



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-322202-25

Development	Construction of four dwellings and associated site works
Location	Ardagh, Bere Island, Beara, Co. Cork
Planning Authority	West Cork County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2516
Applicant(s)	Barry Hanley.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Barry Hanley.
Observer(s)	Failte Ireland.
Date of Site Inspection	20 th May 2025
Inspector	Jennifer McQuaid

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site is located at Ardagh, Bere Island, Beara, Co. Cork and approximately 600m from the centre of Rerrin village as the crow flies and approximately 1km by road. The site is woodland and overgrown grass areas. The site slopes away from the roadway and towards the coast. There are extensive coastal views and views towards Lawence Cove Marina.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development consists of:
- Construction of four, two-bedroom houses (short-term letting)
 - Vehicular entrance and internal roads and footpaths and eight car parking spaces
 - Effluent treatment unit and percolation system
 - All associated site works

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Refused for two reasons as follows:

1. The proposed development at Ardagh is located outside of any defined settlement boundary, is removed from the existing service cluster/village of Rerrin, is sited within a rural area categorised in the Cork County Development Plan 2022 as a “Tourism and Rural Diversification Area” and lies within an area of High Value Landscape on Bere Island. The Planning Authority considers that the proposed development of 4 no. houses intended to be used for short term letting, which are not intended to serve any category of housing need, are removed from any settlement boundary/village/service cluster and not associated with any farm complex, fails to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 10 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 regarding Tourist Facilities, as set out in the objective TO-10, and Tourist

Accommodation, as set out in objective TO 10-11, and the proposed development of short term letting units within a Tourism and Rural Diversification Area and removed from any established settlement boundary would contravene the objectives RP5-5, RP 5-28, TO-10 and TO-11 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022, would set an undesirable precedent for similar development in a rural/High Value Landscape area and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. It is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its design, scale and location in an area of High Value Landscape, between the road and the sea, would not fit appropriately into the rural/coastal/High Value Landscape and would have an adverse impact on the scenic and visual amenity of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the objective GI 14-12 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 which seeks to preserve the character of all important views and prospects including sea views. The proposed development would significantly impact on the coastal amenity and character of the area and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

- The development plan generally encourages holiday development within designated settlements but could be considered outside a settlement at an appropriate scale and balance having regard to the pertaining environmental conditions and sensitivities, scenic amenity, availability of services and the cumulative impact of such developments on the environment. The current proposal is approximately 1.5km from Rerrin Village and as such does not satisfy any of the criteria outlined in the CDP.
- Rural housing can only be considered under RP 5-5, and the proposal does not comply with this policy.
- The proposal would set a poor precedent for other similar developments and refusal is recommended.

- The overall design is uniform and quite utilitarian, given the location in a High Value Landscape, a high standard of design is required, the proposed units will have a significant impact on scenic quality of the area which has a High Value Landscape status.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Area Engineer: concerns regarding water supply for multiple dwellings and further information requested for a hydrological report.
- Archaeologist: concerns regarding potential archaeology and further information requested in relation to an archaeological impact assessment

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- None

3.4. Third Party Observations

- None

4.0 Planning History

- None

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

Chapter 10 relates to Tourism.

Section 10.14 relates to Rural Tourism. Rural Tourism involves visits to rural settings or rural environments for the purpose of participating in or experiencing activities, events, or attractions not readily available in urbanised areas. These are not necessarily agricultural in nature but are usually closely linked with agricultural activity and are often associated with rural sites of a heritage nature, such as archaeological monuments.

The aim of the CDP is to support rural tourism initiatives concerned with Agri-Tourism, rural enterprise, and conservation of natural heritage together with sites that are also important for cultural, archaeological, or built heritage reasons.

Section 10.15 relates to Tourism Developments and Facilities; section 10.15.3 states tourism-related developments and facilities are ideally located inside existing settlements where the scale and size of the development is appropriate and in keeping with the character of the settlement and surrounding landscape subject to normal site suitability considerations. It is acknowledged that some tourist facilities are required to locate in rural areas in proximity to the tourist attraction where there is a clearly defined need and benefits to the local community are balanced with the potential environmental impacts of the development.

