



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ACP-324029-26

Development

Large Scale Residential Development (LRD) comprising the demolition and removal of the existing building, the construction of 3 apartment blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 5 storeys, comprising 114 no. apartment units (45 no. 1 bed, 43 no. 2 bed, and 26 no. 3 bed apartments), and ESB substation and all associated site development works.

Location

Ballyhooly Road, Laherdane, Whites Cross, Cork

Planning Authority

Cork City Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

2544053

Applicant(s)

Whitestone Corner Properties Limited

Type of Application

Large-Scale Residential.

Planning Authority Decision

Cork City Council

Type of Appeal

Third Party

Appellant(s)	Kellie Cronin and Others.
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	20 th February 2026.
Inspector	Lucy Roche

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Appendices

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The proposed development site is situated on the eastern side of the R614 (Ballyhooly Road), in the outer suburban area of Ballyvolane, approximately 3km northeast of Cork City Centre (as the crow flies). This outer suburban area is identified as a new residential neighbourhood in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (CCDP, Vol. 4, Mapped Objectives, Core Strategy 2028 Map). Lands to the immediate north, east and south of the application site are currently under construction for an SHD (Longview) which was granted in 2020 under ABP-306325-20. This scheme comprises 753 units, creche, local centre (community and retail uses) and supporting infrastructure including local road widening of the Ballyhooly Road. The permitted residential units to the immediate south of the proposed development site (Longview Park) are now complete and occupied. Lands to the west of the site, on the opposite side of Ballyhooly Road, have been zoned ZO 08 - Neighbourhood and Local Centres and currently have the benefit of planning permission for a commercial development (primary health care centre, retail unit and GP services).
- 1.2. The site itself comprises c.1.218ha of Brownfield land that, in accordance with the information on file was previously used as a storage yard/compound for lorries. The site was not in use on the date of inspection 20/02/2026. The site has been subject to extensive works of excavation resulting in a significant level difference between it and neighbouring lands, which are elevated above the R614. A steep bank of exposed rock encloses the site to the east. This bank gradually reduces across the extents of the north and south boundaries. There is a continuous line of mature leylandii cypress trees to the east and partially to the north and south boundaries to the site, at the top of the rock face slope. Existing vegetation along the western roadside boundary, includes a number of mature sycamore trees. Internally within the site is an industrial building located towards the northern boundary. This building has a footprint of approx. 320 sq. m and sits atop a raised bank, accessed via steeply sloping driveway at its southern end.
- 1.3. Access to the site is via an existing gated entrance off the R614 Ballyhooly Road. The R614 Ballyhooly Road, at the location of the proposed development site, is a single carriageway, two-way road, with no infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists

and a posted speed limit of 80km/hr. The R614 to the immediate south of the site has the benefit of a new shared, 4m wide footpath/cycle path and a reduced speed limit of 50 km/hr. In terms of public transport, the area is currently served by Bus Eireann Route 207, with a stop at Brookwood c. 500m to the south. This route includes stops at Ballyvolane Shopping Centre, St. Patrick's College, the City Centre, Douglas Village, and Donnybrook at a 30-minute frequency from 0710 to 2300 (c.15-minute peak frequency). Bus services in the area are to be expanded under BusConnects which will provide three new routes in close proximity to the subject site. Routes 11 and 26 will serve Brookwood with a peak frequency of every 20 minutes and every 30 minutes respectively (combined peak frequency of 12 minutes). Route 39 will provide services between Upper Glanmire and Parnell Place via Ballyhooly Road, at 90minute intervals.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The application, as originally presented to the planning authority, was for a large-scale residential development (LRD) of 114no. residential apartments. The apartment units comprising a mix of 45 no. 1 beds, 43 no. 2 beds, and 26 no. 3 beds and arranged in three blocks ranging in height from 4-5 storeys.
- 2.2. Cork City Council (CCC) issued a request for further information on the 22nd of September 2025, seeking further detail on 7no. items including density and parking provision. The applicant's response, received by CCC on the 20th of November 2025, introduced amendments to the scheme including the omission of 3no. apartments at ground floor level of Block C and the omission of an area of communal open space to facilitate the provision of additional car and bicycle parking.
- 2.3. The amended LRD comprises 111no apartment units in three blocks, as follows:
 - Block A is 4 storeys in height and provides 27 no. apartment units.
 - Block B is 4 storeys in height and provides 31 no. apartment units.
 - Block C is 5 storeys in height and provides a total of 53 no. apartment units.
- 2.4. The proposal includes for the demolition and removal of the existing structures on site and for the provision of footpaths, open space, car parking, bicycle store and bin

stores, a new vehicular and pedestrian access, fencing, lighting, 1 no. ESB substation and all associated site development works. Provision is also made within the scheme for a cycle lane and footpath along the Ballyhooly Road to connect with existing (recently constructed) infrastructure to the south.

- 2.5. The following table presents a summary of the principal characteristics, features, and floor areas of the components of the proposed scheme as originally presented to CCC and as amended at RFI Stage, which are extrapolated from the application forms, plans and particulars (Architectural Design Statement, Schedule of Accommodation, Housing Quality Assessment) and the applicant's response to the grounds of appeal.

Table 2.1: Development Statistics		
	Scheme as Originally Presented	Final Permitted Scheme
Gross Site Area	1.218ha	1.218ha
Net Site Area	0.942 ha	0.9418ha
Gross Floor Space	10,631.05 sq. m	10,410.11 sq. m.
Demolition	301.05 sq. m	301.05 sq. m
Density	93.6uph 121uph (Net)	91.13uph (gross) 117.86uph (Net)
Plot Ratio	0.873	0.872 (gross) 1.128 (Net)
Site Coverage	17.22% developable area	Not stated
No. Residential Units	114	111
Houses	0	0
Apartment	114.	111
Unit Type / Mix <i>(See Tables 2.2 and 2.3 below)</i>	45 no. 1 beds, 43 no. 2 beds, and 26 no. 3 beds	44 no. 1 beds, 42 no. 2 beds, and 25 no. 3 beds
Dual Aspect units	57% (65no. units)	57% (64no. units)

Building Height	4-5 storeys	4-5 storeys
Car Parking	59 <i>(0.52 no. spaces per unit)</i>	83 <i>(0.75 no. spaces per unit)</i>
Cycle Parking	187 <i>(41 no. internal, 56 no. external, 90 no. sheltered)</i>	249 <i>(41 no. internal, 16no external spaces; 192 no. sheltered)</i>
Public Open Space	2,306 sq. m or 18.93% of the site area	No change identified
Communal Open Space	450 sq. m	0 sq. m

2.8. The following Tables provide a breakdown of unit type and mix:

Table 2.2 – Apartment Mix				
Apartment Mix	1 Bed	2 Bed (4 person)	3 Bed	Total
Total Units	44	42	25	111
% Mix	38.6	36.8%	21.9%	100%

2.9. In addition to the standard plans and particulars, the application is accompanied by the following documents and reports:

- Planning Report
- Response to LRD Opinion
- Statement of Consistency
- Housing Mix Statement
- Social Infrastructure Audit
- EIA Screening
- Design Statement including. Housing Quality Assessment
- Operational Waste Management Plan
- Key Development Standards and Schedule of Accommodation
- Preliminary Engineering Design Statement
- Traffic and Transport Assessment

- Preliminary Mobility Management Plan
- Construction and Environmental Management Plan
- Preliminary Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan
- Road Safety Audit (Stage 1)
- Statement of Design Acceptance (Uisce Eireann)
- Landscape Design Statement
- Public Lighting Design Report
- Climate Action Energy Statement
- Daylight and Sunlight Assessment
- Appropriate Assessment Screening
- Ecological Impact Assessment Report
- Knotweed Recovery Report
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Note
- Waste Classification Report
- Preliminary Environmental Risk Assessment
- Site Investigation Report
- Verified View Photomontages

3.0 Planning Authority Pre-Application Opinion

- 3.1. Three pre-planning meetings (two Section 247 meetings and one Section 32B meetings) were held between the applicants and Cork City Council (CCC) prior to the submission of this application. The two Section 247 meetings were held on the 5th of June 2024 and the 28th of August 2024 (respectively) while the Section 32B meeting took place on the 24th of January 2025. Details of these meetings is provided in Section 6 of the applicants '*Planning Report*'.
- 3.2. The planning authority issued its formal LRD Opinion on 19th of February 2025 and advised that the documentation submitted with the consultation request under Section 32B of the Planning and Development Act 2002 (as amended) requires further consideration and amendment to constitute a reasonable basis on which to make an application or permission for the proposed LRD. A copy of the LRD Opinion has been included as part of the application documentation (appendix 1 of the applicants LRD Opinion Response).

3.3. The LRD Opinion first outlined where the documentation submitted required further consideration and amendment. Seven areas were identified for further consideration, these are (in brief):

1. *Density and Height*: - The applicants were requested to provide a robust justification for the density and building heights proposed.
2. *Housing Mix*: - Further consideration and amendments to the housing mix having regard to Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8 of the CCDP or the submission of a report to justify the housing mix proposed.
3. *Amenity*: - Consideration needs to be given to where uses, including amenity uses are provided and how buildings are offset from site boundaries in terms level difference and potential for overshadowing / poor amenity spaces. Revised shadow and sunlight reports required.
4. *Car Parking*: - Further consideration on the level of car parking proposed.
5. *Permeability*: - Further consideration of permeability and connectivity to the adjoining SHD scheme.
6. *Design*: - Further consideration of the design/layout and architectural expression of the scheme.
7. *Childcare facilities*: - the applicant was advised to consult with Cork City Childcare prior to submitting an application.

3.4. Pursuant to Article 16A (7) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), the applicant was notified that in addition to the requirements as specified in Articles 20A, 22 and 23, the following information (in summary) should be submitted with any LRD application for permission:

- Submission of revised proposals / drawings to address issues raised
- Demonstration of compliance with the Apartment Guidelines (2023)
- Additional drawing / sections to detail existing / proposed site levels and finished floor levels relative to existing / permitted developments on adjoining lands.
- Details of external finishes, materials and colours.

- Further engagement with Uisce Eireann - Design acceptance.
- Construction and Environmental Management Plan and Operational Waste Management Plan with refuse swept path drawing
- Contaminated Land Risk Assessment.
- Traffic Impact Assessment and Road Safety Audit.
- AA Screening Report and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA).
- Maintenance plan for the green roofs and a detailed planting schedule for the scheme.
- Additional photomontages.
- A Statement of response to the issues raised in the LRD Opinion.

4.0 Planning Authority Decision

4.1. Decision

Following an initial request for further information, Cork City Council (CCC) decided to grant permission for the proposed LRD on the 17th of December 2025, subject to 45no. conditions.

4.2. Conditions

- 4.2.1. CCC attached 45no. conditions to the grant of permission, most of which are standard construction and planning conditions. The following conditions, which are specific to the proposed LRD, are of note:

C.19 Full details of the pedestrian link (incl. tie-in details) between the subject development and the adjoining Longview estate shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority.

No physical barrier/ fencing shall be erected at the tie-in/ connection point to allow for the unimpeded pedestrian access between the Longview estate and the hereby permitted development and the pedestrian access/ link shall be

made open to the public after the completion of Block B, unless otherwise agreement in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: in the interests of orderly development and support enhanced sustainable mobility

C.20 The shared pedestrian/ cycle path running along the frontage of the site (labelled 'Future Footpath/ Cyclepath' on Drawing No. 1183.PL.160-Site Layout Plan Rev. K) shall be constructed/ delivered by the developer as part of this development. The final geometric layout of the proposed shared cycle/pedestrian facility and the main entrance junction shall be finalised in consultation with Cork City Council and agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. All costs associated with the condition to be borne by the developer

Reason: To ensure the safe operation of the road network for all users

4.3. Planning Authority Reports

4.3.1. Planning Reports

Initial Report (September 2025)

- The Initial report of the planning authority was prepared by the Assistant Planner (AP) and dated 16th of September 2025. The opening sections of this report (sections 1 to 4) outline the statutory requirements and procedural backgrounds for LRD's and the purpose of the LRD report. The report then considers the locational context and planning history of the site, relevant planning policy, third-party submissions and the reports of internal consultees and prescribed bodies received.
- Section 16 of the report comprises the 'Environmental Assessment' which is assessed under the headings of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Flood Risk Assessment. The AP is satisfied that the proposed scheme does not give rise to the need for either an EIA or AA. On the issue of flood risk, the AP considers the applicants Flood Risk Assessment, which notes that the area is not within Flood Zone A or B and is at low risk of flooding and the comments of the Area Engineer (AE)

which refer to a past flood event in the area, the AP concludes that further information is required on this issue.

- Section 17 of the report comprises the main planning assessment which is considered under the headings of (1) Site Zoning / Principle of Development; (2) Residential Density and Building Height; (3) Site Layout; (4) Proposed Pedestrian Connection/ Link to adjacent Longview Estates Development; (5) Impacts on Residential Amenity; (6) Residential Development Standards; (7) Housing Mix; (8) communal Open Space/Landscaping; (9) Ecology; (10) Childcare Facility; (11) Traffic and Transportation (incl. access and parking); (12) Services (water and drainage); (13) Environment and (14) Part V.
- The report concludes with a request for further information on 7 items as follows (in brief):

Item 1 Density: -The applicant was requested to provide a suitably detailed and robust justification for the proposed density (93.6uph) in accordance with the process for establishing and refining density set out in Section 3.4 'Refining Density' and as illustrated in Figure 3.3 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024.

Item 2 Car Parking: - The applicant was requested to submit proposals to increase the level of car parking on site.

Item 3 Sightlines: - The applicant was requested to submit the required sightlines for a Regional Road within the 80KPH speed limit zone i.e. 120 metres, in both directions, to the near side road edge taken from a point 2.4 metres minimum back from the edge of the public road and to provide details of Stopping Sight Distances (SSD), demonstrating compliance with applicable standards.

Item 4 Flood Risk: - The applicant was requested to update the Flood Risk Assessment to include for full assessment of the flood event that occurred in the vicinity of the application site during Storm Babet (18th of October 2023).

Item 5 Impact on Residential Amenity: - The applicant was requested to submit proposals to address/ mitigate the potential for overlooking of adjacent dwellings to south (Longview Estates Development).

Item 6 Bicycle Parking: - The applicant was requested to increase the level of bicycle parking/ storage on site in accordance with Specific Planning Policy Requirement 4 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024.

Item 7 Drainage: - the applicant was requested to provide details of any existing drains or pipes, including the condition, full extent, and outfall location. The proposed storm water drainage strategy includes two separate storm water discharge to an existing storm drain on the Ballyhooly Road of which the Planning Authority had no record.

Report of the Senior Executive Planner (SEP) (18th September 2025):

- The initial report of the SEP considers the drawings and documentation submitted, the policies and objectives of the CCDP and the report of the Assistant Planner and recommends that further information be sought. This report also includes screening for AA and concludes that the need for AA can be screened out.

Report on Further information:

The second and final report of the Assistant Planner (AP) considers the further information received on the 19th of September 2025 along with the additional internal referral reports and third-party submissions received. The following points are noted:

- **Item 1 Density** – The AP notes that the reduction in the number of units proposed from 114 no. to 111 and considers that the applicant has provided a comprehensive rationale/ justification for the proposed density in accordance with the process for establishing/ refining density set out in Section 3.4 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines and that the density as proposed is acceptable.
- **Item 2 Car Parking:** - The AP notes the proposed increase in the level of car parking from 59 to 83 (+ 24 no. spaces) and the comments of the Transport Section which deemed the level of parking proposed to be sufficient.

- **Item 3 Sightlines:** The AP notes the updated drawing detailing sightlines of 120m in both directions (to the near side road edge taken from a point 2.4m back from the edge of the public road) as requested and the fact that the AE raised no objection to a grant of permission.
- **Item 4 Flood Risk:** The AP notes the updated Flood Risk Assessment and the fact that the AE raised no objection to a grant of permission.
- **Item 5 Impact on Residential Amenity:** - The AP is satisfied with the applicant's proposal to address overlooking concerns which include the raising of the cill level of habitable room windows on the southern elevation of Block B (from first-floor level upwards) to 1.8m above finished floor level. It is stated that these windows function as secondary windows only and windows to bathrooms and circulation areas are to be fitted with opaque glazing.
- **Item 6 Bicycle Parking:** - The AP notes that the level of bicycle parking has increased from 181 no. space to 249 no. spaces (+68 no. spaces) and deems this sufficient to meet the requirements of SPPR 4 of the 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines.
- **Item 7 Drainage:** - The stormwater layout and Engineering Design Report has been amended / updated in response to this item. The Drainage Section has raised no objection to a grant of permission subject to condition.
- The report concludes with a recommendation to grant permission subject to 45no. conditions.

