residents of the proposed development will be dependant in use of cars which will exacerbate traffic congestion.
- The Cork City Development Plan, Chapter 10 (10.265) highlight the need for substantial infrastructure improvements in Blarney, particularly along Station Road.

### Social Infrastructure

- There is inadequate infrastructure to cope with the new residents.
- There is no space in the local schools and no supermarket. There is a lack of GP's in the area with long waiting times.
- Sports clubs in the area are at capacity.
- A School Demand Report was not submitted.
- The impact of an additional 485 dwellings will badly affect the school capacity.
- Without investment in the social infrastructure of the area the proposed development will risk putting an undue burden on existing families.

### Flooding

- There has been serious flooding in Blarney in the last 25 years.
- Concern whether the local sewer network/storm drains fit for purpose and capable of coping with this new development
- The Flood Risk Assessment ignores Phase 2 and other elements of the overall landholding.
- The proposed development along with other development proposed will create a gross intensification on the capacity of the River Martin and associated network areas back to the protected SAC in Cork Harbour.
- Ongoing maintenance issues with the River Martin.

### Landscaping

- The proposed kickabout area is not flat enough to allow football to be played.

- Some of the hard landscaped areas are not lit with public lighting and may lead to anti-social behaviour.
- The open spaces and footpaths should have public lighting.
- With no masterplan it is unclear if the proposed open space provided is adequate.

### EIAR

- During the preparation of the EIAR no consultation took place with the existing residents in Blarney and on Station Road.
- The proposed housing figures are not clear and transparent.
- The applicant does not indicate what capacity is available in the Blarney Schools.
- The EIAR does not give a list of the 17no. further and third level education centres accessible to the site.
- The suggested economic impact of the development as being long term and short term is incorrect due to the lack of construction workers.
- The stated traffic movement by construction workers has been underestimated.

### Other Matters

- The proposed cul-de-sac behind Woodville Terrace could lead to anti-social behaviour.
- The application should have been invalidated as critical dimensions were not included on drawings and cross sections of Station Road are not submitted.
- It appears that the creche is being designed on the basis of Phase 1&2, a total of 522 units, however the public have never been allowed to comment on this.
- Accurate details of future phases should have been included with the application. Inconsistencies should be enough to invalidate an application.

- The proposed development will be plainly visible from the roof of Blarney Castle impacting tourism and the character and brand of Blarney Castle and Village.

## 7.2. Applicant Response

The main points of the applicant's response can be summarised as follows:

- Several claims made in the appeals are misleading and exaggerated.
- The decision by the planning authority and the attached conditions have comprehensively addressed the issues raised by the appellants.

### Traffic Congestion

- The site is located in an area designated a strategic urban expansion area.
- The site is located 450m from the zoned town centre and enhanced active travel measures along Station Road are proposed.
- The proposed development has been subject to a Traffic and Transportation Assessment and incorporates a Mobility Management Plan, a Quality Audit and Road Safety Audit, a Walking and Cycling Audit, and Accessibility Audit, a Street Design Audit, a Visual Quality Audit and a Community Audit.
- The Planning Authority reviewed the submitted junction assessments and found they present a robust and reliable indication of traffic volumes.
- The Planning Authority's engineers are satisfied that no undue traffic impacts arise.
- The proposed development is not reliant on upon the planned transport infrastructure schemes in Blarney and can be developed independently.

### Road Safety

- The proposed development entrance onto Station Road has been designed in accordance with relevant road and urban design standards and guidelines.
- The design has been subject to a Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit.



- Condition No.15 requires that a further Stage 3/4 Road Safety be undertaken.
- Condition No. 33 requires agreement on the final geometric layout for the entrance on Station Road and the active travel Infrastructure proposed on Station Road.

#### Apartment Development

- The proposed apartments are not contiguous to these houses are between 33m and 42m to their rear and therefore a contiguous elevation from Woodville Terrace is not required.
- The applicant has submitted artists impressions showing how these apartment building will be experienced from Station Road.
- The potential for impacts on daylight and sunlight to the surrounding properties was assessed and found to be in accordance with the recommendations of the BRE Report – Site Layout and Planning for Daylight and Sunlight BR209 2022.
- The proposed development has been designed to ensure that it does not negatively impact on existing residential amenity.
- Notwithstanding the applicants are happy to replace the apartments with a duplex arrangement. A revised plan has been submitted. The revised density would still comply with the Compact Settlements Guidelines.

#### Social and Community Infrastructure

- The submitted Social and Community Audit demonstrates that residents of the proposed development will have access to social and community infrastructure.
- The development will strengthen the case for enhanced facilities in the town.
- The provision of a creche facility will provide for the childcare needs arising from the proposed development and will serve the wider community.
- The Board's most recent decisions for large scale residential development in Blarney raised no concerns with the level of social and community infrastructure provision.

- The proposed development is accessible to adequate relevant services and amenities.

#### Infrastructure Provision

- Uisce Eireann have provided both a Confirmation of Feasibility and a Statement of Design Acceptance for the proposed development and therefore the development can be adequately served with water supply and foul drainage systems.

#### Active Travel and Parking Proposals

- The proposed works to enhance active travel along Station Road were agreed with the planning authority before the lodging of the application.
- The proposed works are to be implemented as part of the overall development.
- To mitigate against the loss of some public parking, due to the proposed shared cycle/pedestrian path on Station Road, an area to the rear of Woodville Terrace has been set aside and reserved for future parking if required.

#### Construction Stage.

- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Construction Traffic Management Plan has been submitted.
- A Traffic Manager will coordinate and manage deliveries to and from the site.
- The applicants are happy to accept a condition which restrict HGV movement to outside peak traffic periods.
- The CEMP sets out mitigation measures for the protection of amenity and the environment during construction.

#### Residential Density and Housing Mix

- The proposed density of 40.2 dph complies with the Sustainable Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024 and the City Development Plan.
- The proposed development is in accordance with the Development Plan's housing mix targets.

- The proposed development will result in a compact form of development at an appropriate scale, nature and density which will provide an appropriate mix of units catering to a range of people at varying stages of the lifecycle.

#### Tourism and Built Heritage

- There is no plausible impact upon the built heritage of the town or the area arising from the proposed development.
- The submitted photomontage views show that the development can be properly screened.
- The suggestion that the proposed development will impact upon the town's tourism are overstated and misrepresented.

#### Masterplan

- The appellants claim that there is no masterplan available to the public, while at the same time appending and critiquing the applicant's own masterplan.
- The EIAR was prepared on the basis of the future cumulative development of the zoned lands in the immediate area.

#### Landownership and Validity

- The registered owners of the main section of the site have entered into a commercial agreement with the Clockstrike Ltd for the joint development of subject lands and the applicant have a legal and equitable interest in the lands under the agreement and is thereby nominated to make the planning application.
- The proposed site does not encroach on the properties include in the local authority folio (Ref. CK49834).
- A letter of consent from Cork City Council for lands in their ownership has been included with the applicant.
- Any future disposal of Council owned lands will be subject to separate and appropriate procedure for such disposal.

#### EIAR

- The EIAR address cumulative development in the wider area and identified, described and assessed the direct and indirect effects of the proposed development on the environment.
- The planning authority concluded that the EIAR was adequate and that the proposed development would not have significant effects on the environment.

#### Creche Design

- The larger creche submitted as further information includes a lift.
- The detailed design and construction of the creche building will be subject to Building Regulations and Disability Access Certification process as required under Part M of the Second Schedule to the Regulations.

#### Open Space Areas

- The proposed open spaces are of high quality and fit for purpose and in accordance will all relevant Planning Authority guidance on the development of same.
- The Planning Authority Parks and Recreation Report consider the proposed open space to be acceptable.

#### Planning Conditions

- The applicants are happy to accept the planning conditions attached to the Planning Authorities grant of permission.

#### Flood Risk

- The submitted flood risk included a detailed 2-dimensional hydraulic model which was used to refine the flood risks in the area and confirm the flood risk for the climate change scenarios and residual risks.
- The flood images submitted by one of the appellants are not of Station Road.
- There have been no flood events on Station Road. The nearest event was 500m from the subject site at Shamrock Terrace in 2000.

#### Conclusion

- The appellants have failed to present a realistic or convincing case that there are any fundamental or meaningful grounds for objection to the proposed

development from a proper planning and sustainable development perspective.

- The subject proposal's compliance with statutory development plan policies has been demonstrated during the course of the application and has been accepted by the Planning Authority.

The applicant response to the appeal also included a detailed response from MHL Engineers, From SYSTRA. Transport Consultants and Cunnane Stratton Reynolds, Land Planning and Design Consultants.

### **7.3. Planning Authority Response**

No further comments.

### **7.4. Observations**

Observations have been received from Antoinette Mahon & Jogn Goggin, Seamus Mulcahy and Colette O'Gorman.

The main points raised can be summarised as follows:

#### Services

- The wastewater collection infrastructure on Station Road is deficient even for the current levels of loading.
- The sewer is not adequate to take the pressure of more sewerage.
- There are issues with the existing drainage from Woodfield and from Blarney Business Park.
- There are bad smells from the existing drainage.
- The main sewer has not been upgraded and another 246 will add to this problem.
- Uisce Eireann has no current plans to progress upgrades to service in this area.
- The proposed development poses a major risk to public health.

## Traffic

- The volume of traffic and speed at certain times of the day is unacceptable.
- It is impossible to turn right at the end of the road with the volume of cars coming from Tower.
- The proposed development will add significant volumes of traffic onto 'a relatively minor road'.
- When the development is built the junction between Station Road and the R617 is predicted to 'operate over practice capacity' as calculated in the Transportation Assessment Report.
- Recommendation that an alternative access road to the site should be designed to divert construction and residential traffic away from Station Road.
- Limiting the Station Road to cycle and pedestrian access only, would alleviate concerns.

## Pedestrian and Cycle Infrastructure

- The shared cycle/pedestrian path on Station Road will abruptly end at the junction with the R617 with no further cycling infrastructure or safe crossing at the junction to the local secondary school, primary school or Clogheenmilcon walk.
- The proposed infrastructure will not make a positive addition to residents north of the entrance.
- The proposed width of footpath and two-way cycling lane are below NTA's desired and absolute minimum width for cycle lanes shared with pedestrians,
- The proposed development is contrary to Objective 2.14 of the Cork City Council's Development Plan as it will not enhance permeability for walking and cycling.

## Apartments

- The apartment blocks surpass the target density for Blarney and are not in keeping with the character of the village.

- The apartments will have a very negative impact on the local environment due to the local elevation of the site and height of the apartment blocks.
- A contiguous elevation if submitted would have shown the overbearing scale of the properties on Woodville Terrace.
- The proposed apartments to the rear of Woodville Terrace will block the light to the back gardens of the terrace.
- The apartments are not sympathetic to Blarney Village which is a designated Architectural Conservation Area.

### Other Matters

- The Blarney area is already underserved in terms of community facilities.
- It is currently very difficult to secure a medical appointment, and the proposed development will exacerbate the strain on these essential services.
- Concern relating to increased emissions.
- The existing anti-social behaviour to the rear of Woodville Terrace will increase.
- The promised road to the rear of the Woodville Terrace, to take the cars of the residents of the terrace off the main road, has not been provided.

## **7.5. Further Responses**

None

## **8.0 Assessment**

- 8.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the report/s 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 are as follows:

- Ownership
- Principle of Development/Zoning
- Density
- Housing Mix
- Impact of the Apartment Blocks on Existing Residential Amenity
- Social Infrastructure
- Flooding
- Landscaping
- Traffic
- Infrastructure

## 8.2. Ownership

- 8.2.1. The ownership of the application site has been raised as an appeal issue. One appellant states that there is no visibility or transparency in the ownership of the site.
- 8.2.2. The applicant is Clockstike Limited, and one appellant states the site is owned by Clare Forrest. In the response to the appeal the applicant states that Clare Forrest, the registered owner of the main element of the site, and others have entered into a commercial agreement with Clockstrike Limited for the joint development of the lands at Castlview, Ringwood and Stoneview, Co. Cork. The applicant states that the Clockstrike Limited has a legal and equitable interest in Folio CK41642 under the terms of the Agreement and is nominated to make the planning application.
- 8.2.3. The appellant states that the site of the proposed entrance to the development is held under three folios. The main folio of which crosses house numbers of 15 and 16 Woodville Terrace which are in third party ownership and there is no reference to the occupants of the leasehold owners of No.15 and 16 providing consent for the application. A letter of consent has been provided by Cork City Council for the applicants to apply for planning permission on lands in their ownership. The site of the proposed development does not include No.15 and 16 Woodville Terrace and



therefore I consider that, for the purposes of the application, consent from the leasehold owners of No.15 and 16 is not required.

8.2.4. No evidence to dispute the applicant's claim of legal interest has been provided nor any claim by an affected owner.

8.2.5. Having regard to the above I do not consider that a clear lack of sufficient legal interest has been provided in the appeal, and I am, therefore satisfied that the applicant has provided sufficient evidence of their legal interest in the site.

### **8.3. Principle of Development/Zoning**

8.3.1. In the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the site is located on a land zoned ZO 02 New Residential Neighbourhoods. The zoning object is 'to provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.' The subject site is designated as a Tier 2 lands, Tier 2 lands are zoned lands that are considered serviceable by physical infrastructure within the life of the plan. Residential is a stated primary use in this zone and therefore in principle a new residential neighbourhood is acceptable.

8.3.2. The section of the site which includes the eastern stormwater outfall is on lands with a zoning objective of Z020 City Hinterland. The proposed stormwater outfall will not result in any significant change of the use of the land and I therefore consider the principle of the development on this zone to be acceptable.

8.3.3. I note that for the development of this site Objective 10.63 of the Development Plan applies. It states:

8.3.4. *'To support the compact growth and development of Blarney East / Ringwood Expansion Area as a strategic City consolidation and expansion area, as identified in the Core Strategy. All development shall be designed, planned and delivered in a co-ordinated and phased manner, using a layout and mix of uses that form part of an emerging neighbourhood integrated with the wider area.'*

8.3.5. One of the appellants makes reference to a Ministerial Direction on lands at Ringwood where the council was directed to reinstate Z0 21 City Hinterland & Longer Term Strategic Development Lands on remaining residential lands at

Ringwood that were subject to a material amendment in the Development Plan process. This direction did not apply to the ZO 02 zoned application site.

- 8.3.6. One third party considered that the application is premature as no masterplan for the Village Centre as required in Development Plan Objective has been carried out. Objective 10.64 states that during the lifetime of the development plan Cork City Council will seek to provide and implement a framework for heritage-led redevelopment and revitalisation of the town centre and the coordinated provision of services, infrastructure, land use, movement urban design and development. I do not consider that any development of the subject lands, located outside the town centre land is predicated on the delivery of this plan.
- 8.3.7. Third parties have concerns that a full masterplan for the area has not been made available. An indicative master plan for the applicant's landholdings is shown in the planning application documentation and the applicant states that the current phase has been designed having regard to the future development of these lands. The assessment including the EIA deals with the development as proposed in this application. Any future proposals for the applicant land will subject to planning assessment and potentially an EIA.
- 8.3.8. Section 10.234 of the Development Plan states, 'constraints have been identified at Ringwood, another large-scale development area is located just outside the town centre on Station Road, and significant works will be required to allow for development of these lands.'
- 8.3.9. The following assessment will consider if sufficient works have been carried out to facilitate this proposed first phase of development of these lands at Ringwood.

#### **8.4. Density**

- 8.4.1. Concerns have been raised by third parties regarding the density of the proposed development stating that it is too high and out of character with the prevailing density of Blarney.
- 8.4.2. Table 11.2 of the Cork City Development Plan details density standards for residential developments in the Outer Suburbs. Map 11 of Volume 2 shows that the subject site is in an area designated as outer suburbs. Therefore, the development

plan density target for the site is 40-60 dwelling per hectare. The density of the proposed development at 40.2 units is therefore within the density ranges and in this regard therefore complies with the development plan.

8.4.3. The Council's Strategic Planning Report states that while the density proposed is lower than desired, given the low-density characteristics of the development adjacent to the site, the density proposed is acceptable as it will allow for a gentle integration of a large scale development into an established low-density area.

8.4.4. Section 11.72 of the Development Plan states that

'In accordance with relevant s28 Guidelines (e.g. Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas) minimum density targets will be applied in the development of all sites, apart from in exceptional circumstances.'

8.4.5. I note that in Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan, Blarney, is classed as a Metropolitan Town. In the Sustainable and Compact Settlements: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024, which replaced the Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas-Guidelines for Planning Authorities, for Metropolitan Towns with a population of over 1,500, which includes Blarney, on Suburban/Urban Extensions, of which this development site is, it is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 35 dph to 50 dph (net) shall generally be applied, and that densities of up to 100 dph (net) shall be open for consideration at 'accessible' suburban / urban extension locations.

8.4.6. The density of the proposed development at 40.2 units is within the guideline density ranges and would, therefore, also align with the Sustainable Compact Settlement Guidelines.

8.4.7. I accept that the density of the proposed development will result in a significant change in the prevailing character of the area, however the density is required to achieve the principles of compact growth in accessible areas. I am therefore satisfied that the density of the proposed development in this evolving new outer suburb is acceptable in principle.

## 8.5. **Housing Mix**

8.5.1. A point of appeal relates to the proposed house mix and the appellant considered that families are purchasers are being frozen out of the development. It is suggested

that the housing need in Blarney is for family accommodation given the shortage of family orientated property in the village.