Objective TO 10-10 Tourist Facilities

- (a) Encourage tourism related facilities, including accommodation and other developments within existing settlements subject to normal site suitability considerations where they can best support compact growth and the regeneration of settlements, the provision of services and the general economic vitality of the settlement.
- (b) Carefully consider tourism related developments outside settlements at an appropriate scale and balance having regard to the pertaining environmental conditions and sensitivities, scenic amenity and availability of services and the cumulative impact of such developments on the environment.
- (c) Support sustainable environmentally sensitive small scale tourism enterprises including agri tourism enterprises and other initiatives that are developed in conjunction with established rural activities such as, fishing, walking, cycling, mountain biking, surfing, equestrian sports and other activities where these are compatible with environmental legislation. A limited amount of tourist accommodation could be included in association with such enterprises subject generally to the renovation of existing structures redundant agricultural farm buildings as well as limited new buildings on an appropriate scale. (new structures will have regard to the policies of Chapter 5 Rural).

- (d) Encourage and facilitate the delivery of suitably scaled tourism related retail developments and initiatives in settlements and established tourist attractions where these can be compatible with environmental legislation.
- (e) Support the leisure fishing industry and continue to support golf tourism as positive growth sectors in the sustainable economic development of the County while also maintaining the integrity of the landscape and environment of the County as a valuable asset into the future.
- (f) Encourage the provision of small scale agri tourism accommodation and the reuse of disused/derelict farm buildings, in line with the provisions of objectives RP5-28 Small Scale Agri Tourism Accommodation and RP5-31 New Uses for disused or derelict farm buildings.

Objective TO 10-11: Generally, to encourage holiday accommodation to locate within established settlement boundaries and that such development relates sympathetically to the scale and level of development and facilities in the locality.

Support the development of commercial motorhome camping facilities, with due regard to the planning and regulatory requirements for such facilities. Emphasis will be placed on developing facilities within settlement boundaries in areas of the County that currently have a lack of suitable facilities.

Chapter 5 relates to Rural.

Section 5.9 relates to Holiday Home and Second Home Development

Objective RP 5-5 Tourism and Rural Diversification Area: it is recognised that there is development pressure for holiday homes, the plan will encourage the utilisation of disused and derelict housing/building stock in towns and villages or the re use of the existing housing stock in the countryside.

Objective RP 5-26: Demand for Holiday and Second Homes Development: Recognise that sensitive scenic areas such as coasts, lakeside areas and uplands are limited in their capacity to carry significant levels of development and that such capacity as exists needs to be carefully managed to prioritise the needs of rural communities rather than for holiday and second home development.

Objective RP 5-27: Holiday Home Accommodation: Encourage appropriately scaled holiday home development to locate within existing settlements, where there is

appropriate infrastructure provision, where they can contribute to the maintenance of essential rural services and help act as a revitalising force in counteracting population decline.

Objective RP 5-28: Small Scale Agri-Tourism Accommodation: Encourage appropriately scaled agri-tourism on-farm accommodation development to locate within existing or adjacent to farm complexes, such as the renovation of barns, outhouses or other existing structures or the siting of appropriately scaled camping type accommodation within existing farm complexes for owner run agri-tourism/rural business use as short-term holiday home accommodation, subject to normal planning considerations. Consideration will also be given to appropriately scaled camping type accommodation being located within the main farm holding on suitable sites subject to normal planning considerations.

Proposals will be subject to the following:

- a) The proposed development shall be ancillary to an existing established or viable farm holding.
- b) The scale and layout of the development is appropriate for the area and shall integrate visually in the area.
- c) Site suitability and normal planning considerations such as traffic safety, wastewater disposal, safe access, ecological impact assessment and landscaping.

Section 5.6 relates to Environmental and Site Suitability Requirements.

Objective RP 5-22: Design and Landscaping of New Dwelling Houses and Replacement Dwellings in Rural Areas.

- (a) Encourage new dwelling house design that respects the character, pattern and tradition of existing places, materials and built forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape.
- (b) Promote sustainable approaches to dwelling design by encouraging proposals to be energy efficient in their design, layout and siting, finishes, heating, cooling and energy systems having regard to the need to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and reduce carbon emissions.

- (c) Foster an innovative approach to design that acknowledges the diversity of suitable design solutions in most cases, safeguards the potential for exceptional innovative design in appropriate locations and promotes the added economic, amenity and environmental value of good design.
- (d) Require the appropriate landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by retention of existing on-site trees hedgerows, historic boundaries, and natural features using predominantly indigenous/local trees and plant species and groupings.

Chapter 14 relates to Green Infrastructure and Recreation.

