



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ACP-323249-25

Development	Change of use to GP surgery, construction of extensions with all associated site works
Location	Saint Jude's, Main Street, Duncannon, Ballyhack ED, Co. Wexford. Y34 R858
Planning Authority	Wexford County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	20250405
Applicant(s)	Helen Doyle
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Granted
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	Fort Haven Managment Company Limited
Date of Site Inspection	13/11/25
Inspector	Hugh O'Neill

1.0 Site Location and Description

The site consists of a 109 sqm single storey dwelling and detached garage set back from the established urban building line on a 0.011Ha site in the centre of Duncannon.

The site is accessed via a gated vehicular entrance in a masonry wall to the rear of a footpath on the south side of the R737 which is the main road through Duncannon village.

Fort Haven is a 2 storey development of holiday apartments and houses to the immediate east of the subject site on the street frontage. Ground level in the Fort Haven development is above that of the subject site. The boundary wall is of concrete block and appears to be a retaining structure.

The eastern site boundary is defined by a capped and rendered wall with the gable of a semi detached 2 storey house containing a first floor window fronting onto the R737.

The southern, (rear) boundary towards the beach is onto Beach View, a development of holiday home type houses in a courtyard arrangement.

2.0 Proposed Development

2.1. Permission was sought for

- (A) proposed change of use of an existing dwelling house from residential use to a GP surgery,
- (B) proposed ground floor extension and internal alterations to accommodate 6 no. treatment rooms, waiting area, reception, staff facilities and service spaces,
- (C) proposed first floor extension to accommodate a four-bed residential apartment,
- (D) alterations to the elevations,
- (E) widening the existing vehicle access and providing four no. car spaces together with all associated site works and ancillary services.

2.2. Area Breakdown

- Existing ground floor area - 109.15sq.m
- Proposed change of use floor area - 109.15sq.m
- Proposed ground floor extension — 106.18sq.m
- Proposed first floor extension (residential) - 149.11sq.m
- Total floor area proposed - 255.29sq.m
- Total floor area existing and proposed - 364.44sq.m

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Permission was granted subject to 13 conditions each of a standard nature.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

A planning report dated 28/05/25 set out details of the pre-planning undertaken, site and development description, policy context, internal and external referrals and third party submissions. The planning report states that the principle of change of use to GP surgery and continuation/extension of residential use is acceptable in principle, that no impact on amenities is anticipated and that the proposed height is consistent with neighbouring property. A number of points of concern were raised and reflected in 6 points of Further Information requested on 30/05/25. Points are summarised as follows:

1. Vehicle turning circles, sightlines.
2. Separate level and marked pedestrian access to the site.
3. Clarify if proposed car parking spaces for residential or customers.
4. Number of practitioners, support staff and intended hours of operation.
5. Private open space site for the proposed residential apartment.
6. details of proposed bin storage.

A response was received 19/06/25 consisting of a revised site layout with vehicular tracking, open space and bin stores, confirmation of parking use by staff and applicant only and details of staff and opening hours.

A second Planning report dated 08/07/25 considered the responses adequate.

The report concluded with a recommendation for permission to be granted subject to 13 conditions all of which are standard in nature.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Roads report 16/05/25. Request for FI
- Roads report 07/07/25. Recommending grant with 4 conditions
- Disability access officer reported that a DAC is required noting issues with the proposed design.
- Memo from housing noting the development is not subject to Part V.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None.

3.4. Third Party Observations

Concerns raised regarding impact of additional parking and impact on views.

4.0 Planning History

None recorded on online planning register.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.2. Volume 1

Duncannon is designated as a Level 4 Large village, identifiable settlement structures and established populations providing important local level services with potential to support additional growth.

Section 15.7.3 addresses Healthcare Facilities sets out the importance of healthcare facilities and seeks to encourage their location in towns and villages.

Objective SC31

To facilitate the development of new and expanded accessible health and medical care facilities at appropriate locations in the county. These facilities must be easy to get to by the persons availing of the service and therefore should generally be located within towns and villages and areas of significant residential development. Isolated rural locations will not generally be considered, except where it is demonstrated that the nature of the facility requires such a location and in the interests of protecting the amenity of the host community.

