



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-500410-WC-25

Development

Construction of a dwelling house and a garage and all associated siteworks.

Location

Killangal, Castlehaven, Skibbereen, Co. Cork

Planning Authority

West Cork County Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

255890

Applicant(s)

Ian Santry & Denise O'Donovan

Type of Application

Permission

Planning Authority Decision

Grant Permission + Conditions

Type of Appeal

Third Party Normal Planning Appeal

Appellant(s)

Barbara O'Regan

Observer(s)

None

Date of Site Inspection

9th April 2026

Inspector

Matthew McRedmond

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site is 0.32ha in area and is located in the rural townland of Killangal, approximately 1.5km northwest of Castletownshend, County Cork. The site is located to the southeast of local road L8258 and is accessed directly from public road L82581 that bounds the site to the northeast.
- 1.2. The site is located within an agricultural field with a residential dwelling approximately 70m to the northeast side of the local road and a dwelling to the south, also accessed off the L82581 local road (the appellant's property).
- 1.3. The site is generally regular in shape with existing ground levels rising from the road, into the site. The area is generally characterised by agricultural fields with interspersed agricultural dwellings.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought to construct a new dwelling, domestic garage, new vehicular entrance, new wastewater treatment system and all associated site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. The Planning Authority granted permission for the proposed development on 6th November 2025, subject to 8no. standard conditions.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The Local Authority planning report had regard to the location of the site, planning history, national and local policy and to the referral responses and submissions made. Their assessment included the following:

- Information submitted including applicant's work as an agri sales representative, his own beef farming landholding and indications that he has lived in the area for more than 7 years, satisfies the criteria of Category D of RP 5-5 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022.

- Proposal is of modest scale and reflects local rural design. Also benefiting from natural stone cladding proposed. Subject site was considered preferable to a separate site considered for this application. A visual assessment of ridge poles erected on site confirmed suitability.
- Proposal is more than 90m from 2 objectors houses.
- Comprehensive landscape plan required.
- No objection to the proposal from the Area Engineer.
- Concerns in relation to groundworks on the applicant landholding are outside the confines of the subject site. These are related to cowpaths and new agricultural entrance which are exempted development.
- Grant of permission recommended.
 - I note unsolicited further information was submitted by the applicant in response to the third-party submissions received, which the Planning Authority accepted. This included details of landholdings and the applicant's involvement in farming activities including herd number, and was submitted on the 30th October 2026. The Planner's Report makes reference to this information in their assessment of the proposal.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- **Area Engineer** – Recommended a grant of permission.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

3.3.1. None.

3.4. Third Party Observations

3.4.1. There are two submission on file. The main issues highlighted are as follows:

- Concerns in relation to noise, loss of privacy, loss of sunrise views and environmental impacts including loss of hedgerows.
- Unauthorised entrance and gravel path constructed on site which have led to considerable distress and disturbance.
- Inadequate sightlines proposed from the application site entrance.

- Issues with applicant's rural housing need in line with RP 5-5 which is contrary to settlement policy which seeks to consolidate development within established settlement boundaries.
- Environmental risk from proposed wastewater treatment plant. Location of percolation area not given. Proposal should show full compliance with EPA Code of Practice. Details of maintenance and long term functionality should also be provided.
- Residential amenity and visual impact as a result of the proposal is unacceptable. Long term views that have been available for many years will be diminished due to the proposal. Construction impacts also a concern.
- Alternative sites for residential dwelling available to the applicant and these should be utilised to avoid adverse effects on neighbouring residents. Proposal is not well sited and is contrary to the principles of good rural design as set out in the Rural Housing Guidelines.

Applicant Response

3.4.2. The applicant provided a response to the submissions on file by way of unsolicited further information, which is on the file. The applicant response to the submission may be summarised as follows:

- Applicant has not carried out any unauthorised works, which are on his Uncle's land.
- Details of applicant's long term residence and involvement in farming community including his own her number and involvement in his grand father's farm.
- Photos to illustrate no loss of privacy or light.
- Letter from employer.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1. There is evidence of one planning application at this site under Ref. 25/479 for a dwelling. This application was withdrawn prior to a decision.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. National and Regional Policy

- 5.1.1. A central aim of national policy (National Planning Framework/NPF) is to recognise the role of the rural countryside as a lived-in landscape and focusing on the requirements of rural economies and rural communities based on “agriculture, forestry, tourism, and rural enterprise while at the same time avoiding ribbon and over-spill development from urban areas and protecting environmental qualities”. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) reflects the NPF position.
- 5.1.2. Chapter 5 of the National Planning Framework (NPF) is entitled ‘Planning for Diverse Rural Places’ and it sets out to Strengthening Ireland’s rural fabric and supporting rural communities.
- 5.1.3. National Policy Objective 28 states the following:

Ensure, in providing for the development of rural housing, that a distinction is made between areas under urban influence, i.e., within the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment, and elsewhere:

- In rural areas under urban influence, facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area and siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements;*
- In rural areas elsewhere, facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.*

5.2. Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines

- 5.2.1. Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) are relevant. The guidelines aim for proper planning of the countryside and a fair balance between accommodating housing needs of rural community and managing areas of acute development pressure.

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

- 5.3.1. The NBAP includes five strategic objectives aimed at addressing existing challenges and new and emerging issues associated with biodiversity loss. Section 59B(1) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 (as amended) requires the 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.

5.4. **Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028**

- 5.4.1. The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 is the statutory plan for the area. The site is designated as “Tourism and Rural Diversification Area”. Chapter 5 sets out the policies required for the continued sustainable development of the rural county.
- 5.4.2. Objective RP 5-2 relates to rural generated housing need and aims to sustain and renew established rural communities, by facilitating those with a rural generated housing need to live within their rural community.

The Plan then goes on to define the various rural area types under Section 5.4 of Volume 1 of the Plan.

