



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report ABP-322296-25

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<b>Development</b>	Primary care centre to include one retail unit and two GP practices
<b>Location</b>	Saint Patricks Mills, Douglas, Cork
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Cork City Council
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	2443065
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Infrastructure Investment Fund ICAV – Valley Healthcare Fund
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Grant Permission
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	Third Party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Eoin Lane t/a Be Framed
<b>Observer(s)</b>	None
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025
<b>Inspector</b>	Matthew McRedmond

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Appendix 1 – Form 1: EIA Pre-Screening & Form 2: Preliminary Examination

Appendix 2 – AA Screening

Appendix 3 – WFD Impact Assessment

## 1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site is located in Douglas, Cork City, immediately south/southeast of the N40, Cork South Ring Road. The site is located within the St. Patrick's Mills, which is a business park, to the west of Douglas village. The site is generally triangular, 1.29ha in area, with the Douglas GAA pitches located to the south and a disused and overgrown car park to the east. Existing businesses, commercial premises and further car park space is provided further east.
- 1.2. There a range of services, amenities and land uses located within 500m of the site at Douglas district centre to the east.

## 2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development consists of the following:
  - Four storey primary care centre consisting of offices, support rooms, treatment/consulting rooms, staff facilities, storage and circulation
  - 2no. GP practices at ground floor
  - 1no. retail unit at ground floor
  - 5,041sqm Gross Floor Area approximately
  - Solar PV Panel and plant room at roof level
  - Public realm upgrades including reduction in car parking spaces and relocation of zebra crossings within St. Patricks Mills complex.
  - Car Parking, landscaping and all associated site works.

## 3.0 Planning Authority Decision

### 3.1. Decision

Cork City Council granted permission for the proposed development on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025, subject to 29no. conditions, which are mostly standard. The following are of note:

- Condition 10: Prior to commencement of development the applicant shall submit drawings and details, to be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority, showing how the development is in compliance with DMURS.
- Condition 23: a) Prior to commencement of the development the developer shall submit to the planning authority, full details of the quantity and composition of any and all healthcare waste anticipated to arise in this development. (b) Healthcare waste shall be disposed of in a manner agreed with Cork City Council and shall not be presented for refuse collection or for disposal at any sanitary landfill site. Prior to commencement of the development the developer shall submit to the planning authority for written agreement, proposals for disposal of this waste.

### **3.2. Planning Authority Reports**

#### **3.2.1. Planning Reports**

The Local Authority Planner had regard to the locational context of the site, national and local planning policy context, the referral responses received, and any submissions made on the application. Their assessment included the following:

- Site is located within ZO7 – District Centre, of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 that allows for medical and healthcare uses. The principle of the proposed primary care centre, retail use and GP practices is therefore acceptable.
- The application was assessed against paragraph 11.159 of the CDP in terms of need for the proposal, shared uses, integration and the 15-minute city concept.
- Section 3.82, to support Slaintecare and a move to primary and community-based care system is noted. Objective 10.84, to improve connectivity of St. Patrick's Wollen Mills is also noted.
- Existing challenges in terms of accessibility is noted. Further information required in relation to selection of subject site.

- Architectural massing, choice of materials and elevational treatment acceptable. Further information required in relation to urban design strategy, site selection and building design/layout.
- No residential amenity impacts expected. Hours of operation and numbers of employees to be requested.
- Serious concerns in relation to the access off Douglas Road west. Further information required in relation to upgrades to existing road junction and clarity on issues with regard to proposed road upgrades overlapping existing adjacent buildings and third party property. Concerns also raised in relation to pedestrian, cycling and vehicular accessibility, car parking provision, the submitted mobility management plan and public lighting. Further information is requested in this regard.
- Further information required in relation to drainage details, culverting of open drains and connections to existing culverts.
- Additional details required in relation to noise impact, air quality, climate action and energy. Along with a construction and environmental management plan and a construction waste management plan.
- Connections to water/wastewater is feasible as confirmed by Uisce Eireann.
- The Planning Authority did not have sufficient information to make a decision on the application, which was therefore the subject to a further information request on a number of items. The Area Planner's recommendation was supported by a report from the Senior Executive Planner.

#### Further Information Response

3.2.2. The applicant submitted a further information response in February 2025 that included the following details:

- A revised site layout to provide safe pedestrian/cycle route, reduced from 3m to 2m with a 1m planting strip, from the proposed development to Douglas Street West.
- Subject site is the only suitably scaled site that is zoned District Centre in Douglas, that could accommodate the proposal. The subject proposal is also

within easy walking distance of a range of bus services that connect to the wider area.

- The location of the site was selected through a tendering process with the HSE, where other landowners/developers put forward alternative locations. The subject site was chosen from a competitive tender process due to the connectivity of the site to the Town Centre and public transport accessibility.
- The primary care system is designed as an initial stop in health care, to prevent patients being admitted to hospital. Furthermore, it allows residents to remain in their own homes for longer and to be treated in the local community. The proposal will also reduce travel times and reduce reliance on other health departments including Cork University Hospital (CUH).
- Opening hours will be 9-5 with an estimated 53 staff on full/part time basis, with a further 27no. staff in the GP practices. 153 patients per day will be treated in the Primary Care Centre with a further 14 patients per hour treated within the 2no. GP practices.
- The red line site boundary is the only land available to the applicant for the subject proposal. Blue line lands are in the ownership of the landowner and are not available for realignment of the proposed layout.
- A revised layout as discussed with the city Architects Department, to provide a south facing entrance by way of a reorientated building and amended building footprint, to enhance the urban form, legibility and to allow future development of adjacent lands. Connectivity to adjoining lands has also been facilitated.
- Reduction of car parking by 25% from 100 to 75 in number and increase in set down area.
- Pedestrian layout revised with a reduced shared cycle/pedestrian path to 2m in width and a 1m planted buffer.
- Speed bumps added to the internal access road, right turn lane removed at Douglas Road West and improved pedestrian facilities added at this junction. Access junction modified to comply with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).

- Revised cycle parking to provide for visitors and staff.
- Updated Road Safety Audit (RSA) to address revised road layout.
- Comparison with Primary Care Centre in Ballincollig in relation to trip rates provided. Subject proposal is considered to have higher levels of traffic which is more appropriate. Junction analysis also updated at West Douglas Street to accurately reflect recorded turning movements. Right turning lane at Douglas Street West into the Mills can continue to operate with additional traffic in place.
- The single lane exit from St. Patricks Mills to West Douglas Street shows significant delays in the PM Peak in the modelled scenario. RFC is 81%, which is below capacity.
- Construction traffic is included in an updated Traffic and Transport Assessment and is considered to have less of an impact than operational traffic on the surrounding road network.
- Updated mobility management plan to include mobility targets and discourage travel by private car.
- Revised public lighting design prepared in consultation with Lighting Department of Cork City Council.
- Confirmation that no access to southeast of the site is proposed. Future access to Galway's Lane to the south is facilitated.
- Signage and wayfinding are included on the proposed Site Layout Plan.
- Storm drainage Strategy submitted following consultation with area Engineer. This includes SuDs features to limit run off such as green roofs, tree pits, and permeable paving. In addition, the storm design includes an attenuation tank to deal with any surplus storm water including tidal surge. Applicant flood risk assessment has been updated to include this revised information.
- Inward Noise Assessment submitted that illustrate acoustic glazing will achieve appropriate noise levels.
- An Air Quality Assessment provided that indicate a slight impact on existing air quality as a result of traffic generated. No mitigation is considered necessary.