Report of the Senior Executive Planner (17th December 2025):

- The second and final report of the SEP has regard to the drawings and documentation submitted to the Policies and Objectives of the CCDP (as varied) and to the report of the AP and consider that the issues raised in the FI request have been adequately addressed. The report concludes with a recommendation that permission be granted subject to 45no conditions.

Report of the Senior Planner (17th December 2025):

- The Senior Planner notes the content of the reports of the AP and SEP and concurs with the recommendation to grant permission subject to condition.

4.3.2. Other Technical Reports

- **Area Engineer (AE):**

Report of August 2025 requests further information in relation to the provision of adequate sightline distances at the site entrance and in relation to flood risk. On the issue of flood risk, the AE notes that the R614 flooded South of the proposed site entrance during Storm Babet (Oct 2023) due to blockages in the stream resulting in the roadside ditch being washed away. This event was not recorded on the OPW flood date and should be referenced in the Flood Risk Assessment for the development.

Report of December 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Conditions 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates.

- **Traffic Regulation and Safety:**

Report of September 2025 requests further information in relation to parking. A parking ratio of 1 space per apartment is recommended.

Report of December 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Conditions 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates. Conditions 19 and 20 are of note, see section 4.2.1 above for details.

- **Drainage:**

Report of September 2025 requests further information in relation to the storm water drainage strategy presented. The strategy includes two separate storm water discharges to an existing storm water drain on the Ballyhooly Road of which the planning authority has no record. Details of these drains (condition, extent and outfall location etc) requested.

Report of November 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Conditions 9, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates.

- **Contributions:**

Reports of September and December 2025 cite no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Condition 2 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates

- ***Environment:***

Report of September 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Conditions 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates.

- ***Urban Roads & Street Design:***

Report of September 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Conditions 3, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 13 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates.

- ***Housing:***

Report of September 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. No conditions recommended.

- ***Planning Policy:***

Report (Undated): requests further information to justify the density of development proposed.

- ***Parks and Recreation:***

Report of September 2025 cites no objection to grant of permission subject to conditions. Conditions 24, 25, 26 27 and 28 of the planning authority's grant of permission relates.

4.4. Prescribed Bodies

- ***Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII):*** TII requests that the Planning Authority has regard to the provisions of official policy for development proposals as follows: proposals impacting national roads, to the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities and relevant TII Publications and proposals impacting the

existing light rail network, to TII's "Code of engineering practice for works on, near, or adjacent the Luas light rail system".

- ***Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)***: It appears it is proposed to dispose of effluent from the development to the public sewer. IFI would ask that Irish Water/ Cork City Council signifies that there is sufficient capacity in existing system so that it does not a) overload either hydraulically or organically existing treatment facilities b) result in polluting matter entering waters or c) cause or contribute to non - compliance with existing legislative requirements. Should permission ultimately be granted IFI would also ask that planning conditions require there is no interference with, bridging, drainage, or culverting of any watercourse, its bank or bankside vegetation to facilitate this development without the prior approval of IFI.

4.5. **Third Party Observations:**

The planning authority received several (30+) third party submissions during the course of their assessment of the application. The issues raised can be summarised as follows:

- Excessive density and scale. The proposed development would be out of character with existing residential development in the area and would significantly alter the aesthetic and harmony of the locale.
- Inadequate parking provision resulting in overspill parking to neighbouring estates.
- Impacts arising from the proposed pedestrian link to Longview.
- Impacts on traffic congestion and road safety.
- Impacts on the amenities of neighbouring properties by way of overlooking / loss of privacy/ overshadowing, obstruction of free flowing-air.
- Impacts during construction – disruption, noise, dust and HGV traffic

- The level of residential amenity afforded to future residents of the scheme is questioned particularly in terms of natural daylight provision.
- Lack of adequate community / public infrastructure and services to cater for the proposed LRD. The proposed LRD does not contribute to these services.
- Drainage and topographic risks – the application site is a former quarry with steep banks and exposed rock. There is a risk of surface water run - off, flooding, or instability impacting adjoining Longview properties.
- Loss of trees and greenery.

5.0 Planning History

5.1. Application site:

In relation to the application site, the following planning history is noted:

ABP-317014-23 Inclusion of the land on the residential zoned land tax draft map. ABP decided (Oct. 2023) to set aside the determination of the local authority and allow the appeal

CCC Ref: 91/1931 Permission granted by CCC (Oct. 1991) for change of use from farmyard to plant and machinery compound and workshop

5.2. Surrounding Area:

The area surrounding the site has been subject to several planning application in recent years, the following of which are of note:

Adjacent Lands to the North, South and East (SHD known as Longview)

ABP 306325-20: Permission granted (May 2020) for a SHD of 753 no. residential units (600 no. houses and 153 no. apartments), across 6 no. neighbourhoods and a local centre, including 2 no. retail units, a crèche, a doctor's surgery and a community use unit.

ABP 318904-24 Permission granted (Dec. 2024) for amendments to SHD ABP 306325-20 comprising the removal of three residential units and changes to the house types.

CCC 24/43863 Permission granted (July. 2025) for further amendments to SHD ABP 306325-20 comprising the replacement of 7 no. detached houses with 6 no. terraced houses and 4 no. 3 bedroom semi-detached houses. This results in a net increase of 3 no. residential units, bringing the total number of units back to 753.

Lands to the West of LRD site on the opposite side of Ballyhooly Road:

CCC 24/43477 Permission granted (Dec. 2025) for a four-storey primary care centre including the provision of 1no. retail unit and 2 no. GP Practices

6.0 Policy Context

6.1. Development Plan

6.1.1. ***The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028***, hereafter referred to as the CCDP is the applicable plan for the area. The plan comprises four Volumes, Volume 1 - Written Statement, Volume 2 – Mapped Objectives, Volume 3 - Built Heritage Objectives and Volume - 4 Strategies and Supporting Guidance for Strategic Locations. Volumes 1 & 2 were updated to incorporate Variation No. 1, which relates to revised parking standards and updated parking zones and Variation No. 2 which relates to Cork Docklands.

6.1.2. The CCDP include several Policies, Objectives and Development Management Standards applicable to the proposed development, the following of which are of note:

6.1.3. Map Based Objectives (CCDP Volumes 1 and 2):

Land Use Zoning: Also see Vol.1 Chapter 12 Land Use Zoning Objectives. The appeal site is subject to the zoning Objective ZO 02 - New Residential Neighbourhoods' which seeks to provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.'

ZO 2.1 Lands in this zone are designated as Tier 1 or Tier 2 zoned lands in the Core Strategy. Any development proposals must satisfy the

requirements for developing on Tier 1 or Tier 2 lands set out in Chapter 2 Core Strategy.

ZO 2.2 This zone covers primarily greenfield, undeveloped lands for new sustainable residential areas. Development in this zone, while primarily residential, must provide an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures along with the amenity, social, community and physical infrastructure required to promote compact growth, balanced communities and sustainable, liveable communities.

ZO 2.3 Uses set out under ZO 1 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods are appropriate under this zone subject to such uses supporting the creation of sustainable communities and not conflicting with the primary objective of this zoning.

Building Height and Density Maps: Also see Vol. 1 Chapter 11 Placemaking and Managing Development. The Density and Heights Maps within the CDP provide guidance on the heights and densities suitable for different areas within the Cork City Administrative Area. It identifies four areas – City and Central Areas, Primary Urban Corridors and Principal Towns, Inner Urban Suburbs, and Outer Suburbs. Target heights and densities are set out for each of these areas. The subject site is located within ‘Outer Suburbs’. The CDP provides a target height of 2 to 4 storeys for these areas with target densities of 40 to 60uph.

Car-Parking Zones: Also see Vol. 1 Chapter 11 Placemaking and Managing Development. The City Council area is divided into four zones for the purposes of car parking control, based on each area’s accessibility to mass transit, cycling and walking. Car parking standards for both residential and non-residential developments are set out in Table 11.13. These standards are maximums in order to constrain car trip generation and promote patronage of active travel and public transport. The proposed development site is shown to be located within Zone 3 (CCDP V.4 Chapter E). It is envisaged that parking standards serving this zone will be reduced to reflect the level of public transport services over time.

See Volume 1 Chapter 4 'Transport and Mobility', Table 4.6 for the Primary areas to which the Parking Zones relate.

See Chapter 11 Placemaking and Managing Development, Table 11.13 for details of Maximum Car Parking Standards per Car Parking Zone (extract below).

Land Use Category	Zone 3 - Max. Standard
<i>Residential (1-2 bedroom)</i>	1.25
<i>Residential (3-3+ bedroom)</i>	2.25

Extract from Table 11.13 Maximum Car Parking Standards

6.1.4. **Chapter 1 Introduction:** This chapter sets out the strategic vision for Cork City and includes 9no. strategic Objectives (SO's), the following of which are of note:

- *SO 1: Compact Liveable Growth* - Deliver compact growth that achieves a sustainable 15-minute city of scale providing integrated communities and walkable neighbourhoods, dockland and brownfield regeneration, infill development and strategic greenfield expansion adjacent to existing city.
- *SO 2: Delivering Homes and Communities* - Provide densities that create liveable, integrated communities by using a mix of house types, tenures and sizes linked to active and public transport. Provide amenities, services and community and cultural uses to enable inclusive, diverse and culturally rich neighbourhoods.
- SO3 – Transport & Mobility - Integrate land-use and transportation planning to increase active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport usage.
- *SO 9: Placemaking and Managing Development* - Develop a compact liveable city based on attractive, diverse and accessible urban spaces and places. Focus on enhancing walkable neighbourhoods that promote healthy living, wellbeing and active lifestyles, where placemaking is at the heart. Follow a design-led approach with innovative architecture, landscape and urban design that respects the character of the city and neighbourhood.

6.1.5. **Chapter 2, Core Strategy:** This Chapter sets out the growth targets for the City in line with National and Regional planning policy, setting a target population growth of 50,948 (+24%) by the end of the plan period.

The Core Strategy identifies Ballyvolane as a strategic area within and adjoining the existing City within which consolidation and expansion is sought to achieve compact growth. A population growth target of 9,197 is set out for the North-eastern City Suburbs.

Section 2.57 Objectives for City Growth

Ballyvolane is identified as a key site in the city suburbs which will help to deliver the Core Strategy as follows:

Consolidate and enhance by providing a mix of new neighbourhood uses in suitable underutilised locations. Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport access. Deliver uses, layouts and densities that enhance existing local character. Deliver high quality sustainable transport orientated development in combination with high frequency bus routes, the new commuter station at Blackpool (Kilbarry) and prioritised cycling and walking routes set out in CMATS.

Chapter 2 Noted Objectives:

Objective 2.10 The 15-Minute City

- To support the delivery of a 15-Minute City that supports Compact Liveable Growth by creating vibrant local communities that can access all necessary amenities within a 10-minute walk/cycle and access workplaces and other neighbourhoods with a 15-minute public transport journey. Implementation will include walkable neighbourhoods, towns and communities with mix of uses, house types and tenure that foster a diverse, resilient, socially inclusive and responsive city. This includes support for public and active travel infrastructure projects and services and enhanced neighbourhood permeability. Strategic infrastructure and large-scale developments shall demonstrate how they contribute to a 15-minute city and enhance Cork City's liveability and accessibility.

Objective 2.14 Walkable Neighbourhoods:

- New development shall be designed to make positive additions to their neighbourhoods, towns and communities by:
 - a. Delivering the right mix of uses at a scale and design that creates high quality buildings and spaces.
 - b. Creating attractive, safe and vibrant places designed at a human scale (i.e. places that relate to people, streetscapes and local character) with active streets and avoiding the creation of “dead” spaces.
 - c. Ensuring a child friendly and age friendly environment applying Universal Design principles with a mix of household types.
 - d. Designing a safe place that enables access for all.
 - e. Creating a healthy neighbourhood with increased urban greening and direct access to high quality parks and public spaces, schools, shops and local services.
 - f. Being well-connected with easy access to public transport and active travel.
 - g. Providing enhanced permeability for walking and cycling.

6.1.6. **Chapter 3, Delivering Homes and Communities:** - This Chapter sets out objectives aimed at creating and maintaining sustainable neighbourhoods and the community infrastructure needed to ensure that diverse communities all benefit from a good quality of life. It also sets out the objectives for delivering housing to achieve the ambitious targets for Cork City and housing choice.

Objective 3.4: Compact Growth: - Cork City Council will seek to ensure that at least 66% of all new homes will be provided within the existing footprint of Cork. Cork City Council will seek to ensure that at least 33% of all new homes will be provided within brownfield sites in Cork.

Objective 3.5: Residential Density: - Cork City Council will seek to:

- a. Promote compact urban growth by encouraging higher densities throughout Cork City according to the Cork City Density Strategy, Building Height and Tall Building Study and resultant standards set out in Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development and Mapped Objectives; and

- b. Ensure that urban density is achieved by development proposals providing for high quality sustainable residential development, ensure a balance between the protection of the established character of the surrounding area and existing residential amenities.
- c. Ensure that urban density is closely linked to creating successful neighbourhoods and ensuring that neighbourhoods are integrated and permeable to ensure short trips are possible to urban centres, local services and amenities.
- d. Ensuring high-quality architectural, urban and public realm design. Guidance is set out in Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development.

Objective 3.6: Housing Mix: - Cork City Council will seek to:

- a. Implement the provisions of the Joint Housing Strategy and HNDA as far as they relate to Cork City.
- b. Encourage the development of an appropriate mix of dwelling types to meet target residential densities, utilising a range of dwelling types and density typologies informed by best practice (as illustrated in “Density Done Well” in the Cork City Density Strategy, Building Height and Tall Building Strategy) with combinations of houses, stacked units and apartments.
- c. Within all new residential developments, it will be necessary to ensure an appropriate balance of housing tenure and dwelling size to sustain balanced and inclusive communities, including a balance of family - sized units and smaller dwellings tailored to suit the location (please refer to Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development for those standards).
- d. Deliver at least 20% below - market priced housing across Cork City and ideally within each new residential neighbourhood.
- e. Encourage the provision of housing for one and two person households in all neighbourhoods to meet the needs of all age groups, including providing for downsizing to release family housing units.
- f. Update Development Plan policy as necessary to reflect emerging national guidance with regard to housing standards.

6.1.7. **Chapter 10, Key Growth Areas & Neighbourhood Development Sites:** this Chapter focuses on key growth areas identified in the Core Strategy and the Growth Strategy. The City Suburb of Ballyvolane (East and West) is designated as a key growth area where significant areas of land on either side of the Ballyhooly Road is identified for future growth incorporating residential, employment, local services and open space.

Objective 10.75: Ballyvolane East and West Expansion Areas: To support the compact growth and development of Ballyvolane East and West Expansion Areas as Strategic City consolidation and expansion areas, as identified in the Core Strategy. All development shall be designed, planned and delivered in a co-ordinated and phased manner, using a layout and mix of uses that form part of an emerging neighbourhood integrated with the wider area.

6.1.8. **Chapter 11, Place Making and Managing Development:** This Chapter provides guidance on development in Cork City and sets out the qualitative and quantitative standards against which development proposals will be assessed. The following is of note:

Cityscape and Building Height: Well-conceived designs for new buildings should be informed by the prevailing urban characteristics of the neighbourhood they would inhabit. The Plan sets out a combined building height and density spatial strategy, illustrated conceptually in Figure 11.1. The strategy is comprised of four sub-areas, each with their own quantitative performance criteria. The building height of development will respond directly to the proposed density of development, the character of an area, as well as block development typologies, site coverage and a range of other factors.

Residential Development: Objective 11.1 Sustainable Residential Development: - Residential developments shall be sustainable and create high quality places which (in brief):

- a. Contribute to placemaking and to the 15-minute city and walkable neighbourhood concepts
- b. Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise car usage.
- c. Deliver a quality-of-life in terms of amenity, safety and convenience.

- d. Provide a good range of community and support facilities, where needed.
- e. Present an attractive, well-maintained appearance, with a distinct sense of place and a quality public realm that is easily maintained.
- f. Are easy to access for all and to find one's way around, with a focus on permeability within sites and integration and connectivity into the surrounding urban environment to enable short trips by walking and cycling
- g. Promote the efficient use of land and of energy and minimise greenhouse gas emissions.
- h. Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand.
- i. Promote social integration and provide accommodation for a diverse range of household types and age groups.
- j. Enhance and protect green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity.
- k. Enhance and protect the built and natural heritage.