Rural Area Type

- 5.4.3. In terms of rural settlement policy, the site is located within the ‘Tourism and Rural Diversification Area’. The Development Plan states (Section 5.4.5) that these rural and coastal parts of the county exhibit characteristics such as evidence of considerable pressure for rural housing, particularly for holiday and second home

development. They are more distant from the major urban areas and associated pressure from urban generated housing, have higher housing vacancy rates and evidence of a relatively stable population compared to weaker parts of the county. They have higher levels of environmental and landscape sensitivity and a weaker economic structure with significant opportunities for tourism and rural diversification.

Objective RP 5-5: Tourism and Rural Diversification Area

5.4.4. *This rural area has experienced high housing construction rates and above average housing vacancy rates which has led to concerns that a higher demand for holiday and second homes is depriving genuine rural communities the opportunity to meet their own rural generated housing needs. Therefore, in order to make provision for the genuine rural generated housing needs of persons from the local community based on their social and / or economic links to a particular local rural area and to recognise the significant opportunities for tourism and rural diversification that exist in this rural area, it is an objective that applicants must demonstrate that their proposal complies with one of the following categories of housing need:*

- (a) Farmers, their sons and daughters who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the family farm.*
- (b) Persons taking over the ownership and running of a farm on a full-time basis, (or part – time basis where it can be demonstrated that it is the predominant occupation), who wish to build a first home on the farm for their permanent occupation, where no existing dwelling is available for their own use. The proposed dwelling must be associated with the working and active management of the farm.*
- (c) Other persons working full time in farming (or part – time basis where it can be demonstrated that it is the predominant occupation), forestry, inland waterway, marine related occupations or rural based sustainable tourism, for a period of over three years, in the local rural area where they work and in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.*
- (d) Persons who have spent a substantial period of their lives (i.e. over seven years), living in the local rural area in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.*

- (e) *Persons whose predominant occupation is farming / natural resource related, for a period of over three years, in the local rural area where they work and in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.*
- (f) *Persons whose permanent employment is essential to the delivery of social and community services and intrinsically linked to a particular rural area for a period of over three consecutive years and who can demonstrate an economic and social need to live in the local rural area where they work, within which it is proposed to build a first home for their permanent occupation.*
- (g) *Returning emigrants who spent a substantial period of their lives (i.e. over seven years), living in the local rural area in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation, who now wish to return to reside near other immediate family members (mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter or guardian), to care for elderly immediate family members, to work locally, or to retire. It is not necessary for the applicant to show that they have already returned to Cork, provided they can show that they genuinely intend taking up permanent residence.*

5.4.5. Other relevant objectives contained in the County Development Plan include the following:

- Objective RP 5-22 – Design and landscaping of new dwelling houses in rural areas.
- Objective 5-23 – Servicing single houses in rural areas.
- Objective RP 5-25 – Occupancy conditions required for rural housing permissions.
- Objective GI 14-9 – Landscape, seeks to protect the visual and scenic amenities of County Cork and protecting the existing environment.
- Objective GI 14-13 – Protect the character of views and prospects on scenic routes, with Route S83 located 650m north of the subject site and which relates to the road between Castletownsend and Rineen to Union Hall.
- Objective 16-21 – Design and landscaping of new buildings that require the respect of character, pattern and tradition of existing places.

5.5. **Natural Heritage Designations**

- 5.5.1. The subject site is not located within any designated site. The closest Natura 2000 site is Castletownhend SAC (Site Code:001547), approx. 1.6km to the east. The Moyross Wood SAC (Site Code:001070) is located approximately 5.2km to the northeast, the Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA (Site Code:004156) is located 5.3km south and the Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs SAC (Site Code:000097) is located 6km southwest.

6.0 EIA Screening

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

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

- 7.1.1. 1no. third-party appeal has been submitted against the decision of Cork County Council to grant permission for the proposed development.
- 7.1.2. The grounds of the appeal can be summarised as follows:

Introduction

- Proposal would materially and adversely impact the established rural environment with consequences for residential amenity, visual character, environmental protection and rural settlement policy. The proposal would cause unacceptable levels of intrusion, loss of privacy, overlooking and loss of rural amenity to the appellant's home.
- The proposal should be invalidated due to insufficient information submitted by the applicant, including adequate drawings. Development description is not specific. Use of existing agricultural entrance as a new domestic entrance requires change of use and appropriate dimensions and description in

application documentation. No contiguous elevation provided which is contrary to Article 23(1)(d) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

- Concerns raised at application stage have not been adequately addressed in the PA assessment of the proposal.

Breach of Hedgerow Protection and Unauthorised Works

- Alleged unauthorised removal of hedgerow during the closed period as set out in Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976, to create new vehicular entrance to the subject site. This is subject to enforcement file SKB25020.
- Planning Authority erred in accepting this as an agricultural entrance as it aligns with the residential entrance now permitted.
- Due to the narrow winding nature of the local road, the proposed access is not safe and does not provide adequate visibility and was not appropriately assessed by the PA.
- Removal of topsoil to create a gravel path was done without planning permission and without an assessment of the impacts on wastewater disposal and groundwater. The PA accepted these works as a 'cow path' without any supporting evidence.
- All of these issues together constitute a troubling pattern of unauthorised activity at this location, with little regard for environmental protection and regulatory compliance. There is little assurance that the applicants would adhere to any planning conditions.
- The PA assessment did not adequately engage with the appellant's original submission that outlined these issues. This is a fundamental flaw with the PA assessment and the decision to grant should therefore be overturned.

Conflict with Settlement Strategy

- New housing should be directed into designated settlements as per the County Development Plan (DP). Volume 5 of the DP aims to consolidate the village of Castletownshend. Noted that site is located within a Tourism and Rural Diversification Area, which requires protection.

- The proposal is well removed from Castletownsend and associated services and is contrary to the consolidation of urban form and protection of landscape character. Consideration of wider policy context of preventing urban sprawl to rural areas is not provided in PA assessment. The decision should therefore be overturned.

