



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ACP-322814-25

Development	Construction of two storey dwelling and associated site works
Location	Ballynaroona, Glounthaune, Co.Cork
Planning Authority	Cork County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	25/4606
Applicant(s)	Brendan and Anne Cummins
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Brendan and Anne Cummins
Observer(s)	Eddie and Karen Dillon
Date of Site Inspection	4 th September 2025
Inspector	Aisling MacNamara

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is located in Ballynaroona, north of Glounthaune village in County Cork. The site has an area of 0.25ha and is located to the rear of an existing house with an access to the L2968/ Lackenroe Road public road along the southern side of this existing house. Existing detached residential properties adjoin to the northern and southern boundaries and agricultural lands adjoin the western / rear boundary. The site is undeveloped grassland and is treated with existing natural boundaries however the shared boundary to the adjoining house to the east is unmarked and open. Ground levels fall from the northwestern corner of the site to the southeastern corner at the road. There is a difference of c 5.5m in levels across the site.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for:

- construction of a two storey split level detached dwelling house
- waste water treatment unit
- associated site works

The floor area of the proposed house is 219sqm.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority decided by order dated 3rd June 2025 to refuse permission for two reasons, as follows:

1. *The application site is located within the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt as identified in the Cork County Development Plan 2022 wherein it is the policy of the Planning Authority to restrict rural housing to persons who can demonstrate an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and / or economic links to a particular local rural area. On the basis of the information submitted the applicants have not adequately demonstrated*

that they have an exceptional rural generated housing need. The proposal would therefore materially contravene Objective RP 5-3 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022, would set an undesirable precedent in the Metropolitan Greenbelt which is under significant pressure for rural housing and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. *This application relates to the construction of a dwelling in a rural area that is identified as Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and a High Value Landscape in the Cork County Development Plan 2022. Objectives RP 5-22 and HE 16-21 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 seek to ensure that new buildings in rural areas respect the character and pattern of development in those areas and that they fit appropriately into the landscape. The proposed development would, by reason of its form, location, layout and suburban design, represent an incongruous form of backland residential development which would have a detrimental impact on the character and visual amenity of the rural landscape. In addition, the proposed development would set an undesirable precedent and lead to an expectation of permissions on adjoining lands which would further erode the rural character of the area. The proposal development is therefore contrary to the Objectives RP 5-22 and HE 16-21 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

Planning Authority Reports

3.1.1. Planning Reports

- Case planners report of 29/05/2025 recommends refusal of permission for two reasons. The report notes that the site is located in Metropolitan Greenbelt where applicants must demonstrate exceptional rural housing need. Applicant inherited the site from uncle (site is part of a cottage acre and was the applicants mother's family home), applicants resides in Cork city, have not demonstrated social/ economic link to this area and have not demonstrated an exceptional rural housing need. Proposal is backland development, out of character with the rural pattern of development in the area. The design is

suburban, not in accordance with Cork Rural Design Guide – revised design required, extent of hardstanding not appropriate, dwelling could be subdivided, landscaping proposals not sufficient, sections required to show relationship with adjoining properties, planting of boundaries would screen views to adjoining properties,

- Report of the SEP – endorses the report of the case planner, recommends refusal as per decision.

3.1.2. Other Technical Reports

- Area Engineer – concerns raised in relation to water run off from properties in the area, applicants to submit proposals to prevent water run off onto the public road and into existing property to the front of the development.
- Liaison Officer – no comment

3.2. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.3. Third Party Observations

Two third party observations were received raising the following issues:

- The proposed dwelling will adversely impact upon adjoining residential amenity in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing impact.
- Existing surface water issues in the area will be exacerbated, surface water and wastewater risk.
- The proposal conflicts with Cork County Development Plan relating to pattern of rural housing and the requirement to protect groundwater and manage surface water on vulnerable lands.
- Sightlines at the entrance are not indicated, intensification of use of access.
- Impact on established site boundaries and adverse impact on biodiversity.
- Conflicts between urbanisation of the area and requirements for farming.