Residential Density: - Residential densities are set out in Table 11.2. Densities are expressed in terms of minimums and maximums for the constituent areas of the City. Density targets and prevailing character will be the key measures in determining site-specific density. In accordance with relevant s28 Guidelines (e.g. Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas) minimum density targets will be applied in the development of all sites, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Residential size and Mix: All developments will need to comply with dwelling size mix set out in Tables 11.3-11.9. *Table 11.8: City Suburbs Dwelling Size Mix for Housing Developments*, is relevant.

Car Parking

A car parking rate of 1.25 spaces per 1- and 2-bedroom residential unit and 2.25 spaces per 3-3+ residential unit is specified for sites located within Parking Zone 3.

6.2. Other Local Policy:

Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2040

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040 proposes a number of improvements to Regional and Local Roads over the next two decades, including the

Cork Northern Distributor Road. This is a short-term objective and considered to be a 'critical enabler' for CMATS as, among other things, creates opportunities for sustainable development of existing land banks in the Northern Cork Metropolitan area including Monard SDZ and the *Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area*. The Ballyhooly Road, which serves the site, is identified as a Strategic Routes in terms of walking. Upgrade works are proposed to the same to facilitate on-going regeneration in the Ballyvolane UEA area and access to increased bus services.

6.3. **Regional Policy:**

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020-2032

(RSES): The RSES for the Southern Region provides for the development of nine counties (Cork, Clare, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford) including the Cork City area and supports the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP). Cork City and suburbs is the largest settlement in the Region with a population of over 208,000. Cork City is one of three cities categorised as Metropolitan Areas. Ballyvolane is located within the designated metropolitan area of Cork.

One of the Guiding Principles outlined in the Cork MASP is to 'promote consolidation of Cork City and suburbs, refocus on the development of brownfield and infill lands to achieve a target of a minimum 50% of all new homes within the existing built-up footprint in Cork and 30% in other metropolitan settlements'. More specifically, the Urban Expansion Area of Ballyvolane is expected to provide 3,600 units. This strategy provides a framework for development at regional level. The RSES promotes the regeneration of our cities, towns, and villages by making better use of under-used land and buildings within the existing built-up urban footprint.

6.4. **National Plans/Policies:**

Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework, First Revision (April 2025), (NPF)

The National Planning Framework (NPF), initially published in 2018 and revised in 2025, sets out a high-level strategy for the planning and development of Ireland to 2040. The strategy to accommodate this growth in a sustainable way focuses on 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) that include: Compact Growth (NSO1),

Sustainable Mobility (NSO4), Enhanced Amenity and Heritage (NSO7), a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society (NSO8) and the Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and Environmental Resources (NSO9).

National Strategic Outcome No. 1 of the NPF relates to Compact Growth. The aim is to deliver a greater proportion of residential development within existing built-up areas of cities, towns, and villages; to facilitate infill development and enable greater densities to be achieved, whilst achieving high quality and design standards. This is supported by National Planning Objectives that target 50% of new housing growth that take place in the five cities and 30% within other settlements, to be delivered within the existing built-up footprint, respectively.

Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland to 2030 (2021).

The government's housing plan to 2030. It is a multi-annual, multi-billion-euro plan which aims to improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. The overall objective is that every citizen in the State should have access to good quality homes:

- To purchase or rent at an affordable price.
- Built to a high standard in the right place.
- Offering a high quality of life.

Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2025: -

Climate Action Plan 2025 builds upon last year's Plan by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and it should be read in conjunction with Climate Action Plan 2024.

Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2023-2030:

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 Commission, 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 Commission. 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.

6.5. **National Guidance:**

Having considered the nature of the proposed development, its location, the receiving environment, the documentation contained on file, including the submission from the Planning Authority, I consider that the following Ministerial Guidelines are relevant:

The Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025) (the ‘Apartment Guidelines’) set out national policy and standards for apartment development, in order to ensure greater consistency of national policy across local authority areas. These Guidelines include the following Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs):

- SPPR 1 notes that there will be no restriction within statutory plans in relation to the mix of unit sizes or types to be provided within apartment developments and that there shall be no minimum or maximum requirements for apartments with a certain number of bedrooms.
- SPPR 2 provides minimum floor areas for studios (32sqm), 1 bed (45sqm), 2 bed (63sqm), and 3 bed (76sqm).
- SPPR 3 requires a minimum of 25% dual aspect apartments.
- SPPR 4 requires ground level floor to ceiling heights to be a minimum of 2.7m.
- SPPR 5 notes that there is no requirement for a minimum number of units per floor per core.

- SPPR 6 notes that the provision of new communal, community and cultural facilities within apartment schemes shall only be required in specific locations identified within the development plan.
- SPPR 7 relates to shared accommodation/co-living development and
- SPPR 8 relates to student accommodation.

6.6. Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) (the Compact Settlement Guidelines): set out policy and guidance in relation to the planning and development of urban and rural settlements, with a focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements. Applicable policy for the proposed development includes:

- Section 3.3: It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 40dph to 80dph (net) shall generally be applied at suburban and urban extension locations in Dublin and Cork, and that densities of up to 150dph (net) shall be open for consideration at ‘accessible’ suburban / urban extension locations (as defined in Table 3.8).
- Section 3.4: outlines a two-step density refining process, based firstly on a determination of accessibility to public transport options and secondly on five site-specific criteria (impacts on character, historic environment, protected habitats and species, daylight/ sunlight of residential properties, and water services capacity).
- Policy and Objective 3.1 requires that the recommended density ranges are applied and that, where appropriate, these density ranges are refined further using the site-specific criteria.
- Policy and Objective 4.1 require the implementation of principles, approaches and standards in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2013, including updates (DMURS).
- Section 5.3: requires the achievement of residential standards:

- SPPR 1 – Separation Distances requires a minimum of 16m between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses and duplexes above ground floor level.
- SPPR 2 – Minimum Private Open Space specifies new standards for houses (3 bed 40sqm, 4 bed+ 50sqm), and private open space for duplexes remains as per the Apartment Guidelines (see below).
- Policy and Objective 5.1 recommend a public open space provision of between 10%-15% of net site area.
- SPPR 3 – Car Parking specifies the maximum allowable rate of car parking provision based on types of locations (e.g., 2 no. spaces per dwelling for intermediate and peripheral locations).
- SPPR 4 – Cycle Parking and Storage requires a general minimum standard of 1 no. cycle storage space per bedroom (plus visitor spaces), a mix of cycle parking types, and cycle storage facilities in a dedicated facility of permanent construction (within or adjoining the residences).
- Section 5.3.7 – Daylight, indicates that a detailed technical assessment is not required in all cases, regard should be had to standards in the BRE 209 2022, a balance is required between poor performance and wider planning gains, and compensatory design solutions are not required.

The Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning

Authorities (2018) (the ‘Building Height Guidelines’): - set out national policy considerations in relation to building height in order to guide planning authorities in developing local planning policy and in determining planning applications. These Guidelines reinforce the national policy objectives of the NPF relating to compact growth and set a framework for a performance-based approach to the consideration of building height.

6.6.1. Also of note:

- Permeability Best Practice Guide, NTA (2015)

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009, updated 2010).

6.7. Natural Heritage Designations

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the boundary of the appeal site nor are there any Natura 2000 sites directly abutting the appeal site or within the immediate context of the site. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 00430) which is located c. 3.75km to the south-east of the appeal site. The closest NHA/pNHA is the Glanmire Wood pNHA (Site Code 001054) which is located c. 3.65km to the south-east of the appeal site.

7.0 The Appeal

- 7.1. This is a third-party appeal lodged by Kellie Cronin on behalf of the residents of Longview Park, Whites Cross, Cork against the decision of Cork City Council to grant permission for this LRD. The main issue of concern raised in the grounds of appeal relates to the proposal to facilitate a pedestrian connection from the proposed development site to Longview View Park, the newly constructed residential cul-de-sac to the south. The grounds of appeal are set out under separate headings and summarised below.

7.2. Grounds of Appeal

Inappropriate pedestrian access to approved residential cul-de-sac.

- It is contended that Longview, and Longview Park were expressly designed and permitted as self-contained cul-de-sac layouts, with curvilinear internal streets and turning heads intended to serve local residents only and that this design logic relies on limited permeability, low movement levels and natural containment to protect residential amenity, safety and security. The proposed pedestrian access would introduce through-movement from the LRD into a small residential cul-de-sac that was not designed to function as a public circulation route.

- The submitted layout drawings indicate that it is intended for this pedestrian access to function as a primary pedestrian outlet rather than a minor or incidental connection.
- The design is retrofitted with no transition space, buffer zone or managed interface provided.

Failure to properly address the issue in the LRD Opinion Response:

- This pedestrian connection to Longview Park, is proposed as a procedural response to CCC's LRD Opinion rather than a reasoned, site-specific planning intervention informed by the characteristics and approved function of the receiving estates. This omission is material and contrary to the principles of proper planning and sustainable residential layout.

Residential Safety, security and natural containment:

- Reference is made to recent incidents of vehicle break-ins within Longview as an indication that security is already a concern. The proposed pedestrian connection would, by its design, increase vulnerability within the estate by weakening natural containment and reducing effectiveness of passive supervision, contrary to the principles of safe residential layout and crime prevention through environmental design.
- Cul-de-sacs provide a low traffic, contained environment where children can play safely under passive supervision from nearby locations. The introduction of a pedestrian through route would undermine this function, increase unfamiliar through movement and reduce the effectiveness of passive surveillance.
- The proposed access would provide an additional unmonitored route towards Ballyhooly Road, a high traffic environment, thereby increasing risk to children and other vulnerable users.
- Similar connections introduced elsewhere have been closed or blocked due to persistent anti-social behaviour and security concerns. Connections between the Lower Glenheights and Glenthorn Drive and within the Chapel Gate estate, are cited as examples.

Insufficient Parking Provision and likely displacement impacts:

- Concerns raised regarding the limited number of on-site parking spaces and the reliance on bicycle parking and car-share spaces to justify the shortfall.
- No mechanism is proposed to ensure that residents forego car ownership, and no assessment of visitor parking demand is provided.
- There is potential for overflow parking into surrounding residential estates. The provision of the proposed pedestrian connection into Longview Park would facilitate overflow parking at that location.

7.3. Applicant Response

The applicant's response to the grounds of appeal can be summarised as follows:

Inappropriate pedestrian access to approved residential cul-de-sac.

- The applicants note that increased permeability, connectivity and walkability in residential developments is a key design objective at national, regional and local level.
- Permeability is crucial for increasing the attractiveness of walking as a mode of transport and in achieving 15-minute neighbourhoods. Reference is made to CCDP Objectives 2.10 (15-minute City) and 2.14 Walkable Neighbourhoods.
- The assertion that the proposed pedestrian connection is designed to function as a primary connection route is incorrect. The main pedestrian connection is from Ballyhooly Road. The proposed connection to Longview Park is secondary, providing increased permeability as requested by CCC. The stepped nature of the access route will limit its potential to become a main access route.
- The relation to the cul-de-sac approved function, the applicants note that application documentation submitted with the Longview SHD state that cul-de-sacs were only provided where permeability was not possible due to site constraints. The proposal will provide a connection which was not previously possible and improve the permeability of the area.

- The proposal will benefit residents of Longview by providing a shorter route to Ballyhooly Road, bus-stops and the recently permitted primary care centre / retail unit on the opposite side of the road.

Failure to properly address the issue in the LRD Opinion Response:

- The proposed pedestrian connection will not change the function of the cul-de-sac as there will be no vehicular access between the site and the cul-de-sac.
- The turning head will continue to serve as a space for vehicles to turn and exit the cul-de-sac.
- The LRD Opinion emphasised the importance of including connection with the adjacent Longview scheme.

Residential Safety, security and natural containment:

- The applicants note that current planning policy and guidelines seek to limit the provision of cul-de-sacs and that cul-de-sacs were only provided in Longview where it was not possible to provide permeability.
- The turning heads are designed not as a children's play area but as a space for vehicles to turn. Children should be encouraged to play in designated play areas / open spaces. The proposed pedestrian connection will facilitate access designed play areas within the proposed scheme.
- The proposal will increase passive surveillance as more people use the space.
- The examples, references in the grounds of appeal, of where pedestrian connections within housing schemes were closed off due to anti-social behaviour, reflect poorly designed linkages that lack appropriate overlooking, clarity or integration into the surrounding urban network. These examples are not representative of the current proposal which has been carefully designed in line with the NTA's Permeability Best Practice Guide.
- The proposed permeability link will be open, visible and directly overlooked.

Insufficient Parking Provision and likely displacement impacts:

- Concerns raised regarding the number of on-site parking spaces proposed was addressed at RFI stage. The final layout includes for a total of 83no. car parking spaces which equates to a ratio of 0.75 spaces per residential unit. This was considered acceptable by the planning authority.
- Go Car have committed to providing 2no. car sharing spaces on site. Their research suggests that each Go Car Space has the potential to replace 20no. private cars. The proposal could therefore be considered to cater for up to 116 no. cars. (76 + 40).
- The scheme includes safe secure bike parking to ensure cycling is an attractive alternative option to driving,
- Reduced car parking provision is supported by the CCDP and the 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines.
- It is considered that car parking provision is sufficient and that displacement of car parking from the proposed development into the surrounding area is low.

7.4. **Planning Authority Response**

None

7.5. **Observations**

None

8.0 **Assessment**

8.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Residential Amenity
- Permeability

- Parking Provision.
- Built Form – Density, Height and Housing Mix.

8.1.1. In respect of the proposed development, I have carried out screening determinations for Appropriate Assessment (AA), Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). These are presented in sections 9.0, 10.0 and 11.0 below and are to be read in conjunction with Appendices of this report.

8.2. Principle of Development.

8.2.1. The subject site is zoned '*ZO 02 New Residential Neighbourhoods*' in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (CCDP). The objective for this zoning is to provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure. As per associated CCDP objective ZO 2.2, this zoning covers primarily greenfield, undeveloped lands for new sustainable residential areas. Development in this zone, while primarily residential, must provide an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures along with the amenity, social, community and physical infrastructure required to promote compact growth, balanced communities and sustainable, liveable communities.

8.2.2. The proposed scheme comprises the demolition of existing commercial/industrial buildings (c. 301.05 sq. m) on site and its redevelopment for residential use in the form of 111 no. apartments. This is a restricted /self-contained brownfield site comprising an area of excavated ground (1.215ha, as stated), enclosed by a steep band of exposed rock to the north, east and south and beyond by a partially constructed / under construction SHD (Longview), comprising 753no. residential units (753) and a local centre, including 2 no. retail units, a crèche, a doctor's surgery and a community use unit.

8.2.3. The proposed LRD, while solely residential in nature, would contribute to the mix of house type and tenure in the area (the issue of housing mix is discussed in greater detail below). The scheme as presented includes for the provision of new public amenity spaces including two dedicated play areas and a kick-about space. It also

facilitates the extension of existing pedestrian and cycle facilities along the Ballyhooly Road and the provision of a new permeability connection to Longview Park (this issue is also discussed in greater detail below).

- 8.2.4. In my opinion the redevelopment of these underutilised, zoned and serviceable brownfield lands for residential use as proposed and subject to compliance with relevant planning standards, would help to deliver a compact, integrated and sustainable residential neighbourhood at this location as envisaged in the CCDP. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposed scheme would accord with the *ZO 02 New Residential Neighbourhoods'* zoning objective for the area.

8.3. Design and Residential Amenity

- 8.3.1. No specific issues / concerns have been raised in the grounds of appeal regarding the design strategy presented, the level of residential amenity that is to be afforded to future occupants of the scheme or in relation to the potential impact of the development on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. However, in the interests of completeness and to ensure that the proposed scheme would support the delivery of a sustainable, liveable, integrated neighbourhood as envisaged under local and national planning policy, I consider it appropriate to include a general assessment of the proposed scheme.
- 8.3.2. The application documentation includes an Architectural Design Statement (ADS), a Landscape Design Statement and Specification, Daylight and Sunlight Assessment and Verified View Photomontages and Housing Quality Assessment (HQA), which I have considered and reviewed. The following is noted.

Site Context:

- 8.3.3. The proposed development site comprises c. 1.215ha of brownfield land (c. 0.94ha of developable area) that forms part of the outer suburbs of Ballyvolane, approximately 2.7km north of Cork City centre and c1.3km north of Ballyvolane Shopping Centre.