Contrary to Rural Housing Policy

- Noted that Objective RP 5-5 applies to 'Tourism and Rural Diversification Area' and rural housing need is restricted to those with a genuine need for housing in the rural area. This rural need is not demonstrated in the subject application. Gifting of the site from an uncle and reference to previous lack of consent under Ref. 24/486 is provided by the appellant as evidence that rural need is not demonstrated.
- The applicant's occupation as an agri sales representative is not a supported profession for rural housing need and claims of beef farming on an 11.5 hectare landholding is not substantiated.
- Rural housing guidelines require a demonstrable social, economic, or familial necessity to develop rural lands for housing, and this has not been evidenced. Objective RP 5-5 and requirements of the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005) have therefore not been complied with.

Wastewater Treatment and Environmental Risk

- Wastewater Treatment Plant presents risks to groundwater and public health if not managed in strict accordance with EPA Code of Practice.
- It has not been demonstrated effectively that the proposed wastewater treatment system will operate effectively over the long term, or that it will be environmentally compliant.
- The proposal therefore poses an unacceptable risk to environmental quality and groundwater and should be refused permission.

Residential Amenity and Visual Impact

- Proposal would be located to the front of the appellant's home, resulting in a profound and permanent loss of visual amenity, privacy and long-established

rural character. Proposal would also disturb long standing views and introduce a visually obtrusive built form.

- Appellant's property is not shown on submitted drawings which is contrary to Article 23 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, to allow a proper assessment of a proposal including overshadowing, overlooking and visual impact.
- The unauthorised access road has already compromised the appellant's privacy and tranquillity due to increased vehicular activity, noise and disturbance. The cumulative effect of the unauthorised works with the proposed dwelling would fundamentally alter the residential environment and rural amenity at this location. Section 14.2.11 of the DP requires the protection of landscape character, scenic quality and rural residential amenity.
- Construction impacts including rock breaking would have an unacceptable impact on the appellant's home and their permitted short term tourist accommodation, due to noise, dust and vibration.
- The above matters would cause serious injury to residential amenity, diminish visual and landscape character and result in unacceptable loss of privacy and tranquillity. Permission should therefore be refused.

Appeal Conclusion

- Decision of Cork County Council should be overturned for the reasons outlined and therefore permission should be refused.

7.2. Applicant Response

- 7.2.1. The applicant provided a response to the appeal that dismisses alleged inaccuracies with the following main points provided:

Invalidation Issues

- Appeal site does not bound the property of the third-party appellant. This is a deliberate attempt to mislead. The site is an average of 42.5m from the appellants boundary and proposed dwelling is 89 metres from appellants' house. Applicant's uncles land is in between.

- Site is in an agricultural setting with vacant land east and west, so a contiguous elevation is irrelevant.
- Proposed entrance is per 'TII Publications geometric design of junctions', with 1m high stone wall, aco drain and 90m visibility.

Hedgerow and Cow Path

- Cow Path and entrance works are by Niall Cahalane, not the applicant. This alleged unauthorised work was addressed through the PA and was deemed exempted development.
- The agricultural entrance created by Niall Cahalane does not align with the proposed vehicular entrance, they are c.20m apart and are nothing to do with each other.

Wastewater Treatment

- Proposed wastewater treatment system is fully compliant with EPA standards as per submitted documents. Installation and commissioning can be conditioned to be certified within 3 months of installation. Ongoing future maintenance can be ensured by entering into a servicing and maintenance agreement with the supplier, to ensure environmental and residential amenity is maintained.

Housing Need and Eligibility

- Applicant has lived 1,100m from the subject site their whole life. Documentary evidence also provided in relation to farming activity of applicant including invoices, bills, machinery ownership, herd numbers and details and letters from local councillor.
- Previous application withdrawn due to health and personal circumstances.
- Subject site was considered as most appropriate to minimise impacts on scenic route. An appropriate single storey design is proposed.

Conclusion

- There is no rock breaking, overlooking or loss of privacy or unauthorised works as part of the subject proposal. The proposed sightlines, access and

wastewater treatment accord with the standards of Cork County Council and permission should therefore be granted permission.

7.3. Planning Authority Response

7.3.1. No response on file.

7.4. Observations

7.4.1. None.

8.0 Assessment

8.1. I have read the grounds of appeal and have reviewed the file contents having due regard to the issues arising, the assessment of the Local Authority and their ultimate decision to grant permission and the provisions of the current Cork County Development Plan and relevant statutory guidance. I have inspected the site and have regard to relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance in my consideration of the appeal., I consider that the main issues in this appeal are as follows:

- Preliminary Matters
- Principle of Development and Compliance with Rural Housing Strategy.
- Sightlines
- Design and Amenity Impacts
- Wastewater Treatment System

8.2. Preliminary Matters

8.2.1. The third-party appeal raises a number of procedural issues generally in relation to the application. These issues relate to the description of the development, the planning status of the agricultural entrance and farm path, unauthorised removal of hedgerow and perceived non-compliance with future permissions and associated conditions.

8.2.2. Issues associated with validation of applications, enforcement issues and provision of appropriate information, as raised by the appellant are noted. However, any issues with the validation of applications, enforcement and compliance with permissions on

site are a matter for the Planning Authority. Validation and enforcement are not matters for the Commission and I do not propose to address these issues in my assessment of this appeal.

8.3. Principle of Development and Compliance with Rural Housing Policy

- 8.3.1. The third-party appeal sets out a number of issues with the proposed development, including the principle of rural housing need based on being contrary to settlement policy with regard to consolidating the established settlement of Castletownshend, and that the applicant has not provided satisfactory evidence to live within the rural area. While this is not the primary issue raised in the appeal, I consider this to be a fundamental issue to the acceptability of the proposal before other more detailed design issues should be assessed.
- 8.3.2. The site is located in an area designated as “Tourism and Rural Diversification” within the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028. The development plan states that this area should be protected from inappropriate development that does not comply with acceptable planning and sustainable development standards. I note Objective RP 5-5 of the development plan that requires applicants to demonstrate their compliance with one of the categories for housing need. The full text of the objective is contained in section 5.4 of my report above and the categories includes persons taking over the running of a farm and other persons working full-time in farming (or part time where it can be demonstrated that it is the predominant occupation) and landowners including their children who wish to build their first home on a landholding.
- 8.3.3. I note part RP 5-5(d) that states the following in relation to local need:
- (d) Persons who have spent a substantial period of their lives (i.e. over seven years), living in the local rural area in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent residence.*
- 8.3.4. I note the contents of form SF1 as submitted as part of the application. The applicant has indicated that he lived in the family home in a townland 1.1km to the east of the subject site for a period exceeding 7 years. He has also indicated he attended national school at Castletownshend National school, which is located 500m south of the site, has had involvement with the local GAA club and works part time on his own farmholding of 11.5hectares which he is renting.