- A Construction and Environmental Management Plan and Construction Waste Management Plan submitted.

#### Planning Authority Response

- 3.2.3. Having regard to the zoning of the site, the need for primary care centres and the importance for a centre in the south east of the City, and the further information addressing access and connectivity concerns, the location is considered acceptable. Details of uses, opening hours and staff/patient numbers are considered acceptable.
- 3.2.4. Given the District Centre Zoning, the proximity of the Town Centre and numerous public transport options, the location of the site is acceptable. Future connections to the south and west are acceptable. The acceptance of revised proposals by the Strategic Transport Officer and Transport and Mobility Sections are noted.
- 3.2.5. The proposed amendments to the building design and layout are welcomed by the City Architect and are considered satisfactory.
- 3.2.6. Revisions to the proposed access way are considered acceptable. Conditions are recommended to agree access to the vacant site to the east and the horizontal alignment of the access to the primary care centre.
- 3.2.7. Amended cycle parking arrangements are considered satisfactory.
- 3.2.8. Final details of proposed access to St. Patricks Mills are to be agreed by way of condition, but are generally supported as they improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- 3.2.9. Reduced number of car parking spaces is considered acceptable, as is the revised traffic and transport assessment and mobility management plan.
- 3.2.10. Outdoor lighting proposal is considered appropriate with conditions recommended related to same.
- 3.2.11. Drainage arrangements are considered acceptable by the Council Executive Engineer.
- 3.2.12. Noise, air, climate action and construction management details are considered satisfactory by the Engineering Department.
- 3.2.13. The Planning Authority therefore accepted the Further Information as addressing the issues raised and recommended a grant of permission subject to conditions.

### 3.2.14. Other Technical Reports

- PA Drainage Division – Require further detailed design information, along with clarity on issues of ownership and the right to connect to the existing culvert under the N40. Details required included SuDs, storm water management, updated flood risk assessment and pumping station details. The applicant provided a response to all RFI items, and the Drainage section recommended a grant of permission subject to conditions.
- Urban Roads and Street Design (Community, Culture and Placemaking) – Pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding unclear, straight sections of internal access road should be avoided. Following a request for FI, the applicant was considered to have addressed the concerns in relation to urban road and street design.
- Contributions – No objection to the proposed development subject to payment of relevant contributions of €277,818.14.
- Traffic – Joint report between the Strategic Transport Officer and the Traffic Regulation and Safety Section. Sought further information in relation to pedestrian accessibility, cycle parking, vehicular accessibility, parking provision, trip generation rates and the transport assessment, and public lighting. Following submission of further information, the Traffic and Transport Section had no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions.
- City Architect – Further information requested in relation to the layout of site selection, urban design strategy and site strategy. The massing and elevational treatment were considered acceptable. The City Architect considered the FI response addressed the concerns raised, noted the undeveloped site to the east, which could bring better connectivity, legibility and placemaking, however the revised proposal achieves better legibility and placemaking through the creation of a more generous and people-orientated south-facing public space.
- Infrastructure – Site will be well served by bus and no issue from an infrastructure development perspective.

- Area Engineer – Requested further information in relation to junction at West Douglas Street and clarity on drawings showing roads overlapping existing buildings. No report provided following FI stage was provided on file, but the planner’s report indicated they had no objection.
- Environment – Requested further information in relation to a number of items including noise assessment, air quality, climate action and construction management. Following receipt of FI, Environment section had no objection subject to conditions.

### 3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- 3.3.1. Uisce Eireann (UE) – No Objection to the proposal, subject to conditions. Water and Waste water connections are feasible without upgrades.
- 3.3.2. Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) – Requested that Uisce Eireann/Cork City Council confirm there is sufficient capacity, so it does not overload existing facilities and to be notified when further information is submitted, and a decision is reached on this application. No works in vicinity of adjacent river to facilitate this development without prior approval of IFI. No objection to the subject proposal.

### 3.4. Third Party Observations

- 3.4.1. 2no. submissions were submitted in relation to the subject application. One by a single business owner and one on behalf of a number of businesses in the area. The main issues raised can be summarised as follows:
- Provision of 3m wide footpath would result in large delivery vehicles to existing businesses overrunning onto the proposed pedestrian path, negatively impacting on operations. Existing accesses are for operational, health and safety and emergency exit purposes.
  - Removal and reorientation of car parking spaces could potentially negatively impact existing business operations, which is contrary to the employment and economic activity strategy of the current development plan for the Douglas District. This should be resolved before the application proceeds.

- The proposal does not appear to maintain existing wheelchair access, which is contrary to equality legislation.
- Concern in relation entry and exit to and from Douglas Street West.
- Concern in relation to construction traffic impacts on road surface, impact on structural stability of buildings, impacts on already poor sewerage/drainage system in the Mills complex, and access to businesses during the construction period.
- No details in relation to demolition of part of premises adjacent to unit 29b, and structural stability of same. Structural integrity of all buildings should be monitored during construction.
- Existing disused car parking area to east of proposal should be reopened.
- Existing foul sewage odours should be addressed as it runs under the main entranceway.

## 4.0 Planning History

4.1.1. There is no planning history for the subject site specifically. Relevant applications in the surrounding area are as follows:

- **Cork City CC Ref. 25/43667:** Application for padel club indoor courts/indoor recreation area and associated works at vacant car park lot to the east of subject site. Currently at Further Information stage at time of writing, that requested consideration of the proposed primary care centre and associated connectivity, among other matters.
- **Cork City CC Ref. 19/4301:** Permission granted for modifications and elevational changes to existing retail unit 33. The proposed development includes partial demolition and reconstruction of the north-western corner of the building to improve vehicular and pedestrian access as per the subject application. I note from my site visit partial demolition has taken place and the applicant has submitted that these works will be complete to facilitate pedestrian/cycleway enhancements.

- **Cork City CC Ref. 14/6570, 14/4350, 09/5233, 2140593 and others:** Permission granted for various upgrades and works to Douglas GAA to the south including flood lighting at 2no. pitches, boundary fences, all weather pitches and ball walls.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. National and Regional Planning Policy

5.1.1. The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to the year 2040. A key element of the NPF is a commitment towards ‘compact growth’, which focuses on a more efficient use of land and resources through reusing previously developed or under-utilised land and buildings. National Strategic Outcome No. 1 is ‘Compact Growth’. Activating strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority.