5.3. Volume 2,

4.3 Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare facilities will be considered on appropriately zoned lands in town and village centres. Small scale medical surgeries/practices (doctor/dentist/physiotherapist, etc.) are open for consideration in established residential areas, subject to appropriate safeguards to protect the residential amenity of the area. The applicant will be required to demonstrate a spatial rationale for the conversion of a full dwelling in the context of the availability of alternative sites in the area, the location of schools and employment and existing healthcare facilities.

Planning applications for medical surgeries/practices/centres should include details of proposed professional medical (commercial) activities, proposed number of practitioners and support staff, and intended hours of operation. In instances of

partial conversion from residential to healthcare, the proposal shall be assessed as a Home Based Economic Activity.

Table 6-7 Car Parking Standards in Volume 2 of the Development Plan sets a maximum standard of 1 parking space per consulting room and max of 0 spaces per residential unit in village centre locations.

Section 3.4 requires extensions to avoid unacceptable loss of private open space.

Table 3-4 prescribes a minimum of 70 sqm of private open space to be provided for houses in excess of 110sqm.

5.4. Natural Heritage Designations

The site is not located within any European site. The closest European site to the subject site is the River Barrow and River Nore SAC Site Code 002162 c. 100m to the south of the site.

Duncannon Sandhills Proposed Natural Heritage Area is also located 100m to the south of the site.

5.5. EIA Screening

The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

Third party grounds are summarised as follows:

- Loss of amenity, overlooking/privacy, loss of light for ground and first floor apartments
- Parking inadequate for staff and patients, will result in overspill into Fort Haven. Concern over insurance issues raised.

6.2. Applicant Response

Response received by way of letter dated 01/09/25 summarised as follows:

- No proposed windows overlook Fort Haven.
- Balcony is below roof level and away from Fort Haven.
- The scale of the proposal will not lead to overshadowing
- The proposal will blend with the surrounding development all of which is 2 storey construction.
- Sea views from Fort Haven are accessed by looking between/through existing structures, the proposal will have little impact on these views.
- Patients will be able to access the surgery by active and public transport modes due to its location.

6.3. Planning Authority Response

None on file.

6.4. Observations

None on file.

6.5. Further Responses

None on file.

7.0 Assessment

It is proposed to consider the appeal under the following broad headings:

- Principle of the development
- Residential amenity
- Impact on parking

7.1. Principle of the development

The proposal entails provision of a healthcare facility within Duncannon which is designated in the Wexford Development Plan 2022-2028 as a Level 4 large village identified as having potential to support growth. The site is located in the village centre, is an established residential use, it is proposed to retain that residential use and the structure whilst providing a community service.

The principle of the proposed development was accepted by the Planning Authority. I consider the principle of the development within local, regional and national policy to be acceptable.

7.2. Residential amenity

A ground of appeal relates to the potential for **overlooking** particularly of Ground and First Floor Apartments located to the north east of the proposal.

I note there is a single first floor window proposed to the east elevation (towards Fort Haven) which is orientated towards the car parking to the rear of the Fort Haven.

This proposed window is to an internal stairwell above a half landing. Submitted drawings indicate the internal sill level of this window will be significantly above the half landing floor level with any potential limited view of the car park from the first floor landing at a 2.3m set back from that window.

The flat roof area shown as accessible from the proposed living room area is located to the south western corner of the proposal and for that reason is removed and screened from any potential overlooking of Fort Havens. I am satisfied that there will be no significant impact on residential amenity of the Fort Haven Apartments as a result of overlooking from the proposal.

Concerns are also raised regarding **overshadowing** of Fort Haven. Taking account of the scale of the proposal with a ridge height of 8.257m above ground level at separation distances ranging from circa 6.8m to c.9.1m due west of Fort Haven I am satisfied that any potential overshadowing will be negligible and insignificant in the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The **loss of sea view** is set out as a concern by the appellant as a loss of visual amenity. The proposed site is located in a predominantly 2 storey built context with

ground level within Fort Haven above that of the subject site and any potential sea views from Fort Haven across the subject site towards the sea are within a context of 2 storey houses. I do not consider the potential impact on views from Fort Haven towards the sea or otherwise to be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

In conclusion I do not consider the proposal has the potential to significantly negatively impact on the residential amenity of property in Fort Haven as a result of overlooking, overshadowing or visual amenity.