- 8.3.5. Additional information submitted with the appeal also includes details of the involvement of Applicant 1 in the operation of his grandparent's farm and I note the subject site is being gifted by his uncle to the applicants. Having reviewed the documentation submitted, I am of the view that the applicant qualifies for consideration of a dwelling at this location as a person who has spent a substantial period of their life in the local rural area, with attendance at the local school from 2001-2009, although no dates are provided for residence at his parent's house, I am satisfied that the applicant has lived in the area for a period exceeding 7 years, given his time in the local national school. I note the Planning Authority were satisfied with the information submitted in relation to Part 5-5 (d) of the objective. I do note the years of residence have not been indicated on the planning application form on file, however the appeal response indicates the applicant has lived in the locality all his life, which I consider acceptable given the other details in relation to farming activities provided.
- 8.3.6. In relation to other parts of Objective RP 5-5 that may be relevant, I note the applicant included a letter from his grandmother to note his involvement in their farm and 100% responsibility for farm operations, however no reference is provided in relation to taking over ownership and running of the farm, so part (a) of objective RP 5-5 does not apply.
- 8.3.7. The application and appeal include additional documentary evidence to support the applicant's assertion that they are involved in farming in the local area. I therefore give consideration to Part (c) of objective RP 5-5 that relates to 'other persons working full time in farming (or part time basis where it can be demonstrated that it is the predominant occupation...for a period of over three years, in the local rural area where they work and in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation'.
- 8.3.8. The appeal includes information including invoices from January 2023 for AI services, a letter from Gortatlea Mart, Tralee Co. Kerry that indicates they have been trading with them since 2015, and additional photographic evidence is submitted of the applicant's involvement with agricultural shows and day to day running of farm operations. I also note the letter from the applicant's accountant that states 60% of their income is from their sole trade farming activities. A map has been provided

showing the location of the 11.5 hectares he currently farms and they are all local to the subject site.

- 8.3.9. The applicant has adequately demonstrated they have lived in the area for a period exceeding 7 years, which is compliant with Objective RP 5-5(d). I am satisfied that he has illustrated appropriate connections to the area and a rural generated housing need in regard to his own farming operations, as well as supporting his family in relation to farming activities. I further note the submissions of the applicant's grandmother that indicates a reliance on the applicant in relation to farm activities, which further supports the rural generated need. I am therefore satisfied that the applicant complies with Objective 5-5(d) as he is from the local area and 5-5(c), as he operates his own farming activities in the locality.
- 8.3.10. Having regard to the above, the applicant has demonstrated their compliance with the rural housing policy of the development plan, and I consider that the proposal constitutes a rural generated housing need as submitted by the applicant and as required under Objective 5-5 of the County Development Plan.

8.4. Sightlines

- 8.4.1. The appeal raises concerns in relation to the geometry and nature of the local road and the ability to provide adequate sightlines, which gives rise to road safety concerns.
- 8.4.2. The applicants submit that sightlines of 90 metres are provided and the proposed access junction is designed as per "TII publications geometric design of junctions".
- 8.4.3. It is proposed to construct a new entrance at the eastern boundary of the site with access onto the L82581 Local Road. A layout drawing is submitted with the applicant's appeal response showing new splayed entrance and works including the lowering of the bank to 1m and removal of trees/hedgerow along the site's roadside boundary to provide sightlines to the north and south.
- 8.4.4. I note for roads with a design speed of 60km/h as per The Transport Infrastructure Ireland Rural Road Link Design Standard DN-GEO-03031, 90m sightlines are required on 60km/h roads with 70m desirable one step below the minimum. These sightlines of 90m northwest and 70m southeast are provided as shown on the submitted site layout plan PL01. Existing sod and stone front boundary ditches are to

be lowered where necessary and vegetation maintained at a height no more than 1m.

- 8.4.5. Having visited the site, I note that the L82581 is a narrow road that has a relatively straight alignment along the section near the site. Both traffic volumes and speeds are low. The speed limit on the public road is 60km/h. On my visit to the site and owing to the c.4m width on this 2-way road, I noted the traffic speeds to be less than this, although I make this observation without the benefit of a specific traffic speed survey.
- 8.4.6. TII Publication Geometric Design of Junctions DN-GEO-03060 (2023) states that a design speed of 60km requires a Y distance sightline of 90m to the near edge of the road measured from its intersection with the centre line of the minor road measured from a drivers eye (1-2m) and that a relaxation of 'x' distance to 2m can be applied at lightly trafficked local roads. For a design speed of 50km/hr, a visibility of 70m is required.
- 8.4.7. I note on drawing 'Site Layout & Site Section A-A' submitted by the applicant, sightlines of 70m southeast and 90m northwest from a point setback 2.4m from the roadside are indicated. I further note that the proposed sightlines will require hedgerow removal and management. I am satisfied that any hedgerow removal can be appropriately mitigated with replacement native planting and that an additional 'y' distance beyond 70m can be achieved when the 2m 'x' distance is applied, instead of the 2.4m used by the applicant.
- 8.4.8. I note the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan at Objective TM 12-8 (d) that seeks to ensure that all new vehicular accesses are designed to appropriate standards of visibility to ensure the safety of other road users. I also note the Area Engineer report on the proposal and their satisfaction with the sightlines proposed, having noted that vegetation should be maintained.
- 8.4.9. TII publication 'DN-GEO-3031-10 – Rural Road Link Design' requires a minimum sightline of 90 metres for safe stopping distances at a design speed of 60km/h. I also note the TII Publication allows up to a 2-step relaxation in applicable safe stopping distances if certain road design parameters are provided. Relaxations include where the site is remote from a junction, remote from the site of other relaxations in design standards and where road speeds are reduced due to local geometry including uphill

sections of road. The minimum safe stopping distance permissible at 60km/h is therefore 50m.