- 8.3.4. The site and neighbouring lands have been identified for a new residential neighbourhood in the CCDP with lands to the immediate north, east and south currently under construction for a SHD – *Longview* (granted under ABP-306325-20), comprising 753no. residential units and a local centre including retail, creche, doctors' surgery and community use unit. The permitted residential units to the immediate south of the proposed development site (Longview Park) are completed and occupied. Lands to the west of the site, on the opposite side of the Ballyhooly Road (R614) have been zoned *ZO 08 Neighbourhood and Local Centres* and have the benefit of planning permission for a primary care centre, retail unit and 2no. GP services.
- 8.3.5. In terms of public transport, the area is currently served by Bus Eireann Route 207, with a stop at Brookwood c. 500m to the south. This route includes stops at Ballyvolane Shopping Centre, St. Patrick's College, the City Centre, Douglas Village, and Donnybrook at a 30-minute frequency from 0710 to 2300 (c.15-minute peak frequency). Bus services in the area are to be expanded under BusConnects which will provide three new routes in close proximity to the subject site. Routes 11 and 26 will serve the existing Brookwood bus stop with a peak frequency of every 20 minutes and every 30 minutes respectively (combined peak frequency of 12 minutes). Route 39 will provide services between Upper Glanmire and Parnell Place via Ballyhooly Road, at 90minute intervals.
- 8.3.6. The site itself comprises an area of excavated ground, as evidenced by the level differences to the neighbouring lands and the presence of rock. A steep bank of exposed rock encloses the site to the east. This bank gradually reduces across the extents of the north and south boundaries. There is a continuous line of mature *leylandii* cypress trees to the east and partially to the north and south boundaries to the site, at the top of the rock face slope. These trees, while in good condition, have been identified for removal as part of the proposed scheme, on the grounds that they would be difficult to maintain and the fact that they have limited arboriculture merit. These trees, along with elements of *girselinia* hedge along the northern boundary are to be replaced with native hedging / thicket species, which in accordance with the details provided, will support a more bio-diverse environment. Existing vegetation along the western roadside boundary, including a number of mature sycamore trees,

is also to be removed to facilitate the extension of the public footpath / cycle track along Ballyhooly Road.

- 8.3.7. The removal of existing vegetation from site boundaries, will alter the visual amenities of the area, at least in the short to medium term; however, I note that this area is currently undergoing significant change from new development and I am of the opinion that any visual impact in this context would be temporary and would be adequately mitigated through the implementation of the applicants landscape Plan (RFI Drawing No. 202407/SLD/P01).
- 8.3.8. The proposed development is to be accessed off the R614 (Ballyhooly Road) to the west via the existing vehicular entrance and via two additional pedestrian entrances. The proposed scheme as presented also facilitates the provision of a new permeability link to Longview Park, the newly constructed residential cul-de-sac to the south. This aspect of the proposed scheme is considered in greater detail below.
- 8.3.9. The R614 Ballyhooly Road, at the location of the proposed development site, is a single carriageway, two-way road, with no infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists and a posted speed limit of 80km/hr. The R614 to the immediate south of the site has the benefit of a new shared, 4m wide footpath/cycle path and a reduced speed limit of 50 km/hr. As detailed on the proposed site layout plan, the existing roadside boundary is to be set to facilitate the future extension of this shared surface along the full length of the western site boundary. It is a condition of the planning authority's grant of permission, (C. 20) that this shared pedestrian / cycle path be constructed / delivered by the developer as part of the proposed scheme with all costs borne by the applicant. As I consider that this section of the pedestrian / cycle path is required to facilitate the proposed development, I would recommend the inclusion a similar condition should the Commission be of a mind to grant permission.

Design and Layout:

- 8.3.10. The proposed LRD (as amended) comprises 111no. apartments and is to be constructed in a single phase. The apartment units are arranged in three Blocks. Blocks A and B are both four storey and front onto the R614, with a set-back some

10m from the existing road edge. The taller Block C is five storeys and is located towards the rear (east) of the site. The central area, between the Blocks is laid out as open space with vehicular access and car parking confined to areas along the northern and eastern boundaries.

8.3.11. As detailed on the elevation drawings, material finishes include a mix of render (described as maintenance free), cladding panels and brick. The design of the buildings also incorporates green roof systems. The application documentation includes a maintenance plan for same (Appendix A of the Landscape Design Statement). Overall, I have no significant concerns or objections to the layout of the development or to the design scheme presented.

Separation Distances:

8.3.12. The CCDP does not prescribe a specific separation distance between units; however, it does state in section 11.103, that proposals for apartment developments and those over three storeys high, shall provide for acceptable separation distances between blocks to avoid negative effects.

8.3.13. For further guidance on this matter, I refer to the 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines, under which it is a specific planning policy requirement (SPPR 1), that when considering a planning application for residential development, a separation distance of at least 16 metres between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses, duplex units and apartment units, above ground floor level shall be maintained. Separation distances below 16 metres may be considered acceptable in circumstances where there are no opposing windows serving habitable rooms and where suitable privacy measures have been designed into the scheme to prevent undue overlooking of habitable rooms and private amenity spaces.

8.3.14. I have reviewed the plans and particulars submitted in support of this application and I note that the separation distance between the southern (side) elevation of Block A and northern (side) elevation of Block B is approximately 7m; however, I also note that the windows in these elevations that serve habitable rooms (bedrooms) are staggered so as to avoid direct overlooking. I also note that these bedroom windows

are secondary windows, as each bedroom is also served by a window to either the front (west) or rear (east) elevations. In my opinion the staggered arrangement of windows is sufficient to prevent undue overlooking; however, should the Commission disagree, I am of the opinion that this matter could be addressed by way of condition that, for example, requires the use of opaque glazing or the replacement of windows with high level windows similar to those introduced on the southern (side) elevation of Block B to prevent overlooking of opposing properties in Longview.

Daylight /Sunlight:

- 8.3.15. The Sunlight, Daylight and Shadow Assessment submitted with the application indicates that 99% of all rooms tested meet or exceed the BRE's minimum recommendations for internal daylight provision in dwellings. Notably the unit that included one room (Bedroom R19) that was shown to have failed the assessment, ground floor Unit. no.4 within Block C, was omitted from the scheme at RFI stage, resulting in full compliance with the BRE guidance. The submission also indicates that 97% of the open spaces receive more than 2 hours of sunlight on March 21st, exceeding the BRE Requirements.
- 8.3.16. I have reviewed this document, and I am satisfied that it has been prepared in accordance with recognised best practice guidelines and I have no objection to the methodology used. Furthermore, I am satisfied on the basis of the findings and conclusions of this document, which I consider reasonable and robust, that the proposed scheme is acceptable in terms of daylight and sunlight provision for future residents. In addition, having regard to the change in ground levels that occurs between the proposed development site and adjacent lands and the layout of the permitted SHD development, that the proposed LRD would not have a significant undue impact on the amenities of existing / planning properties in the vicinity by way of overshadowing / loss of light.

Residential Amenity – Future Occupants

- 8.3.17. Regarding the design quality of the proposed apartments, the CCDP defers to the standards set out in the Apartment Guidelines (updated 2025). In this regard, I note

that the Housing Quality Assessment submitted with the application indicates that all units meet or exceed the minimum requirements in terms of unit size, floor areas, room width internal storage and private amenity space. Of the 111no. apartments proposed, 64 or 57% are stated as dual aspect, exceeding the minimum standard of 25% required under SPPR 4. Additionally, it is noted that the scheme does not include single aspect north facing apartments. All ground floor apartments meet the required minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.7m (SPPR 5) and as detailed on the submitted drawings, each apartment building will have easy access to communal bin and bike stores at ground floor level of their respective Block.

Outdoor Amenity Space

- 8.3.18. In terms of outdoor amenity space, all apartments are to be served by an area of private amenity space in the form of balconies or ground floor terraces, all of which meet or exceed the minimum required standard and all of which can be accessed directly off the main living area.
- 8.3.19. With regard to public open space provision, the CCDP in sections 11.112 and Table 11.11 sets out a general provision for 10% of the site area increasing to 15% for greenfield sites. The proposed scheme will deliver approximately 2,306 sq. m of public open space (as stated) which equates to 18% of net development area, thereby far exceeding the minimum required standard. The design of the open space includes two dedicated play areas (totally 300 sq. m), a kickabout area (c. 1000 sq. m), seating areas and a central treelined avenue that facilitates pedestrian connectivity between Block C and Ballyhooly Road. Areas of incidental open space have not been included in the calculation, and nor have the sloped areas to the north, east and south of the proposed buildings.
- 8.3.20. The 2025 Apartment Guidelines state that the provision and proper future maintenance of well-designed communal amenity space will contribute to meeting the amenity needs of residents. In particular, accessible, secure and usable outdoor space is a high priority for families with young children and for less mobile older people. In accordance with the standards set out in the Guidelines, the proposed scheme would generate a demand for 689 sq. m of communal amenity space.

8.3.21. The proposed LRD as originally presented to the planning authority included an area of Communal amenity space (450 sq. m) to the rear of Block C. However, this was omitted at RFI stage to facilitate additional car parking. As a result, the scheme for consideration by the Commission, does not include for the provision of dedicated communal amenity space for residents. I have reviewed the plans and particulars submitted in support of this application. While I consider that that it would be technically feasible to dedicate areas of public open space within the scheme for 'communal' open space, whilst still meeting the quantitative standards for public open space set out in the CCDP, I believe it would not be possible to do so without compromising the design, layout and functionality of the public open space as a whole.

8.3.22. The CCDP does not include a specific requirement for the provision of communal amenity space within apartment schemes; however, it does stipulate that communal space within schemes should benefit from excellent daylight and sunlight, should be accessible to all residents and tenure blind. In my opinion the public open space areas proposed within this scheme, while accessible to the general public, would satisfy the provisions of both the Apartment Guidelines and CCDP in respect of communal open space provision and, would meet the outdoor recreational needs of future occupants of the scheme, including children. I am satisfied that any deficiency in the provision of dedicated communal amenity open space, would not significantly compromise the quality of the scheme and that no issue of material contravention arises.

Conclusion:

8.3.23. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed LRD would accord with the development and design standards set out in the CCDP and relevant Ministerial Guidelines and that it would provide a good standard of residential amenity for future occupants while not detracting in any significant way from the amenities of the area or the residential neighbouring properties (existing and permitted).

8.4. Permeability

- 8.4.1. The main issue raised in the appeal relates to the planned permeability connection between the proposed development site and Longview Park, the newly constructed residential cul-de-sac to the south.
- 8.4.2. The appellants, as residents of Longview Park, are concerned that the introduction of a new permeability connection at this location would alter the character and function of the cul-de-sac. They have raised concerns regarding the location of the connection, adjacent to a turning head on the cul-de-sac and are concerned that it would have a negative impact on residential safety, security and natural containment. They are also concerned that this connection would, in combination with the limited number of car parking spaces proposed for the LRD, encourage overflow parking from the LRD site onto the cul-de-sac. I propose to address these issues below.

Policy:

- 8.4.3. In keeping with the National Planning Framework, the strategic objectives of the CCDP seek to deliver compact growth that achieves a sustainable “15-minute city” of scale providing integrated communities and “walkable neighbourhoods” (*SO1: Compact Liveable Growth*) and to develop a compact liveable city based on attractive, diverse and accessible urban spaces and places with a focus on enhancing walkable neighbourhoods that promote healthy living, wellbeing and active lifestyles, where place making is at the heart (*SO 9: Placemaking and Managing Development*).
- 8.4.4. The basic concept of the 15-minute city is where residents have easy access to their essential needs at distances taking no more than 15 minutes by public transport, foot and bicycle. While the 15-minute city includes travel by public transport, the concept of the ‘*walkable neighbourhood*’, concentrates on local active travel, walking and cycling, and the provision of easy access to essential amenities and services within a short walking distance (800m / 10-minutes) of homes. This strategy requires the development of compact, well designed, integrated and multi-functional neighbourhoods. CCDP Objective 2.14 on *Walkable Neighbourhoods* requires that new development to be designed to make positive additions to their neighbourhoods,

towns and communities through various mechanisms, including the provision of enhanced permeability for walking and cycling.

Proposals for Enhanced Permeability:

- 8.4.5. As evidenced by the information / documentation on file, including CCC's LRD opinion, that the provision of permeability connections between the proposed development site and the permitted SHD development (Longview) was seen by CCC as an important design consideration at the pre-planning stage. While the applicants are of the opinion, as outlined in the *Planning Report* submitted in support of the application (section 7.8.1), that the potential for such connections is limited, particularly to the north and east, due to the level differences between the site and the surrounding lands, and due to the layout of the permitted Longview SHD, the scheme was designed to facilitate a potential future pedestrian connection to Longview to the south of the development site. It is of relevance to note that the applicants are not proposing to deliver this permeability link as part of the proposed scheme and that it would appear from the information on file and from my inspection of the area, that the completion of the link would require works on lands within the Longview development and outside of the applicant's control.
- 8.4.6. This potential future connection is to be facilitated within the development site, though the provision of a ramped and stepped walkway at the southern end of the development, navigating a level increase of c. 5m. The walkway is shown (RFI Site Layout_Rev J, Drawing No. 1183.PL.131) to connect with the proposed internal pedestrian network to the rear of Apartment Block B and to extend to the southern site boundary (currently defined by a paladin style fence), just north of the existing turning head on the cul-de-sac serving Longview Park.
- 8.4.7. The design of the walkway, as detailed on the applicants Landscape Plan (Dwg. No. 202407/SLD/P01) incorporates two viewing platforms with seating that overlooks the central area of open space. No specific design details (in terms of materials / method of construction etc) have been included as part of the application nor has it been demonstrated how the proposed walkway is to tie-in with the existing pedestrian network in Longview. From my observations during site inspection the completion of

this connection would necessitate a break in the existing boundary fence and the extension of the walkway across a grass verge to connect with the existing pedestrian network at Longview Park. I am satisfied that there is sufficient space available within the grass verge to extend the footpath into Longview Park and to connect it to the existing pedestrian network. I am also satisfied that this can be achieved with minimal impact on the functionality of the cul-de-sac, without altering the turning head and without giving rise to a conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Therefore, while there is a deficiency in information on the design of the walkway, I am of the opinion that this deficiency is of a technical nature that can be adequately addressed by way of condition should the Commission be of a mind to grant permission.

- 8.4.8. With regard to the above, I note that the planning authority, in their decision to grant permission, included a condition (Condition 19), requiring full details of the pedestrian link, including tie-in details, be submitted for agreement; that no physical barrier to the connection be erected and that the connection be made open to the public after the completion of Block B, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority. I would support the inclusion of a similar condition in the event of a grant of permission; however, as it would appear that the applicants do not to have control over the necessary lands in Longview to complete the connection, I do not consider it appropriate to restrict the delivery of units with the completion of this link. it is my opinion, the completion of this link into Longview will ultimately be a matter for the Council and relevant landowner.

Assessment.

- 8.4.9. I have considered the concerns raised in the grounds of appeal and I have visited the site and the surrounding area. In principle, I would support the delivery of new permeability connections between the proposed development site and the adjoining Longview SHD, as I consider that such facilities would enhance the level of permeability in this new / emerging residential neighbourhood in line with the concept of the 'walkable neighbourhood' while also supporting greater social integration, to the benefit of both existing and future residents. However, I accept that the level

differences between the site and the surrounding lands, and the layout of the permitted Longview SHD, does limit the potential for such connections.

8.4.10. In my opinion, the planned permeability connection to the south, while compromised due to the need for steps, is suitably located and designed with the inclusion of viewing platforms and seating, that would allow it to be integrated as part of the planned outdoor amenity area. A connection at this location would provide an alternative, more direct route for the existing residents of Longview to Ballyhooly Road and to the Neighbourhood and Local Centre zoned lands to the east of the proposed development site, which currently have the benefit of planning permission for primary care centre, retail unit and GP services. I also note that this connection would give the residents of Longview a direct connection to the proposed outdoor amenity space for the LRD, which includes two dedicated play areas and kick-about space.

8.4.11. Furthermore, it is my opinion that this permeability connection would, due to its location away from a main thoroughfare, be unlikely to attract a significant volume of users from outside of the immediate residential area, therefore, I do not anticipate that it would generate a level of pedestrian traffic that would alter the residential character of Longview Park or generate levels of noise / disturbance that would go beyond the norms of a residential area. Additionally, as the connection would facilitate pedestrian movements only, it would not give rise to vehicular through traffic and as such would not significantly alter the character or function of the cul-de-sac.

8.4.12. It is the contention of the appellants, that this permeability connection, as it is designed as a continuation of the internal pedestrian network serving the LRD, is intended to function as a primary pedestrian route rather than a minor or incidental connection. I would disagree with this assertion. In my opinion, it is vital that any proposed permeability link is integrated as part of the wider pedestrian network, as to do otherwise would seriously undermine the usability and functionality of such a link. In this case, it is evident from the plans submitted in support of the application and my observations during site inspection, that the primary pedestrian outlet for this LRD would be to Ballyhooly road to the west, as this would offer more direct access to local services and amenities to future residents of the scheme.