8.5.2. The proposed housing mix is shown in the table below.

	4-bed	3-bed	2-bed	1-bed	Studio	Total	Percentage
<b>Apartments</b>	0	0	60	35	6	101	<b>41%</b>
<b>Houses</b>	32	64	19	0	0	115	<b>47%</b>
<b>Duplex</b>	0	0	15	15	0	30	<b>12%</b>
<b>Total</b>	32	64	94	50	6	246	<b>100%</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

- 8.5.3. Specific Planning Policy Requirement 1 of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments - Guidelines for Planning Authorities states that *‘housing developments may include up to 50% one-bedroom or studio type units (with no more than 20-25% of the total proposed development as studios) and there shall be no minimum requirement for apartments with three or more bedrooms. Statutory development plans may specify a mix for apartment and other housing developments, but only further to an evidence-based Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA), that has been agreed on an area, county, city or metropolitan area basis and incorporated into the relevant development plan(s).’*
- 8.5.4. The proposed apartments provide for approximately 41 studio or one bed apartment. This equates to approximately 40% of the total apartment provision which complies with the above Specific Planning Policy Requirement 1. This also represents 23% of the overall dwelling provision which is acceptable.
- 8.5.5. Objective 11.2 Dwelling Size Mix of the Cork City Development Plan sets out the required dwelling type mix for proposed development over 50 units in Urban Towns such as Blarney.
- 8.5.6. The development plan requires between 25% -35% of the total development to be 3-bed units. As 26% of the units are 3 bed units, the proposed development complies with the development plan standards in this regard.

- 8.5.7. The development plan requires between 10% -20% of the total development to be 4-bed units. As 13% of the units are 4 bed units, the proposed development complies with the development plan standards in this regard.
- 8.5.8. The Cork Housing Need Demand Assessment has highlighted the need for a mix of dwelling types to cater for households of between 1 and 3 people. I consider that the proposed housing mix is appropriate for the area as it will provide an adequate provision of families and for smaller occupancy units.

## **8.6. Impact of the Apartment Blocks on Existing Residential Amenity**

### Height

- 8.6.1. One of the appellants states that the height of the apartments is contrary to the Cork City Building Height Standards as contained in Table 1.1. Development Plan Figure 1.1: Density and Building Height Spatial and Map 11 of Volume 2 shows that the subject site is in an area designated as outer suburbs. Table 11.1: Cork City Building Height Standards gives an upper target figure of 4 storeys for outer suburbs. In this regard the proposed apartments at three and part four storeys comply with the development plan.

### Impact on Residential Amenity: Overlooking.

- 8.6.2. Concern has been raised in the appeal and observations that the proposed apartments to the rear of Woodville Terrace will create overlooking, overshadowing, will be overbearing and not in keeping with the character of Blarney.
- 8.6.3. The distance of proposed apartment blocks A & B ranges from approximately 39-41m from the rear first floor elevations of the existing dwellings on Woodville Terrace. The ground levels of the site rise significantly from the properties on Woodville Terrace to the proposed ground floor of the apartments with an approximate 3m level difference at places.
- 8.6.4. Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 1 -Separation Distances of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), states that when considering a planning application for residential development, a separation distance of at least 16 metres between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses, duplex

units and apartment units, above ground floor level shall be maintained. The distance between the opposing windows of the existing dwellings and the apartments will be well in excess of the minimum of the 16 meters.

- 8.6.5. Apartment Block A and B are approximately 23m from the rear garden boundaries of the properties on Woodville Terrace, I consider that this is adequate distance to prevent significant overlooking of the existing private amenity space.

Impact on Residential Amenity: Overshadowing.

- 8.6.6. Third Parties consider that the apartment will overshadow the existing dwellings and amenity space of Woodville Terrace and will have a negative impact on residential amenity.
- 8.6.7. Objective 11.4 - Daylight Sunlight and Overshadowing (DSO) of The Cork City Development Plan requires that in relation to all major schemes the potential impacts of the proposed development on the amenities enjoyed by adjoining properties will need to be assessed for residential development.
- 8.6.8. A Daylight and Sunlight Analysis Report has been submitted with the planning application. The assessment applied the guidelines and recommendations of the British Research Establishment report (BRE). In relation to the existing dwelling the assessment is broken into two sections, impact on day light reception and impact on sunlight reception on the open scape including the neighbouring properties..
- 8.6.9. For the analysis of the impact of the proposed development on the impact on daylight reception of the existing dwellings, all of the properties on Station Road that back on to the development site and the site on the opposite side of the road to the proposed dwelling on Station Road at the development entrance have been assessed. I consider that theses dwellings are the properties that are potential most impacted by the development.
- 8.6.10. The results of the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) analysis show that the neighbouring habitable rooms to the rear of the properties on Woodville Terrace will be affected to some degree. However, VSC change levels for all windows analysed will be greater than 0.80 times its former value. This is in compliance with the BRE Guidelines which states that only when there is a change factor less than 0.80 times

its former value will the occupants of the existing buildings notice the reduction in the amount of daylight.

- 8.6.11. I am satisfied with the results of the daylight reception analysis and therefore I consider that the dwellings on Woodville Terrace will not receive significant less daylight as a result of the proposed development.
- 8.6.12. A Daylight and Sunlight Analysis Report also analysed the impact of the proposed development on the existing amenity areas. Again, I consider that the appropriate properties were analysed. Based on the BRE guidelines at least 50% of the amenity space should receive at least two hours of sunlight on the 21<sup>st</sup> March and any loss of sunlight should not be greater than 0.8 (20% reduction) times its former size. The results indicate that all of the existing rear garden space would receive 2 hours of sunlight or more on at least 50% of the amenity space on the 21<sup>st</sup> March before and after the introduction of the new development. The analysis also concluded that the proposed development would not result in a reduction of sunlight to the rear gardens of greater than a 20% reduction of its former size. I am satisfied with this conclusion and consider that the rear gardens of the properties on Woodville Terrace will not be significantly impacted by the proposed development as a result of overshadowing.
- 8.6.13. Having studied the Daylight and Sunlight Analysis Report and visited the site, I consider that that the proposed development will not be seriously harmful to the residential amenity of the residents on Woodville Terrace as a result of over shadowing from the proposed development.

Impact on Residential Amenity: Overbearance.

- 8.6.14. The issue of the scale of the apartment has been raised by the appellants and it ovebearance on the properties on Woodville Terrace. The lack of a contiguous elevation of showing the proposed apartments to the rear of Woodville Terrace has been included in the appeal. As part of the response to the appeal the applicant has submitted a site section, a contiguous elevation and artist impression showing the relationship of the proposed apartment block and the existing properties on Woodville Terrace. I am satisfied that adequate information has been submitted to make a reasonable recommendation on the impact of the apartments on the existing residential amenity.

- 8.7. As stated above the apartment block A and B are from 39-42m from the rear of the dwellings on Woodville Terrace and given the topography of the site, the ground floor level of the area of the apartments is almost 3m higher than that of the existing properties on Woodville Terrace.
- 8.8. In the planning authority planning report it is stated that with regard to the impact on the setting of the dwellings on Woodville Terrace through overbearance, the development will result in a change in the setting of the residences. The report continues that it is this lower part of the site where there is capacity for taller building that will not detract from the long view from Blarney Castle. The report concludes that given the separation distance and the landscaping proposed that the apartments will not have an undue visual impact through overbearance. In the appeals it has been suggested that there are more suitable parts of the site for apartments.
- 8.9. While I consider that the proposed apartments will not have a serious impact on the view from the castle, I consider that the scale of Apartment Blocks A & B on an elevated site will appear overbearing when viewed from the modest two storey dwellings on Woodville Terrace.
- 8.10. In the appeal response the applicants indicate their willingness to omit Apartment Block A and B and replace with 2 duplex blocks containing 12 no units in each. The overall density of the site would reduce to 35.8 units per hectare. The ridge height of the units proposed would be the same as the proposed apartment blocks.
- 8.11. While acknowledging that the top floor of Block 2 & 3 are set back, I consider that the removal of the top floor of Block A and B, would reduce the overall height of the block and significantly reduce the overbearing impact of the blocks when viewed from Woodville Terrace. This would result in the loss of 10 units in total. I consider that the reduction in height will not compromise the overall composition of the two apartment blocks. The reduction in the units would result in a density of 39 dwellings per hectare which is just below the development plan range of still within the required Sustainable and Compact Settlements Guideline density range for 35-50 dwellings.
- 8.12. Therefore, if the Bord is minded to granted permission I recommend that the top floor of apartment block A and B be omitted by way of a condition.



### 8.13. Social Infrastructure

- 8.13.1. Third parties have raised the issue of a lack of social infrastructure in the area to facilitate the proposed development. Stating that there is a lack of school spaces, no supermarket and a shortage of GP doctor services.
- 8.13.2. A Social and Community Audit has been submitted with the planning application. This assessment is required under Section 11.160 of the Cork City Development Plan.
- 8.13.3. The Social and Community Audit examines and analyses the availability and capacity of social infrastructure provision in the vicinity of the development site.
- 8.13.4. There are currently two primary schools in Blarney and several other primary schools in close proximity. The Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal on Castle Close Lawn, the secondary school in Blarney has recently moved into an expanded new building which can accommodate 1,200 pupils. In the reply to further information the applicant states that the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal currently has a capacity for an additional 200 students. A study of the primary schools also showed a capacity for an additional 35 students. Table 3.8 of the Development Plan details the Department of Education preliminary projection of requirements for school places in Cork City up to 2031. In Blarney and the Stoneview growth area, 1-2 new or expanded primary schools are required and 1 secondary school. While recognising that additional educational facilities will be required to be delivered in tandem of the development of the Stoneview area I am satisfied that there are adequate educational facilities for the first phase of this development of Ringwood and am satisfied that the proposed development is inline with development plan policies.
- 8.13.5. With regard to childcare the proposed development, after the submission of revised scheme at further information stage, includes a creche which can accommodate 137 childcare space which is more than adequate to serve this phase of the development. The applicant states that the creche will accommodate the needs of both phase 1 and 2 of the residential development. I, therefore, considered that adequate childcare provision will be provided for phase 1.
- 8.13.6. The audit lists health and service and facilities in the Blarney area. The lack of a Primary Health Centre is noted.

- 8.13.7. I note that section 10.255 of The Cork City Development Plan states that Barney has a wide offering of community facilities, including a library, garda station and health centre. It also states that the Council will work with various stakeholders to identify sites for additional community facilities including a Primary Health Centre. I also note that the applicant is proposing a Primary Health Centre on the R617 as part of a Phase 1A. This is not part of the proposed development and planning permission has yet to be granted for this
- 8.13.8. An audit of recreation facilities was included in the Audit, there is a GAA club in Blarney that is open to new membership, and a number of amenity walks, parks and playgrounds. The extension to Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal has provided an additional four outdoor courts and a multipurpose pitch. I note that the 5.6k Blarney River Trail is adjacent to the development site along the River Martin. The Ballincollig Regional Park is located 5km to the southwest of the site.
- 8.13.9. There is a c.10-hectare parcel of land directly to the south of the development site which is zoned for public open space. It is the applicant's stated intention that this land in their ownership, will become a new town park for Blarney as part of the wider development of Ringwood. Having regard to the existing facilities and potential for future recreational facilities I am satisfied that there are adequate recreation facilities to serve this phase 1 development.
- 8.13.10. Having regard to the above, I consider that there is adequate social infrastructure to serve the future occupants of this phase 1 residential development.

#### **8.14. Flooding**

- 8.14.1. A number of third parties have raised concerns relating to flooding in the area. They state that there has been substantial flooding impact on the River Martin and the proposed development and future phases of residential development at Ringwood and at Stoneview will contribute to future flooding of the River Martin.
- 8.14.2. The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment for the proposed development.
- 8.14.3. The River Martin is located immediately to the west of the site and flows from North to South before joining the Shournagh River c.2.1km southwest of the site. The

Shournagh River is a tributary of the River Lee which enters the sea at Cork Harbour.

- 8.14.4. A number of flooding events were recorded in the area, including one from the River Martin at Shamrock Terrace close to the R617. There is no record of a flooding event at the appeal site.
- 8.14.5. The subject site is within flood Risk C. The River Martin, directly to the west of the site, is at a level considerably lower than of the site and Station Road. As part of the Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. The river Martin and Blarney River were modelled and the site is not at risk of flooding during the 1% or 0.1% AEP fluvial event save for a section of the site at its eastern edge where the red line has extended to the Sheen Upper Watercourse to allow for surface water infrastructure. Flooding of the adjoining lands is limited to the local drains adjacent to the channel which are over 160m south of the site. The impact of a 66% blockage of the culvert was assessed for the 1% AEP event and it indicated the level of spill increases of 1m around the culvert inlet where water pools in the low-lying lands.
- 8.14.6. The eastern section of the culvert is located within the Nov 23 Refined Corridor for the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Project. The Sheen Upper Watercourse is approximately 0.6km from the current road design, which at this location, is upgrading the existing road in its current location. I note the submission on the planning file from TII have concerns regards the location of the Proposed Storm Water Eastern Outfall adjacent to the N20. As it is proposed is use flow control measures to provide a post development runoff rate to match greenfield runoff rates, I am satisfied that the proposed outfall will not have a significant impact on the surface water arrangement of the N20 road. I recommend that if the Board is minded to grant permission a condition be attached requiring agreement with the planning authority and TII on the details of the storm water eastern outfall.
- 8.14.7. The surface water strategy of the site includes the provision of Suds intervention measures and attenuation tanks. The SuDS strategy for the development involves measures including swales, tree-pits and basins. These elements provide conveyance, interception storage and attenuation storage for rainwater runoff. The surface water generated on site will be attenuated at the tank locations shown and westwards flows will tie into the existing storm sewer located on Station Road and

eastern flows will enter into the existing Sheen Upper Watercourse mentioned above.

- 8.14.8. Having regard to the location of the site in flood risk c area and the proposed strategy for surface water drainage I do not consider that the proposed development will result in significant flooding of the area or result in undue pressure on the River Martin.

## **8.15. Landscaping**

- 8.15.1. Third Parties have raised issues relating to the proposed landscaping scheme and the potential inadequacy of the proposed open space.
- 8.15.2. I note that the proposed scheme provides a variety of usable public open spaces which combined, make up 16% of the developable area. The amount of open space provided complies with the Public Open Space Provision as per Section 11.112 of the Cork City Development Plan.
- 8.15.3. The application included a detailed Landscape Masterplan and Design Rationale for the site showing proposals for all open spaces area, recreation and play areas. The proposed development also provides open space in front of the Ring Wood which creates linkages and enhances its setting. Having assessed the Masterplan and Design Rationale I am satisfied that the landscape provides adequate quantity and quality of usable open and recreational spaces to serve the proposed development.
- 8.15.4. One of the issues raised relates to the lack of public lighting of the landscaped areas. I note that a lighting scheme has been submitted with the application. I recommend that if permission is to be granted that a condition be attached requiring agreement of a details of a public lighting scheme.

## **8.16. Traffic**

### Construction Traffic

- 8.16.1. The appellants have raised concern regarding the use of Station Road for construction vehicles and suggest using an access point off the R617 for

construction traffic. This issue has been dealt with in the assessment of the EIAR in Section 9 of this report.

8.16.2. Mitigation measure to reduce the impact of construction traffic on Station Road area included in the outline Construction Management Plan (CTPM). These include restricting hours of construction, HGV deliveries to be scheduled outside peak periods on road network, wheel washing facilities to be provided on site & road sweeper employed and warning signs placed on full length of Station Road and at site entrance

8.16.3. Having regard to the mitigation measures in CTPM and the assessment of the impact of construction traffic on the area in both the EIAR and the Transport Assessment I am satisfied that the impact of the construction of the proposed development will not be seriously injurious to the amenity of the area. I therefore consider the creation of a temporary road which be approximately 850m long with an access off the R617 is not required or appropriate. I recommend that if the Board is minded to grant permission that a condition be attached requiring the agreement of a revised, up to date and detailed CTPM.

*Operational Traffic; Station Road/R617 Junction*

8.16.4. The application is for a proposed residential development with one entrance from Station Road. A number of the appellants state that the entrance to development of this site should be from the R617 and also from the Killard Road junction. I note that the EIAR and the Transport Assessment have assessed the cumulative impact with the future phases of development which includes a link road to the lands of phases 1 and 2 and lands further to the north with a junction on the R617. No details of this access or junction are included in this application and an application for Phase 1A and 2 lands has not been lodged with the Planning Authority. I will therefore restrict by assessment to the impact the proposed development will have on Station Road and its junction with the R617.

8.16.5. The appellants have raised a number of concerns relating to the capacity of Station Road and its junction with the R617 to accommodate the traffic arising from the proposed development.

8.16.6. The Transport Assessment predicted that the proposed development will generate in the region of 131 departing and 36 arriving trips in the AM peak hour, and 57

departing and 105 arriving vehicles trips in the PM peak hour. Having studied the Transportation Assessment I consider that these figures to be a reasonable assessment of the predicted traffic generated from the proposed development.

8.16.7. The assessment studied the impact of the predicted increase in traffic from the proposed development on the five junctions in the area, including the Station Road/R617 Junction. The assessment predicted that the impact of the proposed development traffic in the peak hours is less than 10% at all of the road junctions assessed. The predicted impact for all of the junctions was over 5%.