5.1.2. The NPF contains several policy objectives that articulate the delivery of healthy communities as follows:

- **Section 6.2 Healthy Communities** - Sláintecare and a universal health and social care system is the overarching vision and policy direction for Ireland’s healthcare system. The objective is that everyone has access to “the right care, in the right place and at the right time”.

- **National Policy Objective 36:** Support the objectives of public health policy including the Healthy Ireland Framework and the National Physical Activity Plan, through integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.

- **NSO 10 – Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services** - The development of new healthcare facilities requires that consideration be given to the location, number, profile and needs of the population to ensure access to the most appropriate care, while also ensuring quality of care, particularly in relation to more complex acute hospital services. The ongoing implementation of Sláintecare and the Strategic Healthcare Investment Framework will have an important influence on the type and scale of regional healthcare services.

Expanding Community and Primary Care is at the heart of the Sláintecare vision. The development of Primary Care Centres (PCCs) is an important part of this vision. This will include the appropriate provision of PCCs, and accommodation based on local service and population needs. Expansion of primary care will involve refurbishments of existing buildings and where necessary new builds.

5.1.3. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region, 2020-2032 is relevant in terms of the aim to strengthen the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region.

5.1.4. Section 7.1.2 relates to Healthy Communities, and the following Regional Policy Objectives are relevant:

- **RPO 117 Childcare, Education, and Health Services** - It is an objective to improve access to quality childcare, education, and health services through initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan, alignment with Healthy Ireland and support development of outreach and community services for an expanding and ageing population.
- **RPO 118 - Universal Health Services** It is an objective to seek the delivery of better universal health services including mental health, at all levels of service delivery, including provision of 24 Hour Accident and Emergency Services and implementation of Sláintecare for an expanding and ageing population across the Region.

5.1.5. Relevant national policy also includes Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024 ('the Compact Settlement Guidelines') which supports the more intensive use of sites in locations served by existing facilities and public transport. The Compact Settlement Guidelines supersede the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and accompanying Urban Design Manual.

5.1.6. Section 4.4 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines provides key indicators of quality design and placemaking, which includes sustainable and efficient movement, ensuring places are well connected and accessible by sustainable modes and not dominated by cars. The Guidelines state that active travel should be prioritised

through design measures that seek to calm traffic and create street networks that feel safe and comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists.

- 5.1.7. Section 2.3 of the Compact guidelines references the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. It is noted that this manual puts well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities. DMURS places a strong focus on the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and on improving the safety of streets and enhancing placemaking.

## 5.2. **Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DEMURS), DoTTS, March 2013**

- 5.2.1. In terms of the design of the proposed development, including the entrance and access to the site, it is a requirement that they be considered against the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), DoTTS, March 2013. This Manual replaces DMRB in respect of all urban roads and streets and it does not differentiate between public and private urban streets, where a 60kph speed limit or less applies. The implementation of DMURS is obligatory and divergence from same requires written consent from relevant sanctioning authority (NRA, NTA or DTT&S). The Manual seeks to address street design within urban areas (i.e. cities, towns and villages) and it sets out an integrated design approach. Section 2.2.2 of the Manual addresses user priorities, that places pedestrians at the top of the user hierarchy. The need for walkable communities is provided as an issue of social equality, and design for pedestrians should be prioritised, with cyclists also given high priority.

## 5.3. **National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2023-2030**

- 5.3.1. The NBAP includes five strategic objectives aimed at addressing existing challenges and new and emerging issues associated with biodiversity loss. Section 59B(1) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 (as amended) requires the Board, as a public body, to have regard to the objectives and targets of the NBAP in the performance of its functions, to the extent that they may affect or relate to the functions of the Board. The impact of development on biodiversity, including species and habitats, can be assessed at a European, National and Local level and is taken into account in our decision-making having regard to the Habitats and Birds Directives, Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and other relevant legislation, strategy and policy where applicable.

#### **5.4. Climate Action Plan, 2025 [CAP25]**

- 5.4.1. It is noted within CAP25 that Key targets to further reduce transport emissions include a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled relative to business-as usual, a 50% reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share. In relation to buildings, it is noted that operational emissions in the built environment sector have decreased by 21% since 2018, and achievement of the first sectoral emissions ceilings is within reach. In 2025 it is proposed to transpose the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, publish a roadmap to phase out fossil fuel boilers, and increase the numbers of building energy rating (BER) assessors, OneStop-Shops, and Sustainable Energy Communities. It is stated within the Plan that, CAP25 is to be read in conjunction with CAP24, and as such I have set out a summary of same below.

#### **5.5. Climate Action Plan, 2024. [CAP24]**

- 5.5.1. 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 includes a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, significant increases in sustainable transport trips, and improved modal share.

#### **5.6. Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028**

- 5.6.1. The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 is the relevant statutory plan that applies to the subject site. The site is located within the south central suburbs of Cork City.

##### **Zoning**

- 5.6.2. The appeal site has a land use zoning of 'ZO 07 District Centre' which has an objective to 'provide for the development and enhancement of district centres as mixed use centres and as primary locations for retail, economic and residential



growth.’ Medical and Healthcare uses are listed as primary uses under this land use zone.

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

5.6.3. Section 3.82 provides that within Cork City, healthcare facilities are managed by a range of public, private and voluntary bodies. The Health Service Executive (HSE) is the primary organisation responsible for healthcare infrastructure in the city and is responsible for providing public health and social services. The public healthcare system is undergoing strategic change as part of the ‘Sláintecare’ ten-year programme. In addition to a range of investment proposals and care improvements, one of the key outputs of Sláintecare in terms of spatial planning implications is a strategy of transitioning towards a primary and community-based care system rather than the current hospital-centric model of health care.

5.6.4. Objective 3.27 relates to Healthcare Infrastructure and states the following:

*“To support the sustainable provision and expansion of hospitals and other healthcare facilities within the city including the provision of primary care centres and other specialist facilities at suitable locations, subject to proper planning and sustainable development considerations.”*

5.6.5. More specifically, Objective 10.83 outlines the context for Douglas Community Infrastructure:

*“During the lifetime of this Plan, Cork City Council will work with the Department of Education and other stakeholders and infrastructure providers to support provision of new and enhanced community facilities including schools, a primary care centre, and recreational and open space facilities.”*

5.6.6. Objective 10.84 relates to Douglas St. Patrick’s Woolen Mills:

*“To support proposals which improve the urban environment, facilitate greater connectivity, permeability and synergy with the wider District Centre and enhance the mixed use offering at the site.”*

5.6.7. Section 11.172 refers to Medical Related Practices and states: *“Currently premises for general practice and medical related consultants include a wide variety of building types ranging from adaptations of domestic premises for single practitioners to purpose built premises for larger group practices. Cork City Council will support the*

*provision of health care facilities in the City Centre, Urban Town Centres, District Centres and Neighbourhood and Local Centres.”*

5.6.8. Section 11.73 notes that in assessing applications for medical related practices, the following will be considered (not an exhaustive list):