- 8.4.13. I accept the contention of the appellant, that this permeability connection is retrofit; however, I also accept the point made by the applicants in their response to the grounds of appeal, that the proposed LRD is facilitating a pedestrian connection that was not previously possible, as such a connection could not have been envisaged at the design stage of the Longview SHD.
- 8.4.14. The appellants suggest that increased estate permeability would compromise the security of the cul-de-sac and that it could increase the likelihood of overnight robbery attempts. However, I find no evidence to support this claim. The appellants have cited two instances of where pedestrian connections between residential estates have been closed or blocked due to persistent anti-social behaviour and security concerns. I am not aware of the specifics of these cases and therefore cannot comment directly on same. However, I would direct the Commission to the NTA's Permeability Best Practice Guide (NTA, 2015) which addresses the issue of anti-social behaviour at permeability links, and which acknowledges the understandable pressure placed on local authorities to close those links.
- 8.4.15. This NTA guidance document, discourages the closure of permeability links, stating that such closures should be the exception rather than the rule and should only considered where all measures to overcome the issues of concern have been exhausted. One of the main measures identified in the guidelines to discourage anti-social behaviour etc, is improved visibility and passive surveillance. In this instance, I note that the connection / access point would be well overlooked from both the existing dwellings in Longview Park and the proposed apartments. This high level of passive supervision should be sufficient to discourage anti-social behaviour.
- 8.4.16. It is also the contention of the appellants that the proposed permeability connection, due to its location at a turning head on the cul-de-sac and the limited number of parking spaces proposed for the LRD, would facilitate / encourage informal overflow parking from the LRD onto the Longview Park, resulting in obstruction, reduced pedestrian safety, and compromised emergency access. Again, I find no evidence to support this claim and, in my opinion, the use of cul-de-sac serving Longview Park for overflow parking from the LRD would be unlikely.

Conclusion:

8.4.17. In conclusion, I am satisfied that the applicant's proposal to facilitate a pedestrian connection between the proposed development site and the neighbouring residential development of Longview is acceptable and appropriate in light of current planning policy and guidance. I am further satisfied that a connection at the proposed location can be facilitated without significant undue impact on the character of Longview or on the amenities of existing properties and that it would not be likely to give rise to substantial issues of traffic / pedestrian safety. However, should the Commission disagree with my conclusion on this matter, I note that the option is available to omit this permeability link from the scheme by way of condition, should they deem it appropriate to so.

8.5. Parking Provision

8.5.1. In addition to the concern that the proposed scheme would result in overflow /displacement parking into Longview Park, as discussed previously, the appellants have raised concerns regarding the quantum / limited number of car parking spaces proposed within this LRD and the over-reliance of the scheme on bicycle parking and car-share spaces to justify the alleged shortfall. The appellants contend that the parking strategy presented conflates journey substitution with car ownership, that no mechanism has been proposed to ensure that residents forego car ownership, and that no assessment of visitor parking demand has provided.

8.5.2. The parking strategy for Cork City is set out in *Volume 1, Chapter 11- Transport and Mobility* and *Volume 2, Chapter E: Car Parking Zones* of the CCDP. The strategy divides the City Council Area into four zones based on each area's accessibility to mass transit, cycling and walking. As per the Cork City Car Parking Zones map contained in Volume 2, Chapter E, the proposed development site is within Zone 3. The CCDP envisages that parking standards serving this zone will be reduced to reflect the level of public transport services over time.

8.5.3. Car parking standards for both residential and non-residential developments are set out in Table 11.13 of Chapter 11. The CCDP clarifies that these standards are

maximums in order to constrain car trip generation and promote patronage of active travel and public transport.

- 8.5.4. The proposed LRD as originally presented to the planning authority included for the provision of 59no. car parking spaces, equating to a parking ratio of 0.52. The quantum of parking proposed was deemed to be too low by the planning authority and the applicant was requested, at further information stage, to increase the level of parking on site. In response, the applicants amended the scheme to provide for an increase in the number of car parking spaces proposed from 59 to 83, equating to a parking ratio of 0.75, based on a revised scheme of 111no units.
- 8.5.5. CCC’s Traffic Regulation and Safety section in their report to the planning authority on the revised scheme (Dec. 25), had regard to the apartment nature of the scheme, its proximity to lands zoned ‘*Neighbourhood and Local Services*’ and to the transport plans for the area which will see it highly accessible by both active and sustainable travel modes and, deemed the quantum of car parking proposed in the revised scheme to be acceptable.
- 8.5.6. As previously noted, the proposed scheme (as amended) includes for the provision of 83no car parking spaces, which in accordance with the standards set out in the Table 11.13 of the CCDP, is well below the maximum number of spaces permissible for a residential scheme within Zone C, which I calculate as 164 no. spaces (see table 8.1 below).

Land Use Category	Zone 3 - Max. Standard	No. of Units	Max Permitted
Residential (1-2 bedroom)	1.25	86	107.5
Residential (3-3+ bedroom)	2.25	25	56.25
Total: Maximum Permitted			163.75

Table 8.1 Parking Standards – Zone 3

- 8.5.7. As the standards presented in Table 11.13 are maximum standards and as the CCDP has not been prescriptive in indicating acceptable reductions or an acceptable lower range of parking requirement, I consider that parking provision below the maximum CCDP standard, is acceptable in principle and does not represent a material contravention of the development plan.

- 8.5.8. Updated Guidance on parking provision is provided in 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines which states in section 5.3.4, that car parking ratios should be reduced at all urban locations, and should be minimised, substantially reduced or wholly eliminated at locations that have good access to urban services and to public transport. The 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines further state that in areas where car parking is reduced, local authorities should be satisfied that the mobility needs of residents and workers can be satisfied. Notably, the guidelines suggest the use of shared mobility solutions such as car and bike share, as a means to achieve same.
- 8.5.9. The application is supported by a preliminary mobility management (pMMP) which is intended to serve as a template for the implementation of a Mobility Management Plan once the proposed development is completed and operational. The pMMP presented suggests various measures to encourage and support sustainable travel patterns amongst the users of the proposed development with the aim of reducing car usage/dependency. The mobility management measures recommended are grouped under the headings of Marketing and Communications; Walking & Cycling; Public Transport; Car Sharing and Implementation / Consultation / Monitoring and include the appointment of Mobility Manager or Travel Plan Co-ordinator with the responsibility to implement, monitor, review and update the Plan. Should the Commission be of a mind to grant permission, I would recommend the inclusion of a condition requiring the submission of a final MMP for agreement with the planning authority, prior to occupation.
- 8.5.10. Regarding the contention in the grounds of appeal, that the proposed scheme relies heavily on bicycle parking and car-share spaces to justify the alleged shortfall in car parking. The proposed scheme (as amended) includes for the provision of 249no. bicycle parking spaces for both residents of and visitors to the scheme. The Commission will note that the number of bicycle parking spaces was increased at RFI stage from 187 to 249 to meet the quantitative standards prescribed under SPPR4 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines, therefore the number of bicycle parking spaces proposed cannot be considered excessive.
- 8.5.11. The proposed scheme also includes 2no. car sharing spaces which are intended to support the transport needs of future occupants. In accordance with the information

contained in the applicants pMMP, carsharing can reduce car ownership at an estimated rate of one rental car replacing 15 owned vehicles.

8.5.12. In my opinion, the bicycle parking and car share facilities proposed as part of this scheme are intended as mechanisms to encourage residents to forgo car ownership and are proposed not as a justification for a reduction in car parking but as an appropriate response to current planning policy and adherence to development management standards. As I see it, potential future owners / occupiers of the scheme will be aware of the parking strategy in operation at the development at the outset and as such the scheme is more likely to attract persons who are not reliant on the car for their day-to-day needs and who are amenable to more active modes of transport such as walking / cycle.

8.5.13. I refer the Commission to Condition 22 attached to the planning authority's grant of permission. This condition prohibits the reservation of parking spaces for individuals or individual unit and the provision of barriers or gates to control access to parking spaces. The stated intention of this condition is to ensure equitable access to sustainable transport options. In my opinion, such a condition would also help to ensure the availability for car parking spaces for visitors to the scheme and should be included should the Commission be minded to grant permission.

Conclusion: Parking:

8.5.14. While I accept that the quantum of parking proposed for this LRD is relatively low, compared to traditional development standards, I am satisfied that the parking strategy presented would accord with the provisions of the CCDP and the 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines, which supports reduced car parking ratios at urban locations. The scheme includes a suitable range of measures to support the mobility needs of future residents including satisfactory proposals for bicycle parking and carsharing and I am satisfied that this approach will, in addition to the planned transport improvements in the area, support a modal shift towards sustainable transport modes in line with CCDP targets. Therefore, I have no objection to the level of parking provided for this LRD and I am satisfied that no material contravention issues arise.

8.6. **Built Form – Density, Height and Housing Mix.**

- 8.6.1. No issues or concerns have been raised in the grounds of appeal in relation to density, height or housing mix; however, I consider it appropriate, in the interests of completeness and proper planning and development, to include an assessment of these issues.
- 8.6.2. The CCDP sets out a combined building height and density spatial strategy, which is illustrated conceptually in *Figure 11.1 Density and building Height spatial strategy* (CCDP Vol. 1, pg.462). The strategy divides the City’s functional area into four sub areas, each with their own quantitative performance criteria. *Figure 11.1* shows the proposed development site within the Outer Suburbs of Cork City. The residential density and building height targets for the Outer Suburbs are included in CCDP Table 11.2 and in Table 8.2 below.

Density						Height		
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)			Dwellings per Hectare			No. of Storeys		
Prevailing	Target	Proposed	Prevailing	Target	Proposed	Prevailing	Target	Proposed
0 - 1.5	0.2-1.5	0.87	0-25	40-60	118	2-3	2-4	4-5

Table 8.2 Density and Building Height, Outer Suburbs – Prevailing, Target and Proposed

Density:

- 8.6.3. The density of proposed development is stated as 118dph. This figure is based on the number of residential units proposed (111) and a net developable area of 0.942ha.
- 8.6.4. The target density range in this outer suburban location is 40 -60dph. The CCDP clarifies in section 11.72 that the residential densities set out in Table 11.2 are expressed in terms of minimums and maximums for the constituent areas of the City. The density of the proposed development at 118dph, exceeds the maximum target set out in the CCDP. I consider this deviation sufficient to be deemed a **material contravention** of the CCDP. I note that the floor area ratio / plot ratio of the proposed scheme at 0.87 falls comfortably with Target Range set out in the CCDP. I will consider the issue of material contravention later in this section.

- 8.6.5. More recent guidance on density is set out in the 2024 Compact Settlement Guidelines which were introduced in following the adoption of the current CCDP. The Compact Settlement Guidelines in Section 3.3 set out a series of settlement and area types and recommends density ranges that should be applied to each. Table 3.1 identifies three area categories within Cork City and Suburbs. The planning authority in their assessment of the application considered that the site falls under the category of City - Suburban/Urban Extension. Suburban areas are the lower density car-orientated residential suburbs constructed at the edge of cities in the latter half of the 20th and early 21st century, while urban extension refers to the greenfield lands at the edge of the existing built-up footprint that are zoned for residential or mixed-use (including residential) development. I agree that the proposed development site meets with the definition of an '*urban extension*' location.
- 8.6.6. It is a policy and objective of the Compact Settlement Guidelines that residential densities in the range 40 dph to 80 dph (net) shall generally be applied at suburban and urban extension locations in Cork, and that densities of up to 150 dph (net) shall be open for consideration at 'accessible' suburban / urban extension locations (as defined in Table 3.8). The density of development proposed at 118 dph would be at the higher end of the density range for an urban extension location but still well below the upper limit.
- 8.6.7. In addition to the density ranges outlined in section 3.3 of the Guidelines, section 3.4 recommends that the ranges should be refined having regard to: (Step 1) Proximity and Accessibility to Services and Public Transport; and (Step 2) Considerations of Character, Amenity and the Natural Environment.
- 8.6.8. *Regarding 'Step 1'*, the Guidelines outline that while densities within the recommended ranges will be acceptable, planning authorities should encourage densities at or above the mid-density range at the most central and accessible locations in each area, densities closer to the mid-range at intermediate locations and densities below the mid-density range at peripheral locations.
- 8.6.9. Further guidance on 'Accessibility' is outlined in Table 3.8 of the Guidelines wherein an '*Accessible Location*' is defined as 'lands within 500 metres (i.e. up to 5–6-minute

walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10-minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services. '*Intermediate Location*' is defined as lands within 500-1,000 metres (i.e. 10–12-minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10-minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services; and Lands within 500 metres (i.e. 6-minute walk) of a reasonably frequent (minimum 15-minute peak hour frequency) urban bus service. The Guidelines clarify that the characteristics detailed in Table 3.8 are not exhaustive and a local assessment will be required.

8.6.10. In terms of public transport, the area is currently served by Bus Eireann Route 207, with a stop at Brookwood approx. 500m to the south of the site. This route includes stops at Ballyvolane Shopping Centre, St. Patrick's College, the City Centre, Douglas Village, and Donnybrook at a 15-minute peak hour frequency. Under BusConnects. Bus services in the area are to be expanded under BusConnects which will provide three new routes in proximity to the subject site. Routes 11 and 26 will serve Brookwood with a peak frequency of every 20 minutes and every 30 minutes respectively (combined peak frequency of 12 minutes). Route 39 will provide services between Upper Glanmire and Parnell Place via Ballyhooly Road, at 90minute intervals. Given the distance to and frequency of existing / planned bus services in the area, it is my opinion that the proposed development site would fall within the Compact Settlement Guidelines definition of an '*Intermediate Location*' where densities closer to the mid-range should be encouraged.

8.6.11. However, I note the location of the proposed development within City Suburb of Ballyvolane, c4km walking distance from the City Centre. This area is identified as a key growth area for Cork City, with significant areas of land on either side of the Ballyhooly Road identified for future growth incorporating residential, employment, local services and open space with the intention of forming a new suburban neighbourhood. Development in the area is being delivered in tandem with new pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Ballyhooly Road, improving the areas accessibility to local services and to the City Centre. The accessibility of the area would be further enhanced though the delivery of the planned Cork Distributor Multi-Modal Route (CNDMR), which is currently at preliminary design stage having received approval from the NTA. As per the information available on the Cork City Council's website (09/04/2026), this proposed new road will connect Carrigrohane

Road to the west of the City with Glanmire in the east, crossing the northern side of Cork City via Hollyhill, Dublin Hill and Banduff, c.500m south of the proposed LRD site. It is intended that this road will establish improved connectivity for residents in the north side of Cork City, providing safe, dedicated infrastructure for walking, cycling, public transport and general traffic. In my opinion, the development of this area as envisaged in the CCDP will result in the formation of an accessible suburban neighbourhood.

8.6.12. Step 2 of the refining process requires an assessment of whether the quantum and scale of development can integrate successfully into the receiving environment. It goes on to state that new development should respond to the receiving environment in a positive way and should not result in a significant negative impact on character, amenity or the natural environment. Step 2 references five areas for consideration, these are addressed below.

(a) Impact on Local Character:

The subject site is located within the outer suburban area of Ballyvolane to the north of Cork City. Under the provisions of the CCDP, this area is to be consolidated and expanded to form one of seven new suburban neighbourhoods within and adjoining the existing City Centre. Development in this area is progressing as evidenced by the extent of newly permitted, completed and under construction development in the vicinity of the proposed development site and the character of the area is likely to change significantly in the coming years. The proposed scheme, if permitted, would contribute to this planned change.

The proposed development site is a brownfield site that has previously been subject to extensive works of excavation resulting in a significant level difference between it and the adjoining lands to the north, east and south. In my opinion, this level difference supports a development of increased density and building height. To illustrate this point, I refer the Commission to the verified view photomontages submitted as part of the application documentation. The photomontages presented detail the proposed LRD in context with the permitted Longview SHD, which once completed will enclose the proposed development site along its northern, eastern and southern boundaries. As evidenced by these

photomontages, the parapet height of the proposed apartment blocks aligns with the ridge heights of the permitted dwellings to the north and south and is significant below that of the permitted dwellings to the east, which are at a higher natural elevation, and which will form a backdrop to the proposed LRD. The location of the taller three-storey apartment block to the rear (east) of the site, provides a gradual increase in building height within the site that corresponds with the sloping topography of adjoining lands.