Objective GI 14-10: Draft Landscape Strategy: Ensure that the management of development throughout the County will have regard for the value of the landscape, its character, distinctiveness and sensitivity as recognised in the Cork County Draft Landscape Strategy and its recommendations, in order to minimise the visual and environmental impact of development, particularly in areas designated as High Value Landscapes where higher development standards (layout, design, landscaping, materials used) will be required.

Objective GI 14-12: General Views and Prospects: Preserve the character of all important views and prospects, particularly sea views, river or lake views, views of unspoilt mountains, upland or coastal landscapes, views of historical or cultural significance (including buildings and townscapes) and views of natural beauty as recognized in the Draft Landscape Strategy.

Objective GI 14-9: Landscape:

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

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

Volume 5 of the CDP

Objective GDO-01 Development multiple housing or employment uses should normally be located in or within a short walking distance of Rerrin and Ballynakilla.

Objective GDO-03 Conserve the landscape and cultural quality of Bere Island while recognising the need of its occupants and improving service provisions to the island.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The subject site is not located within a designated site. The nearest sites are:

- Beara Peninsula SPA (Site code: 4155) located approximately 800m to the south.
- Roancarrigbeg and Roancarrigmore pNHA (site code: 001073) is located 5.5km northeast of the subject site.
- Hungry Hill Bog NHA (Site code: 001059) located approximately 6km northeast of the subject site.
- Sheep's Head SAC & pNHA (site code: 000102) is located approximately 7km south of the subject site.
- Glanmore Bog SAC & pNHA (site code: 001879) is located approximately 7km north of the subject site.
- Pullleen Harbour Bog NHA (site code: 002416) is located approximately 8.5km west of the subject site.
- Cara Mountains SAC & pNHA (site code: 000093) is located approximately 11km northeast of the subject site.
- Kenmare River SAC (site code: 002158) is located approximately 11.5km northwest of the subject site.

5.3. EIA Screening

- 5.3.1. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2, in the Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed

development and the types and characteristics of the potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

5.4. Water Framework Directive

5.4.1. The subject site is located in a rural area on Bere Island, approximately 600 metres west of Rerrin village. There are no streams or rivers in close proximity to the site, however, the site is mainly rock and slopes towards the coast (Lawrence Cove Marina). The proposed development comprises of 4 no. holiday homes. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seeks to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water body in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works consists of a small-scale development of 4 individual short-term letting units.
- Separation distance to the nearest European site at 800 metres north of Beara Peninsula SPA and lack of connections to the European site.

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The grounds of appeal have been received from the applicant; the concerns raised are:

- Principle of development: All relevant policies of the CDP were not adhered to. The proposal complies with AgriTourism, the existing holiday homes users can engage with lambing season, nature walks, beekeeping and enjoy the rural scenery.

Section 2.22.11, chapter 5 of the CDP states “The identification of a development boundary or the zoning of specific sites is not considered appropriate in an island context. It is not intended to specify the number of houses that is expected to be developed over the lifetime of the plan. The key consideration is the need to reverse population decline and increase the number of permanent residents living all year round on the island. However, guidance is required on the appropriate forms of residential development, which are acceptable on the island. The development of the islands needs to be promoted, and it is important to balance the additional physical development and the need to preserve the sensitive environment”. The planners are ignoring the statement above, there are no village zonings on Bere Island.

The proposal complies with TO 10-10 where it states that a limited amount of accommodation could be included in association with such enterprises. And consistent with RP-28 and GO-01. RP 5-5 is the wrong policy for this proposal. The proposal will be managed as part of a farm; the proposal is a small scale and adjacent to existing clusters.

Preplanning was carried out for planning reference 23888 and the location was not raised as an issue, discussions about a community effluent treatment system was carried out.

Failte Ireland wish to extend the tourism season into the shoulder season and the users tend to be couples and smaller groups, therefore the proposed units comply with Failte Ireland's vision.

The proposal will enhance the family business and retain a full-time family permanently on Bere Island and creating employment and utilise existing services on the island.

- Design: The design used is agricultural and military buildings reflective of the heritage of the area. This type of design was used very successfully in the services building of the nearby Wild Atlantic Glamping, which fits in very appropriately to the landscape. The scale is very modest at 51.52sqm, each house will be well insulated and alternative energy sources will be utilised.
- Visual Impact: The proposal will not impact the coastal views and does comply with GI14-12. The location is secluded with considerable amount of woodland and the houses will not be visible from the road. More trees will be planted, no change to the visual impact from the road.
- Incorrect information and assumptions. The family do not own the adjacent camp site. The proposed site is on a working farmstead.