1. Contribution to placemaking and to the 15-minute city and walkable neighbourhood concepts;
2. An audit by the applicant of existing facilities in the vicinity;
3. Impacts on the amenity of the area and privacy of adjacent neighbouring properties;
4. Proximity to public transport;
5. Adequate traffic management, including safe access, parking and drop-off;
6. Traffic generation;
7. Hours of operation;
8. Proposed signage

5.6.9. Other relevant objectives include Strategic Objective 3 – Transport and Mobility that states:

*“...To integrate land-use and transportation planning to improve movement for all across Cork City. To protect, improve and maintain the operation of national and strategic regional transport networks and assets. To promote and prioritise sustainable transport including active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport; housing and employment development will be prioritised in locations where it can be served by walking, cycling and public transport. Cork City Council will support the delivery of multi-modal travel integration, smart mobility and transport network and services that are accessible to all.*

*Proposal for new development in Cork City will be required to minimise the need for the private car, prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, be permeable, safe and secure for walking and cycling and where possible provide for filtered permeability....”*

5.6.10. And Strategic Objective 6 – Employment and Economy, which aims:

*“To support Cork City’s role as the economic driver for the region and the creation of a strong, resilient, diverse and innovative economy, and enable a just transition to a low carbon economy...Employment growth will be focused on the key strategic areas of the City Centre, docklands, urban towns, neighbourhoods, suburban district centres and strategic employment locations...”*

## **5.7. Natural Heritage Designations**

- 5.7.1. The site is not located within any designated site. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030) which is located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the site.

## **6.0 The Appeal**

### **6.1. Grounds of Appeal**

- 6.1.1. 1no. third-party appeal has been submitted against the decision of Cork City Council to grant permission for the proposed development.
- 6.1.2. The grounds of the appeal can be summarised as follows:
- Lack of procedural fairness as opportunity to comment on further information was denied following submission by the applicant. Proposed changes materially impact on the appellants property and business operations.
  - Significant concerns in relation to traffic exiting, turning right and entering turning left via South Douglas Road. No proposals to address or mitigate safety issues at this location.
  - Unacceptable impact on delivery area of ‘Be-Framed’ business premises, with proposal to enter through front of business unworkable. Applicant’s claim that no deliveries take place at the entrance to the north of the appellant’s property is incorrect and this entrance is in fact essential to the safe delivery of goods, including large frames of glass.
  - No proper investigation of concerns outlined in relation to impact on business operations.

- Loss of dedicated parking spaces to the front of the appellant's premises, which is a long-standing agreement despite the absence of road markings. This will severely impact on deliveries, staff parking and customer access and will undermine the economic viability of the business.
- Amendments to the proposed layout would likely require a complete rethink of the access strategy, but this should not be at the expense of serious health, safety and business continuity issues.
- In summary, the proposal has failed to adequately consider traffic safety, existing business operational needs, and the principles of fair engagement and permission should be refused until these issues are addressed.

## 6.2. Applicant Response

The applicant provided a written response to the 1<sup>st</sup> no. third party appeal. The response can be summarised as follows:

- The development of this District Centre site for a primary care centre is well supported by Development Plan policy and by future population and employment projections for Douglas.
- The need for the proposed development is well established in terms of Slaintecare programme and providing additional healthcare services in the local community.
- In response to the grounds of the appeal, the significant upgrades to the access to/from Douglas Street West will enhance safety for road users, including pedestrians, and the proposed upgrades are supported by the Planning Authority Traffic Regulation and Safety Report on the application. Amendments include footpath widening, relocation of pedestrian crossing, single lane exit and additional pedestrian crossing point.
- Issue of car parking layout amendments is submitted as a legal rather than planning issue. Relevant consents from the Mills complex landowner were included with the application. Sufficient car parking will be maintained to service existing businesses. The proposed pedestrian/cycle path will improve

accessibility, despite the removal of parking spaces. This is consistent with the theme of compact growth.

- There is no defined set-down area adjacent to the appellants property as claimed. Photos provided illustrate deliveries impeding the pedestrian path, which would force pedestrians on to the roadway. No parking signs further support the fact this is not an appropriate loading area. There is ample space in surrounding parking areas to allow safe and convenient loading, via a dedicated pedestrian crossing point.
- In relation to public consultation, it is noted it is at the discretion of the Planning Authority to deem further information as 'significant' and therefore seek to advertise. The applicant submits that the appellant had adequate opportunity to comment, and these issues were taken into consideration in the final decision by Cork City Council.

### **6.3. Planning Authority Response**

6.3.1. No response on file.

### **6.4. Observations**

None.

## **7.0 Assessment**

7.1. Having reviewed the details and appeal documentation on the file, the submissions made, having inspected the site, and having regard to relevant local and national policy and guidance, I conclude that the main issues are the following:

- Procedural Issues
- Traffic and Transport
- Impact on Existing Business Operations

### **7.2. Procedural Issues**

- 7.2.1. The third-party appeal raises procedural issue in relation to the application. This issue relates to the lack of opportunity to comment on the further information as submitted as it was not considered to be 'significant' by the Planning Authority.
- 7.2.2. Issues associated with advertisement of significant further information, as raised by the appellant are noted. However, the decision to seek views of the public with regard to further information is a function and a matter for the Planning Authority to decide. Advertisement of further information is not a matter for the Board, and I do not propose to address these issues in this report. The appellant has taken the opportunity to appeal the decision of the Planning Authority based on all available information associated with the Planning Application, including the further information details, and I am satisfied these can be addressed as part of my assessment of this appeal.

### **7.3. Traffic and Transport Issues**

- 7.3.1. The appeal raises concerns in relation to the operability and safety of the access to Douglas Street West (referred to as South Douglas Road in the appeal) from St. Patrick's Mills complex. These concerns are particularly noted as being in relation to traffic exiting the Mills Business Park and turning right, as well as vehicles turning left as they enter The Mills entrance road. The appeal states that inadequate visibility will be provided to allow appropriate levels of road safety.
- 7.3.2. I note the applicant has submitted detailed proposals for the revised access to the Mills including enhanced pedestrian crossings, relocated pedestrian crossings, speed bumps, resurfacing and alterations to the layout of the junction at Douglas Street West.
- 7.3.3. At response to Further Information stage the applicant confirmed that the right turning lane exiting the St. Patrick's Mills junction has been removed to provide a single lane exit, widened footpaths to enhance pedestrian safety and provision of a zebra crossing to improve crossing facilities. The signalised pedestrian crossing facility to the north of the junction has also been relocated to the south side and amended to a zebra crossing. This will enhance pedestrian crossing facilities and associated safety.
- 7.3.4. I note the additional traffic analysis as submitted at Further Information stage that included an analysis of the revised junction layout with single lane exit to Douglas

Street West. A maximum RFC (ratio of flow to capacity) of 81% occurs at the minor arm of the junction (exit arm) in the PM Peak for the 2041 Development Scenario, which is a maximum increase of 19% for right turning vehicles from St. Patricks Woolen Mills exiting on to Douglas Street West (also known as the R851 as referenced in the TTA). This capacity level is a delay of approximately 45 seconds in the PM Peak period on the minor arm of this junction. I note the analysis concludes that the junction is operating below capacity for all scenarios up to and including the 2041 with development scenarios.