Lands to the west of the proposed development site, on the opposite side of Ballyhooly Road are zoned for a neighbourhood centre and currently have the benefit of planning permission for a four-storey commercial scheme (health care / retail) which, in conjunction with the proposed LRD, would help to provide a strong street frontage to Ballyhooly road and contribute to the consolidation the built-environment at this location. Furthermore, I note that the Longview SHD includes apartment blocks of up-to six storeys fronting onto the Ballyhooly road, approx. 225m to the south of the site, establishing a precedent for taller buildings in the area.

(a) Built and Landscape Heritage

There are no historic landscapes or built heritage on or adjacent to the site.

(b) Impact on the environment, protected habitats and species

The application documentation includes an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AA), an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), an EIA Screening Report (EIASR) and a Landscape Design Statement. As part of this assessment, I have carried out screening determinations for Appropriate Assessment, Water Framework Directive and Environmental Impact Assessment. These are presented in sections 9.0, 10.0 and 11.0 below and are to be read in conjunction with Appendices of this report. no significant impacts on protected habitats or species are anticipated.

The site is a brownfield site dominated by recolonising and spoil/bare ground that is of little ecological value. The application includes for the demolition of existing building and the removal of trees with Bat Roost potential. However, I note that the field assessments carried out to inform the EclA found no evidence of roosting bats on site (negating the need for a derogation licence). The EclA included a number of recommended mitigation measures to limit potential impacts on the environment.

The Landscape Plan for the site incorporates street tree planting, native boundary hedgerow, planting next to steep embankment/rock face, hydroseeding of stabilised embankment/rock face where relevant, ornamental shrubs/plants/grasses, non-native hedgerow and public grassland amenity areas. The EclA purports that the proposed planting schedule will represent an enhancement and net gain for fauna from the existing situation through the inclusion of native and pollinator friendly dominant planting mixes.

(c) Impact on Residential Amenity

I have considered the impact of a proposed development on the amenities of residential properties (existing and permitted) in close proximity to a development site and I am satisfied that the development of this site as proposed, will not have a significant negative impact on the amenities of residential properties in close proximity.

(d) Availability of Water Services:

A Confirmation of Feasibility (July 2024) and Design Acceptable (July 2025) from Uisce Eireann have been received for the proposed development. these documents confirm that water and wastewater connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade by Uisce Eireann. The Uisce Eireann capacity registers (09/04/2026) show that there is capacity available for water and wastewater in this area. Therefore, the water supply and wastewater networks can service any new development.

8.6.13. In completing the two-step density refining process, it is my opinion, that the density of development proposed at c118uph, is relatively high for this urban extension location in Cork. However, having regard to the brownfield nature and characteristics of the site (excavated ground, steep slopes / embankments along site boundaries and the level difference with surrounding lands), extant planning permissions in the vicinity and the emerging pattern of development in the area, and having regard to the ongoing and planned infrastructure improvements in the area, I am satisfied that the development of these lands for a higher-density residential scheme as proposed is appropriate and justified and would on balance, accord with the provisions of the SDCDP and current ministerial guidelines.

8.6.14. **Material Contravention:** As previously noted, the density of the proposed development, at c.118uph, far exceeds the density target range for this outer suburban area of Cork City and as such would materially contravene the CCCDP. However, I do not recommend that planning permission be refused on the basis, instead I consider it reasonable in this instance to recommend that the Commission invoke its powers under section 37(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). My reasoning for this is based on the following:

- The location of the proposed development site within the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area and the provisions for this area as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
- The brownfield nature and characteristics of the site (excavated ground with steep slopes/ embankments at site boundaries and the level of the site relative to adjoining lands) which provide scope for increased density and height, at this location.
- The density of the proposed scheme is supported by the provisions of the Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024, and in particular Table 3.1 *Table 3.1 - Areas and Density Ranges Dublin and Cork City and Suburbs - City - Suburban/Urban Extension* where it is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 40 dph to 80 dph (net) shall generally be applied at suburban and urban extension locations in Dublin and Cork, and that

densities of up to 150 dph (net) shall be open for consideration at 'accessible' suburban / urban extension locations.

- The proposal would support broader goals of compact growth and make efficient and sustainable use of zoned and serviceable lands. In this regard, I note that the applicants in their response to the further information request, issued by the planning authority on the 22nd of September 2025, included a review of recently permitted and constructed residential developments in the area and found that these developments combined, included the Longview SHD, would provide for a density of just c. 36dph. The proposed LRD would increase the average density of development in the area to approx. 39uph and would provide critical mass to support existing and future infrastructure services in the area.

Height:

- 8.6.15. In terms of building height, the proposed LRD comprises 3no apartment blocks. Blocks A and B front onto Ballyhooly Road and are both four storeys with a ground to parapet height of 14.05m and reaching an elevation of 87.290 (OD). Block C, set to the rear of Blocks A and B, is 5 storeys with a ground to parapet height of 17.15m, reaching an elevation of 90.390 (OD). Block C, at 5 storeys would exceed the target height range (2-4 storeys) for this Outer Suburban area.
- 8.6.16. I note that in respect of building height the standards outlined in the CCDP are expressed as a recommended 'target range' as opposed to a definitive limitation, which SPPR 1 of the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018) prohibits development plans from providing for. As such, it is my opinion that the CCDP does not prohibit buildings of five storeys in the Outer Suburban area and that as such the current proposal would not represent a material contravention of the CCDP in respect of building height.
- 8.6.17. Section 11.33 of the CDP states that '*the building height of development will respond directly to the proposed density of development, the character of an area, as well as block development typologies, site coverage and a range of other factors.*' I have reviewed the plans and particulars submitted in support of the application and I have

visited the site and surrounding area and in my opinion the application site is ideally suited to a 4-5 storey apartment scheme as presented and I am satisfied that the proposed scheme would be effectively assimilated into emerging built environment at this location with minimal visual impact.

Housing Mix:

8.6.18. In terms of housing mix, regard is had to Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8: ‘City Suburbs Dwelling Size Mix for Housing Developments’ of the CCDP. Objective 11.2 states that: ‘All planning applications for residential developments or mixed-use developments comprising more than 50 dwellings will be required to comply with the target dwelling size mix specified in Tables 11.3-11.9, apart from in exceptional circumstances. Objective 11.2 of the CDP further states that ‘where a clear justification can be provided on the basis of market evidence that demand /need for a specific dwelling size is lower than the target then flexibility will be provided according to the ranges specified.’ Table 11.8 *City Suburbs Dwelling Size Mix for Housing Developments* sets out the criteria for the ‘Target’ dwelling size mix and range (minimum and maximum) for sites within the City Suburbs, I have included these criteria in Table 8.3 below.

Unit Size	Development Plan Range	Target	Proposed
Studios	0%-15%	10%	0%
1-Bed	15%-25%	20%	38.6%
2-Bed	25%-40%	34%	36.8%
3-Bed	18%-38%	28%	21.9%
4-Bed	5%-15%	8%	0%

Table 8.2 *City Suburbs Dwelling Size Mix for Housing Developments’ – Range, Target and Proposed*

8.6.19. As can be seen from the above table, the percentage of one-bed units proposed within this LRD, at 38.6%, far exceeds both the target 20% and maximum range 25%, specified in the CCDP. Additionally, as no 4-bed units are proposed within the scheme, it does not meet the minimum target of 5%. While Objective 11.2 does allow for a degree of flexibility, this flexibility is limited to the minimum and maximum

ranges specified. Therefore, I consider the housing mix proposed to be a **material contravention** of the CCDP.

8.6.20. However, I do not recommend that permission be refused on this basis, instead I consider it reasonable in this instance to recommend that the Commission invoke its powers under section 37(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). My reasoning for this is based on the fact the proposed scheme in respect of Housing Mix accords with the 2025 Apartment Guidelines under which it is a specific planning policy requirement (SPPR 1) that:

(A) With the exception of social housing developments, social/affordable housing provided for under Part V the Act or schemes to provide housing for older persons where a specific mix of unit sizes may be required, such as in accordance with a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA), there shall be no restrictions within statutory plans in relation to the mix of unit sizes or types to be provided within apartment developments. There shall be no minimum or maximum requirements for apartments with a certain number of bedrooms.

(B) Where any such restriction or requirement is set out within a statutory plan, this Specific Planning Policy Requirement shall apply to any single apartment scheme and there shall be no restriction in relation to the mix of unit sizes or types and there shall be no minimum requirements for apartments with a certain number of bedrooms within the development, except in the circumstances set out above.

and the fact that planning authorities and An Coimisiún Pleanála, are required under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to apply specific planning policy requirements (SPPRs) stipulated under Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

Conclusion: - Built Form

8.6.21. I have considered the plans and particulars submitted in support of the application and I have visited the area. In my opinion, the proposed development site is ideally

suited to an apartment scheme of the density, height and scale proposed. I am satisfied that the scheme as presented is consistent with the emerging pattern of development at this location, that it would deliver an appropriate mix of house type, size and tenure to meet the needs of the existing and future population of the area and that it would contribute in a positive and proportionate way to the receiving environment.

9.0 **AA Screening**

9.1. In accordance with section 177U(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and on the basis of objective information, I conclude that the project would not have a likely significant effect on any European site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) under section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, is not required.

9.2. This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.
- Qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the European sites.
- The distances separating the site from European sites.
- The lack of direct hydrological connection.
- The localised nature of the proposed works.

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

10.0 **Water Framework Directive**

10.1. The purpose of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is to protect and enhance all waters as well as water dependent wildlife and habitats, with the aim to achieve 'good' water quality status for all waters subject to the WFD and to mitigate against the risk of a decline in the water body quality and quantity status.

- 10.2. The proposed development comprises the development of a largescale residential development on a brownfield site c. 1km south of White's Cross and just north of main urban fabric of Cork City (refer to section 2 for details). No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 10.3. The proposed development site is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay catchment (Kiln sub-catchment, Hydrometric Area 192). There is an unnamed watercourse located c. 50m to the west of the study site that flows in a southerly direction. It is understood, from the applicants Appropriate Assessment Screening report, that existing ground conditions at site result in surface-water run-off onto Ballyhooly Road during storm events, which likely results in run-off into the nearby unnamed watercourse via two existing public storm drains. The unnamed watercourse appears to eventually flow into Ballincolly Stream that in turn flows into the Glen Stream, which in turn flows into the Bride (Cork City) River c. 900m downstream of the study site. The Bride (Cork City) River finally discharges into the northern channel of the River Lee, which is part of the Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper transitional waterbody. The River Lee continues through the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and Lough Mahon transitional waterbodies before discharging into Cork Harbour coastal waterbody. Where the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and Lough Mahon transitional waterbodies meet, Cork Harbour SPA is also present c. 9.9km downstream of the study site. The Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper and Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower transitional waterbodies are of moderate and poor status (consecutively), and both are at risk under the Water Framework Directive.
- 10.4. 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 & ground 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 project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.
- 10.5. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The nature of the development including the connection to public water supply, public sewer and storm sewer, and
- lack of direct hydrological connections
- The effectiveness of the mitigation measures proposed and adoption of a CEMP.

10.6. 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 (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

11.0 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Introduction

11.1. The application includes an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report (EIASR) prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants. This Screening Report provides supporting information, as specified in Schedule 7 and 7A of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations (the Regulations), to assist the competent authority, to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed development is required. It is stated in the EIASR that the proposed development is a sub threshold infrastructure project, and that the EIASR has been prepared to satisfy the applicant's obligations under Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations (PDR) 2001, as amended.

11.2. This section outlines my assessment of the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), which will enable the Commission to make a determination on the matter.

Mandatory Thresholds

11.3. There are no activities listed within Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning Regulations (as amended) which relate to the proposed development. It does not fall within the scope of activities listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 and a mandatory EIA, as classified under Annex 1 is not required.

11.4. Item (10) of Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) provides that mandatory EIA is required for various Infrastructure Projects. Class 10 (b)(i) relates to the construction of more than 500 dwelling units. The proposed development involves the construction of 245 units and therefore does not exceed the mandatory threshold. Class 10(b)(iv) relates to 'Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 ha in the case of a business district, 10 ha in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 ha elsewhere. (In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use)'. I do not consider that the application site is within a 'business district'. I consider that the site is within part of a 'built-up area' where the 10ha threshold applies. The application site has a total area of 1.218ha and is therefore significantly below the applicable threshold.

Sub-Threshold Development

11.5. Class 15, Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Regulations provides that EIA will be required for 'Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7'.

11.6. EIA is required for development proposals of a class specified in Part 1 or 2 of Schedule 5 that are sub-threshold where the Commission determines that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

11.7. Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) sets out the criteria for assessing whether or not a project will have 'likely' and 'significant' effects on the environment, in which case an EIA is also required. The criteria include, characteristics and location of proposed development, and characteristics of potential impacts. These criteria were considered for the proposed development under the topics recommended in EIAR guidance documents and concludes that the proposed development does not meet the criteria where a subthreshold EIA would be warranted.

11.8. I am therefore satisfied, having regard to: -

(a) the criteria set out in Schedule 7A, in particular

- a. the nature, scale and location of the proposed housing development,
 - b. the absence of any significant environmental sensitivity in the vicinity
 - c. the location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in article 109(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)
- (b) the results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment submitted by the applicant and the results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) under the SEA Directive
- (c) the features and measures proposed by applicant envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant effects on the environment, including those identified in the Construction Environmental Management Plan, Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan and Ecological Impact Assessment.

that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report is not required. (See EIA Screening Determination Form 3)

12.0 Recommendation

12.1. Having regard to the foregoing assessments, I recommend that permission be granted for the proposed development (as amended), subject to conditions, and for the reasons and considerations set out in the following Draft Order.

13.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the following:

- (a) The location of the site within the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area and the provisions for this area as a new residential neighbourhood as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
- (b) The Residential zoning of the site as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.

- (c) Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030: An Action Plan on Housing Supply and Targeting Homelessness
- (d) The provisions of Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework, First Revision (April 2025), which identifies the importance of compact growth.
- (e) The provisions of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031, which supports compact sustainable growth and accelerated housing delivery integrated with enabling infrastructure.
- (f) The provisions of Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in January 2024.
- (g) The provisions of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in July 2025.
- (h) The provisions of the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in December 2018.
- (i) The provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in 2013.
- (j) The Climate Action Plan 2025 issued by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment.
- (k) Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in 2024
- (l) The nature, scale and design of the proposed development.
- (m) The existing and emerging pattern of development in the area.
- (n) The proximity of the site to Cork City Centre
- (o) The planned infrastructure upgrade works in the area that will improve the sites accessibility and connectivity.
- (p) The submissions received.

(q) The reports from the Planning Authority.

it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would constitute an acceptable density of development in this urban location, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area or properties in the vicinity, would be acceptable in terms of layout, urban design, height and unit mix and would be acceptable in terms of traffic, pedestrian safety and convenience.

The proposed development would be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, save for the provisions of the plan relating density (Table 11.2) and Dwelling Unit Size Mix (Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8) where a material contravention can be considered to arise.

Nevertheless, having regard to the quality of the proposed scheme, to the relevant provisions of the Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024 and Apartment Guidelines 2025, specifically SPPR 1, it is considered that having regard to the provisions of 37(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and that a grant of permission is therefore warranted in this instance, notwithstanding the above. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Therefore, in light of the above and having regard to the urgent need for housing supply to facilitate increased population growth and compact growth in accordance with the National Planning Framework First Revision (April 2025), is considered having regard to the provisions of 37(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), that the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and that a grant of permission is therefore warranted in this instance, notwithstanding the above. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and consistent with the Climate Action Plan, 2025 and the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

14.0 **Recommended Draft Order:**

14.1. **Appeal by** Kellie Cronin on behalf of the residents of Longview Park, Whites Cross, Cork against the decision made on the 17th day of December 2025 by Cork City Council to grant permission to Whitestone Corner Properties Ltd.

14.2. **Proposed Development:**

A Large Scale Residential Development (LRD) comprising the demolition and removal of the existing building, the construction of 3 no. apartment blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 5 storeys, comprising 114 no. apartment units (45 no. 1 bed, 43 no. 2 bed, and 26 no. 3 bed apartments), and ESB substation and all associated site development works including footpaths, cycle paths, car and bicycle parking, open spaces, drainage, fencing, lighting, and the provision of a new footpath, cycle path, and bus stop along Ballyhooly Road. Access to the site will be via a new vehicle access point and three new pedestrian entrance along Ballyhooly Road. Provision is also made for a pedestrian link to the 'Longview' residential development to the south.