6.2. Applicant Response

- As above

6.3. Planning Authority Response

- None

6.4. Observations

- None

6.5. Further Responses

Failte Ireland have made a submission. The following comments were received:

- The proposed development will add to the existing accommodation offering on Bere Island and would support the opportunities to extend the season due to the nature of the units.
- It would support sustainable employment opportunities and the longer-term economic and social wellbeing of the island community.
- The proposed development is considered consistent with the West Cork and Kenmare Destination and Experience Development Plan and a number of policy objectives as set out in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 which seeks to support the development of visitor accommodation.
- Failte Ireland supports the proposed development subject to adherence to all proper planning and environmental requirements.

7.0 **Assessment**

7.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the 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 as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Design
- Visual Impact
- Appropriate Assessment

7.2. **Principle of Development**

7.3. The proposal relates to 4 no. houses which will be available for short-term letting. The site is located in a rural area of Bere Island and located over 600 metres from the centre of Rerrin Village as the crow flies. The planning authority refused permission as the site is outside of any defined settlement boundary, is removed from the existing service cluster/village of Rerrin, is sited within a rural area categorised in Cork County Development Plan 2022 (CDP) as a “Tourism and Rural Diversification Area”, lies within an area of High Value Landscape, is not intended to

serve any category of housing need and is not associated with any farm complex. The proposal fails to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 10 of the CDP regarding Tourist Facilities and would contravene the objectives RP5-5, RP5-28, TO-10 and TO-11 of the CDP and would set an undesirable precedent for similar development in a rural/High Value Landscape area.

- 7.4. The grounds of appeal state the proposal complies with agri-tourism, the applicant has existing holiday homes whereby the holiday makers can engage with farming and beekeeping activities (received permission under planning reference 98460). Also, tourists can benefit from walking tours and appreciate the scenic landscape. Failte Ireland are encouraging smaller holiday units for the shoulder seasons. The proposal will allow the family to continue their business and remain on the Island and provide economic benefits for the wider community.
- 7.5. In relation to the settlement boundary, the appellant states section 2.22.11, chapter 5 of the CDP outlines the identification of a development boundary, and the zoning of specific sites is not considered appropriate in an island context. The planners are ignoring section 2.22.11 of the CDP, there are no village zonings on Bere Island. The proposal complies with TO 10-10 where it states that a limited amount of accommodation could be included in association with such enterprises. And consistent with RP-28. RP 5-5 is the wrong policy for this proposal. Preplanning was carried out for planning reference 23888 and the location was not raised as an issue. Proposal complies with GO-01 "Consideration of very small-scale managed holiday home developments may be considered in or adjacent to existing development clusters, where there is a clear and identifiable economic and social benefits that endures beyond the construction phase and that is compatible with the capacity of the local community to accommodate it". The proposal will be managed as part of a farm; the proposal is a small scale and adjacent to existing clusters.
- 7.6. I have assessed the location of the subject site and I note the site is located within a Tourism and Rural Diversification Area as defined by the CDP, RP 5-5 objective relates to this area and it is recognised that there is development pressure for holiday homes, the plan encourages the utilisation of disused and derelict housing/building stock in towns and villages or the re use of the existing housing stock in the countryside. I have carried out a site visit and I note the subject site is outside the settlement of Rerrin Village, it is approximately 1km by road from the

village. The subject site is currently a mixture of mature trees overgrown areas, and a number of walkway tracks are noted. There are no existing buildings or farm structures on site and the site is not in close proximity to an existing working farm. I note the applicant has stated he currently operates a number of holiday homes on the island and offers a farm experience. I have viewed the information brochure submitted by the applicant for his current holiday homes. It is in my opinion that the current proposal for four short term let units on a woodland site devoid from any existing building or farm structures and the limited farm experience on offer is not in compliance with objective RP 5-5 which encourages the utilisation of disused and derelict housing/building stock in towns and villages or the re-use of the existing housing stock in the countryside.