4.0 Planning History

The following planning history relates to the site:

- PA23/5402 – Brendan Cummins – grant – permission for agricultural entrance with gate

The following planning history relates to the site of the existing dwelling adjoining the eastern boundary:

- PA20/6944 – Karen and Edward Dillon – grant – permission to demolish existing cottage, to erect a new dwelling, install on site sewage treatment system and associated site work

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. National policy

- National Planning Framework First Revision 2025 - NPO24, NPO28, NPO29
- Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for planning authorities 2005

5.2. Development Plan

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 applies. The following is of relevance:

- The site is located outside of the development boundary of Glounthaune and is located within the rural housing policy area of the 'Metropolitan Green Belt'
- The site is located within a High Value Landscape.
- Scenic Route S42 is located along the L2969 (Rockgrove/Lackenroe Road) which is located c 80m to the south of the site. The view protected is the 'local road at Forest-town, NW Carrigtwohill and westwards to Caherlag – views of the harbour, open countryside and tree lined hillsides'.

The following objectives are of relevance:

Chapter 5 Rural

- Objective RP5-1 Urban Generated Housing

Discourage urban-generated housing in rural areas, which should normally take place in the larger urban centres or the towns, villages and other settlements identified in the Settlement Network. Encourage the provision of a mix of house types in towns and villages to provide an alternative to individual housing in the open countryside.

- Objective RP 5-2 Rural Generated Housing

Sustain and renew established rural communities, by facilitating those with a rural generated housing need to live within their rural community. Encourage the provision of a mix of house types in towns and villages to provide an alternative to individual rural housing in the countryside.

- Objective RP5-3 County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area

Objective RP 5-3 should be read in conjunction with Chapter 14 Green Infrastructure and Recreation and the section relating to 'Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt Areas' including Objective GI 14-16 and Figure 14-3.

The Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt is the area under strongest urban pressure for rural housing. Therefore, applicants shall satisfy the Planning Authority that their proposal constitutes an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and / or economic links to a particular local rural area, and in this regard, must demonstrate that they comply with one of the following categories of housing need:

(a) Farmers, including their sons and daughters who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the family farm.

(b) Persons taking over the ownership and running of a farm on a full-time basis, who wish to build a first home on the farm for their permanent occupation, where no existing dwelling is available for their own use. The proposed dwelling must be associated with the working and active management of the farm.

(c) Other persons working full-time in farming, forestry, inland waterway, or marine related occupations, for a period of over seven years, in the local rural area where they work and in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.

(d) Landowners including their sons and daughters who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the landholding associated with their principal family residence for a minimum of seven years prior to the date of the planning application.

In circumstances, where a family land holding is unsuitable for the construction of a house, consideration may be given to a nearby landholding where this would not conflict with Objective GI 8-1 and other policies and objectives in the Plan. In this context a 'nearby landholding' may be construed to mean adjoining landholdings but not normally more than 1.5km from the prospective applicant's family residence. Proposals exceeding the 1.5km distance may be considered in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

The total number of houses within the Metropolitan Greenbelt, for which planning permission has been granted since 15th January 2015 on a family farm or any single landholding within the rural area, will not normally exceed two.

- Objective RP5-22 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.

- Objective RP5-23 Servicing Single Houses (and ancillary development) in Rural Areas

a) Ensure that proposals for development incorporating on-site wastewater disposal systems comply with the EPA Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) and Wastewater Treatment Manual - Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business Centres, Leisure Centres and Hotels (1999), or relevant successor approved standards / guidelines (including design, installation and maintenance). The cumulative impact of such systems will also be considered in the assessment process.

b) Surface water should be disposed of using sustainable drainage systems and in a manner that will not endanger the receiving environment or public health. The use of permeable paving should also be considered to reduce run off.

Chapter 14 Green Infrastructure and Recreation

- Objective GI14-9 Landscape

a) Protect the visual and scenic amenities of County Cork's built and natural environment.

b) Landscape issues will be an important factor in all land-use proposals, ensuring that a pro-active view of development is undertaken while protecting the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability.

c) Ensure that new development meets high standards of siting and design.

d) Protect skylines and ridgelines from development.