8.4.10. I am satisfied that due to the low speeds, lightly trafficked and unmarked nature of the road, that sightlines of 90m at a relaxed 2m 'x' distance are reasonable and that they can be achieved at the entrance and that any required works are in the control of the applicant.

8.4.11. In conclusion, based on my own assessment of sightlines above, I consider that the proposed new entrance can be accommodated without resulting in traffic hazard or obstruction of road users and do not consider that a refusal of permission on the grounds of traffic safety is merited in this instance.

8.5. Design and Amenity Impacts

8.5.1. The appeal raises concerns in relation to the visual impact of the proposal, the impact of hedgerow removal on the character and biodiversity of the area, and the impact on privacy, that would consequently impact on their residential amenity.

8.5.2. I note the application site is not located within a high value landscape designation. Objective RP 5-22 encourages new dwelling design that respects the character, pattern and tradition of existing places, materials and built forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape. This objective includes the retention of existing trees and hedgerows. Objective GI 14-9(e) reiterates this requirement.

8.5.3. The appeal raises concern in relation to the potential for obstruction of views, private amenity, disturbance and disruption of rural tranquility and submits that an alternative site should be used for the proposal to avoid visual and residential amenity impacts.

8.5.4. I note the front elevation of the proposed dwelling is facing southeast, with the rear of the dwelling facing in a northwest direction and the proposal is sited within the gradient of a gentle hill that rises from east to west within the application site and subject agricultural field. As the proposed dwelling will be set into a sloping site, and some cut and fill will be required. I consider the hillside location and the proposed planting with post and wire fence along the site boundary will mitigate the visual impact of the proposal from the wider area and assimilate the proposal into the character of the landscape.

- 8.5.5. The existing roadside, eastern boundary comprises a sod and stone ditch with mature trees. Hedgerow removal and reduction to 1m in height is required in order to achieve appropriate sightlines. Objective GI 14-9 of the Development Plan discourages proposals that necessitate the removal of extensive amounts of trees and hedgerows. Although the applicant submits that the existing agricultural entrance and the proposed domestic entrance are separate, the existing entrance is not shown on submitted plans. I have reviewed the submitted drawings and conclude from my site visit that the existing agricultural entrance and the proposed entrance are generally in the same location. Hedgerow removal has therefore already taken place to at least partially provide the new entrance. I recommend a condition that the applicant would replace the existing trees and hedgerows that are removed, within the site boundaries, which would allow sightlines to be achieved and for details of the agricultural entrance in relation to the site boundaries to be provided on a site layout plan and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. I am satisfied that extensive native hedgerow boundary planting can also be conditioned as shown on the submitted plans and this would lead to an overall net gain in relation to native biodiversity at this location. In this regard I note the proposal to include approximately 160m of native hedgerow planting at the boundaries of the site, which I find acceptable.
- 8.5.6. I note the Planning Authority are satisfied that the removal and replacement of hedgerow at this location is acceptable. The removal of c.30m of hedgerow is not significant in the wider context of this rural area and once replaced with appropriate species, can add beneficially to native hedgerow in the locality. This would be consistent with the requirements of Objective RP 5-22 as it provides for the appropriate landscaping and screen planting of the proposal.
- 8.5.7. I note the submitted site layout plan at 1:500 scale is in accordance with the requirements of Article 23 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and adjoining properties at this scale are not shown on the submitted plans. I note from my review of submitted plans and GIS data, a separation distance of more than 90m from the proposed dwelling to the existing dwelling to the southeast. I further note the subject proposal includes mitigating replacement planting that will provide a visual buffer towards the southeast as I referenced above. The extensive landscaping plan submitted by the applicant will integrate the proposal

into the rural area and provide for additional native planting. The proposed single storey design and native stone cladding will assist in integrating the subject proposal into the landscape. This is consistent with Objective GI 14-9 and can be further ensured by inclusion of an appropriate condition attached to any grant of permission. I am satisfied that the proposed dwelling is a sufficient distance from surrounding dwellings to remove any possibility of significant residential amenity impacts and will not pose a risk to the visual and environmental integrity of the landscape character of the area.

- 8.5.8. The potential for construction impacts is also noted in the appeal, with regard to rock breaking and other disruptions. I am satisfied that the subject site is adequately separated from other properties so that it would not give rise to significant or unacceptable impacts. Construction works would be temporary and short term in nature and can be appropriately managed through construction mitigation works. The applicant has confirmed there will be no requirement for rock breaking as submitted in the appeal although my review of ground conditions at this location does indicate sandstone, shale bedrock outcrop. The trial holes indicated gravelly silt to a depth of 2.1m with no presence of bedrock. Final details of construction methodology can be appropriately provided in a standard construction management plan to be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development and I therefore do not consider construction impacts to be an appropriate grounds for refusal in this instance.

8.1. Wastewater Disposal

- 8.1.1. The proposed dwelling is intended to be served by an onsite wastewater treatment system (WWTS). The relevant guidance for assessment purposes is the EPA Code of Practice (2021) (CoP) which applies to site assessments and associated wastewater treatment installations with P.E. ≤10 carried out on or after 7th June 2021. The County Development Plan includes relevant policies under Policy Objective WM 11-5 'Discharges in unsewered Areas' and RP 5-23 'Servicing Single Houses' to ensure compliance with this standard.
- 8.1.2. I note the third-party appeal submits that the proposal will have an undue impact on the environment if the wastewater treatment system is not adequately maintained and serviced at regular intervals.