8.16.8. TII's 'Traffic and Transportation Guidelines' states that *'In general, the study area should include all road links and associated junctions where traffic to and from the development may be expected to exceed 10% of the existing traffic movements, or 5% in congested or other sensitive locations, including junctions with national roads.'*

8.16.9. In order to provide a comprehensive assessment, junction capacity modelling was undertaken of the five junctions.

8.16.10. The results of the R617/Station Road Junction show that with the addition of traffic from the development, the Station Road arm of the junction is predicted to operate over capacity in 2026 with a maximum Ratio Flow Capacity (RFC) of 1.00. The Mean Maximum Queue (MMQ) is 20.7 Passenger Car Unit (PCU) or around 119m. Due to assumed background traffic growth, the results predicted that the RFC rises to 1.05 in 2031, with an MMQ of 32.3pcu or 186m.

8.16.11. With regard to the Station Road/R617 junction the Assessment concludes that *'whilst the junction exceeds capacity in the peak, this level of predicted, short-lived, congestion is not unusual in an urban setting during the peak hour, and is considered...to be accessible, particularly when the robust approach to trip generation has been adopted and taken into account. In addition, the assumption of continued traffic growth should be considered against national and regional targets to reduce the number of vehicles travelled annually.'*

8.16.12. I note that the traffic growth rates have been calculated using trip-end totals from the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy which were considered to be more applicable rather than 'Project Appraisal Guidelines for National Roads Unit 5.3- Travel Demand Projections'

- 8.16.13. The Planning Authorities Strategic Transportation Planning report dated the 31st July 2024 notes that there will be capacity issues with both the Station Road/R617 Junction and the R617/Lanes Cross Junction. However, it notes that the proposed Phase 2 lands at Ringwood includes additional transportation infrastructure including a new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access corridor which will reduce traffic volumes on Station Road. It is stated in the report that 'that the proposed development will not cause unacceptable operational impacts in the short term and any future traffic impacts on the local and national road network will be mitigated through the delivery of the additional planned transport infrastructure associated with the development of the remaining zoned lands at Ringwood (phase 2) along with the transportation infrastructure planned for the Blarney Area as presented in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS). The CMATS proposed a new rail station in Blarney, Busconnects and a cycle network for Blarney.
- 8.16.14. In the response to the transport matter raised at appeal Systra state that while the junction exceed capacity in the AM peak hour, this will be short lived and in addition the proposed development traffic has a negligible impact on the operation of R617.
- 8.16.15. Like the Strategic Transportation Planning report, Systra highlight the creation of an alternative route between Station Road and the R617, as proposed in Phase 1A & 2, will reduce the traffic pressure on Station Road. It is recognised that any future phases of the development will have to address any infrastructural deficits or improvement that are necessary to facilitate the development.
- 8.16.16. Given that the addition of the development traffic will have a negligible impact on the operation of the R617, the impact on the Station Road will be localised and will result in a potential queuing distance of under 120m, the future infrastructural and active travel measure proposed (sharded cycle/pedestrian lane), which has not been included in the traffic modelling, and considering the potential for a new residential community as presented in this application, I am satisfied that this phase of the development of the lands at Ringwood would not have a significant negative long term impact on the traffic on the area and in this regard is acceptable.

#### Road Safety

8.16.17. The appellants have raised concerns about the safety of the proposed development entrance onto Station Road and its impact on existing residents on Station Road. The lack of adequate sightlines to the north of the junction has been raised as a concern. In Section 4.4.5 of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street states that the visibility splays are applied to priority junctions where drivers must use their own judgements as to when it is safe to enter the junction. The proposed junction on Station Road is to be a signalised junction and therefore a visibility splay is not required.

8.16.18. A Road Safety Audit Stage 1 and 2 has been prepared for the proposed development. This includes a number of measures to be implemented for the signalised junction including a review of the signal head locations and the consideration of employing a supplementary second traffic signal head on the western footpath to serve southbound traffic and the use of a cranked pole. The installation of a raised junction treatment at the signalised junction to slow vehicle speeds is also recommended.

8.16.19. I consider that with the proposed Safety Audit recommendations, that traffic speed along Station Road will be significantly reduced at this location without negative impact on residents entering or existing their property on Station Road. If the Board is minded to grant permission a condition ensuring the findings of the Road Safety Audit are incorporated into the development and the carrying out of a Stage 3 and 4 Road Safety Audit is recommended.

Proposed cycle/pedestrian lane.

8.16.20. Concern have been raised in the appeal regarding the design and provision of the proposed cycle/pedestrian lane on Station Road. I consider that the provision of the active travel infrastructure along Station Road is to be welcomed. The proposed new cycle infrastructure is part of an Urban Primary Cycling route as designated in the Cycle Connects: Ireland's Cycle Network (NTA) and will complement the proposals in the Blarney Village Pedestrian and Cycling Scheme. (Cork City Council) and the proposed cycle network in CMATS.

8.16.21. I note that the shared cycle/pedestrian way narrows to less than 3m on a section of Station Road to the south of the proposed development. While this is not



optimum, this Station Road narrows and the width of the shared surface will be the same as the existing footpath.

8.16.22. The Road Safety Audit made recommendations relating to the shared surface which have been incorporated into the design of the road improvement works.

8.16.23. I considered that the proposed shared cycle/pedestrian is acceptable and reasonable given the existing width and alignment of Station Road. The proposed shared surface will add to the active travel infrastructure of the area and will be of benefit to the residents of the area and the future occupants of the proposed development.

#### Car parking on Woodville Terrace.

8.16.24. Concern has been raised in the appeal relating to the design of the car parking area in front of the dwellings on Woodville Terrace. It is stated that the width of the car parking spaces does not meet the development plan standards. I note that the current Cork City Development Plan does not give dimensions for car parking spaces save for disabled car parking spaces. The replacement parking along the front of Woodville Terrace is 2.1m wide and the width of the road is 5.5m wide. I consider Station Road to be an Arterial Street and the proposed width of 5.5m road width complies with the standards set out in DMURS. Section 4.4.9 On-Street Parking and Loading states that the standard width of a car parking space should be 2.4m.

8.16.25. The applicant states in their appeal response that the proposed parking spaces are in accordance with relevant design standards as set out in Chapter 7 of the Department of Transport published 'Traffic Signs Design Manual'. I note the interim version of Chapter 7 Road Markings (Dec2024) show parallel parking widths of 2.1-2.4m. It would appear from the submitted site survey that the existing car parking in front of Woodville is c.2.1m. Given the width of the existing car parking and the provision of a shared cycling lane on the opposite side of Station Road I consider that the proposed car parking in front of Woodville Terrace is acceptable. I note that the applicant has reserved an area to the rear of Woodville Terrace for future public parking, if required to mitigate against the loss of any public parking spaces on the road.

Impact on N20 and its Upgrade.

- 8.16.26. A point of appeal has referenced the Transport Infrastructure Ireland report on file dated the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024 which states that insufficient data has been submitted on file to demonstrate that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the capacity, safety or operational efficiency of the national road network in the vicinity of the site.
- 8.16.27. Save for a section of the proposed storm water eastern outfall the proposed development is outside the refined November 2023 Corridor for the M20. The design proposal for the M20 includes the development of a new Blarney Junction. The existing Station Road overbridge will be retained. The Transport Assessment assessed the impact on the proposed development on the existing junction Blarney Junction. The threshold analysis found that development's impact would at the N20/R617 roundabout would be around 5% in the AM and PM. The junction modelling results showed that the roundabout is predicted to continue to operate within the capacity with the development in place. I note that these figures were not disputed and having studied the Transportation Assessment I considered them to be reasonable. I therefore consider that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the proposed upgraded M20 Blarney Junction.
- 8.16.28. While accepting that the proposed development will have a negative impact on the junction with Station Road and R617, I consider that the R617 will not be significantly negatively impacted and therefore the effect will be localised. I therefore consider that having regard to the proposed provision of housing in a new quality neighbourhood on balance that this first phase of the proposed development at Ringwood is acceptable in terms of Traffic and Transportation.

**8.17. Infrastructure**

- 8.17.1. Third parties have raised concerns relating to the capacity of wastewater infrastructure in the area.
- 8.17.2. Currently there is no foul water network within the site. There is an existing 225mm diameter public foul sewer in Station Road which discharges into the Wastewater Pumping Station in Blarney and on to the Blarney Wastewater Treatment Plant. The

Uisce Eireann Waster Water Capacity Register, published December 2024, indicates that there is available capacity in the Blarney Wastewater Treatment Plant.

- 8.17.3. Concern has been raised from an observer relating to capacity issues in the foul sewer network in the vicinity of the site. No evidence of the existing sewer network on Station Road being under strain has been submitted.
- 8.17.4. A report has been received on the planning file from Uisce Eireann indicating that the applicant has engaged with Uisce Eireann who have issued a Confirmation of Feasibility advising that both water and wastewater connections are feasible.
- 8.17.5. Having regard to the comments received from Uisce Eireann, I am satisfied that currently there is adequate capacity and wastewater infrastructure for the proposed development. I recommend that if the Board is minded to grant permission that a condition be attached ensuring that developer enter into a Connection Agreements with Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) to provide for a service connections to the public water supply and/or wastewater collection network.

## **9.0 Environmental Impact Assessment**

### **9.1. Statutory Provisions**

- 9.1.1. Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 10. Infrastructure projects (b) (i), requires EIA for the construction of more than 500 dwelling units and Class 10 (b) (iv), requires EIA for 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.

- 9.1.2. The proposed development of 246no. residential units on a site c.8.23 and does not come within the scope of the definition of infrastructure projects under Class 10(b)(i) or Class 10(b)(iv) of Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Regulations.
- 9.1.3. The applicant has stated that the proposed development will be Phase 1 of a three-part development of a larger land parcel. The Phase 1A is located 400m to the south of the site and will consist of a proposed new Primary Care Centre and 9no. residential units. Phase 2 abuts the northern boundary of the appeal site and includes the remainder of the two fields. It is the applicant's intention to apply for planning permission for 307no residential units, including sheltered housing at a future date. A new link road through the eastern part of the site to facilitate connectivity between the R617 and zoned lands to the north of the N20 at Stoneview is also proposed to be part of future phases. It is stated that the link road will eventually include a bridge over the N20 to facilitate connectivity from Blarney Town Centre and the surrounding hinterland, including Tower, to the new rail station at Stoneview.
- 9.1.4. The application site area for future Phase 2 will be c.14.08ha. Combined with the subject site and the site of Phase 1A, the total site area is c.24.64ha.
- 9.1.5. In accordance with pre-planning advice received from Cork City Council, as the three phases are combined would involve more than 500 houses and with a site area greater than 10 hectares in a built-up area, it was suggested that the applicant prepare an EIAR for this phase of the development.

## **9.2. EIA Structure**

- 9.2.1. This section of the report comprises the environmental impact assessment of the proposed development in accordance with Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the associated Regulations, which incorporate the European directives on environmental impact assessment (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). Section 171 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) defines EIA as:
- a) consisting of the preparation of an EIAR by the applicant, the carrying out of consultations, the examination of the EIAR and relevant supplementary

information by the Board, the reasoned conclusions of the Board and the integration of the reasoned conclusion into the decision of the Board, and

- b) includes an examination, analysis and evaluation, by the Board, that identifies, describes and assesses the likely direct and indirect significant effects of the proposed development on defined environmental parameters and the interaction of these factors, and which includes significant effects arising from the vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and/or disasters.

9.2.2. Article 94 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 and associated Schedule 6 set out requirements on the contents of an EIAR.

9.2.3. This EIA section of the report is therefore divided into two sections. The first section assesses compliance with the requirements of Article 94 and Schedule 6 of the Regulations. The second section provides an examination, analysis and evaluation of the development and an assessment of the likely direct and indirect significant effects of it on the following defined environmental parameters, having regard to the EIAR and relevant supplementary information:

- population and human health,
- biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive,
- land, soil, water, air and climate,
- material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape,
- the interaction between the above factors, and
- the vulnerability of the proposed development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters.

9.2.4. An Addendum Statement to the original EIA dated the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024 was submitted to Cork City Council with Further Information.

9.2.5. The assessment provides a reasoned conclusion and allows for integration of the reasoned conclusions into the Boards decision, should they agree with the recommendation made.

### **9.3. Issues Raised in Respect of EIA**

9.3.1. Issues raised in respect of EIA by parties to the appeal relate to:

- population and human health, traffic and transport, climate and the landscape.

9.4. **Compliance with the Requirements of Article 94 and Schedule 6 of the Regulations 2001**

9.4.1. Compliance with the requirements of Article 94 and Schedule 6 of the Regulations is assessed below.

9.4.2. Table 9.1

Article 94 (a) Information to be contained in an EIAR (Schedule 6, paragraph 1)
A description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the proposed development (including the additional information referred to under section 94(b).
A description of the proposed development is contained in Volume 2 Chapter 4 of the EIAR including details on the location, site, design and size of the development and arrangements for access. Chapter 5 contains a construction strategy which includes an identification of the probable activities necessary to prepare the site and execute the enabling works for the construction of the proposed development and a presentation of indicative methodologies for executing construction activities. It is noted that the proposal does not involve demolition works.
A description of the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed development (including the additional information referred to under section 94(b).
An assessment of the likely significant direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the development is carried out for each of the technical chapters of the EIAR. I am satisfied that the assessment of significant effects is comprehensive and robust and enables decision making.
A description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment of the development (including the additional information referred to under section 94(b).

The EIAR includes designed in mitigation measures and measures to address potential adverse effects identified in technical studies. These, and arrangements for monitoring, are summarised in Chapter 21 (Summary of Mitigation Measures, Monitoring & Residual Effects). Mitigation measures comprise standard good practices and site-specific measures and are largely capable of offsetting significant adverse effects identified in the EIAR.

A description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the person or persons who prepared the EIAR, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the proposed development on the environment (including the additional information referred to under section 94(b).

A description of the alternatives considered is contained in Chapter 3 of the EIAR. The alternatives considered include, 'do nothing', alternative site selection, alternative layout, designs and alternative infrastructural proposals. The main reasons for opting for the current proposal were based on minimising environmental effects within the sensitivities of the area and complying with Cork City Development Plan. I am satisfied, therefore, that the applicant has studied reasonable alternatives in assessing the proposed development and has outlined the main reasons for opting for the current proposal before the Board and in doing so the applicant has taken into account the potential impacts on the environment.

Article 94(b) Additional information, relevant to the specific characteristics of the development and to the environmental features likely to be affected (Schedule 6, Paragraph 2).

A description of the baseline environment and likely evolution in the absence of the development.

A description of the baseline environment is included in each technical chapter of the EIAR and an assessment of the likely evolution of it, in the absence of the development.

A description of the forecasting methods or evidence used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment, including details of difficulties (for

example technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information, and the main uncertainties involved

The methodology employed in carrying out the EIA, including the forecasting methods is set out, in each of the individual chapters assessing the environmental effects.

The applicant has indicated in the different chapters, where difficulties have been encountered (technical or otherwise) in compiling the information to carry out EIA. I comment on these, where necessary in the technical assessment below and for the reasons stated, I am satisfied that forecasting methods are adequate in respect of likely effects on biodiversity etc..

A description of the expected significant adverse effects on the environment of the proposed development deriving from its vulnerability to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to it.

This issue is specifically dealt with in the in Chapter 19 of the EIAR. Specific risks have been identified in relation to the project's vulnerability of the project to severe weather conditions or incident at an IE licenced site. These risks are reasonable and are assessed in my report.

Article 94 (c) A summary of the information in non-technical language.

This information has been submitted as a separate standalone document (Volume I – Non Technical Summary). I have read this document, and I am satisfied that the document is concise and comprehensive and is written in a language that is easily understood by a lay member of the public.

Article 94 (d) Sources used for the description and the assessments used in the report

The sources and references used to inform the description, and the assessment of the potential environmental impact are set out at the end of each chapter. I consider the sources relied upon are generally appropriate and sufficient.

Article 94 (e) A list of the experts who contributed to the preparation of the report

A list of the various experts who contributed to the report are set out in in Volume 2 Chapter 1, where details of the individual's expertise, qualifications which



demonstrates the competence of the person in preparation of the individual chapters within the EIAR. I am satisfied that the EIAR has been prepared by experts with competency in the technical subject areas.

### Consultations

9.4.3. Prescribed bodies as per Article 28 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended, were contacted to seek initial comments to inform the preparation of the EIAR. Formal responses were received from eight of the consultees. The main comments are summarised in the follow table:

9.4.4. Table 9.2

<b>Prescribed Body</b>	<b>Summary of Comment</b>
<b>Geological Survey of Ireland</b>	Recommend use of Geological Survey of Irelands datasets for the EIAR.
<b>Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)</b>	Sufficient capacity in the public infrastructure to prevent overloading resulting in pollution of watercourses.  Request no interference with, bridging, draining or culverting of any watercourse without IFI agreement.  Request EIA to ensure that there can be no potential for a contravention of the Fisheries Act as a result of the development.
<b>HSE, Environmental Health</b>	Gives guidance on the information to be contained in the EIAR.  Open space should be designed to promote health and well-being of residents.  Prest control measures required during construction.
<b>Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine</b>	No comments

<b>Minister of Transport</b>	Observations relating to EV chargers, mobility hubs
<b>Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage</b>	A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment should include the impact of the proposed development on the internationally renowned tourist attraction of Blarney Castle and its attendant grounds.
<b>Transport Infrastructure Ireland</b>	Gives best practice guidance.
<b>Uisce Eireann</b>	Details the aspect of Water service which should be considered in the scope of the EIA where relevant.