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

- Objective GI14-10 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 minimize 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 GI14-12 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 GI14-13 Scenic Routes

Protect the character of those views and prospects obtainable from scenic routes and in particular stretches of scenic routes that have very special views and prospects identified in this Plan. The scenic routes identified in this Plan are shown on the scenic amenity maps in the CDP Map Browser and are listed in Volume 2 Heritage and Amenity Chapter 5 Scenic Routes of this Plan.

- Objective GI14-14 Development on Scenic Routes

a) Require those seeking to carry out development in the environs of a scenic route and/or an area with important views and prospects, to demonstrate that there will be no adverse obstruction or degradation of the views towards and from vulnerable landscape features. In such areas, the appropriateness of the design, site layout, and landscaping of the proposed development must be demonstrated along with mitigation measures to prevent significant alterations to the appearance or character of the area.

b) Encourage appropriate landscaping and screen planting of developments along scenic routes (See Chapter 16 Built and Cultural Heritage).

- Objective GI14-16 Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt Map

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

Chapter 16 Built and Cultural Heritage

- Objective HE16-21 Design and Landscaping of New Buildings

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

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

Sites designated for natural heritage in the surrounding area include:

- Great Island Channel SAC and pNHA c 0.9km from the site
- Cork Harbour SPA c 0.9km from the site
- Dunkettle Shore pNHA c 3.2km from the site
- Rockfarm Quarry Little Island pNHA c 3.2km from the site
- Glanmire Wood pNHA c 3.9km from the site

5.4. EIA Screening

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

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The key issues raised by the applicant in the grounds of appeal are as follows:

- The applicant owns the site. The original landholding comprised of a one acre residential holding which was in the ownership of the applicant Mr. Cummins' grandfather and was Mr. Cummins' mothers family home dated back to the early 1900's. The applicant's uncle lived at the landholding until his death in 2015. After this, the landholding was willed and subdivided. Mr. Cummins inherited 0.25ha of the landholding and the original cottage and 0.17ha was inherited by a different family member.
- Site is 90m outside of the development boundary but has been part of long established residential property for over 100 years.
- Disagree that the development would set an undesirable precedent leading to an expectation of permissions on adjoining lands. There is a clear defined western boundary encompassing the property to the north and two properties to the south, with all the land west of this line being agricultural land. The land across the road to the east and north forms part of a long established farm. The land to the north would not be able to achieve sightlines for entrance. The land to the south below the two existing houses is within the development boundary. There is no adjoining land that could expect a permission following grant of permission.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

The planning authority has responded to the grounds of appeal stating that the relevant issues have been covered in the submitted technical reports and it has no further comment.

6.3. Observations

One observation was received from the owner occupiers of the adjoining property to the east of the site 'Tigin Bui'. A copy of the original submission on the application to

the planning authority is submitted, which outlines their concerns. The issues raised are as follows:

- Object to the proposed development.
- Loss of privacy – direct overlooking from proposed development, due to proximity, orientation and elevated site levels – overlooking from patio, rear garden, driveway into family kitchen /living and sleeping areas.
- Overbearing mass and visual enclosure – levels relative to existing development are not provided, overshadowing of rear garden and patio, any screen walls would have overbearing impact.
- Future extensions could exacerbate impact.
- Better site positioning is possible.
- Environmental concerns – concerns regarding capacity for on site effluent disposal and disposal of surface water - slope of 22.5% is steeper than average for percolation areas, highly vulnerable aquifer, groundwater flow is towards their property, no drainage calculations, attenuation capacity or engineered surface water management plan, runoff from proposed development is directed to their property, there are natural springs in the area.
- Improper access use – from agricultural to residential – no new visibility splays shown, material intensification of access, required to comply with residential standards.
- Conflict with the county development plan objectives that they were required to comply with in building their property (RCI4-1, RCI6-1, GI6-1).