- 7.7. I note the Planning Authority refused permission as they consider the site is outside any defined settlement boundary and within an area defined as a “Tourism and Rural Diversification Area” and lies within an area of “High Value Landscape” and not associated with any farm complex which fails to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 10 of the CDP regarding Tourist Facilities. I have reviewed objective TO-10 Tourist Accommodation, which encourages tourism related facilities including accommodation within existing settlements. I note it also supports Agri-Tourism enterprises and other initiatives in conjunction with established rural activities such as fishing, walking, cycling mountain biking, surfing, equestrian sports and other activities. A limited number of tourist accommodation could be included in association with such enterprises subject generally to the renovation of existing structures or redundant agricultural farm buildings as well as limited new buildings on an appropriate scale. I note the applicant is not utilising existing structures or redundant agricultural farm buildings, and in relation to scale, the proposed short term let units may have a small-scale floor area, but they are spread out across a large area of 1.06hectares. Therefore, I do not consider the overall layout is an appropriate scale for the location. In addition, I have concerns that there is a limited agri-tourism element involved in the proposed development and therefore I do not consider the proposal complies with TO-10 objective.
- 7.8. In relation to objective TO-11, tourist accommodation shall generally encourage local holiday accommodation within established settlement boundaries and that such development relates sympathetically to the scale and level of development and

facilities in the locality. The proposed development is not located within an established settlement boundary. The site is located over 1km by road from Rerrin Village, walking distance of 20 minutes. Therefore, I consider the proposal is outside any settlement boundary (defined and undefined) and I do not consider that the proposed 4 units is appropriate to the level of facilities in the locality.

- 7.9. Objective RP 5-28 relates to Small Scale Agri-Tourism Accommodation, which encourages appropriately scaled agri-tourism on-farm accommodation development to locate within existing or adjacent to farm complexes, such as the renovation of barns, outhouses or other existing structures or the siting of appropriately scaled camping type accommodation within existing farm complexes for owner run agri-tourism/rural business use as short-term holiday home accommodation, subject to normal planning considerations. I do not consider that the applicant is providing short term accommodation for agri-tourism, the site is not located on or adjacent to a farm complex and does not include the renovation or any structure. Therefore, I do not consider the proposal complies with objective RP5-28 of the CDP.
- 7.10. Having regard to the location of the proposed development of short term letting units within a Tourism and Rural Diversification Area which is removed from any established settlement boundary and farming complex and does not involve the renovation of any existing structure or associated with agri-tourism, I consider the proposal would contravene the objectives RP5-5, RP5-28, TO-10 and TO-11 of the CDP and would set an undesirable precedent for similar development in a rural/High Value Landscape.
- 7.11. **Visual Impact**
- 7.12. The planning authority refused permission as it was considered that by reason of its design, scale and location in an area of High Value Landscape, between the road and the sea, would not fit appropriately into the rural/coastal/high value landscape and would have an adverse impact on the scenic and visual amenity of the area. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to objective GI14-12 of the CDP which seeks to preserve the character of all important views and prospects including sea views. The proposal would significantly impact on the coastal amenity and character of the area.

- 7.13. The grounds of appeal state that the proposal will not impact the coastal views and does comply with GI14-12. The location is secluded with considerable amount of woodland and the houses will not be visible from the road. More trees will be planted, no change to the visual impact from the road.
- 7.14. I note the subject site which is located within a High Value Landscape as per CDP and objective GI14-12: General Views and Prospects applies to the site. The objective requires any development to preserve the character of all important views and prospects, particularly sea views, river or lake views, views of unspoilt mountains, upland or coastal landscapes, views of historical or cultural significance (including buildings and townscapes) and views of natural beauty as recognised in the Draft Landscape Strategy. The Landscape Character type is described as “rugged ridge peninsulas”, the landscape value is very high, landscape sensitivity is very high, and the landscape importance is national. In this regard I have assessed the proposed site layout, the proposed house 1 is located approximately 110 metres from the coastline, houses 2 & 3 are located 50 metres from the coastline, house 4 is located over 30 metres from the coastline. Parts of the subject site are overgrown with woodland and scrub; the proposed housing units are located within the open areas with views towards the coast. I viewed the subject site from Lawence Cove Marina (across the bay from the subject site), the proposed housing units will be visible from the Marina, and potentially impact views from the Marina, in addition, the proposed development will be visible from the sea and may impact the rural views from passing boats/tourists. Therefore, in my opinion, I do not consider that that proposed development respect the sea views or the coastal landscape and has the potential to negatively impact the character of these important views.
- 7.15. I note the subject site is within a High Value Landscape and as such any proposed development should respect the character of the landscape. There are a number of trees on site, and these will help to screen the proposed development, however, I consider that the applicant should have taken into account the high value landscape and provided additional landscaping in order for the proposed development to integrate within the landscape. The landscape value and sensitivity are very high with a national importance landscape, and this should be protected from inappropriate development.