- 8.1.3. The Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) mapping confirms the appeal site is in an area with a locally important aquifer. The groundwater vulnerability is described as X (Extreme). The submitted Site Characterisation form notes a soil type of 'shallow well drained mineral, over tilled derived from Devonian and Carboniferous sandstones and shales and bedrock outcrop/subcrop. GSI Online mapping confirms this status. The vulnerability rating also suggests that bedrock may be close to the surface. Areas with an Extreme vulnerability and located on a locally important aquifer require a R2¹ response as set out in Table E1 of the EPA CoP. For R2¹ the depth of subsoil over bedrock should be given specific attention and I note the observation of 2.1m of gravelly silt in the trial hole inspections on site and a DWWTS is acceptable subject to normal good practice in these circumstances.
- 8.1.4. The Site Characterisation Form (SCF) states that existing land use is a grazing meadow and that ground conditions are good, firm underfoot. This is consistent with my site visit and visual assessment of the land in April 2026.
- 8.1.5. The EPA CoP 2021 requires that a trial hole should have a minimum depth of 2.1m. The submitted site characterisation form confirms this depth was reached. There was no evidence of mottling, bedrock or water ingress within the trial hole, which suggest the water table and bedrock is greater than 2.1m below ground level.
- 8.1.6. Section 3.2 of the SCF shows that the surface and subsurface presoak tests were carried out within a 24 hour period (08:30, 3rd July 2025 to 13.35, 3rd July 2025).
- 8.1.7. This is within the 4-to-24-hour period and other methodologies recommended by the CoP to be followed as part of the pre-soak prior to the percolation test procedure. I am therefore satisfied that the true percolation values were recorded in the Site Characterisation Form. The recorded gravelly silt clay is generally accepted as well aerated and provides good drainage. T and P values are given as <210 minutes per 25mm.
- 8.1.8. Table 6.4 identifies a range of options for a DWWTS, with a percolation value above 3. The subject site is 3.75, which is acknowledged as fast. The SCF notes that due to area constraints, the site is unsuitable for a conventional septic tank and percolation area. A packaged treatment plant and soil polishing filter is therefore proposed. This falls within the acceptable systems as set out in Table 6.4 of the EPA CoP and would be an underlying gravity discharge system.

- 8.1.9. The applicant response notes that maintenance issues as raised by the third party appellant can be addressed by certification to be signed off for written agreement with the PA, within three months of installation/first occupation and a maintenance agreement can be entered into with the installer. Both of these can be agreed by way of condition. I accept this rationale and that individual maintenance is the responsibility of the occupier for residential amenity and environmental protection that is separately regulated.
- 8.1.10. I note the third party concerns in relation to proximity to their property boundary, and associated implications for property enjoyment. I have had regard to Objective HE 16-9 in this regard. The proposed percolation area is located over 80m from the property boundary to the southeast. Table 6.2 of the EPA CoP requires a separation distance of 3m from property boundaries, 4m from slope break/cuts and 7m from a neighbouring dwelling, all of which are complied with.
- 8.1.11. The outcome is a system that is designed to EPA CoP standards and that reduces the potential risk of contamination occurring and discharge of untreated, or partially treated wastewater, to groundwater and/or surface water receptors. I therefore do not accept the appeal rationale that the subject proposal would result in impacts on the environment. The subject proposal is adequately set back from property boundaries, provides for adequate public health and environmental protection and therefore does not contravene policy objective HE 16-9.
- 8.1.12. I note the third party appeal submits that the applicant has not complied with Article 22 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 in terms of the details provided on wastewater treatment. The applicant has provided information and details in relation to the proposed system, in line with statutory requirements and I am satisfied there is sufficient information before me to adjudicate on the proposal. In summary, I consider that the surface and sub-surface test results can be relied upon in this case and that the applicant has sufficiently demonstrated the proposed method of wastewater treatment is in accordance with the EPA CoP 2021. This is consistent with the Rural Housing Guidelines. I consider the subject proposal to be consistent with the proper planning of the countryside and will protect human health and the environment by providing a system that is consistent with EPA Code of Practice guidelines.

8.2. The proposed development would therefore be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and, for this reason, I recommend that permission be granted.

8.3. **Assessment Conclusion**

8.3.1. Having regard to the foregoing and having reviewed the issues raised in the single third-party appeal I am satisfied that the applicant has illustrated appropriate rural housing need, adequate sightlines can be provided, replacement native hedgerow planting is proposed and the subject proposal is consistent with the rural character of the area without unduly impacting on existing levels of amenity, as well as providing a wastewater treatment system consistent with EPA Code of practice Guidelines. I therefore recommend that permission is granted.

9.0 **AA Screening**

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

9.1.2. Please refer to the attached appendices for detailed Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment.

10.0 **Water Framework Directive**

10.1.1. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives based on the mitigation measures, drainage arrangements and management of surface water as set out in the proposed development. Please see WFD Assessment attached at Appendix 3 of this report.

11.0 Recommendation

- 11.1.1. I recommend that permission for the development be granted for the following reasons and considerations.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 12.1.1. Having regard to the objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, the nature, scale and design of the development which is consistent with Objectives 5-22, and GI 14-9(e), and the rural generated housing need illustrated by the applicant, which is consistent with Objective 5-5(c) & (d) of the Development Plan, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not adversely impact the character of the area or be seriously injurious to the visual or residential amenities of the area, and would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience, and environmental quality. It is considered that the proposed development would therefore be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

13.0 Conditions

1.	The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further plans and particulars received by the planning authority on the 30th day of October 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.	(a) The proposed dwelling when completed shall be first occupied as the place of residence of the applicant, members of the applicant's immediate family or their heirs and shall remain so occupied for a period of seven

	years thereafter, unless consent is granted by the planning authority for its occupation by other persons who belong to the same category of housing need as the applicant. (b) Before development commences, the applicant shall enter into an Agreement with the planning authority, pursuant to Section 47 of the 2000 Planning and Development Act providing for the terms of this occupancy requirement. (c) Within two months of the occupation of the proposed dwelling, the applicant shall submit to the planning authority, a written statement of the confirmation of the first occupation of the dwelling in accordance with paragraph (a) and the date of such occupation. (d) This condition shall not affect the sale of the dwelling by a mortgagee in possession or by any person deriving title from such a sale. Reason: To ensure that the proposed dwelling is used to meet the applicant's stated housing needs and that development in this rural area is appropriately restricted to meeting essential local need in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3.	Details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed development, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.
4.	Details in relation to the design and construction of the proposed entrance to the site shall comply with the detailed requirements of the planning authority for such works and services. Prior to commencement of development, drawings and details in accordance with this condition shall be submitted for the written agreement of the planning authority. Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and visual amenity.
5.	The proposed garage/ shed building shall not be sold, let or otherwise transferred or conveyed as an independent building, save as part of the