6.4. Further Responses

None

7.0 Assessment

- 7.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all submissions received in relation to the appeal and inspected the site,

and having regard to relevant policies and guidance, I consider that the main issues in the appeal are as follows:

- principle of development
- design and visual impacts
- impact on adjoining residential amenity
- environmental and traffic considerations

7.2. Principle of development

- 7.2.1. The proposed development is for the construction of a new rural house located outside of the development boundary of Glounthaune within the rural area of the 'Metropolitan Green Belt' designated in the Cork County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028. The development proposal for a house within this rural area is assessed under Objective 'RP5-3 County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area' of the CDP. Objective RP5-3 states that applicants for a proposed rural house in this area are required to have an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and or economic links to the particular local rural area and must demonstrate that they comply with one of four categories of housing need listed.
- 7.2.2. The planning authority refused permission on the basis that the applicant has not demonstrated an exceptional rural generated housing need and therefore the proposal materially contravenes objective RP 5-3 and would set an undesirable precedent.
- 7.2.3. The applicant Mr. Cummins has appealed the decision and argues that the site is part of a historic residential landholding which has been in his family's ownership and that the granting of permission would not create a precedent for similar development in this area. The applicant Mr. Cummins is the landowner of the site, having inherited to the site from his late uncle in 2015. The site is part of a cottage landholding which was the family home of the applicant's mother.
- 7.2.4. Notwithstanding that the site was historically part of a residential landholding, the development proposal for a house within this rural area is assessed under Objective 'RP5-3 County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area' of the CDP.

- 7.2.5. No information is submitted by the applicant to demonstrate that he has an exceptional rural generated housing need, his social or economic links to this area or to show that the proposal is in accordance with any of the four categories of housing need listed under RP5-3. The historic family links to the site are noted however this in itself is not sufficient to show compliance with RP 5-3.
- 7.2.6. I note that the submitted application form for a section 96 Certificate of Exemption states that the applicant's address is within the Cork City area.
- 7.2.7. I am satisfied that the applicant has not demonstrated that they have an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their links this local rural area and that they have not demonstrated that they comply with the categories of housing need in this area. Therefore, the proposal is not in accordance with objective RP5-3 of the CDP and refusal on this basis is recommended.

7.3. Design and visual impacts

- 7.3.1. The planning authority refused permission because the form, location, layout and suburban design represents an incongruous form of back land residential development that would be detrimental the character and visual amenity of the landscape, would set an undesirable precedent and which is contrary to objectives RP5-22 and HE16-21 of the CDP.
- 7.3.2. Objective RP5-22 of the CDP relates to the design of new dwelling houses in the rural area. The objective is to 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. Objective HE 16-21 of the CDP relates to design and landscaping of new buildings and is substantially similar to RP5-22.
- 7.3.3. The site is located within an area designated High Value Landscape under the CDP. Objective GI14-9 is to protect the visual and scenic amenities of the natural environment and requires a high standard of siting and design for new developments. Objective GI14-10 requires higher development standards in high value landscapes with regard to design etc, in order to minimise the visual and environmental impacts. Scenic route S42 runs along the main Rockgove/Lackenroe road c 80m to the south of the site. Objective GI14-14 is for the protection of scenic routes.

- 7.3.4. Section 5.6 Environmental and Site Suitability Requirements of the CDP states that the Cork Rural Design Guide should be consulted for advice on rural house site, design and landscaping. Part One Site Selection of the design guide indicates that regard is to be paid to the traditional alignment and orientation of houses in the area. Along this stretch of road extending north from the Glounthaune development boundary, there are four houses fronting onto the road. No houses have been constructed to the rear of this roadside row of houses. The proposed site is a 'back land' site which extends the full length of the rear boundary of the existing house. This siting is at odds with the established pattern. The house is orientated side on to the road so that the main frontage addresses south. This is at odds with the orientation of existing houses which have frontage addressing the road. I do not consider that this proposed layout and orientation is in accordance with the existing pattern of development in the area. Part Three of the design guide sets out design advice for appropriate house design. The design advice promotes simple traditional forms and finishes. The proposed house is a stepped, part two storey, part one storey house. The proposed three bay design is awkward form, 'boxy' and busy, with split roofs and variety of windows shapes and sizes. The suburban design is not appropriate design in this rural location.
- 7.3.5. On site visit, I have considered the visual impact of the proposed development from scenic route S42 along the Rockgrove / Lackenroe Road. Due to banking and vegetation along the northern side of the road including the distance of the site from the road and its location in proximity to other dwellings, I consider that the proposed dwelling would not be highly visible from this scenic route and that views from the road of the countryside or hillsides would not be significantly degraded or obstructed.
- 7.3.6. In conclusion, having regard to the proposed 'backland' site configuration, the unacceptable suburban design of the house and to the location of the site within a sensitive High Value Landscape rural area where higher development standards are required, I do not consider that the proposal respects or responds to the rural character of this rural Metropolitan Green Belt location and it would not fit appropriately into this landscape. The proposed development would adversely impact on the visual and scenic amenities of the area and the proposal is not in accordance with objectives RP 5-22 and GI 14-9 of the CDP.