14.3. **Decision:**

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

14.4. **Reasons and Considerations:**

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

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

- (a) The location of the site within the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area and the provisions for this area as a new residential neighbourhood as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
- (b) The Residential zoning of the site as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
- (c) Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030: An Action Plan on Housing Supply and Targeting Homelessness
- (d) The provisions of Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework, First Revision (April 2025), which identifies the importance of compact growth.
- (e) The provisions of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031, which supports compact sustainable growth and accelerated housing delivery integrated with enabling infrastructure.
- (f) The provisions of Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in January 2024.
- (g) The provisions of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in July 2025.
- (h) The provisions of the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in December 2018.
- (i) The provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in 2013.
- (j) The Climate Action Plan 2025 issued by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment.
- (k) Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in 2024
- (l) The nature, scale and design of the proposed development.

- (m) The existing and emerging pattern of development in the area.
- (n) The proximity of the site to Cork City Centre
- (o) The planned infrastructure upgrade works in the area that will improve the sites accessibility and connectivity.
- (p) The submissions received.
- (q) The reports from the Planning Authority.
- (r) The report of the Planning Inspector

14.5. **Appropriate Assessment (AA): Stage 1**

The Commission completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on designated European sites, taking into account the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, the documents submitted with the planning application and appeal including the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, the Inspector's Report, and the submissions on file. In completing the screening exercise, the Commission adopted the report of the Inspector and concluded that the project would not have a likely significant effect on any European site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) under section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, is not required.

14.6. This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.
- Qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the European sites.
- The distances separating the Site from European sites.
- The lack of direct hydrological connection.
- The localised nature of the proposed works.

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

14.7. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening:

The Commission completed an environmental impact assessment screening of the proposed development and considered that the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report and other documents and drawings submitted by the applicant identifies and describes adequately the direct, indirect, secondary and cumulative effects of the proposed development on the environment.

Having regard to:

- (a) the criteria set out in Schedule 7, in particular:
 - a. the nature, scale and location of the proposed housing development,
 - b. the absence of any significant environmental sensitivity in the vicinity
 - c. the location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in article 109(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)
- (b) the results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment submitted by the applicant and the results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) under the SEA Directive
- (c) the features and measures proposed by applicant envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant effects on the environment, including those identified in the Construction Environmental Management Plan, Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan and Ecological Impact Assessment.

It considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report is not required

14.8. Conclusions on Proper Planning and Sustainable Development:

The Commission considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would constitute an acceptable density of development in this urban location, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area or properties in the vicinity, would be acceptable in terms of layout, urban design, height and unit mix and would be acceptable in terms of traffic, pedestrian safety and convenience.

The proposed development would be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, save for the provisions of the plan relating density (Table 11.2) and Dwelling Unit Size Mix (Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8) where a material contravention can be considered to arise.

Nevertheless, having regard to the quality of the proposed scheme, to the relevant provisions of the Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024 and Apartment Guidelines 2025, specifically SPPR 1, it is considered that having regard to the provisions of 37(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and that a grant of permission is therefore warranted in this instance, notwithstanding the above. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Therefore, in light of the above and having regard to the urgent need for housing supply to facilitate increased population growth and compact growth in accordance with the National Planning Framework First Revision (April 2025), is considered having regard to the provisions of 37(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), that the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and that a grant of permission is therefore warranted in this instance, notwithstanding the above. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and consistent with the Climate Action Plan, 2025 and the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

15.0 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 20th day of November 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. The mitigation measures contained in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), shall be fully implemented, except as may be otherwise required or specified by way of planning condition.

Reason: in the interests of clarity, environmental protection and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. Tree felling and clearing of vegetation shall take place outside of bird nesting season, beginning 1st March to 31st August.

Reason: To protect nesting birds and other wildlife

4. Details of the materials, colours and textures of all external finishes to the proposed dwellings, ancillary structures and hard landscaping shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: in the interest of visual amenity and to ensure an appropriate high standard of development.

5. The shared pedestrian/ cycle path running along the frontage of the site (labelled 'Future Footpath/ Cyclepath' on Drawing No. 1183.PL.160-Site Layout Plan Rev. K) shall be constructed/ delivered by the developer as part of this development. The final geometric layout of the proposed shared cycle/pedestrian facility and the main entrance junction shall be finalised in consultation with Cork City Council and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. All costs associated with the condition to be borne by the developer

Reason: To ensure the safe operation of the road network for all users

6. Full details of the pedestrian link / walkway (incl. tie-in details) between the subject development and the adjoining Longview estate shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority. This pedestrian link / walkway shall be constructed up to the site boundary to provide access to adjoining lands with no obstruction including the erection of any structure which would otherwise constitute exempted development under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Reason: in the interest of permeability and proper planning and sustainable development.

7. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall enter into a Connection Agreements with Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) to provide for service connections to the public water supply and wastewater collection network.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure adequate water/wastewater facilities.

8. Drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Upon completion, the applicant shall submit a SuDS Assessment Report based on the as-constructed development. This report shall include drainage layouts, drawings, details, calculations and confirm the discharge rate from the development.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

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

Reason: In the interests of visual and [residential] amenity.

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.

Reason: In the interest of amenity and public safety.

11. The internal road network serving the proposed development including turning bays, junctions, parking areas, footpaths, and kerbs shall comply with the detailed construction standards of the planning authority for such works and design standards outlined in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).

Reason: In the interest of amenity and of traffic and pedestrian safety.

12. Prior to the occupation 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 residents/occupants/staff employed in the development. The mobility strategy shall be prepared and implemented by the management company for all units within the development.

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

13. (a) No parking spaces shall be reserved for either an individual or an individual residential unit

(b) No additional barriers or gates are permitted to control access to any parking spaces without specific planning permission permitting such interventions.

Reason: In the interests of orderly development, to ensure equitable access to sustainable transport options

14. All the communal parking areas serving the residential units shall be provided with functional electric vehicle charging points, and all of the in-curtilage car parking spaces serving residential units shall be provided with electric connections to the exterior of the houses to allow for the provision of future electric vehicle 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 transportation.

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

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

16. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Friday inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays 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 [residential] amenities of property in the vicinity.

17. A detailed construction traffic management plan shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. The plan shall include details of arrangements for routes for construction traffic, parking during the construction phase, the location of the compound for storage of plant and machinery and the location for storage of deliveries to the site.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable transport and safety.

18. Prior to the commencement of any works associated with the development hereby permitted, the developer shall submit a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the written agreement of the planning authority. The CEMP shall incorporate details for the following: collection and disposal of construction waste, surface water run-off from the site, on-site road construction, environmental management measures during construction including working hours, noise control, dust and vibration control and monitoring of such measures and measures to reflect mitigation described in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment. A record of daily checks that the construction works are being undertaken in accordance with the CEMP shall be kept at the construction site office for inspection by the

planning authority. The agreed CEMP shall be implemented in full in the carrying out of the development.

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

19. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer or any agent acting on its behalf, shall prepare a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021) including demonstration of proposals to adhere to best practice and protocols. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be measured and monitored for effectiveness; these details shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record. The RWMP must be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commencement of development. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the agreed RWMP shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development

20. A plan containing details for the management of waste (and, in particular, recyclable materials) within the development, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of the waste and, in particular, recyclable materials [within each house plot and/or for each apartment unit] shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Thereafter, the agreed waste facilities shall be maintained, and waste shall be managed in accordance with the agreed plan.

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

21. The landscaping masterplan (Drawing No. 202407/SLD/P01), as submitted to the planning authority on the 20th day of November 2025 shall be implemented before any of the units are made available for occupation.

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

Reason: In the interest of residential and visual amenity.

22. The management and maintenance of the proposed development following its completion shall be the responsibility of a legally constituted management company, or by the local authority in the event of the development being taken in charge. Detailed proposals in this regard shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory completion and maintenance of this development.

23. Prior to commencement of development, the applicant or other person with an interest in the land to which the application relates shall enter into an agreement in writing with the planning authority [in relation to the transfer of a percentage of the land, to be agreed with the planning authority, in accordance with the requirements of section 94(4) and section 96(2) and 96(3)(a), (Part V) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and/or the provision of housing on lands in accordance with the requirements of section 94(4) and section 96(2) and 96(3) (b), (Part V) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended], unless an exemption certificate has been granted under section 97 of the Act, as amended. Where such an

agreement cannot be reached between the parties, the matter in dispute (other than a matter to which section 96(7) applies) shall be referred by the planning authority or any other prospective party to the agreement, to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and of the housing strategy in the development plan for the area.

24. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or other security to secure the provision and satisfactory completion and maintenance until taken in charge by the local authority of roads, footpaths, watermains, drains, public open space and other services required in connection with the development, coupled with an agreement empowering the local authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory completion or maintenance of any part of the development. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.

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

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

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

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.”

Lucy Roche
Planning Inspector

27th April 2026

Appendix 1(a) - Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference	324029-26		
Proposed Development Summary	LRD comprising 111no. units (as amended)		
Development Address	Whites Cross, Cork		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)	Yes	X	
	No		
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?			
Yes	X	Class 10(b)	Proceed to Q3.
No			
3. Does the proposed development equal or exceed any relevant THRESHOLD set out in the relevant Class?			
Yes		State the relevant threshold here for the Class of development.	EIA Mandatory EIAR required
No	X		Proceed to Q4
4. Is the proposed development below the relevant threshold for the Class of development [sub-threshold development]?			
Yes	X	Relevant thresholds arising from Class 10(b): - Class 10(b)(i) – more than 500 dwelling units. - Class 10(b)(iv) – urban development in an area greater than 10ha	Preliminary examination required (Form 2)
5. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?			

No		Screening determination remains as above (Q1 to Q4)
Yes	X	Screening Determination required

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1(b) – Copy of Form 2 - EIA Screening Determination (Note: Signed Copy (20/03/26), included under separate cover).

A. CASE DETAILS

An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference	ACP-324029-26	
Development Summary	Large-scale residential development. The proposed development (as amended at RFI stage) comprises the demolition/removal of the existing structures on site, the construction of 111 no. apartment units in 3 no. apartment blocks ranging in height from 4 to 5 storeys and all associated site development works.	
	Yes / No / N/A	Comment (if relevant)
1. Was a Screening Determination carried out by the PA?	Yes	The planning authority concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that an environmental impact report is not required'
2. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?	Yes	
3. Has an AA screening report or NIS been submitted?	Yes	Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
4. Is a IED/ IPC or Waste Licence (or review of licence) required from the EPA? If YES has the EPA commented on the need for an EIAR?	N/A	

<p>5. Have any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment which have a significant bearing on the project been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives – for example SEA</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Environmental Management Plan • Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan • Operational Waste Management Plan • Ecological Impact Assessment • Engineering Report incorporating a Flood Risk Assessment • Traffic and Transport Assessment • Site Investigation report • SEA was undertaken by the planning authority in respect of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 	
<p>B. EXAMINATION</p>	<p>Yes/ No/ Uncertain</p>	<p>Briefly describe the nature and extent and Mitigation Measures (where relevant)</p> <p>(having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact)</p> <p>Mitigation measures –Where relevant specify features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect.</p>	<p>Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?</p> <p>Yes/ No/ Uncertain</p>
<p>This screening examination should be read with, and in light of, the rest of the Inspector’s Report attached herewith</p>			
<p>1. Characteristics of proposed development (including demolition, construction, operation, or decommissioning)</p>			
<p>1.1 Is the project significantly different in character or scale to the existing surrounding or environment?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The project, comprising apartments in blocks of up to 5 storeys is different in character and scale to existing development in the area which</p>	<p>No</p>

		<p>comprises mainly low-rise housing. However, this is a new /emerging residential area and having considered the plans and particulars submitted with the application, including the Design Statement and verified photomontages and having visited the site, it is my opinion the proposed development could be adequately assimilated into the landscape at this location. I do not consider that it would significantly impact on the visual amenity, landscape, or character of the area.</p>	
<p>1.2 Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works cause physical changes to the locality (topography, land use, waterbodies)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The project works, including demolition and site preparation, will cause physical changes to the site, but I consider that these changes would changes would be positive in terms of placemaking.</p> <p>The works will be appropriately managed in accordance with a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a Resource and Waste Management Plan (RWMP). Together with the Infrastructure Design Report and the mitigation measures included in the NIS and other supporting</p>	<p>No</p>

		documentation, I am satisfied that there will be no significant effects on waterbodies.	
1.3 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy, especially resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	<p>The project uses standard construction methods, materials and equipment, and the process would be managed through the implementation of the Construction Environmental Management Plan. Waste arising from the demolition and construction phase would be managed through the implementation of the Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan. There is no significant use of natural resources anticipated.</p> <p>While the project uses land, the lands are zoned for development and serviced. In this regard, the project would use land more efficiently and sustainably than at present (brownfield (storage yard / compound for lorries) intensified through provision of medium-high density residential scheme). Otherwise, the operational phase of the project would not use natural resources in short supply.</p>	No
1.4 Will the project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substance which would be harmful to human health or the environment?	Yes	Construction activities will require the use of potentially harmful materials, such as fuels and other such substances. Such use will be typical of construction sites. Any impacts would be local and	No

		<p>temporary in nature and implementation of the CEMP etc will satisfactorily mitigate potential impacts. No operational impacts in this regard are anticipated.</p> <p>Accordingly, I do not consider this aspect of the project likely to result in significant effects on the environment or on human health</p>	
<p>1.5 Will the project produce solid waste, release pollutants or any hazardous / toxic / noxious substances?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The proposed development will result in the production of demolition and construction waste. A Preliminary Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan (CDWMP) has been prepared by MHL Consulting Engineers which outlines best practice measures for the management of waste produced on site during the construction and demolition phases. An Environmental Risk Assessment was completed by Enviroguide which included an assessment of soil samples from the site. Two samples were found to be contaminated and the soil impacted by this contamination is to be excavated for off-site disposal in advance of the main excavation works on site.</p> <p>Waste arising during construction is to be managed based on the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Development Projects.</p>	<p>No</p>

		Operational waste generated will generally be domestic waste from the residential units and will be disposed of by a licensed waste contractor. An Operational Waste Management Plan has been included with the application; this document provides details on the management of waste generated during the operational phase.	
1.6 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes	<p>Project involves works of demolition, excavation and construction with potential for contaminated run-off to ground and surface waters. However, it uses standard construction methods, materials and equipment, and the process will be managed through the implementation of the CEMP and CDWMP to satisfactorily address potential risks in relation to contamination of land/water.</p> <p>Project includes for surface water management systems, designed, and constructed in accordance with GDSDS. Surface water will be attenuated prior to discharge to the wider drainage network. Wastewater will be discharged to the public system.</p>	No

<p>1.7 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Noise and vibration impact during the site development works are likely. These works are short term in duration, and impacts arising would be temporary, localised, and be managed through implementation of the CEMP.</p> <p>The operational phase of the project would likely result in noise and light impacts associated with the proposed residential use (increased traffic generation, use of open spaces etc) which are considered typical of such schemes.</p> <p>Accordingly, I do not consider this aspect of the project likely to result in significant effects on the environment in terms of air quality (noise, vibration, light pollution).</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>1.8 Will there be any risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>There is potential for water contamination, noise and dust emissions during the construction phase. Construction phase works would be managed through implementation of the CEMP. Site development works are short term in duration, and impacts arising would be temporary, localised, addressed by the mitigation measures.</p> <p>The Preliminary Environmental Risk Assessment submitted with the application includes a generic qualitative risk assessment which concluded that there is no unacceptable risk associated with the identified soil condition beneath the site for</p>	<p>No</p>

		<p>residential land use, on the basis that the soil remains in-situ and that the soil from certain areas of the site would not be suitable for use within other areas of the site.</p> <p>Operational phase of the project would not likely cause risks to human health through water contamination or air pollution due to the nature (residential) and design (SuDS features) of the scheme, connection to public water services systems, and scale of residential use/ activities arising.</p> <p>Accordingly, in terms of risks to human health, I do not consider this aspect of the project likely to result in a significant effect on the environment.</p>	
<p>1.9 Will there be any risk of major accidents that could affect human health or the environment?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No significant risk is predicted having regard to the nature and scale of development. Any risk arising from construction will be localised and temporary in nature.</p> <p>The Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) submitted with the planning application identifies that the site is within Flood Zone C, with a low probability of flooding.</p> <p>The Preliminary Environmental Risk Assessment submitted with the application includes a generic qualitative risk assessment which concluded that there is no unacceptable risk associated with the</p>	<p>No</p>

		identified soil condition beneath the site for residential land use, on the basis that the soil remains in-situ and that the soil from certain areas of the site would not be suitable for use within other areas of the site.	
1.10 Will the project affect the social environment (population, employment)	Yes	<p>The project would increase localised temporary employment activity at the site during site development works (i.e. site enabling and construction phases). The site development works are short term in duration and negative impacts arising would be temporary, localised, addressed by the mitigation measures in the CEMP.</p> <p>The operational phase of the project (i.e. the occupation of the residential units) would result in increase in the population of the area. Such an increase is considered to constitute a slight impact in scale of effect.</p> <p>The receiving area is a developing suburban location, in proximity to wider education, amenities, services, public transport, and has the capacity to accommodate the impacts associated with the population increase.</p> <p>Accordingly, I do not consider this aspect of the project likely to result in a significant effect on the social environment of the area</p>	No