- 9.4.5. The application has been submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) in respect of public notices. Submissions have been received from statutory bodies and third parties and are considered in this report, in advance of decision making.
- 9.4.6. I am satisfied, therefore, that appropriate consultations have been carried out and that third parties have had the opportunity to comment on the proposed development advance of decision making.

#### Compliance

- 9.4.7. Having regard to the foregoing, I am satisfied that the information contained in the EIAR, and supplementary information provided by the developer is sufficient to comply with article 94 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001. Matters of detail are considered in my assessment of likely significant effects, below.

### **9.5. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects**

- 9.5.1. This section of the report sets out an assessment of the likely environmental effects of the proposed development under the following headings, as set out Section 171A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended:

- Population and human health.
- Biodiversity.
- Land, soil, water, air and climate.
- Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape.
- The vulnerability of the proposed development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters.
- The interaction between these factors.

9.5.2. In accordance with section 171A of the Act, which defines EIA, this assessment includes an examination, analysis and evaluation of the application documents, including the EIAR and submissions received and identifies, describes and assesses the likely direct and indirect significant effects (including cumulative effects) of the development on these environmental parameters and the interaction of these. Each topic section is therefore structured around the following headings:

- Issues raised in the appeal/application.
- Examination of the EIAR.
- Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and indirect effects.
- Conclusion: Direct and indirect effects.

## 9.6. **Environmental Topic: Population and Human Health**

### **Population and Human Health**

#### 9.6.1. **Issues Raised**

Issues were raised during the planning application and appeal in respect of adequacy of Population and Human Health section of the EIAR, impacts on of the proposed development on the Blarney Settlement, lack of social infrastructure and the impact of the proposed apartments on the residential amenity of the properties adjoining the site.

#### **Examination of the EIAR**

#### 9.6.2. **Context**

Chapter 17 of the EIAR deals with Population and Human Health. The Cork City Childcare- Childcare Needs Assessment Blarney Tower Area is included in Appendix 17.1. A Social and Community Audit has been included with the application. The

assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines. The chapter considers demographics, economic activity, tourism and recreation, community and amenities. Potential effect on population and human health arising from: traffic and transportation, air quality and climate, noise and vibration, landscape and visual, material assets and the risk of major accidents and/or disasters are dealt with in the specific chapters in the EIAR. Methodology includes site walkovers to identify and characterise neighbouring land uses. Desk top studies of O.S. Maps, aerial photography, information on employment, education, health, tourism, amenity and community were carried out. The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines. No limitations are identified and are not evident in the assessment.

#### 9.6.3. **Baseline**

The site of the proposed development is located within the Cork City Council Administrative area. The National Planning Framework identifies Cork as being located within the Southern Region and sets out a target population for the city.

The site is in the settlement of Blarney and is mainly zoned for new residential development. A small section of the site is zoned for open space.

Blarney's close proximity to both Cork City and Blackpool is significant with regard to social and community infrastructure.

The Census 2022 figures state that the population of Blarney town was 2,779 people in 2022 with an average household size of 2.75.

There are 2 no. existing primary schools and 1 no. recently expanded secondary school within the catchment area. In addition, there are several other primary schools and post primary schools in vicinity in particular in Cloghroe, Ballincollig and the north-west of Cork City. The Department of Education Preliminary Assessment of Additional Education Capacity proposes that Blarney requires an additional 1-2 new or expanded Primary Schools and 1 new or expanded secondary schools. There are 12 existing third level education facilities in vicinity of the site in Cork City. There is a deficit in childcare spaces in the catchment area.

The catchment area appears to be underserved in relation to primary health care facilities. The proposed Phase 1A of the development includes a primary care centre

at the southern side of Ringwood. A planning application has yet to be lodged for this phase.

A desk top survey concluded that the area is well catered for in terms of open space and recreational outdoor spaces and social and community facilities.

While there is a shortfall of Arts and Cultural Facilities in the immediate area, Cork City is well served with arts, cultural and musical facilities. The area is well served with centres of worship.

#### 9.6.4. Potential Effects

Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.3 below.

Table 9.3: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Do Nothing	If the proposed development is not realised the site would remain in agricultural use. The site would therefore provide additional dwelling units to the current under supply of housing in the Blarney area.
Construction	<p>Land Use: the provision of housing, maintenance of a wayleave and no severance of land, loss of rights of way or amenities will have a permanent positive effect that will achieve planning objectives.</p> <p>Human Health: Construction site posed potential risks on human health. These are dealt with in this EIAR under the other chapters including air, traffic and noise.</p> <p>Population and Economic Activity: Construction phase will provide a boost for the local construction sector with additional employment generation and capital spend. Revenue generated will have an associated benefit with additional expenditure on local goods and services. Predicted effect will be positive significant and short-term.</p>

	<p>Local Amenities: Predicted effects to local amenities relating to landscape and visual, traffic, noise and air quality are dealt with the other chapters of the EIAR.</p> <p>The effect of the works to the public road are predicted to be neutral, significant and temporary.</p>
Operation	<p>Land Use: The provision of 246 no. residential units would realise the objectives of urban consolidation and provide needed housing units with amenity for future occupants.</p> <p>Human Health: Compliance with Part M regulation will result in the development being readily accessible to all. Energy efficient measure will provide for healthier living standards.</p> <p>Effects predicted to be local significant, positive and permanent.</p> <p>The proposed development will meet and exceed BRE light recommendation with no impact on existing residential uses in the vicinity.</p> <p>The proposed development prioritises pedestrians and cycling which promotes active movement for future occupants.</p> <p>The predicted effects of the proposed open spaces and adjacency to the Ring Wood are positive and significant.</p> <p>Population and Economic Activity: Additional employment from the creche.</p> <p>Economic effects will be permanent, slight and positive.</p> <p>The predicted population increase as a result of the development is approximately 677 which will support the ongoing and future enhance provision of an efficient public transport system.</p> <p>Local Amenities and Services:</p>

	<p>The provision of amenity facilities within the development will be of benefit to future residents and existing residents of the area.</p> <p>The provision of a proposed on-site creche will have the capacity to accommodate the childcare demand resulting from the proposed development.</p>
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	<p>Childcare: There is adequate childcare provision in the proposed creche to cater for future phases at Ring Wood.</p> <p>Education: Combined phases at Ring Wood would result in a total of 191 children of primary school age and 83 children of post primary school age. Development of additional lands such as that at Monachapa will result in additional school demand. The recent extension to Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal will accommodate the demand. Predicted cumulative effect will not be significant and neutral.</p> <p>Health: With the provision of a proposed Primary Care Centre in phase 1A the predicted cumulative effect is significant and positive.</p> <p>Open Space: Additional population will give rise to the need for an additional public park. 10ha south of Ring Wood is zoned for open space, if a new town park is provided the predicted cumulative effect is considered significant and positive.</p> <p>Social and Community Facilities: With the potential for new social/community use provided as part of future development at Ring Wood or Stoneview, the cumulative effect is not significant and positive.</p> <p>Art and Culture: Additional population in Blarney will make the feasibility of providing art and cultural facilities more viable.</p>

	<p>Faith and Worship: The cumulative effect of the increase to the population of Blarney is predicted to be slight and neutral.</p> <p>N/M20 Scheme: Due to improved connectivity, the cumulative effect of the proposed development with the N/M20 scheme will be significant and positive</p>
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#### 9.6.5. **Mitigation**

Mitigation measures are set out in section 17.5 of the EIAR. Mitigation measure includes those in the CEMP and the formulation of a Preliminary Health and Safety Plan.

The proposed development has been designed to avoid negative impacts on population and human health. These include:

- Provision of amenity facilities and facilities for walking and cycling.
- Landscaping to mitigate against issues arising from microclimate conditions.
- A comprehensive foul and surface water management system.
- Energy efficient measures.
- High quality finishes and materials.

#### 9.6.6. **Residual Effects**

It is envisaged that the proposed development will have a predicted positive overall economic and social effect for the local community and the wider Cork City area.

#### 9.6.7. **Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 17 of the EIAR and all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of population and human health. I have inspected the application site and the surrounding area. In addition, I have had regard to the policy outlined in the current development plan. It is noted that there are numerous inter-related environmental topics described in detail throughout the EIAR document which are of relevance to human health. During the construction and operational phases, noise, traffic, air, biodiversity, landscape and visual will be the key environmental factors that will have an impact on population



and human health and each topic will be addressed in further detail in my assessment of the individual chapters of the EIAR.

As noted, concerns have been raised within a public submission regarding the potential impact of the proposed development, especially the apartment blocks, in terms of overshadowing and loss of daylight on the residential properties. I have addressed these matters in detail in Section 8 of this report and I am satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable subject to compliance with appropriate conditions.

I note that with regard to social infrastructure, the EIAR relies on facilities, such as the primary care centre being provided in future phases. The assessment of the future phases will be subject to separate planning application and an EIAR. The effects of the proposed development on the Human Health with regard to adequate social infrastructure can be assessed at that stage.

#### **9.6.8. Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information contained in Chapter 17, it is considered that by virtue scale of the development and the capacity of Blarney Village there is no potential for significant environmental effects on population and human health.

### **Noise and Vibration**

#### **9.7. Issues Raised**

Issues were raised in the course of the planning application relating to increased noise level from residential traffic and construction traffic and works.

#### **Examination of the EIAR**

##### **9.7.1. Context**

Chapter 10 of the EIAR deals with Noise and Vibration. Appendix 10.1 contains Noise Plates and Charts and Appendix 10.2 a Pro Pg Stage 2 Acoustic Assessment. The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best

practice guidelines. A full acoustic assessment based on a Stage 2 'Acoustic Design Process' of the 2017 Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise was conducted. A construction noise assessment was conducted following the British Standard 'Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites'. No limitations are identified and are not evident in the assessment.

### 9.7.2. **Baseline**

To assess the potential acoustics impacts during construction and operational stages the Noise Sensitive Receptors (NSR) were selected. These are residential dwellings located within close proximity of the site. Chapter 10 includes strategic noise mapping of the existing baseline noise environment showing day-evening night levels ( $L_{den}$ ) and night levels ( $L_{night}$ ). An Ambient Acoustic Environment Survey was also carried out. The local ambient acoustic environment was influenced by traffic noise from the N20 and surrounding road network, and noise from overall plans, bird song and bird calls. Higher levels of acoustic sound were found with proximity to the N20 Road. The monitoring locations recorded  $L_{Aeq,T}$  values of 47dB to 51dB for daytime and 36dB to 44dB for nighttime period. It was concluded that the ambient sound levels surrounding the site are typical for an urbanising environment in proximity to a major road. (N20).

### 9.7.3. **Potential Effects**

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on the noise environment. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.4 below.

Table 9.4: Summary of Potential Effects

<b>Project Phase</b>	<b>Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects</b>
Do Nothing	
Construction	At closest NSRs, construction sound levels at or above a $L_{Aeq}$ of 65dB. The predicted effect will be negative, significant and temporary.
Operation	Effect of sound levels at operational phase due to increase traffic level are predicted to be not significant and permanent.

	<p>Effects of sound levels at operational stage due to domestic heat pumps are predicted to be negative, not significant and permanent especially at night.</p> <p>Predicted effects of sound levels from ESB substation predicted to be negligible.</p>
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	<p>The cumulative effects with future Phase 1A and Phase 2 could result in a doubling of traffic and the associated change in place could be 3dB which will be noticed at the nearest NSR, a detail assessment will be required at time of full design and planning assessment of future phases.</p>

#### 9.7.4. Mitigation

Mitigation measures are set out in section 10.6 of the EIAR. These include mitigation measures for effect of predicted construction noise including:

- Acoustic hoarding on the western boundary of the site.
- Use of acoustic enclosure for high noise impact activities, such as breaking,
- Turning off/powering down plant when not in use.
- Turning of HGVs when not in use.
- Reduction in drop heights of incoming materials.
- Appointing project liaison officer to communicate with locals regarding noise works, their duration and organising construction noise monitoring.
- Strict controls on construction hours to prevent noise works occurring early morning or into the evening period.
- Inclusion of response procedure within the CEMP to noise complaints and noise breaches.

Mitigation measures for effect of predicted operation noise includes:

- Sound pressure for the specified heat pumps will be set at a maximum of a  $L_{Aeq T}$ , of 30dBA at 10m.

#### 9.7.5. **Residual Effects**

The residual noise effects based on the proposed emissions, the mitigation measures and practices within the context of the existing ambient environment is predicted to be negligible, negative and local during the operational phase.

#### 9.7.6. **Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 10 of the EIAR, all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of noise. I am satisfied that the applicant's understanding of the baseline environment, by way of desk and site surveys, is comprehensive and that the key impacts in respect of likely effects due to increased noise, as a consequence of the development have been identified. Parties to the appeal/application have raised a number of issues relating to the construction noise and operational traffic noise.

I am satisfied that with the proposed mitigation measures that the effect of the construction noise and traffic will not be significant to the residential properties in close proximity to development site.

Having regard to the noise assessments contained in Chapter 10, I am also satisfied that the effects from and increase in traffic from the proposed development will not be significant.

Subject to the proposed noise level restriction on the residential heat pumps I am satisfied that the effect of the proposed development on the surrounding properties will not be significant during the operational stage.

#### 9.7.7. **Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information contained in Chapter 10, it is considered that by the residential nature of the development and distance from noise sensitive receptors, the predicted noise levels and subject to the proposed mitigation measures, there is no potential for significant environmental effects on noise in the area.

#### 9.8. **Environmental Topic: Biodiversity**

## **9.9. Issues Raised**

The potential negative impact on the natural environment of the Ring Wood from the proposed development was raised in observations submitted with the original planning application.

### **Examination of the EIAR**

#### **9.9.1. Context**

Chapter 11 of the EIAR deals with Biodiversity. A Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted with the planning application. The Addendum Statement to the EIAR did not alter the assessment and conclusions made in Chapter 11 of the submitted EIAR. A Q-Sample species composition and Physicochemical water quality results are included in Appendix 11.1 and 11.2.

The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines. The assessment methodology includes desk top survey, a field survey, a bat roost and activity survey, survey of the wintering bird community, a survey of the Shean Upper Stream including physiochemical water testing and Q-sampling testing which are carried out at appropriate times of the year.

The chapter highlights that Brown long-eared bats can be difficult to detect as they echolocate at a low-amplitude and foraging bats often make no sounds. The survey design aimed to increase the likelihood of recording this species by the employment of full spectrum monitoring adjacent to the woodland's edges and treelines.

No other limitations are identified and are not evident in the assessment.

Potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites are dealt with in the Appropriate Assessment section of this report.

#### **9.9.2. Baseline**

The baseline/receiving environment is described in Section 11.3 of the EIAR. The site is predominately Improved Agricultural Grassland with, at the time of the survey, arable crops. There are a number of hedgerow and treelines traversing or bounding the site. Bounding the site to the south is Ring Wood, a section of mixed broadleaf woodlands. The Shean Upper Stream is located ca.150m to the east of site and

discharges into the Blarney Bog Proposed Natural Heritage (pNHA). The site is located in the Manin sub catchment. All waterbodies in the vicinity of the site have been assigned Moderate Status under the Water Framework Directive.

The EIAR states that no potential tree bat roosts were recorded within the site of the proposed development. There are no structures within the site. Seven Bat species were recorded during the survey. Bat activity was variable within the site of the proposed development and its environs with a high level of activity recorded within Ring Wood. The most frequently recorded species was common pipistrelle. Five bat species were recorded in the subject site. The EIA states that the site is considered to be of moderate to high suitability for foraging and commuting bats due to the presence of connectivity to other suitable habitats in the wider landscape. The EIA states that the terrestrial mammals survey highlighted no sign of Badger on the site or Otter along the Shean Upper Stream. The bird community recorded on site is of local values with the only the red listed species noted being the Grey Wagtail which was recorded on the Shean Upper Stream outside the proposed development site. A number of non-breeding of Snipe were recorded.

### 9.9.3. Potential Effects

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on Biodiversity. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.5 below.

Table 9.5: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Do Nothing	<p>Assumed that the site would be maintained as agricultural grassland/arable lands with managed hedges and treelines. Some level of scrub expansion is likely around the boundaries of the site.</p> <p>Given the residential zoning of the site the lands are likely to be considered for development in the future.</p>

Construction	<p>Construction will result in the loss of the agricultural grassland and arable lands which are of negligible ecological value and effects are not predicted to be significant.</p> <p>Construction will result in the loss of 85m of hedge. Given the continuing development of Blarney this habitat is considered of being of local importance. The effects are predicted to be significant negative impact due to loss of landscape connectivity.</p> <p>Construction of surface water pipe running eastwards to the Shean Upper Stream.</p> <p>No rare or protected species recorded on site therefore it is predicted that there will be no negative ecological impact thereon due to construction.</p> <p>The community of species using the site is of local importance (low ecological value) therefore significant negative ecological impact to fauna are not predicted.</p> <p>The construction of access roads will result in the loss of some hedgerow for foraging and commuting habitat and the effects will be negative, not significant and temporary.</p> <p>Disturbance to bats due to construction lighting will have a significant negative but temporary effect at the local level on bats in lit areas.</p>
Operation	<p>Increased light levels during operational phase would reduce availability of feeding sites for bats and the effects are predicted to be long-term significant adverse impact at the local scale.</p>
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	<p>None at present. No large-scale residential development permitted or in at application stage in the immediate area.</p> <p>Potential for cumulative impact on bats with the proposed development and the development of Phase 2. Future phases of</p>

	development of these lands will be subject to a separate/future application where cumulative effects can be assessed.
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#### 9.9.4. **Mitigation**

Mitigation measures for effect on Biodiversity are set out in Section 11.5 of the EIAR and in the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP). Measures include the preparation and implementation of an Invasive Alien Plant Species (IAPS) Management Plan. Other notable measures include:

- Additional terrestrial mammal pre construction surveys,
- Limiting the period of tree felling and vegetation clearance.
- If required a derogation licence for the felling of trees if bat roots are discovered.
- Protection of hedgerows/trees adjacent to Ring Wood in order to protect foraging and commuting bat habitats.
- To minimise disturbance to bats construction operations during the hours of darkness will be kept to a minimum.
- Proposed landscaping scheme to provide connectivity to linear woodland habitats in the wider landscape.
- Ongoing management of the landscape specification including the annual management of wildflower communities.
- Lighting design to take into account the presents of bats by creation of dark buffer zones and appropriate luminaire design.
- Selection of planting to attract nocturnal flying insects.
- Installation of bat boxes.
- SUDs measures.