7.4. Impact on adjoining residential amenity

- 7.4.1. The third party observation raises concerns in relation to the potential impact of the proposed development on their residential amenity by reason of overlooking from the house, driveway and outdoor areas, visual intrusion and loss of light / overshadowing.
- 7.4.2. The blank side/ eastern elevation of the proposed house is located c 11m from the shared boundary with the adjoining property to the east. This adjoining house is set back over 9m from the shared boundary.
- 7.4.3. The rear /northern elevation of the proposed house is located 31.8m from the shared boundary with the adjoining property to the northeast and the front /southern elevation is located 11.5m from the shared boundary with the adjoining property to the southeast. Ground levels rise generally in northwestern direction from the road meaning that the level of the proposed house is higher than the existing along the road. The proposed house is positioned at the lower part of the site and the design is for split levels to address the change in ground levels with a maximum ground to ridge level of c 7.8m (front elevation drawing) and 4.6m (rear elevation). No details are provided on finished floor levels and should permission be granted, this matter could be addressed by condition.
- 7.4.4. Whilst I note that the proposed house is on higher grounds to the rear of the existing houses, I consider that having regard to the separation distances between the proposed house, the scale of the proposed house and to its stepped design, positioning and orientation relative to the adjoining properties and boundaries, I do not consider that the proposed house would have significant adverse impacts on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts. Furthermore, I do not consider that there would be significant overlooking from the proposed outdoor space or driveway of the adjoining property. In this regard, I note that a landscaping plan is submitted showing the retention of existing hedging and new hedge planting along all boundaries of the site.
- 7.4.5. In conclusion, I do not consider that the proposed development is likely to significantly compromise the amenity of adjoining residential properties.

7.5. Environmental and traffic considerations

7.5.1. Effluent disposal

7.5.2. Permission is sought for the installation of an on site waste water treatment and disposal system to serve the proposed new house. Domestic waste water treatment systems are to be designed in accordance with EPA Code of Practice (CoP): Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (population equivalent <10). A site characterisation report is submitted.

7.5.3. The site is in a resource protection area with an extremely vulnerable aquifer of local importance (bedrock moderately productive only in local zones). The CoP Table E1 indicates that the site falls within the R2(1) category which indicates that the site is suitable for a domestic waste water and treatment system subject to normal good practice and that where domestic water supplies are located nearby, particular attention should be given to the depth of subsoil over bedrock such that the minimum depths are met and microbial pollution is minimised. The 2.2m trial hole found silt clay loam and water table at 1m below ground level. A T value of 12.28 (min/25mm) and P value of 11.42 (min/25mm) was recorded. The site was deemed suitable for the installation of an on site system.

7.5.4. It is proposed to install a tertiary treatment system with gravity feed to packaged secondary treatment system and pumped feed to raised soil polishing filter. The treatment system and raised polishing filter is located to the north of the house. The site characterisation form states that all minimum separation distances of Table 6.2 are met. A vertical separation of 900mm is to bedrock / water table as required in R2(1) area. The area of the proposed pipe distribution for the infiltration area is in accordance with Table 10.1.