- 7.3.5. The right turn filter lane from Douglas Street West was determined to be at a maximum of 23% for all scenarios modelled. The 95<sup>th</sup> percentile queue for the right turn filter lane is 1.4pcu's with an 8 second delay. This would indicate insignificant delays may occur as a result of the proposed development. Although the proposal may result in peak traffic flows of 133 trips in the AM and 113 trips in the PM, the traffic analysis presented indicates that predicted traffic will have a negligible impact on the operation of the junction with Douglas Road West from a capacity point of view.
- 7.3.6. I consider the wider benefits of providing the subject proposal at this location to outweigh the identified negligible traffic impacts. The site is in a District Centre location, supports Strategic Objectives 3 and 6 of the CDP in relation to employment and transport/mobility, is easily accessible to a range of amenities and services in the area including public transport, will provide an essential service to the wider area in terms of healthcare and as provided for under CDP policy as outlined in section 5.5 of my report and specifically objectives 3.27 and 10.83 of the Development Plan that seek to provide these services in accessible locations. I note the Traffic Regulation and Safety Report and Urban roads and Street Design Report by the Planning Authority raised no objection to the proposed upgrades, subject to conditions.
- 7.3.7. In addition, the overall road upgrades to improve the junction with Douglas Street West and enhance pedestrian/cyclist facilities, will enhance the overall environment of St. Patrick's Mills as outlined in the following sections and I therefore see no reason to refuse permission on traffic and transport grounds in this instance.

- 7.3.8. Section 11.73 of the Development Plan notes a number of factors that must be addressed in assessing applications for medical related practices. I consider the subject proposal to contribute positively to these requirements by enhancing placemaking and contribution to the principles of the 15-minute city, good accessibility to public transport, enhance the mix of uses in the area without impacting negatively on adjoining properties, enhanced public realm to manage traffic generation and movements, with appropriate technical details in relation to opening hours and signage provision.
- 7.3.9. I note the appeal states a concern in relation to construction traffic impacts. I consider operational traffic impacts to provide the worst-case scenario in relation to volume on the Mills access road. Construction traffic will be short term and temporary in nature and will be appropriately managed through a final Construction and Environmental Management Plan to be required for approval by the Planning Authority by way of condition.

#### **7.4. Impact on Businesses**

- 7.4.1. The appeal states that the subject proposal will lead to an unacceptable impact on existing business operations due to a loss of car parking and impact on the existing loading/deliveries that occur on the north side of their property.
- 7.4.2. I note the details on file in relation to existing loading that occurs at the appellant's business premises, including the photographic evidence submitted. I further noted the parking arrangements associated with this business premises on my visit to the site, including 2no. unmarked/informal spaces at kerbside in front of the 'Be-Framed' business, 2no. marked spaces on the west side of the access road and an additional 7-8no. spaces in a marked parking area, approximately 5-6m further to the west. There is also additional parking in the wider parking allocation of the Mills complex, within 20-30m of the front entrance.
- 7.4.3. I consider the provisions of the Compact Settlement Guidelines and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) to be informative in this regard.
- 7.4.4. The Compact Guidelines notes it will be necessary to design settlements at every level to support the transition away from private car use and to support ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. I note the existing loading/delivery arrangement at the subject premises, currently impinges on the



surface marked pedestrian path, that leads to walkers and cyclists having to enter the vehicular pathway when loading/delivery is taking place. This is at a location where there is already limited visibility due to building orientation and proximity to the roadway, which includes the pedestrian path. I consider the proposed provision of a 2-3m dedicated cycle/pedestrian path, with a 1m planted buffer in section, will provide an appropriate elevation of pedestrian priority at this location.

- 7.4.5. Furthermore, I consider the provisions of DMURS, in terms of order of priority of road users to be particularly important at this location. While a formalised pedestrian/cycle path will undoubtedly impact on the informal delivery practices of a single business, the overall benefits to the St. Patrick's Mills complex will outweigh the need for minor amendments to delivery practices at this location. The proposed design provides appropriate priority for pedestrians and cyclists, while also providing an improved level of safety for vehicular traffic through re-surfacing, junction upgrades and the proposed pedestrian/cycle path. The enhanced pedestrian environment will provide a more attractive public realm for all trip modes to and from the Mill complex. Delivery to and from the side/service entrance of the subject property can still effectively be managed through parking within 10m of this entrance and access by way of a dedicated pedestrian crossing immediately adjacent. I consider this to be an appropriate resolution for the common benefit of the wider area in terms of upgrades to enhance road safety and to be an added benefit to the provision of an essential healthcare service within the community.
- 7.4.6. The proposed development is within a District Centre with a wide range of services and amenities that will benefit from being co-located with a healthcare proposal. This is consistent with the provisions of Objective 3.27 to provide healthcare infrastructure, Objective 10.83 to provide community infrastructure in Douglas and Objective 10.84 that seeks to improve the urban environment of St. Patrick's Woolen Mills.
- 7.4.7. Accessibility, permeability and connections to public transport will be enhanced by the subject proposal and as a result, travel by sustainable modes will be promoted. The premises referred to in the appeal will retain ample parking in the surrounding vicinity, with short walking distances to the front entrance and service entrance and I therefore do not believe there to be a reason for refusal in this regard.

## 8.0 EIA Screening

- 8.1.1. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

## 9.0 Water Framework Directive (WFD)

- 9.1. 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 based on the mitigation measures, drainage arrangements and management of surface water as set out in the proposed development. Please see WFD Assessment attached at Appendix 3 of this report.

## 10.0 AA Screening

- 10.1. Having reviewed the details on file and having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the location of the site within an adequately serviced urban area, the absence of strong ecological and/ or hydrological connections, and the physical separation distances to European Sites, I consider the potential of likely significant effects on European Sites arising from the proposed development, alone or in combination effects, can be reasonably excluded.

## 11.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission be granted based on the following reasons and considerations, and subject to the attached conditions.

## 12.0 Reasons and Considerations

12.1. Having regard to the zoning objective of the site in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, to the principle of the proposal within a District Centre that is easily accessible, to the infill nature of the site, and to the pattern of development in the vicinity, it is considered that the proposed development would not seriously injure the business operations of the area or of property in the vicinity, would represent an appropriate land use at this location, would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and parking, would not endanger public health, and would comply with the relevant provisions of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the National Planning Framework, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the southern region. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 13.0 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 received by the planning authority on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of February 2025, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

**Reason:** In the interest of clarity.

2. Details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings and boundaries shall be as submitted with the application, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority, prior to commencement of development.

**Reason:** In the interest of visual amenity.

3. Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water shall comply with the requirements of the relevant Section of the Council for such works and services.