<p>1.11 Is the project part of a wider large-scale change that could result in cumulative effects on the environment?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The site is zoned for residential development in the CCDP. The zonings at the site and in the vicinity (i.e., residential and Neighbourhood and Local Centres) support the planned sustainable development of the area.</p> <p>As such, the site is part of a wider large-scale change in the area as envisaged by the planning authority in the CCDP for the plan period until 2028.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the site is serviced, and the project is standalone and not dependent on other development or services being provided.</p> <p>I direct the Commission to the response to Q: 3.1 below in respect of considerations of cumulative effects of the project.</p> <p>Within this planned context, I do not consider that cumulative significant effects on the area could be reasonably anticipated.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2. Location of proposed development</p>			
<p>2.1 Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or have the potential to impact on any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European site (SAC/ SPA/ pSAC/ pSPA) - NHA/ pNHA - Designated Nature Reserve - Designated refuge for flora or fauna 	<p>No</p>	<p>Project not located in, on, or adjoining any European site, any designated or proposed Natural Heritage Area, or any other listed area of ecological interest or protection. The EclA and NIS has considered the proximity and potential connections to designated/ecological sites in the wider surrounding</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>- Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation/conservation/ protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ LAP/ draft plan or variation of a plan</p>		<p>area. I am satisfied that there would be no significant effects on same.</p>	
<p>2.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, for example: for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>This brownfield site is not under any wildlife or conservation designation. No rare, threatened or legally protected species are known to occur on the site</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.3 Are there any other features of landscape, historic, archaeological, or cultural importance that could be affected?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The subject site and the surrounding lands are not of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.4 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, for example: forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>This is a brownfield site, historically used as a storage yard/compound for lorries. Surrounding lands are developed / under construction there are no such resources on or close to the site.</p> <p>The quality and regime of relevant waterbodies will be protected by the proposed mitigation measures, including the implementation CEMP and standard best practice construction and mitigation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.5 Are there any water resources including surface waters, for example: rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or groundwaters which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>There are no hydrological features of note within the site. There is an unnamed watercourse located c. 50m to the west of the study site that flows in a southerly direction. It is understood that existing ground conditions at site result in surface-water run-off onto</p>	<p>No</p>

		<p>Ballyhooly Road during storm events, which likely results in run-off into the nearby unnamed watercourse too via two existing public storm drains. The unnamed watercourse appears to eventually flow into Ballincolly Stream that in turn flows into the Glen Stream, which in turn flows into the Bride (Cork City) River c. 900m downstream of the study site. The quality and regime of these waterbodies will be protected by the proposed mitigation measures, including the implementation CEMP and standard best practice construction and mitigation. The site is located within Flood Zone C, with a low probability of flooding.</p>	
<p>2.6 Is the location susceptible to subsidence, landslides or erosion?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>There is an embankment at the north, eastern and southern boundaries. This embankment ranges in height from about 3m to 10m with sheer side slopes typically ranging between 1in2 and 1in1. The embankments have a line of mature Leyland cypress trees at their top with heights ranging from 8-12 metres. As detailed in the Preliminary Engineering Design Report submitted with the application, it has been recommended that these existing trees be removed given the difficulty in accessing them for future maintenance and the unknown extent of the tree root system that is stabilising the top of the</p>	<p>No</p>

		steep rock face. After removal the embankment is to be inspected and methods to stabilise the embankment are to be employed if deemed necessary. These will include the provision of a geo-grid which would be pinned to the bare rock and then hydroseeded post installation.	
2.7 Are there any key transport routes (eg National primary Roads) on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion, or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	<p>The development lands are located along the Ballyhooly Road (R614), approximately 4.0km to the northeast of Cork City Centre. During the site development works, the project would result in an increase in traffic activity (HGVs, workers) as construction equipment, materials, and waste are delivered to/ removed from the site. Site development works would be short term in duration and impacts arising would be temporary, localised, and managed under in the CEMP</p> <p>The Traffic and Transportation Assessment (TTA) consider the operational phase impacts for the project. The TTA assesses four junctions in the local road network. The results show a steady degradation in the capacity of analysed junctions 1, 2 and 3 in both the with and without development scenarios and</p>	No

		<p>recommends possible network improvements to address same.</p> <p>The impact of the traffic from this development is proportionally small in relation to both the adjoining development and the existing traffic already on the local road network. Due to the suburban nature and proximity to the Citycity centre, a certain level of congestion is to be expected during peak times and the proposed traffic volumes are considered within the norms of a busy urban environment.</p> <p>Accordingly, I consider the applicant has demonstrated that the key transport routes in the vicinity of the site will not be congested due to or otherwise affected by the project.</p>	
<p>2.8 Are there existing sensitive land uses or community facilities (such as hospitals, schools etc) which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>There are no sensitive land uses within the vicinity of the site. Lands to the north, west and south are being development for residential use. Lands to east have the benefit of planning permission for a Primary Care Centre.</p> <p>A social and Community Infrastructure Audit was submitted with the application. I have considered this document, and I am satisfied that there would not be excessive pressure placed on community facilities (including schools) in the wider area.</p>	<p>No</p>

3. Any other factors that should be considered which could lead to environmental impacts			
3.1 Cumulative Effects: Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulative effects during the construction/ operation phase?	Yes	Existing and/ or approved planning consents in the vicinity of the site have been noted in the application documentation and associated assessments, including the EIA Screening Report. However, these developments are of a nature and scale that have been determined to not have likely significant effects on the environment. No cumulative significant effects on the area are reasonably anticipated	No
3.2 Transboundary Effects: Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No	No transboundary considerations arise.	No
3.3 Are there any other relevant considerations?	No	No other issues arise.	No
C. CONCLUSION			
No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	X	EIAR Not Required	
Real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.		EIAR Required	
D. MAIN REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS			
Having regard to: -			

1. the criteria set out in Schedule 7, in particular
 - (a) the nature and scale of the proposed development within an emerging residential area served by public infrastructure
 - (b) the absence of any significant environmental sensitivity in the vicinity.
 - (c) the location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in article 109(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)
2. the results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment submitted by the applicant, including the results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) under the SEA Directive.
3. the features and measures proposed by applicant envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant effects on the environment, including measures identified in the Construction & Environmental Management Plan, the Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan, the Operational Waste Management Plan, the Engineering Design Report, the Traffic and Transport Assessment and the Ecological Impact Assessment,

The Commission concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, and that an environmental impact assessment report is not required.

Appendix 2 - WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
ACP ref. no.	324029	Townland, address	Laherdane at White's Cross, Cork
Description of project		The proposal (as amended) includes the demolition/removal of the existing structures on site, the construction of 111 no. apartments in 3 no. blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 5 storeys and all associated site development works	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The brownfield quarried study site is dominated by recolonising and spoil/bare ground with natural features mainly limited to scrub, hedgerow and treeline features along the outer boundary. The study site is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay catchment (Kiln sub-catchment, Hydrometric Area 192). There is an unnamed watercourse located c. 50m to the west of the study site that flows in a southerly direction. It is understood that existing ground conditions at site result in surface-water run-off onto Ballyhooly Road during storm events, which likely results in run-off into the nearby unnamed watercourse too via two existing public storm drains. The unnamed watercourse appears to eventually flow into Ballincolly Stream that in turn flows into the Glen Stream, which in turn flows into the Bride (Cork City) River c. 900m downstream of the study site. The Bride (Cork City) River finally discharges into the northern channel of the River Lee, which is part of the Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper transitional waterbody. The River Lee continues 	

	<p>through the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and Lough Mahon transitional waterbodies before discharging into Cork Harbour coastal waterbody. Where the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and Lough Mahon transitional waterbodies meet, Cork Harbour SPA is also present c. 9.9km downstream of the study site. The Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper and Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower transitional waterbodies are of moderate and poor status (consecutively) and both are at risk under the Water Framework Directive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Flood Risk Assessment was included in the planning application. The site is within Flood Zone C.
Proposed surface water details	<p>Operational surface-water run-off will be collected by a new stormwater network at site that will outfall to a recently constructed storm water network on Ballyhooly Road.</p> <p>The proposed new stormwater network at site will include water attenuation features, including ones in line with adopted Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features (see MHL 2025b). In this case, such features will include proposed underground attenuation tanks with hydrobrake to allow attenuated stormwater to discharge at greenfield rates, along with green roof systems, water butts, rainwater gardens and tree pits</p>
Proposed water supply source & available capacity	<p>Public mains connection. A Confirmation of Feasibility Letter from Uisce Éireann (July 2024) indicates that a connection to the existing water supply network is feasible without infrastructure upgrade.</p>
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues	<p>Public mains connection. A Confirmation of Feasibility Letter from Uisce Éireann (July 2024) indicates that a connection to the existing foul network is feasible without infrastructure upgrade.</p>

Others?		Not applicable				
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 Waterbody	900m	BRIDE (Cork City)_020 IE_SW_19B140300	Poor	At risk	Nutrients, organic	Surface-water run-off from the site onto Ballyhooly Road during storm events, which likely results in run-off into the nearby unnamed watercourse too via two existing public storm drains. The unnamed watercourse appears to eventually flow into Ballincolly Stream that in turn flows into the Glen Stream, which in turn flows into the Bride

							(Cork City) River c. 900m downstream of the study site.
Groundwater waterbody	Underlying site	Ballinhassig East IE_SW_G_004	Good	Not at risk			Drainage
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Water body receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
1.	Surface	BRIDE (Cork City)_020 IE_SW_19B140300	Surface Water run off to unnamed stream which connects to the Bride (Cork City) River c. 900m downstream	Siltation, pH (concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard Construction Measures / Conditions including submission and compliance with CEMP	No	Screened out

3.	Ground	Ballinhassig East IE_SW_G_004	Drainage	Hydrocarbon Spillages	As above	No	Screened out
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
3.	Surface	BRIDE (Cork City)_020 IE_SW_19B140300	Surface water discharge Surface Water run off	Hydrocarbon Spillages	Surface water management plan	No	Screened out
4.	Ground	Ballinhassig East IE_SW_G_004	Drainage	Hydrocarbon Spillages	Surface water management plan	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE N/A							

Appendix C - Screening for Appropriate Assessment - Test for likely significant effects

Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics

<p>Brief description of project</p>	<p>Large-scale residential development. The proposed development (as amended at RFI stage) comprises the demolition/removal of the existing structures on site, the construction of 111 no. apartment units in 3 no. apartment blocks ranging in height from 4 to 5 storeys and all associated site development works. See Section 2 of the above planning report and Section 2.3 of the AA Screening report for further details.</p>
<p>Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms</p>	<p>The subject site with a stated area of 1.218ha comprises a brownfield quarried site that as per the AA Screening Report is dominated by recolonising and spoil/bare ground with natural features mainly limited to scrub, hedgerow and treeline features along the outer boundary. There is also an intact corrugated shed present at site which is to be removed to facilitate the development. The nearest Natura 2000 site is Cork Harbour SPA that is c. 3.6km overland from the study site boundary.</p> <p>There is an unnamed watercourse located c. 50m to the west of the study site that flows in a southerly direction. It is understood that existing ground conditions at site result in surface-water run-off onto Ballyhooly Road during storm events, which likely results in run-off into the nearby unnamed watercourse too via two existing public storm drains. The unnamed watercourse appears to eventually flow into Ballincolly Stream that in turn flows into the Glen Stream, which in turn flows into the Bride (Cork City) River c. 900m downstream of the study site. The Bride (Cork City) River finally discharges into the northern channel of the River Lee, which is part of the Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper transitional waterbody. The River Lee continues through the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and Lough Mahon transitional waterbodies before discharging into Cork Harbour coastal waterbody. Where the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower and Lough Mahon transitional waterbodies meet, Cork Harbour SPA is also present c. 9.9km downstream of the study site. The Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper and Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower transitional waterbodies are of moderate and poor status (consecutively) and both are at risk under the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>Walkovers were undertaken at the study site at various dates between 2024 and 2025 as part of Ecological Impact Assessment field assessments. While a minor infestation of immature invasive Japanese Knotweed <i>Reynoutria japonica</i> was noted at two locations within the study site in 2024, the specimens have since been removed and placed into a dedicated storage bunded bin at site for further treatment and monitoring during the upcoming plant growing season in 2025. Other invasive species noted at site included the following plants; Butterfly Bush <i>Buddleja davidii</i> and Winter Heliotrope <i>Petasites pyrenaicus</i>.</p>

Screening report	Yes
Natura Impact Statement	No
Relevant submissions	No issues / concerns have been raised in the grounds of appeal regarding appropriate assessment or potential impact of the development on European Sites.

Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model

[List European sites within **zone of influence** of project in Table and **refer** to approach taken in the AA Screening Report as relevant- there is no requirement to include long list of irrelevant sites.

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections²	Consider further in screening³ Y/N
Cork Harbour SPA		c. 3.6km overland to the southeast Discharge Points: Surface-water: c.9.9km Waste-water: > 4.0km	Surface-water Wastewater (operational phase)	Y
Great Island Channel SAC		c. 7.6km overland to the southeast Discharge Points: Surface-water: n/a	None	N

~~Waste-~~
~~water~~Wastewater: n/a

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

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
<p>Site 1: Cork Harbour SPA</p> <p>Wintering bird species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Grebe • Grey Plover • Great Crested Grebe • Lapwing • Cormorant • Dunlin • Grey Heron • Black-tailed Godwit • Shelduck • Bar-tailed Godwit • Wigeon 	<p>Direct: None</p> <p>Indirect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative impacts (temporary) on surface water/water quality due to construction related emissions including increased sedimentation and construction related pollution. • Negative impacts on surface water/water quality from contaminants (hydrocarbons<u>hydrocarbons</u> etc.) during operational phase. • Operational stage waste-<u>wastewater</u>/foul effluent will be collected by a new wastewater network at site 	<p>Construction related standard best practice environmental controls to be implemented to protect surface-water quality of the nearby unnamed watercourse.</p> <p>Implementation of a surface water drainage strategy, incorporating surface water management and SuDS in accordance with proper planning/development guidelines and the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS).</p> <p>Construction/operational run-off drainage controls are not intended to address any particular risks to other water-features, including Natura 2000 sites, downstream of the site and nearby unnamed watercourse. Such controls are proposed regardless of the downstream presence of the SPA/SAC.</p> <p>The AA Screening Report notes that water quality is not stated as an attribute/target in the conservation objectives of Cork Harbour SPA (NPWS 2014a). Therefore, no measures are specifically required to address risks to any Natura 2000 site in this case. Therefore, no significant adverse habitat loss/deterioration effects are considered likely in relation to Cork Harbour SPA via construction/operational surface-water run off drainage associated with the proposed development.</p> <p>Even though Cork City WWTP was most recently non-compliant in relation to Total Nitrogen, ambient monitoring of transitional and coastal receiving waters indicates that discharge from the WWTP does not have an observable negative impact on the WFD (Water Framework Directive) status of the receiving waters (Uisce Éireann 2024). Furthermore, the WWTP has significant capacity to accept the</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curlew • Teal • Redshank • Pintail • Black-headed Gull • Shoveler • Common Gull • Red breasted Merganser • Lesser Black-backed Gull • Oystercatcher • Golden Plover <p>Breeding bird species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Tern <p>Habitat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetlands 	<p>that will connect into the existing public foul sewer network for treatment at Cork City WWTP, with the eventual discharge of treated effluent into Lough Mahon transitional waterbody where a section of Cork Harbour SPA is >4km downstream of the WWTP discharge point</p>	<p>organic loading of c. 308 PE from the proposed development (where remaining organic capacity is >115k PE; see Uisce Éireann 2024); this has also been confirmed by Irish Water’s pre-connection enquiry response that the proposed foul connection can be facilitated. Therefore, no significant adverse effects regarding indirect habitat loss or deterioration of Cork Harbour SPA arising from waste-waterwastewater associated with the proposed development via WWTP discharge are deemed likely in this case.</p>
<p>N</p>	<p>Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): Y/N</p>	
<p>N</p>	<p>If None, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects?</p>	
<p>No</p>	<p>Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*</p>	

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 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.