7.5.5. The observer has raised concerns regarding the suitability of the site stating that the slope of 22.5% is steeper than the average for percolation areas. In this regard, Chapter 6 of the CoP states that for a site to be suitable, the natural slope is to be less than or equal to 1:8 (or 12.5%). The ground levels on the site layout plan show levels rising from +86.05 in the southwestern corner of the site to +88.12 in the northwestern corner of the site which is a level change of 2.07m across a distance of c50m which equates to a slope of 1:24. The levels in the northern corners of the site are 86.94m and 88.12m which is a change of 1.18m across c30m which equates to a

slope of 1:25. The levels between the northern side of the house and the northwestern corner of the site rise from 86.73m to 88.12m or 1.4m level change across c 35m which equates to a slope of 1:25. Having regard to these levels, I am satisfied that the natural slope of the site is lower than the maximum allowed in the CoP 1:8 or 1 in 8m ratio.

7.5.6. Section 4 of the site characterisation form states that the slope of the proposed infiltration / treatment area is 22.5 (assumes refers to degrees or ratio). Section 11.5 'Infiltration / Treatment Areas' of the CoP states that in the construction of a mounded soil polishing filter, the raised mound should be graded and sloped at a gradient of no more than 1 in 2 with respect to existing surrounding ground level. I am satisfied that the proposal is in accordance with this standard.

7.5.7. The observer has made reference to springs in the area, however no detailed information is provided. I note that the site characterisation report indicates no springs or wells within 250m and I did not observe any springs on site visit.

7.5.8. Based on the information available including the submitted site characterisation form I am satisfied that the site is suitable for on site effluent disposal and the system is in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice.

7.5.9. Surface water disposal

7.5.10. It is proposed to dispose of surface water on site via methods including on site soakpits, water butts and permeable finish in parts. The observers have raised concerns over the suitability of the proposed measures. The report of the Area Engineer indicates that surface water runoff from the lands and properties along this road has caused issues and that proposals are required to address this matter.

7.5.11. Should permission be granted, it is recommended that a condition be attached to require final details of surface water collection and disposal measures to be agreed with the planning authority prior to development.

7.5.12. Proposed access

7.5.13. The proposed access is via an existing agricultural gate to the public road which is a busy route into and out of Glounthaune. The Area Engineer has submitted a report indicating that sight distances at the main road entrance are good. The TII Geometric Design of Junctions DN-GEO-03060, May 2023 sets out visibility standards for the

construction of new entrances. The TII standards require 'y' distance to the near edge of the road of 90m for a design speed of 60km/hour, from a standard 2.4m 'x' set back at the entrance. As per site visit, the road is surfaced up to the grass verge and this in my view forms the road edge that is open to vehicles. Sightlines from the entrance are obstructed either direction by existing roadside vegetation which is located outside of the red site boundary, on lands outside of the control of the applicant.

7.5.14. I am not satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated that sightlines are achievable in accordance with the TII standards and the proposed residential entrance would result in traffic hazard.

7.5.15. Landscaping

7.5.16. A landscaping plan is submitted with the application. Existing vegetation is to be retained and interplanted with native hedge along all boundaries and 8 no. native silver birch trees are to be planted. The open space along the driveway is to be planted with pollinator friendly meadow. The proposals to retain existing native boundaries and plant native hedging and trees positively impacts on biodiversity and amenity. I consider that the proposals are acceptable.

8.0 AA Screening

8.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements of S177U of the Planning and Development Act as amended. The Great Island Channel SAC and the Cork Harbour SPA are c 0.95km from the site. A screening assessment for Appropriate Assessment is attached in Appendix 3 of this report.

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening, I conclude that the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA or any other European Site in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.

8.2. This determination is based on:

- the small scale and domestic nature of the development,
- the 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 birds.

9.0 Water Framework Directive Screening

- 9.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. A screening assessment for WFD is attached in Appendix 4 of this report.
- 9.2. The site is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay WFD catchment and the Tibbotstown_SC_010 WFD subcatchment. The nearest river is the Butlerstown_030 which is c 0.5km from the site (uphill). The site overlays the Ballinhassig East groundwater body. The site is c 0.96km from Lough Mahon (Harper's island) transitional water body (downhill).
- 9.3. The Butlerstown_030 has moderate status and is at risk, the Ballinhassig East groundwater body has good status and is not at risk and the Lough Mahon (Harper's island) water body has moderate status and is at risk.
- 9.4. 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 and ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, 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.
- 9.5. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:
 - the small scale low intensive nature of the development,
 - the distance to the surface water bodies Butlerstown river and Lough Mahon,
 - the low risk status of Ballinhassig East groundwater,

- the low risk of potential impacts having regard to the proposed drainage measures.