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

4. Signage associated with development shall be restricted to those shown on the drawings submitted to the Planning Authority on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024, as amended by the plans and particulars received by the planning authority on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025. No further signage shall be erected on site without the prior written agreement of the Planning Authority. No permission is granted for any internally illuminated signage.

**Reason:** In the interest of visual amenity.

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

**Reason:** In the interests of clarity and public health.

6. The following requirements in terms of traffic, transportation and mobility shall be incorporated into the development and where required, revised plans and particulars demonstrating compliance with these requirements shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development:

(a) the applicant shall liaise with Cork City Council to ensure the provision of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at Douglas Road West (R851);

(b) details and the extent of all road markings and signage requirements on surrounding roads, shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for approval prior to the commencement of development;

(c) the roads and traffic arrangements serving the site (including arrangements for maintenance of sightlines, servicing of the site, and details of 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, before first occupation of the primary care centre;

(d) the proposed junction arrangement at Douglas Street West (R851), and the internal road network serving the proposed development including turning bays, junctions, parking areas, footpaths, cycle paths and kerbs, pedestrian crossings and

car parking bays, shall comply with the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Streets, the Cycle Design Manual (CDM) prepared by the National Transport Authority (NTA) 2023 and with any requirements of the planning authority for such road works;

(e) the materials used on roads and footpaths shall comply with the detailed standards of the planning authority for such road works;

(f) the developer shall carry out a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit of the constructed development on completion of the works and submit to the planning authority for approval and shall carry out and cover all costs of all agreed recommendations contained in the audit;

(g) all car parking spaces are reserved for the sole use of patrons and staff of the approved buildings;

(h) The future pedestrian/cycle connections to both the lands to the West and to Galway's Lane shall be constructed to the boundary of the proposed scheme to ensure unimpeded connectivity to the neighbouring zoned lands and shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the Primary Care Centre.

In default of agreement on any of these requirements, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

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

7. Prior to the opening of the development, a final Mobility Management Plan (MMP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority. This shall provide for incentives to encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking by occupants/staff employed in the development, details of a Mobility Manager and intervals for travel surveys. The mobility strategy shall be prepared and implemented by the management company for the development.

**Reason:** In the interest of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

8. A minimum of 10% of the proposed car parking spaces shall be provided with electrical connection points, to allow for functional electric vehicle charging. The remaining car parking spaces shall be fitted with ducting for electric connection points to allow for future fitout of charging points. Details of how it is proposed to

comply with these requirements shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

**Reason:** In the interest of sustainable transport.

9. The site shall be landscaped in accordance with a comprehensive scheme of landscaping, details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This scheme shall include the following:

(a) A plan to scale of not less than [1:500] showing –

(i) The species, variety, number, size and locations of all proposed trees and shrubs (pollinator friendly)

(ii) Detailed boundary treatment for all site boundaries

(iii) A maintenance plan for site landscaping

(b) The site shall be fully landscaped in accordance with the agreed landscaping plan within the first planting season following completion of the development.

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, 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.

10. Public lighting shall be provided in accordance with a scheme which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development. The scheme shall include lighting along pedestrian routes.

**Reason:** In the interest of amenity and public safety and to minimise disturbance to bats.

11. All service cables associated with the proposed development (such as electrical, telecommunications and communal television) shall be located underground. The cables shall avoid roots of any trees and hedgerows to be retained in the site.

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.

12. (a) The developer shall implement the glazing mitigation measures as specified within the Noise Impact Assessment

(b) Upon commissioning of the structure, noise from the premises shall not exceed the background Cork City Council Planning Department. For Inspection Purposes Only! levels by more than 5dB (A) during the period 0800 - 2200 and by more than 3 dB (A) at any other time when measured at any external position at a noise sensitive premises. The noise level shall be measured as Leq, 15 minutes. The developer shall engage and bear the cost for the services of a noise specialist to assess compliance with this condition if requested by Cork City Council.

**Reason:** In the interest of residential amenity.

13. 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, in particular, recyclable materials and health related waste shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Thereafter, the waste shall be managed in accordance with the agreed plan.

**Reason:** To provide for the appropriate management of waste and, in particular recyclable materials and health-related waste, in the interest of protecting the environment and orderly disposal of waste.

14. Prior to commencement of works, the developer shall submit to, and agree in writing with the planning authority, a Construction 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, fuel storage, and off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste.

**Reason:** In the interest of public safety and amenity.

15. 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. 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. The plan shall include details of waste to be generated during site clearance and construction phases, and details of the methods and locations to be employed for the prevention, minimisation, recovery and disposal of this material in accordance with the provision of the Waste Management Plan for the Region in which the site is situated.

**Reason:** In the interest of sustainable waste management.

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

- (a) Location of the site and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse;
- (b) Location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;
- (c) Details of site security fencing and hoardings;
- (d) Details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction;
- (e) Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, to include proposals to facilitate the delivery of abnormal loads to the site;
- (f) Measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network;
- (g) Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on the public road network;
- (h) Alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public road or footpath during the course of site development works;



- (i) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;
- (j) Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained. Such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater;
- (k) Off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;
- (l) Means to ensure that surface water run-off is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local surface water sewers or drains.
- (m) A record of daily checks that the works are being undertaken in accordance with the Construction Management Plan shall be available for inspection by the planning authority.

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

17. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Saturdays inclusive, and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

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

18. Proposals for a development name, commercial unit identification 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 such names and numbering shall be provided in accordance with the agreed scheme.

**Reason:** In the interest of urban legibility.

19. The management and maintenance of the proposed development, following completion, shall be the responsibility of a legally constituted management company, which shall be established by the developer. A management scheme, providing adequate measures for the future maintenance of the development; including the external fabric of the buildings, internal common areas, landscaping, roads, paths, parking areas, lighting, waste storage facilities and sanitary services, shall be

submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority, before the proposed development and any of the commercial units are made available for occupation.

**Reason:** To provide for the future maintenance of this private development in the interest of visual amenity.

20. 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.

21. 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.

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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Matthew McRedmond  
Senior Planning Inspector

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

### Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

<b>Case Reference</b>	ABP-322296-25
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Primary Care Centre, 2no. GP units, Retail Unit, access and entrance road upgrades and all associated site works.
<b>Development Address</b>	St. Patricks Mills, Douglas, Cork.
<b>In all cases check box /or leave blank</b>	
<b>1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a ‘project’ for the purposes of EIA?</b>  (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.
<b>2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.  <b>EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.</b>	State the Class here
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
<b>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?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road	

<p>development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p><b>No Screening required.</b></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p><b>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</b></p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p><b>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</b></p>	<p><b>Class 10(b)(iv) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 relates to a mandatory EIA for urban development involving 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. As the proposal is for a 5,041sqm primary care centre development on a 1.3 hectare site, it would be substantially less than the thresholds set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 and would not fall under Class 10(b)(iv) in respect to urban development.</b></p>

<p><b>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)?</b></p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)</b> <i>[Delete if not relevant]</i></p>
<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)</b> <i>[Delete if not relevant]</i></p>