#### 9.9.5. **Residual Effects**

The implementation of the mitigation measures are dealt with in Section 11.8 of the Biodiversity Chapter. This section states that the development will not give rise to any significant negative effects on the biodiversity of the biodiversity or ecology if the



receiving environment and will be aligned with the principle of Biodiversity Net Gain. It states that there will not be any significant negative effects on the conservation status of the bat species as a result of the proposed development.

#### **9.9.6. Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 11 of the EIAR, all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of biodiversity. I am satisfied that the applicant understanding of the baseline environment, by way of desk and site surveys, is comprehensive and that the key impacts in respect of likely effects on biodiversity, as a consequence of the development have been identified. A party to the application has raised the impact of the proposed development on Round Wood in respect of biodiversity.

Given the design of scheme including a landscape buffer adjacent to Ring Wood, which is outside of the application site and given the mitigation measures to reduce impact on bats, I am satisfied that that there is no potential for significant environmental effects on the Ring Wood.

#### **9.9.7. Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the foregoing, it is considered that the main significant direct and indirect effects on Biodiversity after the application of mitigation measures are:

- Loss of foraging and commuting habitat for bats, which will be mitigated in part by lighting design, landscaping design and management and provision of bat boxes.

### **9.10. Land, Soil, Water, Air and Climate.**

#### **9.10.1. Lands, Soils, Geology and Hydrology**

No issues have been raised by any party to the appeal or application in respect of lands, soils geology and hydrology. I have examined Chapter 14 of the EIAR which deals with this topic. I acknowledge that the proposed development will result in the loss of agriculture land. Having regard to the site investigations carried out, the baseline environment and site-specific best practice mitigation measures including those contained in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan which

mitigate potential effects on land and soils including ground water, I am satisfied that there is no potential for any significant direct, indirect or cumulative effects on lands, soils geology and hydrology as a result of the proposed development.

## Water

### 9.10.2. **Issues Raised**

The issue of flooding and the inadequacy of the Flood Risk Assessment was raised in the third-party observations and the appeal. A stand-alone Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application. I note that only a brief overview is provided in this chapter. I have carried out an assessment of the Flood Risk Assessment in the Section 8 of this report.

### **Examination of the EIAR**

### 9.10.3. **Context**

Chapter 15 relates to Water and as stated above a Flood Risk Assessment was submitted with the application. A response to Further Information clarified the detailed specifications of aspects of the proposed water and drainage networks and their operation. The drainage proposals were not materially altered. No changes were made to conclusions of this chapter. The assessment includes the site investigation works including:

- Trial pit excavations.
- In situ soakaway testing.
- All associated sampling.
- Environmental testing.
- Preparation of factual report.

The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines. No limitations are identified and are not evident in the assessment.

### 9.10.4. **Baseline**

The site is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay WFD catchment. There are two rivers in the direct vicinity of the proposed development. The River

Blarney is approximately 670m south of the site flowing from east to west and a small tributary of the River Blarney (Shean Upper Stream) is approximately 130m east of the site and flows into the Blarney River 1km downstream. The Martin River is located west of the site, flowing south towards the Blarney River. These watercourses are part of the same WFD waterbody (MARTIN\_040) and are all at Moderate Status and At Risk. There are no waste EPA licenced activities within the vicinity proposed development.

#### 9.10.5. Potential Effects

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on Water. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.6 below.

Table 9.6: Summary of Potential Effects

<b>Project Phase</b>	<b>Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects</b>
Do Nothing	Section 15.5.3 deal with the 'Do Nothing' Scenario. There would be no resulting impacts on the hydrology of the site as it would remain in agricultural use. The effect would be neutral, not significant and long term.
Construction	Construction activities: risk to watercourses and hydrology for contaminated surface water runoff. Predicted Water quality effects: moderate, negative and short-term Predicated Hydrological Regime effects: moderate, negative and short-term
Operation	Given the use of a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) and tank system and expected discharge rates the predicate effect on surface water is long term, imperceptible and neutral
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	This Phase 1 of development has been designed to incorporate future phases in mind. Future phases will be subject to a separate planning application. The cumulative

	effects of potential Phase 1a and Phase 2 are predicted not to be significant. The future M20 scheme will be subject to full environmental assessment and the cumulative effects are predicted not significant.
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#### 9.10.6. **Mitigation**

Mitigation measures are detailed in section 15.6.1 of the EIAR and details the extensive measures contained in the Outline Construction Environment Management Plan. They include details relating to surface water runoff, potential commercial pollution, silt and suspended solids, changes to runoff and flow pathways. During the operation phase the SuDS measure will help to mitigate against additional surface water runoff and pollution. Regular inspections of the silt traps and hydrocarbon interceptors to be carried out.

#### 9.10.7. **Residual Effects**

With the implementation of mitigation measures including monitoring, post mitigation effects are set out in section 15.7. These provide that there are no significant residual effects on WFD surface waterbodies and the hydrogeological environment.

#### 9.10.8. **Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 15 of the EIAR, all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of water. I am satisfied that the applicant understanding of the baseline environment, by way of desk and site investigation, is comprehensive and that the key impacts in respect of likely effects on water quality and the hydrological environment, as a consequence of the development have been identified. Parties to the appeal/application have raised the issues of flooding. This chapter only provides a brief overview of the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application. I have assessed the Flood Risk of the proposed development and have concluded that there is minimal flooding risk to the site or surrounding area as a result of the development.

#### 9.10.9. **Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information contained in Chapter 15 and the submitted Flood Risk Assessment it is considered that having regard to

the design of the proposed surface water system and the construction mitigation measures that there is no potential for significant environmental effects on water and hydrology.

#### 9.10.10. **Air Quality**

No issues have been raised by any party to the appeal or application in respect of air quality. I have examined Chapter 8 of the EIAR which deals with this topic. Having regard to the construction dust risk assessment, the construction and operational traffic emissions which are predicted to be with TII guidelines, the residential use of the proposed development and the proposed mitigation measures including the preparation of a Dust Management Plan, I am satisfied that there is no potential for any significant direct, indirect or cumulative effects on air quality as a result of the proposed development.

### **Climate**

#### 9.10.11. **Issues Raised**

The issue of increased emissions, flooding and the inadequacy of the Flood Risk Assessment was raised in the third-party observations and the appeal. As stated above I have carried out an assessment of the Flood Risk Assessment in the Section 8 of this report.

### **Examination of the EIAR**

#### 9.10.12. **Context**

Chapter 9 relates to Climate and a GHG Assessment and a Climate Vulnerability Assessment are included in Appendix 9.1 and 9.2. The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines. A Flood Risk Assessment and a Climate Action and Energy Analysis Report has been submitted with the application. The methodology includes an assessment of the sources of GHG emissions from the proposed development. The potential risks of the effects of climate change to the proposed development was assessed using a Climate Change Risk Assessment. Given the size and the nature of the development there are no potential impacts on microclimate due to wind-tunnelling and shading. The principal

air quality pollutants relevant to this assessment are considered to be NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, generally regarded as the three most significant air pollutants released by vehicular combustion processes or subsequently generated by vehicle emissions in the atmosphere through chemical reactions and are generally considered to have the greatest potential to result in human health impacts.

#### 9.10.13. **Baseline**

The baseline climate is described in section 9.3.1 of the EIAR.

The nearest meteorological station to the development site is Cork Airport and the average observed climate data for the site is presented in Table 9.2. Section 9.3.2 of the EIAR set out projections for projected future climate change which includes a projected average seasonal change in temperature ran from 0.9<sup>o</sup> to 1.9<sup>o</sup> with an increase in the duration and intensity of heatwaves expected and projected changes in the frequency of very wet days between 21% and 31% increase.

Climate hazards relevant to the proposed development includes:

- Temperature (Extreme Highs, Extreme Lows, Droughts)
- Flooding (Pluvial, Coastal, Fluvial and Storms) and
- Wildfires.

Table 9.5 details the Sectoral Emissions Ceilings, as per section 6C of the Climate Action Law and Carbon Development Act, which are relative to the proposed development.

#### 9.10.14. **Potential Effects**

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on Climate. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.7 below.

Table 9.7: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Do Nothing	Not examined in EIAR. I note that the site and area would be subject to the effects of future climate change.

Construction	<p>Construction GHG emissions are detailed in Section 9.6.1 of the EIAR, with traffic related emissions 0.002% (first carbon budget) and 0.00%% (second carbon budget) of the Transport Sector. Industry related emissions (embodied carbon) 0.003% (first and second carbon budget) of the industry sector.</p> <p>National Climate Budget related submissions (plant usage and land clearance): 0.002% (first carbon budget) and 0.005% (second carbon budget) of the National Climate Budget. Other related emission (Waste generation): 0.0004% (first carbon budget) and 0.008% (second carbon budget) of the other sector.</p> <p>Construction GHG emissions for this development and future phases are not significant in relation to the relevant sectoral emissions ceiling.</p>
Operation	<p>Operational GHG emission due to increase in transport are listed in Table 9-11 with an estimated contribution of 0.033% to the second carbon budget which is 0.002% higher than without the proposed development. The effects are considered to be not significant.</p> <p>Operational GHG emission due to electricity generation is detailed Table 9.13 with the contribution of the proposed development to the sectoral emission ceiling to be 0.005%.</p> <p>The operation effects due the proposed development are considered to be not significant.</p>
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	<p>An assessment of construction GHG emission associated with the indicative phase 1A, and Phase 2 are detailed in Table 9-14. Contributions of cumulative emissions are 0.01% to transport Sector, 0.01% to Industry Sector, 0.01% National Carbon Budget and 0.0002% to other sector. No significant construction effects are predicted.</p>

	Operational emissions from electrical usage for Phase 1A and Phase 2 would contribute to 0.009% of the emission allocated for the 2027-30 period. The cumulative effects from operational emission are predicted to be not significant.
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#### 9.10.15. **Mitigation**

Section 9.7 details the proposed mitigation measures which follow the mitigation hierarchy.

- Avoid: avoidance of GHG emission by:
  - Use of high-performance insulation, windows and roofing materials reducing the energy required for heating and cooling.
  - Provision of electrical vehicle charging infrastructure.
  - Effective waste management practices to minimise landfill and associated methane emissions.
- Reduce
  - Local Sourcing of construction material from local sources as far as practicable.
  - Reduce idling of onsite plant when not in use.
- Replace.
  - Use of recycled materials and aggregates for road pavements as infill.
  - Site equipment to be reused as far as practicable.
- Offset
  - Facilitate landscaping design that promote tree and shrub growth as far as practicable.

#### 9.10.16. **Residual Effect**

Section 9.11 of the EIAR notes that the effects of the GHG emissions will not be significant in the context of the sectoral emission ceilings. GHGs will be generated as



a result of the Operational Phase of the proposed development, however given the design of the houses and the advancement of renewable energy it I stated that these emissions are not considered to be significant.

#### 9.10.17. **Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 9 of the EIAR and the associated appendices. Overall, I am satisfied that the information submitted in the EIAR adequately demonstrates an understanding of the potential impacts and provides a suitably comprehensive range of mitigation measures to reduce any potential impacts.

It is acknowledged that there is the potential for combustion emissions from onsite machinery and traffic derived pollutants of CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O to be emitted during the construction phase of the proposed development. However, noting the size and duration of the construction phase, the predicted traffic movements and the mitigation measures proposed, I would agree with the applicant that the effect on national GHG emissions will be insignificant, and the proposed development will have no considerable impact on climate. I note that the proposed development promotes active travel through the provision of proposed cycle and pedestrian infrastructure on Station Road. Having regard to the foregoing, I am satisfied that subject development will not give rise to significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on climate subject to compliance with the proposed mitigation measures and suitable conditions.

#### 9.10.18. **Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of the environmental information contained within Chapter 9 and the associated appendix it is considered that due to the residential nature of the development the predicted GHG figures are not significant in the context of the sectoral emissions ceilings, therefore I consider that there is no potential for significant environmental effects on climate.

### 9.11. **Material Assets, Cultural Heritage and the Landscape**

#### **Traffic and Transport**

##### 9.11.1. **Issues Raised**

A number of issues/concerns were raised were raised in the third-party observations and the appeal and can summarised as follows:

- The proposed development will result in residents experiencing large volumes of traffic congestion and delays.
- Difficulty of exiting dwellings on Woodville Terrace.
- Issues of traffic safety, noise levels, debris due to construction traffic using Station Road.
- There is no provision for improvements in the junction of Station Road and the R617.
- The traffic report did not include agricultural machinery.
- The proposed entrance on Station Road should be for pedestrian and cycle access only.
- Residents of Station Road and adjoining estates current face increasing tailbacks each midweek day at rush hours and school drop-off/collection times.
- TII considers that the proposed development would adversely affect the operation and safety of the national road network due lack of information, concern over the proposed storm water eastern outfall adjacent to the N20, potential impact on the future M20 national road scheme.

## **Examination of the EIAR**

### **9.11.2. Context**

Chapter 7 of the EIAR seeks to assess the potential impact of the proposed development in terms of traffic and transport. The chapter provides an assessment of the proposed development on the local road network both during the short-term operational phases and outlines mitigations measures to ensure significant effects are minimised or avoided.

A Transport Assessment (which incorporates and Mobility Management Plan), a Road Safety Audit 1&2, an Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan and a Quality Audit Report, were submitted with the planning application. There were no

changes to the conclusions of the EIAR Traffic and Transport assessment in the EIAR Addendum Statement.

The assessment methodology used has regard to the TII's 'Transport and Traffic Guidelines' and the UK's Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) 'Environmental Impact Assessment of Traffic and Movement' (2023).

No limitations are identified and are not evident in the assessment.

#### 9.11.3. **Baseline**

The baseline environment is described in section 7.3 of the EIAR. The site is located c.1km to the north-east of Blarney village and c. 550m north of the R617. There is currently an entrance to the site from the Station Road.

The existing pedestrian infrastructure includes a continuous footpath along the western side of Station Road from the subject site to R617/Station Road junction. To the north of the site there is a footpath on at least one side of the road between the site and the bridge cross the N20. There is presently a limited amount of cycle infrastructure in the place in the vicinity of the site. These include a 2m wide off-road Clongheenmilcon walk and a 2m wide, off road, shared-use Waterloo Road path.

The closest bus stops to the site are on the R617, close to the junction with Station Road. (approximately 6 mins walking time). An hourly bus service runs between Jacobs Island, Cork City Centre, Blarney and Tower. In the Cork Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (CMATS) proposed a new rail station within the Stoneview area, along with an associated park and ride and an increased train frequency, an expansion of the Cork BusConnects along the R617, extension and improvements of the existing Waterloo Road and Killard Road/ Blarney Bog Greenway cycle routes and further enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes to serve Blarney.

The existing Local Road Network includes the N20 National Road, the R617 Convent Road, a single-carriageway road that runs west, through Blarney town centre, Station Road, a single- carriageway road from the R617 crossing over the N20 and then the Dublin to Cork rail line. The baseline traffic conditions on the road network are detailed in the EIAR Table 7.4: 2023 Base AADT.

#### 9.11.4. **Potential Effects**

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on Traffic and Transport. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.8 below.