9.6. 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 either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

10.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that permission be refused.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. The site is located on lands designated Metropolitan Green Belt in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028. Objective RP5-3 of the plan states that the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt is the area under strongest urban pressure for rural housing and therefore applicants shall satisfy the planning authority that their proposal constitutes exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and / or economic links to a particular local rural area and must demonstrate that they comply with one of the identified categories of housing need. The applicant has not demonstrated that they have an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and or economic links to the area and have not demonstrated that they comply with one of the categories of housing need. The proposed development, in the absence of any identified locally based need for the house, would contribute to the encroachment of random rural development in the area and would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure. The proposed development would be contrary to the policies of the planning authority as set out in the development plan and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The site of the proposed development is located on lands designated Metropolitan Green Belt and High Value Landscape in the Cork County Development Plan. Objective RP 5-22 provides for the design of new dwellings that respect the character, pattern and tradition of existing places and forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape. Objective GI 14-9 provides for the protection of visual and scenic amenities and to ensure that new development meets high standards of siting and design. It is considered that, by reason of the suburban design of the house and the 'backland' nature of the site to the rear of the established building line, that the proposed development would form a discordant feature on the landscape at this location which would be out of character with the established pattern and form of development in this area, 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 seriously injure the visual amenities of the area, would be contrary to objectives RP5-22 and GI14-9 of the development plan, and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. It is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard because of the additional traffic turning movements the development would generate on the L2968 public road (Lackenroe Road) at a point where sightlines are restricted from the entrance in a northern and southerly direction along the road.

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.

Aisling Mac Namara
Planning Inspector

16th September 2025

Appendix 1: Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	322814
Proposed Development Summary	Permission for construction of split level, two storey, detached dwelling house with waste water treatment plant and associated site works
Development Address	Ballynaroona, Glounthaune, Co.Cork
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<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, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	Schedule 5, Part 2, 10 (b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units
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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:** _____

Appendix 2: Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	322814
Proposed Development Summary	Permission for construction of split level, two storey, detached dwelling house with waste water treatment plant and associated site works
Development Address	Ballynaroan, Glounthaune, Co.Cork
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed residential use is compatible with other uses in area, - Modest size and intensity of development - No significant use of natural resources - No significant production of waste - No significant risk of pollution or nuisance - No significant risk of accidents / disasters to human health
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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rural area - Local ecology only on site - No built heritage - No water features at the site - No designated sites at the site
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).	Having regard to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nature and scale of the development, - lack of significant environmental sensitivities on the site, - absence of significant in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.
Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. x	EIA is not required.

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

DP/ADP: _____ **Date:** _____

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

Appendix 3: AA Screening Determination Template Test for likely significant effects

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects				
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics				
Brief description of project	Dwelling, site works, on site treatment system to EPA CoP standards, water supply via public mains, on site disposal of surface water			
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	Small scale residential development 0.25ha site Site is in undeveloped natural state No rivers or streams at site			
Screening report	No			
Natura Impact Statement	No			
Relevant submissions	None			
Planning authority	Planning authority AA screening report of Executive Planner concludes that no AA requirement having regard to the scale and nature of the proposal and the lack of any physical or hydrological connection between the development site and any European site			
Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites within zone of influence using the Source-pathway-receptor model				
European Site (code)	Qualifying interests ¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections ²	Consider further in screening ³ Y/N
Great Island Channel SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) [1330]	c 0.95 km	No direct connections. Possible indirect connections.	yes
Cork Harbour SPA	Birds	c 0.95 km	No direct connections. Possible indirect connections.	yes
¹ Summary description / cross reference to NPWS website is acceptable at this stage in the report ² Based on source-pathway-receptor: Direct/ indirect/ tentative/ none, via surface water/ ground water/ air/ use of habitats by mobile species				