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination**

<b>Case Reference</b>	ABP-322296-25
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Primary Care Centre, 2no. GP units, Retail Unit, access and entrance road upgrades and all associated site works.
<b>Development Address</b>	St. Patricks Mills, Douglas, Cork
<b>This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.</b>	
<p><b>Characteristics of proposed development</b></p> <p>(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).</p>	<p>The site lies within the settlement boundary of Douglas and associated District Centre. Surrounding land uses are mainly commercial land uses, National Road and recreation/GAA pitches. It is not considered that any significant cumulative environmental impacts will result when considered in cumulation with existing developments.</p> <p>There are no demolition works involved, and there are no identified risks of accidents or disaster, nor is there any obvious risks to human health that result from the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed development will not give rise to the production of significant waste, emissions or pollutants.</p>
<p><b>Location of development</b></p> <p>(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>	<p>The proposed development would be in keeping with the mixed use nature of adjacent developments.</p> <p>The site is not located within any designated site. The closest Natura 2000 sites is Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030), located 0.7km to the northeast.</p> <p>The site is bounded by the N40 to the north, St. Patricks Mills to the east and Douglas GAA to the south.</p> <p>The proposal would not have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area.</p> <p>While there will be some loss of existing scrubland on site, there is no evidence on file that the site is of particular ecological value, nor is there evidence that the site of particular ecological value for any species, and I am satisfied that there will be no significant effects on biodiversity.</p> <p>The site has not been identified as of particular historic, cultural or archaeological significance</p>

<p><b>Types and characteristics of potential impacts</b></p> <p>(Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).</p>	<p>The scale of the proposed development is not significant in the context of existing development in the surrounding area.</p> <p>During the construction phase noise, dust and vibration emissions are likely. However, any impacts would be local and temporary in nature and the implementation of standard construction practice measures would satisfactorily mitigate potential impacts. Impacts on the surrounding road network at construction stage can be mitigated by way of adherence to a Construction Management Plan. No significant impacts on the surrounding road network are considered likely at operational stage, with mitigation proposed through road upgrades in the application</p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	
<p><b>Likelihood of Significant Effects</b></p>	<p><b>Conclusion in respect of EIA</b>  <i>[Delete if not relevant]</i></p>
<p>There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.</p>	<p>EIA is not required.</p>

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DP/ADP: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

**Example 2: Screening the need for Appropriate Assessment  
Finding of no likely significant effects for Inspectors Report**

**Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination  
(Stage 1, Article 6(3) of Habitats Directive)**

I have considered the proposed development of a storage warehouse in light of the requirements of S 177S and 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

A screening report for Appropriate Assessment was not submitted with this planning appeal case. However, in the Local Authority assessment of the proposed development, Appropriate Assessment Screening was undertaken by Cork City Council as part of their planning assessment and a finding of no likely significant effects on a European Site was determined. Cork City Council concluded the proposed development would not require the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement and Appropriate Assessment was not carried out.

A detailed description of the proposal is presented in Section 2.0 of my report. In summary, the proposed development site is a vacant site within a mixed use/suburban environment, surrounded by commercial/mixed uses, roads and green space in the immediate vicinity. The development will comprise the construction of a new primary care centre with a nature-based drainage strategy, attenuation tank and associated site works. The development includes a car park with a surface water treatment system comprising oil petrol interceptor before discharge to the local drainage system. Water and waste will be connected to local services.

The storm water is to be pumped from the site to the existing stormwater drainage system presently discharging to the Tramore River, which connects to Cork Harbour SPA. Storm water from the site will be pumped to an existing manhole within the St. Patricks Mills site. The attenuation tank has been oversized to accommodate storm water that may accrue in the event of a power failure to the pumping system. Discharge rates will be limited to 2 litres per second per hectare. In the event of tidal surge, the pumps will be designed to shut down and any residual water is collected and stored in the oversized attenuation tank. I am satisfied that stormwater can be adequately managed through nature based solutions on site and through the existing network, to avoid any adverse impacts on European Sites.

**European Sites**

The proposed development site drains excess storm water to the existing network, which drains to the Tramore River. One European site is located within 0.7 Kilometers of the potential development site.

- Cork Harbour SPA [004030]



The most western boundary of Cork Harbour SPA encompasses the inner harbour area within 0.7km of the development site. This large European site is designated for coastal and marine habitats including Salt meadows and sand flats.

European Site	Qualifying Interests (summary)	Distance	Connections
Cork Harbour SPA [004030]	Little Grebe ( <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> ) [A004] Great Crested Grebe ( <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> ) [A005] Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Grey Heron ( <i>Ardea cinerea</i> ) [A028] Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [A048] Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> ) [A052] Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [A054] Red-breasted Merganser ( <i>Mergus serrator</i> ) [A069] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> ) [A142] Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> ) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa limosa</i> ) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Curlew ( <i>Numenius arquata</i> ) [A160] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [A179] Common Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> ) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> ) [A183] Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [A193] Wigeon ( <i>Mareca penelope</i> ) [A855] Shoveler ( <i>Spatula clypeata</i> ) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]  NPWS.ie	<b>0.7km</b>	Via attenuated storm water network.

### **Likely impacts of the project (alone or in combination)**

Due to the enclosed nature of the development site and the presence of a significant buffer area between this urban site and the Tramore River, which drains to Cork Harbour, I consider that the proposed development would not be expected to generate impacts that could affect anything but the immediate area of the development site, thus having a very limited potential zone of influence on any ecological receptors.

The proposed development would not have direct impacts on any European site. During site clearance, and construction of the proposed development and site works, possible impact mechanisms of a temporary nature include generation of noise, dust and construction related emissions to surface water.

The contained nature of the site (serviced, defined site boundaries, no direct ecological connections or pathways) and distance from receiving features connected to Cork Harbour SPA, and the nature based SuDs drainage solutions, make it highly unlikely that the proposed development could result in stormwater quantities that would generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect European Sites.

No detail has been provided regarding the possible use of existing scrubland/grassland by overwintering birds that are Special Conservation Interests of other European Sites. However, given the scale of the proposed development within a suburban area, I do not consider it likely that any temporary noise or human disturbance that may occur during the construction phase would be any significant increase on the current baseline if works were to commence during the wintering period.

### **Likely significant effects on the European sites in view of the conservation objectives**

The construction or operation of the proposed development will not result in impacts that could affect the conservation objectives of the SPA. Due to distance and lack of meaningful ecological connections there will be no changes in ecological functions due to any construction related emissions or disturbance. There will be no direct or ex-situ effects from disturbance on mobile species during construction or operation of the proposed development. There will be no significant disturbance to any wintering birds (ex-situ) that may occasionally use the amenity grassland area adjacent to the proposed development site.

### **In combination effects**

The proposed development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.

No mitigation measures beyond normal standard drainage works are required to come to these conclusions. I consider the provision of the nature based drainage solutions a standard measure to provide effective management of run off rates and is not a mitigation measure for the purpose of avoiding or preventing impacts to the SPA.