	dwelling. The garage shall be for domestic use only and shall not be used for human habitation or for any commercial purpose. No wc shall be within the building and the proposed wc shall be omitted and this floor area shall be used as part of the garage. Reason: In the interests of clarity and orderly development.
6.	The site shall be landscaped in accordance with a comprehensive scheme of landscaping, details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This scheme shall include the following: (a) A plan to scale of not less than 1:500 showing – (i) Existing trees and hedgerows, specifying which are proposed for retention as features of the site landscaping and which are being replaced (ii) The measures to be put in place for the protection of relevant landscape features during the construction period (iii) The species, variety, number, size and locations of all proposed trees and shrubs [which shall comprise predominantly native species such as mountain ash, birch, willow, sycamore, pine, oak, hawthorn, holly, hazel, beech or alder] [which shall not include prunus species] (iv) Details of screen planting [which shall not include cupressocyparis x leylandii] (v) Details of roadside/street planting [which shall not include prunus species] (c) A timescale for implementation All planting shall be adequately protected from damage until established. Any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the completion of the development, shall be replaced within the next planting season with

	others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority. Reason: In order to screen the development and assimilate it into the surrounding rural landscape, in the interest of visual amenity.
7.	(a) The septic tank/wastewater treatment system hereby permitted shall be installed in accordance with the recommendations included within the site characterisation report submitted with this application and shall be in accordance with the standards set out in the document entitled “Code of Practice - Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) ” – Environmental Protection Agency, 2021. (b) Treated effluent from the septic tank/ wastewater treatment system shall be discharged to a percolation area/ polishing filter which shall be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the document entitled “Code of Practice - Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10)” – Environmental Protection Agency, 2021. (c) Within three months of the first occupation of the dwelling, the developer shall submit a report to the planning authority from a suitably qualified person (with professional indemnity insurance) certifying that the septic tank/ wastewater treatment system and associated works is constructed and operating in accordance with the standards set out in the Environmental Protection Agency document referred to above. Reason: In the interest of public health and to prevent water pollution
8.	Prior to commencement of development, details of the proposed surface water drainage measures shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority and shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works. Reason: In the interests of traffic safety and to prevent flooding or pollution.
9.	Prior to commencement of works, the developer shall submit to, and agree in writing with the planning authority, a Construction Management Plan,

	which shall be adhered to during construction. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including hours of working, noise and dust management measures, fuel storage, and off-site disposal of construction waste. Reason: In the interest of public safety and amenity.
10.	The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme. Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

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

Matthew McRedmond
Senior Planning Inspector

30th June 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500410-WC-25
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of a dwelling and all associated site works.
Development Address	Killangal, Castlehaven, Skibereen, Co. Cork
IN ALL CASES CHECK BOX / OR LEAVE BLANK	
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'Project' for the purposes of EIA?	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q.2.
	☐ No, No further action required.
(For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	

☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here
☒ No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
☐ No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required.	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	
☒ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR	Schedule 5, Part 2, 10 (b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units Proposal is substantially less than the threshold

If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	
4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?	
Yes ☐	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2: Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	PL-500410-WC-25
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of a dwelling and all associated site works
Development Address	Killangal, Castlehaven, Skibereen, Co. Cork
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	- Proposed residential use is compatible with other uses in area, - Modest size and intensity of development - No significant use of natural resources or production of waste - No significant risk of pollution or nuisance - No significant risk of accidents / disasters to human health
Location of development (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity)	- Located within rural area/Tourism Area - Local ecology only on site - No built heritage - No water features at the site - No designated sites at the site

of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	Having regard to the following: - Nature and scale of the development, - Lack of significant environmental sensitivities on the site, - Absence of significant in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.
Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant	EIA is not required. Include the following paragraph under EIA Screening (a separate heading) in the Inspectors report.

effects on the environment.	
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Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

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

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

Appendix 3: Standard AA Screening Determination

Test for likely significant effects

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects				
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics				
Brief description of project		Proposed dwelling and all associated works		
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms		Small domestic development on 0.32ha site. Site in undeveloped natural grass / pastoral state, existing natural boundaries, located c 1.6km to European site, potential impact on ground water from effluent disposal and disposal of surface water, removal of natural vegetation may disturb species, significant amount of native planting proposed. The Castletownshend SAC is located c. 2.8km east.		
Screening report		No.		
Natura Impact Statement		No.		
Relevant submissions		No submissions relevant to AA issues.		
Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model				
4no. European sites are identified as being located within a potential zone of influence of the proposed development as detailed in Table 1 below. I note that no further range of European Sites is necessary for consideration in relation to this proposed development.				
Table 1:				
European Site (code)	Qualifying interests ¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections ²	Consider further in screening ³ Y/N
Castletownshend SAC (001547)	Vandenboschia speciosa (Killarney Fern) [6985] Castletownshend SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service (12/06/2026)	1.6km east	No. Separation distance and no ecological or hydrological connections between subject site and SAC	Y
Myross Wood SAC (001070)	Vandenboschia speciosa (Killarney Fern) [6985]	5.2km northeast	No. Separation distance and no	Y

	Myross Wood SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service (12/06/2026)		ecological or hydrological connections between subject site and SAC	
Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA (004156)	Peregrine (Falco peregrinus) [A103] Chough (Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax) [A346] Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service (12/06/2026)	5.3km south	No. Separation distance and no ecological or hydrological connections between subject site and SPA	Y
Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs SAC (000097)	Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] European dry heaths [4030] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330] Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service (12/06/2026)	6km southwest	No. Separation distance and no ecological or hydrological connections between subject site and SAC	Y
¹ Summary description / cross reference to NPWS website is acceptable at this stage in the report ² Based on source-pathway-receptor: Direct/ indirect/ tentative/ none, via surface water/ ground water/ air/ use of habitats by mobile species ³ if no connections: N				
Given the proximity of the site to the details SPA and SACs, potential effects are not likely to occur due to surface water run off during construction or operation and foul water discharge during operation. Significant effects from other pathways have been ruled out i.e., habitat loss, spread of invasive species, impacts from noise and disturbance.				
Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone <u>or</u> in combination) on European Sites				

The proposed development will not result in any direct effects on either the SPA as it relates to Sheep's Head to Toe Head or the SAC as it relates to Castletownshend, Moyross Wood or Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs. However, due to the application of the precautionary principle, impacts generated by the construction and operation of the proposed development require consideration.