- 7.16. Having regard to the location of the proposed development on a woodland & greenfield site with views towards the coastline, I consider that the proposed development could potentially negatively impact the visual amenity of the area and impact the character of the high value landscape.
- 7.17. **Design**
- 7.18. The Planning Authority refused permission as they considered that the proposed development, by reason of its design, scale and location in an area of High Value Landscape, between the road and the sea, would not fit appropriately into the rural/coastal/High Value Landscape and would have an adverse impact on the scenic and visual amenity of the area.
- 7.19. The grounds of appeal state that the design used is agricultural and military style which is reflective of the heritage of the area. This type of design was used in the service building of the nearby Wild Atlantic Glamping, which fits in very appropriately to the landscape. The scale is very modest at 51.52sqm, each house will be well insulated and alternative energy sources will be utilised.
- 7.20. I have assessed the proposed design, the proposed housing units will have an overall height of 4.6 metres and a floor area of 51.52sqm, they will consist of 2 bedrooms, kitchen, living area, toilet and utility. The proposed finishes include black corrugated metal cladding on timber frame for the exterior walls, windows and doors to be black powder coated aluminium, pitched roof will be black corrugated metal sheeting. The proposed units are dispersed on the site, House 1 is located to the west of the access track, and over 40 metres to house 2 and 3 which are side by side to the south and house 4 is located to the east at a distance of 40 metres from house 2. The finished floor level of each dwelling varies from 7.85m asl to 4.7m asl. Car parking is provided a short walk from each unit. The applicant has not provided a design statement or visuals, houses 1 & 4 are separated from the proposed house 2 & 3. The layout is dispersed with an extensive access track and associated pedestrian access to each unit. The proposed units are not clustered, and an extensive area of rural landscape will be used which does not adhere to a sustainable approach to development within a rural area.
- 7.21. Having regard to the proposed site layout and the finishes proposed, I do not consider the proposed development respects the high value landscape of Bere

Island. The units are dispersed within a rural area and has the potential to lead to further development on this rural site which is located outside any defined settlement boundary.

8.0 AA Screening

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

The subject site is located on Bere Island, approximately 600 metres west of Rerrin Village. The site is located approximately 800 metres south of Beara Peninsula SPA (Site code: 4155).

The proposed development comprises of 4 no. holiday homes, onsite effluent treatment unit and all associated site works.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site.

The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works consists of a small-scale development of 4 individual short-term letting units.
- Separation distance to the nearest European site at 800 metres north of Beara Peninsula SPA and lack of connections to the European site.
- Taking into account screening determination by planning authority.

I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

9.0 Recommendation

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

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the location of proposed development outside of any defined settlement boundary removed from the existing service cluster/village of Rerrin, sited within a rural area categorised in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 as a “Tourism and Rural Diversification Area” and lies within an area of High Value Landscape on Bere Island. It is considered that the proposed development is removed from any settlement boundary/village/service cluster and does not involve the renovation of any existing structure or associated with agri-tourism and would contravene objective RP5-5, RP 5-28, TO-10 and objective TO 10-11 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 - 2028, would set an undesirable precedent for similar development in a rural/High Value Landscape area and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. Having regard to the location of the proposed development within a High Value Landscape as set out in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 where emphasis is placed on the importance of designing with the landscape and of siting development to minimise visual intrusion, it is considered that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the scenic and visual amenity of the area and would be contrary objective GI 14-12 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 which seeks to preserve the character of all important views and prospects including sea views. The proposed development would significantly impact on the coastal amenity and character of the area would fail to be adequately absorbed and integrated into the landscape, would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and would set an undesirable precedent for other such development in the vicinity. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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

Jennifer McQuaid
Planning Inspector

8th July 2025

Appendix A: Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ABP-322202-25
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of 4 no. houses for short-term letting, vehicular entrance and internal roads and footpaths, effluent treatment unit and percolation system and all associated site works.
Development Address	Ardagh, Bere Island, Beara, Co. Cork
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2. <input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
<input type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2,	

<p>Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p>No Screening required.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</p>	<p>Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 10b(i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units. The following may also be considered: Class 1(a) of Part 2 (rural restructuring/hedgerow removal); and Class 10(dd) of Part 2 relating to private roads in the form of driveways</p>