Table 9.8: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Do Nothing	The chapter does not deal with the do-nothing scenario, but it is expected that there would be an increase in traffic due to development of additional lands. Proposed public transport investment, including a new train and park and ride facility will offset some of the additional traffic demand.
Construction	Construction Traffic anticipated to be 30 HGV trips to the site (60 two-ways movements) average rate of 6 HGVs per hour. 20 inbound and 20 outbound trips from construction worker. Typically arriving before 8.00 leaving from 16.00 onwards. The biggest impact from construction traffic will be a 1.6% increase in traffic road on Station Road, within this an increase of 38.3% HCV flows. On other roads the increase in HGVs will be less than 10%. Effect is predicted to be moderate, short term and significant.
Operation	<p>Operational Phase: Predicted traffic trips show that at the AM Peak hours, the development is expected to generate a total of 167 two-way vehicle trips. In the PM peak hour, 163 trips are expected to be generated. Predicted impact of development traffic in the peak traffic in the peak hours in less than 10% at all road junctions. The impact on the nearest National Road junction (N20/R617) is predicted to be 5.2%</p> <p>Potential effect of severance of the Station Road between the R617 and Site Access is minor and not significant.</p> <p>Potential effect of driver delay on the Station Road between R617 and Site Access is moderate/minor and not significant.</p>

	<p>Potential effect of pedestrian delay and amenity delay on the Station Road between R617 and Site Access is moderate/minor and not significant.</p> <p>Potential effect on Accidents and Safety on the Station Road between R617 and Site Access is moderate/minor and not significant.</p>
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	<p>In combination with phase 1A and 2 the increased pedestrian delay at Castle Close Lawn is predicted to be long term, and significant as there is no footway on the middle section of the road. (I note that upgrades to the pavements have taken place as part of the recent development of the new school). Effects will be assessed when planning applications, and possible EIAR are lodge for Phase 1A and 2</p>

#### 9.11.5. Mitigation

Traffic impacts during the construction stage will be mitigated through the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). The outline CTMP includes the following measures:

- HGV deliveries will be scheduled outside peak periods on road network.
- Wheel washing facilities will be provided on site & road sweeper employed.
- Warning signs placed on full length of Station Road and at site entrance.

Mitigation Measures for the operation phase includes those in a Mobility Management Plan the aim of which is to minimise the proportion of single occupancy vehicle trips and address the forecast transport impacts of the end-users of the subject site. These include:

- Provision of Active Travel Measure: shared cycle/pedestrian lane
- Appointing a Mobility Manager.

- Measures to encourage walking & cycling including signage and maps.
- Measure to encourage Public Transport use including liaising with local bus operators regarding bus scheduling, routes and school travel.

#### **9.11.6. Residual Effects**

With the CTMP and Mobility Management Plan in place it is predicted that the residual impact of the Phase 1 of the development will be “not significant”.

#### **9.11.7. Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 7 of the EIAR, all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of Traffic and Transport. I am satisfied that the applicant understanding of the baseline environment is comprehensive and that the key impacts in respect of likely effects on Traffic and Transport, as a consequence of the development have been identified. Parties to the appeal/application have raised a number of issues in respect of Traffic and Transport which I address below.

Issues have been raised relating to the capacity of the Station Road and its junction with the R617 to safely accommodate the additional traffic that will result from the proposed development. I am satisfied that the information and trip generation figures detailed in both Chapter 7 and the Transportation Assessment, submitted with the planning application that there is adequate capacity in the road network. The proposed development will result in the junction of Station Road and the R617 operating at over capacity. However, the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the operation of the R617.

The issues relating to potential noise from the construction traffic has been dealt with in the assessment of Chapter 10 – Noise and Vibration.

The details of the improvements to Station Road and the provision of the cycle ways are assessed in the Section 8 of this report.

The submission from TII raised concerns relating to the impact of the proposed development on the N20. The Transport Assessment

#### **9.11.8. Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information it is considered that proposed development will have a positive effect on the area by the provision of active travel measure. The proposed development will have a negative, short-term effect on the operation of the Station Road/R617 junction.

### **Archaeology, Architecture & Cultural Heritage**

#### **9.12. Issues Raised**

No issues are raised by parties to the application in respect of Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage.

#### **Examination of the EIAR**

##### **9.12.1. Context**

Chapter 12 of the EIAR deals with the impact of the proposed development on Archaeology, Architecture & Cultural Heritage. The associated appendices contained in Volume 3 are:

- Archaeological Assessment
- SMR/RMP Sites within the Study Area
- Architecture Sites within the Surrounding Area
- Legislation Protecting the Archaeological Resource
- Legislation Protecting the Architectural Resource
- Impact Assessment and the Cultural Heritage Resource.
- Mitigation Measures and the Cultural Heritage Resource.

The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines. The assessment methodology includes a paper survey, field inspection, archaeological testing and consultation with a number of statutory and voluntary bodies including the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the National Museum of Ireland and Cork City Council, Planning Section.

##### **9.12.2. Baseline**

There are no recorded monuments located within the proposed development, although three recorded monuments are found within 500m of the site. There is one

structure included on the RPS within a 500m of the site. This is the Woollen Mills which is a complex of seven NIAH structures, five of which were used as water mills.

Archaeological Test Trenching was carried out on the site in November 2023. Eleven trenches were excavated but nothing of archaeological significance was identified.

The possible secret burial of a RIC Constable within the Ringwood area is noted as being of potential cultural significance, however it is unclear as to whether the individual who was executed by the IRA in 1920 was buried in Ringwood itself or in its environs.

### 9.12.3. Potential Effects

Table 9.8: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Do Nothing	Not examined in EIAR. I note there would reasonably be expected to be no change in the baseline environment.
Construction	It is predicted that no architectural heritage or specific cultural heritage sites will be affected by the construction.  Potential for the uncovering the burial site of RIC constable during construction.  Potential for uncovering small or isolated features outside the footprint of the test trenches. Potential effects could range from moderation to significant depending on the nature, extent and significance of any remains that may be present.
Operation	It is predicted that there will be no operational impacts on the architectural or cultural heritage resource.
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	Archaeological testing of Phase 2 LRD site identified no features. Proposed link road will cross a tree ring (CO062-249) which is redundant and has been subject to preservation by record.



	No predicted cumulative impacts to the architectural and cultural heritage resource.
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#### 9.12.4. **Mitigation**

Section 12.6 details mitigation measures. All topsoil stripping across the proposed development area will be subject to archaeological monitoring. If features of archaeological significance be identified further mitigation will be required such as preservation by record or in situ. These mitigation measures will require agreement from the National Monuments Service of the DoHLGH. The EIAR states that no mitigation is required with regards to the archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage resource.

If the potential burial site of the RIC constable is identified further mitigation is required with the agreement of National Monuments Service of the DoHLGH.

#### 9.12.5. **Residual Effects**

9.12.6. With the implementation of mitigation measures including monitoring there are no significant residual effects on Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage will arise.

#### 9.12.7. **Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 12 of the EIAR, all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage. I am satisfied that the applicant understanding of the baseline environment, by way of desk and site surveys and archaeological testing, is comprehensive and that the key impacts in respect of likely effects on Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage, as a consequence of the development have been identified. Mitigation measures are proposed to address the impact of identification of the potential burial site of the RIC constable.

#### 9.12.8. **Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information it is considered that by the nature of the development and the absence of protected structures and

recorded monuments and the results of the archaeological testing there is no potential for significant environmental effects on of Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage.

### **Resource and Waste Management**

9.12.9. No issues have been raised by any party to the appeal/application in respect of resource and waste management. I have examined Chapter 16 of the EIAR which deals with resource and waste management. Having regard to the survey work carried out and best practice mitigation measures as specified CEMP, which include the appointment of a Waste Manager, I am satisfied that there is no potential for any significant direct, indirect or cumulative effects on resource and waste management. as a result of the proposed development.

### **Material Assets**

#### **9.13. Issues Raised**

Third parties have raised concerns relating to the inadequate infrastructure, including a public sewer system which has not been upgraded in Blarney to cope with the proposed development.

#### **Examination of the EIAR**

##### **9.13.1. Context**

Chapter 18 of the EIAR seeks to identify and assess impacts associated with the proposed development on the material assets of the area. The assessment is undertaken in accordance with government and industry best practice guidelines including the EPA Guidelines. The assessment involved undertaking a Desk Study, a site walkover and investigations and consultation with Uisce Eireann, Cork City and County Council.

No limitations are identified and are not evident in the assessment.

##### **9.13.2. Baseline**

The baseline environment is described in section 18.3 of the EIAR. The Forrest Family are joint owners of Clockstrike Ltd are multi-generational owners of the site.

The site is in a strategically assessable location benefiting from close proximity to high-frequency public transport services. A new suburban rail service and a high frequency BusConnects service and new segregated cycle routes are planned by the Cork City Council, NTA and Irish Rail. The site is currently zoned for 'Residential Area' Zoning and is deemed underutilized. There is no formal surface water network within the site. There is an existing 225mm diameter Cork City Council storm sewer running for a portion of Station Road. An existing wayleave for a storm sewer runs parallel with Station Road. This storm run outfalls south of the proposed development entrance, out falling into the nearby River Martin. There is no foul water network within the site. There is an existing 225mm diameter public foul sewer in Station Road which discharges into the Wastewater Pumping Station in Blarney and on to the Blarney Wastewater Treatment Plant. Currently the Wasterwater Treatment Plant has capacity. There is a 1500mm diameter uPVC watermain in Station Road. There is extensive ESB Networks infrastructure in the vicinity of the site. The site is served by existing ICT (internet and phone) services from various providers. High-Speed Broadband is available to the site. Postal services are provided by An Post.

### 9.13.3. Potential Effects

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on material assets. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.9 below.

Table 9.9: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Do Nothing	The subject lands will remain undeveloped and there are no predicated impacts on the material assets.
Construction	<p>Surface Water Drainage: effects from construction involving trench excavations will be negative, not significant and temporary.</p> <p>Foul Water Drainage: effects from construction due to upgrading of the existing network will be negative not significant and temporary.</p>

	<p>Potable Water: effects from upgrade of existing water network to facilitate the proposed development will be negative, not significant and temporary. Short term effect predicted to the local public water supply during the construction with temporary shutdowns.</p> <p>Power, Gas and Telecommunication: effects from construction of ducting and chambers, outages and loss of connection predicted to be negative, not significant and temporary.</p> <p>Waste: Predicted effects from waste generated during construction period to be negative, not significant and temporary.</p>
Operation	<p>Surface water: Increased impermeable areas will reduce local discharge and potentially increase surface water runoff. Potential impact would be negative, not significant and permanent.</p> <p>Foul Water Drainage: The predicted effect from the increased quantity of foul water entering the network and Blarney WWTP (available capacity) will be negative, not significant and permanent.</p> <p>Potable Water: Operation phase will increase demand on existing water supply. Predicted effect include increase costs and abstraction volumes from existing source and would be negative, not significant and permanent.</p> <p>Power, Gas and Telecommunications: predicated effects from proposed development would include increased demand on the existing network and would be negative, not significant and permanent.</p> <p>Waste: Operational phase will increase demand for municipal waste disposal and predicated effects will be negative, not significant and permanent.</p>

Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	Combination of Proposed development plus Phase 1 A and Phase 2 will increase effects on Material Asset such as the Blarney WWTP. These future developments will be subject detail design, planning application and EIA. Current phase has been designed to allow for future connections/loading.

#### 9.13.4. **Mitigation**

Mitigation measures are set out in section 18.8 and 18.13 of the EIAR. Measures include those proposed in the associated Construction Environmental Management Plan and Resource & Waste Management Plan. Other notable measures include water conservation strategies to alleviate the load on the foul sewer network.

#### 9.13.5. **Residual Effects**

With the implementation of mitigation measures (including monitoring), no significant residual impacts on material assets are predicted.

#### 9.13.6. **Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 18 of the EIAR and all of the associated documentation and submissions on file in respect of material assets (site services, infrastructure and waste). I am satisfied that the increase in demand arising from the proposed development will not have a significant negative effect of the local foul sewer network. Having regard to the nature, the application documentation and the associated appendix, it is considered that the Chapter adequately demonstrates an understanding of the potential impact of the proposed development on material assets (site services, infrastructure and waste) and I am satisfied that the subject development will not give rise to significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effects.

#### 9.13.7. **Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information it is considered that by virtue of the capacity of existing infrastructure, the design of the development and

the proposed standard construction mitigation measure, there is no potential for significant environmental effects on Material Assets of the area.

### **Landscape and Visual Amenity**

#### **9.14. Issues Raised**

Issues were raised in the course of the planning application and appeal in respect of visual amenity of the proposed development, its visual impact on the Ring Wood and on the local skyline of Blarney especially when viewed from Blarney Castle.

#### **Examination of the EIAR**

##### **9.14.1. Context**

Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual Amenity of the EIA deals with the potential impact of the proposed development on the landscape setting and on visual receptors in the landscape. The assessment is based on established methodology, in particular, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Verified View Photomontages for Proposed Ringwood LRD are in Appendix 13.1.

##### **9.14.2. Baseline**

The character of the local area landscape varies given the location of the site on the interface between the Blarney Town and its rural hinterland. The site has strong green field characteristics defined by its undulating topography and agricultural fields with boundary hedgerows. Ring Wood woodlands, included in the overall landholding, is a prominent landscape feature which provides a distinctive backdrop to the site and is prominent in views from Blarney Castle.

##### **9.14.3. Potential Effects**

The EIAR identifies the potential for a range of environmental effects on the landscape and Visual Amenity. Likely significant effects of the development, as identified in the EIAR, are summarised in Table 9.10 below.

Table 9.10: Summary of Potential Effects

Project Phase	Potential Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects
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Do Nothing	Do nothing would involve the retention of the site in its current state.
Construction	<p>Landscape: Direct effects due earthworks and the movement of machinery and effects overall are predicted to be adverse, not significant and temporary.</p> <p>Visual: Direct effects arise from stockpiling, movement of machinery and site lighting and effects overall are predicted to be adverse, slight and moderated and temporary and short term.</p>
Operation	<p>Landscape: The proposed development will be a significant intervention in the local landscape and influence the character of the locality. The effect is predicated to be significant and neutral.</p> <p>Visual: The effects on six out of 13 of the visual receptors identified will be significant, the effects on three will be neutral and one will experience no-change. Of the 13, for 10 the effect will be neutral in quality in the short, medium and long term, one will be beneficial the short, medium and long term, and two will experience no change.</p>
Decommissioning	N/A
Cumulative	Cumulative visual effects with phase 1A and 2 and distributor road are predicted to be a mixture of moderate/neutral and significant/neutral.

#### 9.14.4. Mitigation

Mitigation measures are set out in section 13.7 of the EIAR. These include construction mitigation measures included in the Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan. These include the control of site lighting, delivery of materials and site boundary hoarding to minimise visual impacts on receptors in the vicinity of the site. Mitigation by design was applied during the design development phase to ensure that proposed development add to the local

distinctiveness. Remedial mitigation includes a comprehensive landscape strategy is proposed to mitigate the loss of some site vegetation. Additional planting along the existing southern boundary hedgerow to supplement the screening effect of hedgerow in views from Blarney Castle.

#### **9.14.5. Residual Effects**

Residual effects relate to the buildings, site access and landscaping which will remain visible in localised views. The extent of the residual effects will reduce as tree planting on the site matures.

#### **9.14.6. Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment: Direct and Indirect Effects**

I have examined, analysed and evaluated Chapter 13 of the EIAR, the associated Verified Views Photomontages and submissions on file in respect of landscape and visual amenity. I am satisfied that the applicants understanding of the baseline environment, by way of desk and site surveys, is comprehensive and that the key impacts in respect of likely effects on the landscape and visual amenity of the area, as a consequence of the development have been identified.

The parties to the appeal and application have raised the issues of effect of the proposed development on the setting of the Ring Wood and the visual effect of the proposed development on the landscape character when viewed from Blarney Castle.

The landscape value of the area is considered to be medium, and the landscape sensitivity is considered to be medium with capacity for change in the form of development. The proposed development will result in an alteration to the setting of Ring Wood. The view towards Ring Wood is not a designated view to be protected in the Cork City Development Plan 2022. In Chapter 13 the effects on the view towards Ring Wood when viewed from Ard Na Greine and Aisling Geal (View 3,4 & 4) are considered to have a medium magnitude of change, with a significant but neutral effect. The proposed layout allows for a landscape area in front of the Ring Wood and the building line of the proposed dwellings is set back c.30m. I consider that the verified views are acceptable and expected given the zoning of the site and transitional nature of the Blarney settlement. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct or indirect effects on the landscape character and view of Ring Wood.



The assessment of the visual effects on the view from Blarney Castle has shown that elements of the proposed development will be visible from the castle however it can be seen in in the submitted verified view photomontages View 2 that magnitude of change is low with mainly roofs being visible. The proposed development will be screened by existing vegetation and the proposed roof colour will be dark. In the assessment the effect of the proposed development on the view of from Blarney Castle is considered to be Moderate-Slight and the quality of the effect is to be Neutral. In the Cork City Development Plan 2022 the Blarney Castle is a designated Strategic Landmark building. It is policy to protect the linear view of the castle through the management of development. The proposed linear view of Blarney Castle will not be significantly impacted by the proposed development.

Having regard to the assessment and the Verified View No.2, I concur with the EIAR conclusion that the photomontage demonstrates the natural capacity of the site to successfully accommodate the development when viewed from Blarney Castle.

#### 9.14.7. **Conclusion: Direct and Indirect Effects**

The proposed development is an extension to an existing urban area on residentially zoned lands and therefore the changing view are not out of character or unexpected. Having regard to the examination of environmental information and verified view photomontages it is considered that by virtue of the design of the development and distance from sensitive receptors such as Blarney Castle there is no potential for significant environmental effects on Landscape and Visual Amenity.

#### 9.15. **Major Accidents and Disasters**

No issues have been raised by any party to the appeal/application in respect of major accidents and disasters. I have examined Chapter 19 of the EIAR which deals with this topic.

- 9.15.1. Flooding has been dealt with in Section 8 of this report which concluded that having regard to the location of the site in flood risk c area and the proposed strategy for surface water drainage I do not consider that the proposed development will result in significant flooding of the area or result in undue pressure on the River Martin.

Having regard to the location of the site and its distance away from Seveso site or sites which have relevant EPA licences, the proposed nature of the development on site and standard construction methods I am satisfied that there is no potential for any significant direct, indirect or cumulative effects on the potential for Major Accidents and Disasters as a result of the proposed development.