³if no connections: N

Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

- (a) Identify potential direct or indirect impacts (if any) arising from the project alone that could have an effect on the European Site(s) taking into account the size and scale of the proposed development and all relevant stages of the project (See Appendix 9 in Advice note 1A).
- (b) Are there any design or standard practice measures proposed that would reduce the risk of impacts to surface water, wastewater etc. that would be implemented regardless of proximity to a European Site?
- (c) Identify possible significant effects on the European sites in view of the conservation objectives (alone or in combination with other plans and projects)

AA Screening matrix

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
Great Island Channel SAC Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) [1330]	No direct connections. Indirect hydrological and ecological connections.	No pathways via rivers or streams. Due to distance and intensity of development, any possible residual pollution from storm water and effluent disposal measures via groundwater not likely. Due to distance, construction related impacts from dust are not likely.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): No	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? No	
Cork Harbour SPA Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis) [A004] Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus) [A005] Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017] Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea) [A028] Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048] Teal (Anas crecca) [A052] Pintail (Anas acuta) [A054] Red-breasted Merganser (Mergus serrator) [A069] Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus) [A130] Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140]	No direct connections. Indirect hydrological and ecological connections.	Existing natural boundaries / trees to be retained. Vegetation clearance on site not likely to be significant. Significant effects on birds for foraging / breeding not likely. No pathways via rivers or streams. Due to distance and intensity of development, any possible residual pollution from storm water and effluent disposal measures via groundwater not likely. Due to distance, construction related impacts from noise and dust are not likely.

Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) [A141] Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142] Dunlin (Calidris alpina) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica) [A157] Curlew (Numenius arquata) [A160] Redshank (Tringa totanus) [A162] Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179] Common Gull (Larus canus) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus) [A183] Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) [A193] Wigeon (Mareca penelope) [A855] Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) Greenshank (Tringa nebularia)		
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): No	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? No	
Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site		
I conclude that the proposed development (alone) would not result in likely significant effects on Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA. The proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on any European site(s). No further assessment is required for the project. No mitigation measures are required to come to these conclusions.		

Screening Determination

Finding of no likely significant effects

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening, I conclude that the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA or any other European Site in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.

This determination is based on:

- the small scale and domestic nature of the development

- the 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 birds.

Appendix 4: 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.	322814	Townland, address	Ballynaroan, Glounthaune, Co.Cork			
Description of project		Dwelling				
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		<p>Site is undeveloped land at the edge of the settlement of Glounthaune, Co.Cork.</p> <p>No water features on the site or directly adjacent to the site.</p> <p>Site not located within a flood zone area.</p> <p>Culverted stream at public road.</p>				
Proposed surface water details		On site soakpits, SUDS measures proposed – water butt, permeable finish in part, bioretention planter, aco drain to soakpit at entrance				
Proposed water supply source & available capacity		Public mains				
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues		Onsite wastewater treatment system to EPA CoP standards				
Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection						
Identified water body	Distance to (m)	Water body name(s) (code)	WFD Status	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk	Identified pressures on that water body	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)
River	c 0.5km	BUTLERSTOWN_030	Moderate	At risk	Urban run off	No pathway
Groundwater	Underlying site	Ballinhassig EastIE_SW_G_004	Good	Not at risk	None identified	<p>Surface water drainage to ground</p> <p>Effluent treatment and disposal to ground</p>
Transitional	0.96km	Lough Mahon (Harper's Island) IE_SW_060_0700	Moderate	At risk	Urban run off Urban waste water	Possible runoff from site via road

Step 3: 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	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.
	Ground	Ballinhassig EastIE_SW_G_004	underground	pollution	standard best practice construction	No	Screened out
	Transitional	Lough Mahon (Harper's Island)	Overland	Pollution and sedimentation	standard best practice construction	No	Screened out
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
	Surface	Lough Mahon (Harper's Island)	runoff	pollution and sedimentation	Soakpit, SUDS	No	Screened out
	Ground	Ballinhassig EastIE_SW_G_004	underground	pollution	WWTS to EPA CoP standards Soakpit SUDS	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
	NA						