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

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	ABP-322202-25
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of 4 no. houses for short-term letting, vehicular entrance and internal roads and footpaths, effluent treatment unit and percolation system and all associated site works.
Development Address	Ardagh, Bere Island, Beara, Co. Cork
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal consists of 4 no. short-term letting holiday homes within the rural area of Bere Island. • The development will consist of typical construction and related activities and the site works. However, it is not envisaged that the works will result in the production of significant waste, emissions or pollutants. • Surface water will be discharged to an onsite soakaway. • Wastewater will be discharged to an onsite wastewater treatment system.
Location of development (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	<p>Given the rural nature of the proposal with connection to onsite services for wastewater, water and surface water, there are no significant sensitivities in the immediate area. The subject site is not located within a designated site, the closest are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beara Peninsula SPA (Site code: 4155) located approximately 800m to the south. • Hungry Hill Bog NHA (Site code: 001059) located approximately 6km northeast of the subject site. • Roancarrigbeg and Roancarrigmore pNHA (site code: 001073) is located 5.5km northeast of the subject site. • Sheep's Head SAC & pNHA (site code: 000102) is located approximately 7km south of the subject site. • Glanmore Bog SAC & pNHA (site code: 001879) is located approximately 7km north of the subject site.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pullleen Harbour Bog NHA (site code: 002416) is located approximately 8.5km west of the subject site. • Cara Mountains SAC & pNHA (site code: 000093) is located approximately 11km northeast of the subject site. • Kenmare River SAC (site code: 002158) is located approximately 11.5km northwest of the subject site. <p>My Appropriate Assessment Screening concludes that the proposed development would not likely have a significant effect on any European Site.</p> <p>The subject site is located outside any flood risk area for coastal and fluvial flooding.</p>
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site size measures 1.03ha. The size of the development is not exceptional in the context of a rural environment. • There are no dwellings in close proximity to the proposed development. • There is no real likelihood of significant cumulative effects within the existing and permitted projects in the area.
Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

DP/ADP: _____ Date: _____

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

Appendix B: Water Framework Directive Screening

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING**Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality**

An Bord Pleanála ref. no.	ABP-322202-25	Townland, address	Ardagh, Bere Island, Beara, Co. Cork
Description of project		Construction of 4 number holiday homes and all associated site works.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		The site is located within the rural area of Bere Island; the site is not zoned and connection to onsite wastewater and private well are required. On site soakaways are proposed to deal with surface water on site. The site is slightly elevated from the coastline and will require some cut and fill, however, is it not considered significant. There are no water features on site or adjacent the subject site. The site is not within a flood zone area.	
Proposed surface water details		Surface water will be disposed of onsite soakaways.	
Proposed water supply source & available capacity		Private onsite well.	

Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues		Onsite wastewater treatment system required.				
Others?						
Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection						
Identified water body	Distance to (m)	Water body name(s) (code)	WFD Status	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk	Identified pressures on that water body.	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)
e.g. lake, river, transitional and coastal waters, groundwater body, artificial (e.g. canal) or heavily modified body.	Adjacent Berehaven Groundwater	Berehaven Coastal Waterbody (IE_SW_180_0000) The site is located within	Coastal water status is described as High. Groundwater status is	Coastal water is described as Not at Risk Groundwater is described as Not at Risk.	None identified	Potential surface water run-off

		groundwater Body Beara Sneem Islands (IE_SW_G_02 0)	described as Good (period for GW 2016- 2021).				
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Water body receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
1.	Coastal	Berehaven Coastal Waterbody (IE_SW_18 0_0000)	Possibly surface water run off	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard constructio n practice CEMP	No - due to distance	Screened out
2.	Ground	Groundwater r Body	Pathways exist through bedrock	Spillages	Standard constructio	No	Screened Out

		Beara Sneem Islands (IE_SW_G_ 020)			n practice CEMP		
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
4.	Ground	Groundwater r Body Beara Sneem Islands (IE_SW_G_ 020)	Pathways exist through bedrock.	Spillages Possible contamination from wastewater treatment system	SuD features – on site soakaways to be installed. Tertiary Treatment system to be installed as per EPA Code of Practice 2021	No	Screened Out

5.	Coastal	Berehaven Coastal Waterbody (IE_SW_180_0000)	Possibly existing drainage ditches	hydrocarbon spillages Possible contamination from wastewater treatment system	Suds features Tertiary Treatment system to be installed as per EPA Code of Practice 2021	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	N/A						