### **Issues Raised**

9.15.2. No specific issues have been raised in relation to this matter.

### **Examination, analysis and evaluation of the EIAR**

9.15.3. Chapter 20 of the EIAR summarises the interactions and cumulative effects between different aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development. The potential significant effects of the proposed development and the measures proposed to mitigate have been outlined in the preceding sections of this EIA. The cumulative impacts have already been addressed in relation to each individual environmental factor.

9.15.4. The primary interactions can be summarised as follows:

- Noise & Vibration and Air with Traffic and Transport.
- Population & Human Health, Traffic and Transport, Biodiversity, Climate with Air Quality.
- Material Assets, Biodiversity, Water, Material Assets with Climate.
- Traffic and Transport, Biodiversity, Population and Human Health with Noise and Vibration.
- Land & Soils, Water, Noise and Vibration, Air Quality, Landscape and Visual with Biodiversity.
- Land & Soil, Biodiversity and Material Assets and Population and Human Health with Landscape and Visual.
- Water, Traffic and Transport, Biodiversity, Material Assets, with Land, Soils Geology and Hydrogeology.

- Material Assets, Land & Soils, Biodiversity and Climate with Water.
- Land and Soils, Biodiversity, Traffic and Transport on Resource and Waste Management.
- Traffic and Transport, Noise and Vibration, Material Assets, Air on Population and Human Health.
- Population & Human Health, Water, Land & Soils, Water, Climate on Material Assets.

9.15.5. During the Operational Phase, it is anticipated traffic will be the key environmental factors impacting upon population and human health as a new residential neighbourhood will be created. The increase in population will result in increased traffic. This is addressed in the appropriate sections of the EIAR and in the foregoing. Where any potential negative effects have been identified during the assessment process, these impacts have been avoided by design or reduced by the proposed mitigation measures.

#### **Assessment: Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects**

9.15.6. All mitigation measures relating to the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development are set out in the relevant chapters of this EIAR. Chapter 21 of the EIAR presents a compilation of these measures, grouped according to environmental field/topic in a format which provides an easy to audit list that can be reviewed and reported on during the future phases of the project.

#### **9.16. REASONED CONCLUSION**

Having regard to the examination of environmental information provided in respect of the proposed development, in particular the EIAR and the supplementary information provided by the applicant, the submissions from the planning authority, prescribed bodies and third parties in the course of the application/appeal, it is considered that the main significant, direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the environment, with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures are:

- a) A positive impact with regard to population and material assets due to the increase in housing stock in Blarney and the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- b) Traffic and Transport: Potential for moderate short-term negative impacts in terms of construction traffic will be mitigated as part of a construction management plan. There will be localised negative impact on the Station Road /R617 traffic junction in the immediate area in the operational phase and any potential impact will be mitigated in part provision of active travel provision.
- c) Potential negative effects arising from noise and air during the construction and operational phases, which will be short term in nature and will be mitigated by appropriate construction management and design measures outlined in the relevant section of the EIAR.
- d) Visual Impacts: There will be changed views from various locations given the change from a largely greenfield site to a residential development. The lands are zoned for development and the proposal is not expected to involve the introduction of new or uncharacteristic features into the wider landscape character setting or the views from Blarney Castle, relative to what exists in the immediate and wider area.
- e) Potential indirect impacts on water during the construction and operational phase, which will be mitigated by construction management measures and implementation of sustainable drainage system measures.

## 10.0 AA Screening

- 10.1. I have considered the proposed large scale residential development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.
- 10.2. In accordance with Section 177U (4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of objective information
- 10.3. I conclude that 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. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) [under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000] is not required.

10.4. This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Screening Report
- Standard pollution controls that would be employed regardless of proximity to a European site and effectiveness of same
- Distance from European Sites,
- The absence of meaningful pathway to any European site

10.5. No measures intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on European sites were taken into account in reaching this conclusion.

See Appendix 2

## **11.0 Recommendation**

Following from the above assessment, I recommend that permission is GRANTED for the development as proposed due to the following reasons and considerations, and subject to the conditions set out below.

## **12.0 Reasons and Considerations**

Having regard to the following:

- a) the location of the site in the established metropolitan town of Blarney,
- b) the policies and objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020-2032 and the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan.
- c) the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016
- d) Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)
- e) the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018)
- g) the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2013)

h) the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (including the associated Technical Appendices) (2009)

i) the nature, scale and design of the proposed development

j) the availability in the area of a wide range of social, community, transport and water services infrastructure,

m) the submissions and observations received

it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would constitute an acceptable density of development in this accessible urban location, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area, would be acceptable in terms of urban design, height and quantum of development and would be acceptable in terms of pedestrian and traffic safety. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### 13.0 Recommended Draft Order

**Appeal** by Trevor Daley, Paul Byrne, Rory O’Keeffe, Patricia & Denis O’Donoghue against the decision made on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2025 by Cork City Council to grant permission to Clockstrike Ltd.

#### **Proposed Development.**

The development will consist of a large scale residential development representing Phase1 of the development in the blarney East/ Ringwood expansion area and comprising of 246no. residential dwellings. The particulars of the development are as follows:

- 101no. apartments arranged in 4no. part 3-storey part 4-storey apartment blocks (to include 6no. one-bed studio units, 35no. one-bed units and 62no.two bed units)
- 30no. duplex units arranged in 3no. three-storey buildings (to include 15no. one-bed dwellings and 15no. two-bed dwellings)
- 115no. two-storey and three storey houses (to include 19no. two-bed dwellings 64no three-bed dwellings and 32no. four-bed dwellings)

- a creche with the capacity to accommodate 137 children.
- Car parking including EV charging points, bicycle parking and Moto cycle parking bays and provision of an area reserved for future residential car parking to the rear of Woodville terrace.
- Private communal and public open spaces, internal roads and footpaths with potential for future links to adjacent lands pedestrian and cyclist routes; hard and soft landscaping at boundary treatments with storage, plant, signage.
- A new signalized access onto station road and road and footpath improvement works on station roads and again 617 Rd.
- Public lighting, two new substations all associated site development works and all drainage and foul sewer infrastructure and networks including nature-based SuDS measures.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAR) has been prepared in respect of the proposed development.

## **Decision**

**GRANT permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the said plans and particulars based on the reasons and considerations under and subject to the conditions set out below.**

### **Matters Considered:**

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.

In coming to its decision, the Board had regard to the following:

- a) the location of the site in the established metropolitan town of Blarney,

- b) the policies and objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020-2032 and the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan.
- c) the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016
- d) Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)
- e) the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018)
- g) the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2013)
- h) the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (including the associated Technical Appendices) (2009)
- i) the nature, scale and design of the proposed development
- j) the availability in the area of a wide range of social, community, transport and water services infrastructure,
- m) the submissions and observations received
- n) the report of the inspector.

The Board considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity, would be acceptable in terms of urban design, height and quantum of development and would be acceptable in terms of traffic and pedestrian safety and convenience. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### **Appropriate Assessment (AA):**

The Board agreed with the screening assessment and conclusion carried out in the Inspector's report 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. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) [under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000] is not required.



This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Screening Report
- Standard pollution controls that would be employed regardless of proximity to a European site and effectiveness of same
- Distance from European Sites,
- The absence of meaningful pathway to any European site

### **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):**

The Board completed an environmental impact assessment of the proposed development, taking into account:

- a) the nature, scale, location and extent of the proposed development,
- b) the environmental impact assessment report and associated documentation submitted with the application.
- c) the submissions from the planning authority, the observers and the prescribed bodies in the course of the application, and,
- d) the Inspector's report.

The Board considered that the environmental impact assessment report, supported by the documentation submitted by the applicant, adequately considers alternatives to the proposed development, and adequately identifies and describes the direct, indirect, secondary and cumulative effects of the proposed development on the environment. The Board completed an environmental impact assessment in relation to the proposed development and, in doing so, agreed with the examination, set out in the Inspector's report, of the information contained in the environmental impact assessment report, associated documentation submitted by the applicant, and submissions made in the course of the planning application, and adopted the Inspector's assessment in this regard.

### **Reasoned Conclusions on the Significant Effects**

The Board considered and agreed with the Inspector's reasoned conclusions that the main significant direct and indirect effects of the proposed development on the environment are, and would be mitigated, as follows:

- f) A positive impact with regard to population and material assets due to the increase in housing stock in Blarney and the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- g) Traffic and Transport: Potential for moderate short-term negative impacts in terms of construction traffic will be mitigated as part of a construction management plan. There will be localised negative impact on the Station Road /R617 traffic junction in the immediate area in the operational phase and any potential impact will be mitigated in part provision of active travel provision.
- h) Potential negative effects arising from noise and air during the construction and operational phases, which will be short term in nature and will be mitigated by appropriate construction management and design measures outlined in the relevant section of the EIAR.
- i) Visual Impacts: There will be changed views from various locations given the change from a largely greenfield site to a residential development. The lands are zoned for development and the proposal is not expected to involve the introduction of new or uncharacteristic features into the wider landscape character setting or the views from Blarney Castle, relative to what exists in the immediate and wider area.
- j) Potential indirect impacts on water during the construction and operational phase, which will be mitigated by construction management measures and implementation of sustainable drainage system measures.

### **Conclusions on Proper Planning and Sustainable Development:**

The Board considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would constitute an acceptable density of development in this urban location, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area, would be acceptable in terms of urban design, height and quantum of development and would be acceptable in terms of pedestrian and traffic safety. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 14.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application as amended by the further plans and particulars submitted the 18<sup>th</sup> day of October 2023 by the further plans, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require points of detail to be agreed with the planning authority, these matters shall be the subject of written agreement and shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed particulars. In default of agreement, the matter(s) in dispute shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. Mitigation and monitoring measures outlined in the plans and particulars, including Chapter 21 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, 'Schedule of Mitigation' submitted with this application shall be carried out in full, except where otherwise required by conditions attached to this permission.

Reason: In the interest of protecting the environment and in the interest of public health

3. The top floor shall be omitted from Apartment Block A and B. Revised floor plans and elevations showing the omission submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development:

Reason: In the interest of the residential amenity of the residents on Woodville Terrace.

4. The development shall be carried out on a phased basis, in accordance with the Proposed Site Layout Plan Phasing Dwg.no. 2106-PA1-S-133. The childcare facility shall be constructed and ready for occupation as part of the Phase 1A of the proposed development.

Reason: To ensure the timely provision of services and facilities, for the benefit of the occupants of the proposed dwellings and the satisfactory completion of the overall development.

5. The childcare facility hereby permitted shall not be converted to any other use without a prior grant of planning permission in the event of the childcare facility ceasing operations.

Reason to protect the amenities of residential properties in the vicinity.

6. The construction of the enhanced active travel infrastructure along Station Road between the entrance to the development and the R617 shall form part of Phase 1A as set out in the proposed site layout plan phasing lodged with the application and works shall be completed prior to the occupation of any residential unit. Details of such provision, including construction, finishes and demarcation, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of orderly development and to support enhanced sustainable mobility.

7. Details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings shall be as submitted with the application, unless otherwise agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. In default of agreement the matter(s) in dispute shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

8. The developer shall comply with all requirements of the planning authority in relation to roads, access, lighting and parking arrangements, including facilities for the recharging of electric vehicles. In particular:
  - a) The roads and traffic arrangements serving the site (including sightlines, footpath connections, and signage) shall be in accordance with the detailed

requirements of the planning authority for such works and shall be carried out at the developer's expense.

(i) The roads layout shall comply with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, in particular carriageway widths, corner radii and pedestrian crossings.

(ii) The materials used in any roads / footpaths provided by the developer shall comply with the detailed standards of the Planning Authority for such road works

(iii) A Mobility Management Plan shall be prepared and submitted to the planning authority for approval prior to the commencement of development.

(iv) The developer shall carry out a final Stage 2 Quality Audit (which shall include a Road Safety Audit, Access Audit, Cycle Audit and Walking Audit), which shall be submitted to the planning authority for its written agreement. The developer shall carry out all agreed recommendations contained in the audits, at the developer's expense.

b) Within six months of substantial completion of the development a Stage 3 Quality Audit (including Road Safety Audit, Access Audit, Cycle Audit and Walking Audit), of the constructed development shall be submitted to the planning authority for approval.

c) A minimum of 10% of the car parking spaces shall be provided with electric vehicle charging points. Details of how it is proposed to comply with this requirement shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

d) Clearly designated spaces for car share use shall be provided.

e) A detailed Construction Traffic Management plan shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. The plan shall include details of arrangements for routes for construction traffic, parking during the construction phase, the location of the compound for storage of plant and machinery and the location for storage of deliveries to the site in default of agreement, the matter(s) in dispute shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian, cyclist, and traffic safety.

9. Proposals for a development name and numbering scheme and associated signage shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Thereafter, all signs, and unit numbers, shall be provided in accordance with the agreed scheme. The proposed name(s) shall be based on local historical or topographical features, or other alternatives acceptable to the planning authority. No advertisements/marketing signage relating to the name(s) of the development shall be erected until the developer has obtained the planning authority's written agreement to the proposed name(s).

Reason: In the interest of urban legibility and to ensure the use of locally appropriate place names for new residential areas

10. No additional development shall take place above roof parapet level of the apartment buildings, including lift motor enclosures, air handling equipment, storage tanks, ducts or other external plant, telecommunication aerials, antennas or equipment, unless authorised by a further grant of planning permission.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of property in the vicinity and the visual amenities of the area, and to allow the planning authority to assess the impact of any such development through the planning process.

11. Public lighting shall be provided in accordance with a scheme, which shall include lighting along pedestrian routes through the communal open spaces, details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development/installation of lighting. Such lighting shall be provided prior to the making available for occupation of any apartment unit.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and public safety.

12. All service cables associated with the proposed development (such as electrical, telecommunications and communal television) shall be located underground. Ducting shall be provided by the developer to facilitate the provision of broadband infrastructure within the proposed development.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity.

13. The developer shall enter into water and wastewater connection agreements with Uisce Eireann, prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of public health

14. Drainage arrangements, the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit to the planning authority for written agreement a Stage 2 – Detailed Design Stage Stormwater Audit, including details of the Eastern Surface Water Outfall which shall not impact on the drainage of the N20. Upon completion of the development, a Stage 3 Completion Stage Stormwater Audit to demonstrate that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems measures have been installed, are working as designed, and that there has been no misconnections or damage to stormwater drainage infrastructure during construction, shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement.

Reason: In the interests of public health and surface water management.

15. Prior to commencement of works, the developer shall submit to, and agree in writing with the planning authority, a Construction and Environmental Management Plan, which shall be adhered to during construction. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including hours of working, noise and dust management measures and off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste.

Reason: In the interest of public safety and amenity.

16. Prior to commencement of development the developer shall submit and obtain the written agreement of the planning authority, a plan containing details for the management of waste within the development, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of the waste and for the ongoing operation of these facilities.

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

17. Construction and demolition waste shall be managed in accordance with a construction waste and demolition management plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Details of the Invasive Species Management Plan for this site shall be incorporated within this plan. This plan shall be prepared in accordance with the "Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects", published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in July 2006.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable waste management

18. Prior to commencement of development, the developer or other person with an interest in the land to which the application relates shall enter into an agreement in writing with the planning authority in relation to the provision of housing in accordance with the requirements of section 94(4) and section 96(2) and (3) (Part V) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, unless an exemption certificate shall have been applied for and been granted under section 97 of the Act, as amended. Where such an agreement is not reached within eight weeks from the date of this order, the matter in dispute (other than a matter to which section 96(7) applies) may be referred by the planning authority or any other prospective party to the agreement to An Bord Pleanála for determination.



Reason: To comply with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

19. The landscaping scheme shown on drawing number 21619-101, as submitted to the planning authority on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of October 2024 shall be carried out within the first planting season following substantial completion of external construction works.

All planting shall be adequately protected from damage until established.

Any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of [five] years from the completion of the development [or until the development is taken in charge by the local authority, whichever is the sooner], shall be replaced within the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of residential and visual amenity.

20. a) The areas of the development for Taking in Charge shall be agreed in writing with the local authority prior to the commencement of development on site.

b) The management and maintenance all area not intended to be taken in charge by the local authority, following its completion shall be the responsibility of a legally constituted management company. A management scheme providing adequate measures for the future maintenance of public open spaces, roads and communal areas shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to occupation of the development.

Reason: To provide for the satisfactory future maintenance of this development in the interest of residential amenity.

21. The developer shall facilitate the preservation, recording and protection of archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site. In this regard, the developer shall –

- a. notify the planning authority in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of any site operation (including hydrological and geotechnical investigations) relating to the proposed development,
- b. All ground reduction should be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring, under licence, by a suitably qualified archaeologist,
- c. where archaeological material is shown to be present, avoidance, preservation in situ, or preservation by record (excavation) may be required. Works may be halted pending receipt of advice from the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage who will advise the applicant / developer with regard to these matters,
- d. on completion of monitoring of ground reduction and any archaeological excavations arising, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the planning authority and to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for consideration.
- e. In default of agreement on any of these requirements, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site and to secure the preservation and protection of any remains that may exist within the site

22. Should human remains, associated, with RIC Constable Walsh, be located in the course of construction, all work shall cease at all parts of the proposed development site and all relevant authorities including the city coroner and An Garda Síochána, shall be informed of the location of the previously unrecorded human remains.