Sources of impact and likely significant effects are detailed in the table below.

AA Screening matrix

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 1: Castletownshend SAC (001547) QI list: As above	Direct: No direct impacts within the SAC. Indirect: Localised, temporary, low magnitude impacts from noise, dust and construction related emissions. Localized, low magnitude impacts on water quality (pollution and sedimentation) from surface water disposal from development and from on site effluent disposal. Removal of vegetation on site.	Having regard to - the domestic nature and small scale of development proposed, - lack of direct connections or pathways, - the distance to receiving features, - normal best construction practices, - disposal of uncontaminated storm water to ground, - disposal of effluent on site to normal EPA CoP standards, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect habitat quality or QI species of the SAC. No significant disturbance to birds that may occasionally use the existing vegetation on the site. Low risk to SAC related to any minor construction related emissions. Low risk of surface or ground water borne pollutants or sediments reaching the SAC.

		Conservation objectives would not be undermined.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? The proposed development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 2: Myross Wood SAC (001070) QI list: As above	As above.	Having regard to - the domestic nature and small scale of development proposed, - lack of direct connections or pathways, - the distance to receiving features, - normal best construction practices, - disposal of uncontaminated storm water to ground, - disposal of effluent on site to normal EPA CoP standards, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect Qis of the SAC. Low risk to SAC related to any minor construction related emissions. Low risk of surface or ground water borne pollutants or sediments reaching the SAC. Conservation objectives would not be undermined.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? The proposed	

	development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 3: Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA (004156) QI list: As above	As above	Having regard to - the domestic nature and small scale of development proposed, - lack of direct connections or pathways, - the distance to receiving features, - normal best construction practices, - disposal of uncontaminated storm water to ground, - disposal of effluent on site to normal EPA CoP standards, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect habitat quality or QI species of the SPA. No significant disturbance to birds that may occasionally use the existing vegetation on the site. Low risk to SPA related to any minor construction related emissions. Low risk of surface or ground water borne pollutants or sediments reaching the SPA. Conservation Objectives would not be undermined.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? The proposed development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.	
	Impacts	Effects

Site 4: Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs SAC (000097) QI list: As above	As above	Having regard to - the domestic nature and small scale of development proposed, - lack of direct connections or pathways, - the distance to receiving features, - normal best construction practices, - disposal of uncontaminated storm water to ground, - disposal of effluent on site to normal EPA CoP standards, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect habitat quality or QI species of the SAC. No significant disturbance to birds that may occasionally use the existing vegetation on the site. Low risk to SAC related to any minor construction related emissions. Low risk of surface or ground water borne pollutants or sediments reaching the SAC. Conservation Objectives would not be undermined.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? The proposed development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.	
Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site		
The construction or operation of the proposed development will not result in impacts that could affect the conservation objectives of the Cork Harbour SPA nor the Great Island Channel SAC.		

Due to distance and lack of meaningful ecological connections there will be no changes in ecological functions due to any construction related emissions or disturbance. There will be no direct or ex-situ effects from disturbance on mobile species during construction or operation of the proposed development. No mitigation measures beyond normal standard construction mitigation and drainage works are required to come to these conclusions.

Screening Determination

Finding of no likely significant effects

Having carried out Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the project in accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), I conclude that that the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on European Sites within the surrounding area namely, Castletownhend SAC, The Moyross Wood SAC, the Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA, and the Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs SAC or any other European site, in view of the sites Conservation Objectives, and Appropriate Assessment (and submission of a NIS) is not therefore required.

This determination is based on:

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

Appendix 4 – WFD Assessment

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
An Comisiún Pleanála ref. no.	PL-500410-WC-25	Townland, address	Killangal, Castlehaven, Skibereen, Co. Cork
Description of project		Construction of a dwelling and all associated site works	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		Site is undeveloped pastoral land in a rural area No water features on the site or adjacent to the site. Site not located within a flood zone area. Site rises gently from east to west, with bank and ditches along roadside boundary. Site is c. 3.3km to Scullane Bay to the south and is within the WFD Catchment of Bandon-Ilen. There is a water monitoring station located to the southeast at Castletownsend	
Proposed surface water details		Surface water to on site soakaway	
Proposed water supply source & available capacity		Uisce Eireann mains water connection	
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues		Onsite wastewater treatment system	
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	C450m west	KILLANGAL_010 Code: IE_SW_20K950970)	Good	Not at risk	None identified	Potential surface water runoff	
Groundwater	Underlying site	Skibbereen-Clonakilty Code: IE_SW_G_085	Good	Not at risk	None identified	Surface water drainage to ground Effluent treatment and disposal to ground	
Step 3: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Waterbody receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
	Surface	KILLANGAL_010 Code: IE_SW_20K950970)	Surface run off	pollution and sedimentation	standard best practice construction	No	Screened out
	Ground	Skibbereen-Clonakilty Code: IE_SW_G_085	underground	Pollution, ground filtration	standard best practice construction	No	Screened out
OPERATIONAL PHASE							

3.	Surface	KILLANGAL_010 Code: IE_SW_20K950970)	Surface run off	pollution and sedimentation	SUDs features	No	Screened out
4.	Ground	Skibbereen-Clonakilty Code: IE_SW_G_085	underground	pollution and ground filtration	On site drainage to BRE standards, WWTS to EPA CoP standards	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	NA						