7.3. Impact on parking.

The appeal raises concerns regarding the quantum of parking proposed and risk of overflow parking using Fort Avens carparking.

I note the allocation to on street car parking of the northern side of the R737 which operates one-way west to east from which the proposal is accessed.

The central location of the proposal is accessible to residents of the area by active travel and public transport which is consistent with transport policy.

The Wexford County Development Plan 2022-208 Volume 2, Table 6-7 Car parking standards sets a maximum standard in village centre of 1 car parking space per consultants room and 0 spaces per residential unit. Note 3 of the above referenced table states that in COU allowance would be made for the existing use. Tabel 6-8 prescribes that the number of accessible spaces are to be determined based on anticipated demand.

The subject development contains 6 no. treatment rooms and 1 residential unit yielding a prescribed maximum of 6 spaces for the proposed development. 4 car parking spaces are proposed with one provided as an accessible space. This does not exceed the prescribed maximum and is for that reason consistent with development plan standards.

At the time of my site inspection c.14:30 on a Thursday, which I take to represent a typical time of operation of the GP surgery there was ample on street parking. I have also examined a number of sources of online aerial photography. The on-street parking was not at full occupancy at the time of any of these sources. In consideration of the application the roads section of the Wexford Co Co did not

report any issues with demand exceeding supply of on street parking in the subject location.

Taking account of the village centre location, in curtilage and on street parking provision I share the view of the Planning Authority that adequate car parking is available to meet the needs of the proposal and wider area.

I do not consider potential impacts on management of third-party parking including insurance to be material to the determination of the subject appeal.

7.4. Other Matters

The adequate provision of private open space was highlighted by the planning authority as a concern. The existing house on the site has ample (in excess of 300sqm) mature rear garden upon which there is negligible impact as a result of the proposed works. I am satisfied that the proposed first floor accommodation will have access to high quality private open space.

8.0 AA Screening

I have considered the change of use from residential to GP with extension of residential use at first floor in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site is currently in use as a residential property, is fully serviced, is in the center of Duncannon village on a site surrounded by existing development and is located 100m from River Barrow and River Nore SAC 002162.

The proposed development comprises a change of use from single residential unit to residential with a GP use including extension of the existing house primarily by the addition of a first floor.

No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

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

The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The small scale and nature of the development.
- The small scale and urban nature of the site containing existing development.
- The location-distance from nearest European site and lack of connections.

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

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

9.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission be granted for the following reasons and considerations:

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the designation of Duncannon as a Level 4 Village in the Wexford County Council Development Plan 2022-2028, the location of the proposal in the centre of the village, the importance of healthcare services to the village and its hinterland, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of the policy requirements of the development plan, would not seriously injure the visual amenities of the area and would not be prejudicial to public health. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

11.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application and further information date stamped by the Planning Authority 19/06/2025, 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, signage and lighting shall be submitted to, and 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 planning authority for such works and services.

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

4. Site development and building works shall be carried out between the hours of 0700 to 1900 hours Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between of 0700 to 1600 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times shall only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written agreement has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of property in the vicinity.

5. All service cables associated with the proposed development (such as electrical, telecommunications and communal television) shall be located underground. Ducting shall be provided by the developer to facilitate the provision of broadband infrastructure within the proposed development. All existing over ground cables shall be relocated underground as part of the site development works.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

6. 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 Coimisiún 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.

7. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or such other security as may be acceptable to the planning authority, to secure the reinstatement of public roads which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road. 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 Coimisiún for determination.

Reason: To ensure that the public road is satisfactorily reinstated, if necessary.

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 me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Hugh O'Neill

Planning Inspector

14 January 2026

Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	323249
Proposed Development Summary	COU residential to GP with extension of residential use at first floor
Development Address	Saint Jude's, Main Street, Duncannon, Ballyhack ED, Co. Wexford. Y34 R858
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?	<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 checked="" 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.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.	

Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)	
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 type="checkbox"/>	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____