**Overall Conclusion****Screening Determination**

Having carried out Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the project in accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), I conclude that that the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on European Sites within the surrounding area namely, Cork Harbour SPA or any other European site, in view of the sites Conservation Objectives, and Appropriate Assessment (and submission of a NIS) is not therefore required.

This determination is based on:

- The relatively minor scale of the development and lack of impact mechanisms that could significantly affect a European Site
- Distance from and weak indirect connections to the European sites
- No significant ex-situ impacts on wintering birds

**Appendix 3**

<b>WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING</b>			
<b>Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality</b>			
<b>An Bord Pleanála ref. no.</b>	<b>ABP-322296-25</b>	<b>Townland, address</b>	<b>St. Patricks Mills, Douglas, Cork</b>
<b>Description of project</b>		<b>Primary Care Centre, 1no. retail Unit, 2no. GP Surgeries, road upgrades and all associated works.</b>	
<b>Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,</b>		<b>Site is located at St. Patrick Mills, to the west of Douglas Town Centre. The site is relatively flat and is not connected to any identifiable watercourses. Excess storm water will connect to the existing network and ultimately drain to Tramore river that connects to Cork Harbour (0.7km to the east). A water quality monitoring station is located approx. 4km west of the site within the harbour at Lough Mahon.</b>	
<b>Proposed surface water details</b>		<b>Connection to existing storm sewer to east of the site.</b>	
<b>Proposed water supply source &amp; available capacity</b>		<b>Connect to existing supply at Douglas Street West. Uisce Eireann confirmed capacity available without upgrades.</b>	
<b>Proposed wastewater treatment system &amp; available capacity, other issues</b>		<b>Uisce Eireann Wastewater connection available without upgrades.</b>	

<b>Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection</b>						
<b>Identified water body</b>	<b>Distance to (m)</b>	<b>Water body name(s) (code)</b>	<b>WFD Status</b>	<b>Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk</b>	<b>Identified pressures on that water body</b>	<b>Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)</b>
<b>River Waterbody</b>	<b>100m north</b>	<b>Moneygurney_010 IE_SW_19M300900</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Review</b>	<b>Urban run off</b>	<b>Yes – stormwater ultimately drains to River Tramore, hydrologically connected to watercourse.</b>
<b>Groundwater Waterbody</b>	<b>Underlying site</b>	<b>Ballinhassig East IE_SW_G_004</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not at Risk</b>	<b>Ground</b>	<b>Yes, via groundwater</b>
<b>Transitional Waterbody</b>	<b>0.7km east</b>	<b>Lough Mahon IE_SW_170_0000</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>At risk</b>	<b>Urban run off</b>	<b>No. Intervening waterbodies of Moneygurney/Tramore River provides separation.</b>
<b>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.</b>						
<b>CONSTRUCTION PHASE</b>						

No.	Component	Waterbody receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
1.	Surface	Moneygurne y_010 IE_SW_19M3 00900	Existing drainage infrastructure.	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction practice CEMP	Yes, proximity to watercourse.	Screened in
2.	Ground	Ballinhassig East IE_SW_G_00 4	Yes pathway exists via moderate drainage characteristics	Spillages	As above	Yes – drainage characteristics warrants further assessment.	Screened in.
3.	Transitional	Lough Mahon IE_SW_170_0000	Yes. Pathway via drainage characteristics.	spillages	As above	No.	Screened out
<b>OPERATIONAL PHASE</b>							
1.	Surface	Moneygurne y_010 IE_SW_19M3 00900	Yes, proximity to watercourse. Surface water discharge.	Hydrocarbon spillage/siltation	Connection to existing storm sewer network/SuDs	Yes – proximity to watercourse and surface water discharge to same warrants	Screened in

						<b>additional assessment.</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Ground</b>	<b>Ballinhassig East IE_SW_G_004</b>	<b>Yes pathway exists via moderate drainage characteristics</b>	<b>Spillages</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Screened in</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Transitional</b>	<b>Lough Mahon IE_SW_170_0000</b>	<b>Pathway exists but poor drainage characteristics</b>	<b>Spillages</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>No – dilution of run off through existing waterbodies and on site attenuation and SuDs features.</b>	<b>Screened out</b>
<b>DECOMMISSIONING PHASE</b>							
<b>5.</b>	<b>N/A</b>						
<b>STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT</b>							
<b>Details of Mitigation Required to Comply with WFD Objectives</b>							
<b>Surface Water</b>							
<b>Development/Activity e.g. culvert, bridge,</b>	<b><u>Objective 1:Surface Water</u></b>	<b><u>Objective 2:Surface Water</u></b>	<b><u>Objective 3:Surface Water</u></b>	<b><u>Objective 4: Surface Water</u></b>	<b>Does this component comply with WFD Objectives 1, 2, 3 &amp; 4? (if</b>		

other crossing, diversion, outfall, etc	Prevent deterioration of the status of all bodies of surface water	Protect, enhance and restore all bodies of surface water with aim of achieving good status	Protect and enhance all artificial and heavily modified bodies of water with aim of achieving good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status	Progressively reduce pollution from priority substances and cease or phase out emission, discharges and losses of priority substances	answer is no, a development cannot proceed without a derogation under art. 4.7)
	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 1:	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 2:	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 3:	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 4:	
Construction works	<p>Site specific mitigation methods described in the Environmental Plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection mats</li> <li>• Sandbags</li> <li>• Be aware of pollution</li> <li>• Drain water</li> <li>• Clean</li> </ul> <p>Site specific construction mitigation methods including:</p>	Site specific mitigation methods as described.	Site specific mitigation methods as described.	Site specific mitigation methods as described.	YES



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good practice, standard construction methodologies to reduce surface water run-off during construction</li> <li>• Appropriate management of chemical storage including spillage procedures, bunded storage areas, security, management of refuelling practices, leakages.</li> <li>• Management of sediment and silt levels within the site.</li> </ul>				
Stormwater drainage	Adequately designed SUDs features, permeable paving and attenuation	SuDS features as described	SuDS features as described	SuDS features as described	YES
<b>Details of Mitigation Required to Comply with WFD Objectives</b>					
<b>Groundwater</b>					
Development/Activity e.g. abstraction, outfall, etc.	<u>Objective 1: Groundwater</u>	<u>Objective 2 : Groundwater</u>	<u>Objective 3:Groundwater</u>		Does this component comply with WFD Objectives

	Prevent or limit the input of pollutants into groundwater and to prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater	Protect, enhance and restore all bodies of groundwater, ensure a balance between abstraction and recharge, with the aim of achieving good status*	Reverse any significant and sustained upward trend in the concentration of any pollutant resulting from the impact of human activity	1, 2, 3 & 4? (if answer is no, a development cannot proceed without a derogation under art. 4.7)
Development Activity 1: Development of primary care centre	<p>Site specific mitigation methods including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate management of chemical storage including spillage procedures, bunded storage areas, security, management of refuelling practices, leakages.</li> </ul>	Site specific mitigation methods as described.	Site specific mitigation methods as described	Yes