In the events that human remains are located it is the responsibility of the relevant state agencies to determine the outcome for these remains and any associated evidence.

Contemporaneous Logs shall be maintained detailing personnel, decisions and actions, and the evidence collected. The site record of stratigraphy and features of interest or evidential value shall be maintained on a contemporaneous and continuous basis.

All documentation generated shall be submitted to the Planning Authority.

Reason: in the interests of proper planning and recording of the site development works.

23. Prior to the commencement of the development as permitted, the applicant or any person with an interest in the land shall enter into an agreement with the planning authority, such agreement must specify the number and location of each housing unit, pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, that restricts all residential units permitted to first occupation by individual purchasers i.e. those not being a corporate entity, and/or by those eligible for the occupation of social and/or affordable housing, including cost rental housing.

Reason: To restrict new housing to use by persons of a particular class or description in order to ensure an adequate choice and supply of housing, including affordable housing, in the common good.

24. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the Planning Authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or other security to secure the provision and satisfactory completion and maintenance until taken in charge by the local authority of roads, footpaths, watermains, drains, public open space and other services required in connection with the development, coupled with an agreement empowering the local authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory completion or

maintenance of any part of the development. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the Planning Authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory completion and maintenance of the development until taken in charge.

25. The developer shall pay to the Planning Authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer, or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

26. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of the Cork Suburban Rail Project in accordance with the terms of the Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme made by the planning authority under section 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the

Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer, or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme made under section 49 of the Act be applied to the permission.

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.

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Peter Nelson  
Senior Planning Inspector

**15 April 2025**

## Appendix 1: Consideration of Local Authority Conditions

Please see the table which details the reasoning behind my recommended conditions for the proposed development.

<b>Consideration of Local Authority Conditions</b>		
<b>ABP Ref: 321688 P.A. Ref: 24/43031</b>		
<b>P.A. Condition No.</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Included/Modified/Excluded in Schedule of Conditions and reasons</b>
<b>1</b>	Plans and Particulars	<b>Modified</b>  Covered in Condition No.1  (Standard ABP condition)
<b>2</b>	EIA Mitigation	<b>Modified</b>  Covered in Condition No.2
<b>3</b>	Revised Road Details	<b>Modified</b>  Covered in Condition No.4
<b>4</b>	Phasing	<b>Modified</b> – Condition No.4
<b>5</b>	Childcare	<b>Included</b> – Condition 5
<b>6</b>	Active Travel Infrastructure.	<b>Included</b> – Condition 6
<b>7</b>	Naming	<b>Modified</b> - Covered in Condition No.9 (Standard ABP condition)
<b>8</b>	Occupation by Individual purchaser	<b>Include</b> - Condition No.23
<b>9</b>	Archaeology	<b>Modified</b> -Covered in Condition No.21 (Standard ABP condition)
<b>10</b>	RIC Constable	<b>Included:</b> Condition 22

11	Commencement Notice	Part of different legalisation
12	Management Company	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.20 (Standard ABP condition)
13	Bond	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.24 (Standard ABP condition)
14	Water/Waste Water agreement	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.14 (Standard ABP condition)
15	Road Safety Audit	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.8 (Standard ABP condition)
16	Road Standards	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.8(Standard ABP condition)
17	Taking In Charge	<b>Modified.</b> Covered in condition 20
18	Damage to Roads	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP (Standard ABP condition)
19	Preservation of Wildlife	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP (Standard ABP condition)
20	Construction Waste	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 17 (Standard ABP condition)
21	Construction Noise Control	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP (Standard ABP condition)
22	Operational Waste	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 16
23	Construction Noise Control	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP

24	Construction Waste	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
25	Operational Noise	<b>Not required</b> – residential development
26	Separation of Drainage	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14 (Standard ABP condition)
27	Drainage	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14 (Standard ABP condition)
28	Storm water connection	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14 (Standard ABP condition)
29	SuDS assessment report	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14 (Standard ABP condition)
30	Attenuation Capacity	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14 (Standard ABP condition)
31	Management/Taking in Charge	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 20 (Standard ABP condition)
32	Duplex Cycle Parking	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.8
33	Station Road Active Travel details	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
34	Reserved parking area to be taken in charge.	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 1 Plans and Particulars (Standard ABP condition)
35	Public Lighting	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 11 (Standard ABP condition)
36	Car parking requirement along Access Road 06.	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 8



37	House EV charging ports	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 8 (Standard ABP condition)
38	Design of EV spaces	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 8 (Standard ABP condition)
39	Barriers/gates not to be used.	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
41	Construction Traffic Management Plan	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
42	Construction Traffic	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
43	Construction Parking	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
44	Construction Traffic	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
45	Vehicular Gate to site entrance	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
46	Landscaping Masterplan	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 19
47	Landscaping Scheme	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 19
48	Tree Protection Plan	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 19
49	Design of Play Areas	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 19
50	Design of Soakaways	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14
51	Surface water at entrance	Modified Covered in Condition No. 14

<b>52</b>	No surface water on public roadway	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14
<b>53</b>	No surface water to neighbouring properties	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 14
<b>54</b>	Debris on public road	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
<b>55</b>	Cleaning of public road	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
<b>56</b>	Utility Poles	Not required
<b>57</b>	Cleaning of public road	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
<b>58</b>	Wheel Wash	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No. 15-CEMP
<b>59</b>	Contribution S48	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.25 (Standard ABP condition)
<b>60</b>	Contribution S49	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.26 (Standard ABP condition)
<b>61</b>	Water/Waste Water connection.	<b>Modified</b> Covered in Condition No.13 (Standard ABP condition)

## Appendix 2 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

### Template 2: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

#### Screening Determination

##### Description of the project

I have considered the Large Scale Residential Development in light of the requirements of S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site is located on a green field site at Ringwood, Shean Upper, Blarney, County Cork. The Shean Upper Stream is located 150m to the east of the site. The stream discharges to Barney Bog which is within the catchment of the River Lee. There is a remote hydrological link via the River Lee to Cork Harbour. The site is therefore, connected along the River Lee to Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (001058) which is 14.6km southeast of the site and 9.9 km (Douglas Estuary) southeast of the Cork Harbour Special Area of Conservation (SPA).

The proposed development comprises of 246 no. residential dwellings, a childcare facility and all other associated site and development works.

##### Potential impact mechanisms from the project.

The site is not within or directly adjoining any Natura 2000 sites. The proposed development does not occur within the or directly adjacent to the Great Island Channel SAC or the Cork Harbour SPA and therefore I consider that there will be no direct impacts, such as habitat loss or deterioration as the result of the proposed development.

##### Surface Water

It is proposed that the surface water from the western part of the site will discharge to an existing outfall to the River Martin. The eastern part of the site will be drained

to the Shean Upper Stream which is located to the 150m east of the site. There is a remote hydrological link between the development site and the European sites in Cork Harbour.

The proposed development site is located approximately 9.9km upstream of the Cork Harbour SPA. Although unlikely, surface water run-off during the construction or operational phase of the proposed development could potentially flow into Cork Harbour SPA via River Martin/River Lee. Habitats within or near the proposed development site could potentially provide ex-situ foraging grounds for SCI species outside the Cork Harbour SPA.

#### Ground Water

There is also a potential hydrogeological pathway. During groundworks and other construction activities, the ground will be exposed and any potential accidental discharges to ground could potentially migrate vertically downward to the underlying groundwater, contributing to the hydrological pathway to the European sites in Cork Harbour (Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC).

#### Disturbance

The construction and operational phases have the potential for disturbance related to increased dust, noise, lighting, and human activity. Given the distance between the site and the nearest designated sites (9.9 km), I do not consider that there is potential for significant construction-related disturbance effects.

Potential Indirect impacts and effect mechanism

#### **Effect A**

Potential surface water and ground water pollution arising from construction activities by sediment, cementitious materials (e.g., concrete), hydrocarbons (e.g. diesel, hydraulic oils and lubricating oils) and other deleterious matters. These include fine sediment from excavations and earthworks, fuel and other

hydrocarbons from vehicles, plant and machinery concrete and other construction materials, and waste from on-site welfare facilities.

### **Effect B**

Surface water pollution from run-off from the new roads, footpaths and cycleways. Run off from roads can be contaminated by hydrocarbons such as fuels, oils, greases, coolants and anti-freeze from vehicles and micro-plastics such as tyre dust which can negatively impact on water quality and hydrological regime in waterbodies.

### **European Sites at risk**

With reference to the potential impact mechanisms from the proposal, the Great Island Channel SAC and the Cork Harbour SPA and the qualifying features listed in Table 1 are identified as potentially at risk.

I note that in the submitted screening for Appropriate Assessment the applicant screened out the Blackwater River SAC (002170), the Gearagh SAC (000108), the Courtmacsharry Bay SAC (001230) the Ballymacoda Bay (Clonpriest and Pillmore), the Gearagh SPA (004109), Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA, Courtmacsherry Bay SPA (004219), the Blackwater Callows SPA, Kilcoman Bog SPA (004095) as there is no spatial overlap or hydrological connections. Due to the lack of spatial overlaps or hydrological connections or potential for negative impacts I am satisfied that the above protected sites do not require further consideration.

**Table 1 European Sites at risk from impacts of the proposed project [example]**

<b>Effect mechanism</b>	<b>Impact pathway/Zone of influence</b>	<b>European Site(s)</b>	<b>Qualifying interest features at risk</b>
Effect A  Surface water and groundwater pollution (construction phase)	Discharge to River Martin which joins the Blarney River and on to River Lee at Carrigrohane  Discharge to groundwater contributing to	Cork Harbour SPA	Little Grebe; Great Crested Grebe; Cormorant; Grey Heron; Shelduck; Wigeon; Teal; Pintail; Shoveler; Red-breasted Merganser; Oystercatcher;

	hydrological pathway to European Sites		Golden Plover; Grey Plover; Lapwing; Dunlin; Black-tailed Godwit; Bar-tailed Godwit; Curlew; Redshank; Greenshank; Black-headed Gull; Common Gull; Lesser Black-backed Gull; Common Tern; Wetland and Waterbirds
		Great Island Channel SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide.  Atlantic salt meadows
Effect B  Surface Water Pollution (operational phase)	Discharge to River Martin which joins the Blarney River and on to River Lee at Carrigrohane	Cork Harbour SPA	Little Grebe; Great Crested Grebe; Cormorant; Grey Heron; Shelduck; Wigeon; Teal; Pintail; Shoveler; Red-breasted Merganser; Oystercatcher; Golden Plover; Grey Plover; Lapwing; Dunlin; Black tailed Godwit; Bar-tailed Godwit; Curlew; Redshank; Greenshank; Black-headed Gull; Common Gull; Lesser Black-backed Gull; Common Tern; Wetland and Waterbirds
		Great Island Channel SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide.  Atlantic salt meadows

### **Great Island Channel SAC**

The Great Island Channel stretches from Little Island to Midleton, with its southern boundary being formed by Great Island. It is an integral part of Cork Harbour which contains several other sites of conservation interest. Geologically, Cork Harbour consists of two large areas of open water in a limestone basin, separated from each other and the open sea by ridges of Old Red Sandstone. Within this system, Great Island Channel forms the eastern stretch of the river basin and compared to the rest of Cork Harbour, is relatively undisturbed. Within the site is the estuary of the Owennacurra and Dungourney Rivers. These rivers, which flow through Midleton, provide the main source of freshwater to the North Channel.

The main habitats of conservation interest in Great Island Channel SAC are the sheltered tidal sand and mudflats and the Atlantic salt meadows. Owing to the sheltered conditions, the intertidal flats are composed mainly of soft muds. These muds support a range of macro-invertebrates, notably *Macoma balthica*, *Scrobicularia plana*, *Hydrobia ulvae*, *Nephtys hombergi*, *Nereis diversicolor* and *Corophium volutator*. Green algal species occur on the flats, especially *Ulva lactuca* and *Enteromorpha* spp. Cordgrass (*Spartina* spp.) has colonised the intertidal flats in places, especially at Rossleague and Belvelly. The saltmarshes are scattered through the site and are all of the estuarine type on mud substrate. Species present include Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*), Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*), Greater Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia media*), Lax-flowered Sea-lavender (*Limonium humile*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritimum*), Sea Mayweed (*Matricaria maritima*) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*).

### **Cork Harbour SPA**

Cork Harbour is a large, sheltered bay system, with several river estuaries - principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas, Owenboy and Owennacurra. The SPA site comprises most of the main intertidal areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas River Estuary, inner Lough Mahon, Monkstown

Creek, Lough Beg, the Owenboy River Estuary, Whitegate Bay, Ringabella Creek and the Rostellan and Poul nabibe inlets.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant, Grey Heron, Shelduck, Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Pintail, Shoveler, Redbreasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Lapwing, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank, Greenshank, Blackheaded Gull, Common Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Common Tern. The site is also of special conservation interest for holding an assemblage of over 20,000 wintering waterbirds. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds. Cork Harbour is an internationally important wetland site, regularly supporting in excess of 20,000 wintering waterfowl.

#### Likely significant effects on the European sites 'alone'

Table 2: Could the project undermine the conservation objectives ‘alone’			
European Site and qualifying feature	Conservation objective	Could the conservation objectives be undermined (Y/N)?	
		Effect A	Effect B
Great Island Channel SAC			
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide.  Habitat area target:  The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.	No	No



Atlantic salt meadows	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic salt meadows  Habitat area target:  Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	No	No	
<b>Cork Harbour SPA</b>				
Little Grebe	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Little Grebe.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Great Crested Grebe	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Great Crested Grebe.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Cormorant	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Cormorant.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Grey Heron	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Grey Heron.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Shelduck	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Shelduck.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	

Wigeon	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Wigeon.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Teal	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Teal.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Pintail	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Pintail.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Shoveler	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Shoveler.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Red-breasted Merganser	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Red-breasted Merganser  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Oystercatcher	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Oystercatcher.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Golden Plover	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Golden Plover  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	

Grey Plover	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Grey Plover.,  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Lapwing	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Lapwing.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Dunlin	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Dunlin.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Black-tailed Godwit	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Black-tailed Godwit  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Bar-tailed Godwit	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Bar-tailed Godwit  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Curlew	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Curlew.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Redshank	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Redshank  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	

Greenshank	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Greenshank  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	NO	
Black-headed Gull	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Black-headed Gull  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Common Gull	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Common Gull  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Lesser Black-backed Gull.  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Common Tern	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Common Tern  Population trend: Long term population trend stable or increasing	No	No	
Wetland and Waterbirds	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat.  Habitat target:  The permanent area occupied by the wetland habitat should be stable and not significantly less than the area of 2,587 hectares, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation.	No	No	

Given the proposed standard construction methodologies contained in the Construction Environmental Management Plan included with the application, which are not being relied upon as mitigation measures for any significant effects on the conservation objectives of the relevant protected sites, the low probability of any significant pollution event and the distance between the application site and the Great Island Channel SAC it is considered that the conservation objectives of the Mudflats and Sandflats and Atlantic salt meadows will not be undermined during the construction phase.

Given the proposed Storm Water Management Plan for the proposed development which includes both sustainable urban drainage systems and attenuation tanks and the distance between the application site and the Great Island Channel SAC, it is considered that the conservation objectives of the Mudflats and Sandflats and Atlantic salt meadows will not be undermined during the operational phase.

Given the remote hydrological connections and distance downstream to the Great Island Channel SAC it is not considered that the conservation objectives of the Mudflats and Sandflats and Atlantic salt meadows will not be undermined during the construction and operational phase due to indirect impacts via groundwater.

As with the Great Island Channel SAC, it is considered that the conservation objectives of the qualifying interest of the Cork Harbour SPA will not be undermined as a result of potential surface or ground water impacts from the proposed development, due to the remote hydrological connections and distance downstream.

The Applicant's screening for AA included a survey for wintering birds. It is noted that while Lesser Black-Backed Gulls were observed flying over the site, none were recorded on or feeding on the site. Two Curlews were observed flying northwest over the site. Given that these were the only occurrence of qualifying interest species observed it is therefore considered that ex-situ impact on field feeding birds which are qualifying interest of the Cork Harbour SPA are not predicted.

I conclude that the proposed development would have no likely significant effect 'alone' on any qualifying features of [insert European site(s)]. Further AA screening in-combination with other plans and projects is required.

**Where relevant, likely significant effects on the European sites 'in-combination with other plans and projects'**

In respect of potential for in-combination impacts, from a review of the applicant's documents and the planning register, I note that there have been several small-scale developments in the vicinity of the project site with some largescale developments, mainly residential, permitted in the Blarney Area. These have been

subject to construction management and detailed planning conditions. I note that a Natura Impact Report has been prepared for the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 the finding of which were integrated into the Plan through mitigation measures. The Plan states that these mitigation measures ensure that there will be no significant effects to the ecological integrity of any European site from implementation of the Plan. Accordingly, by association, no likely significant effects will arise on the European sites as a result of any in-combination effects from the project with individual planning applications or plans.

I conclude that the proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on the qualifying features of any European sites. No further assessment is required for the project.

### **Overall Conclusion- Screening Determination**

In accordance with Section 177U(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of objective information

I conclude that 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. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) [under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000] is not required.

This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Screening Report
- Standard pollution controls that would be employed regardless of proximity to a European site and effectiveness of same
- Distance from European Sites,
- The absence of meaningful pathway to any European site

No measures intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on European sites were taken into account in reaching this conclusion.