



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-501373-CK-26

Development	The use of the school's facilities by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public outside of normal school hours
Location	Carrigaline Education Campus, Ardnacloghy, Carrigaline, County Cork
Planning Authority	Cork County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	26/0485
Applicants	The Boards of Management of Gaelscoil and Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin, and Scoil Sonas
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant, subject to conditions
Type of Appeal	Third-party appeal First-party appeal against condition
Appellants	1. Tony & Gina Fitzpatrick (Third Party) 2. The Boards of Management of Gaelscoil and Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin, and Scoil Sonas (First Party)
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	13 th July 2026
Inspector	Gary Farrelly

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site has a stated area of 8.6 hectares and comprises the site of Carrigaline Education campus. This campus accommodates Gaelscoil Charraig Uí Leighin, Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin and Scoil Sonas. The campus is located to the northwest of the town of Carrigaline. Residential estates are located to the east (Carrig na Curra) and south (Carrigcourt) of the campus. There are two vehicular access points to the site taken off the L-2464 local road (also known as the Ballinrea Road) to the west of the campus. A pedestrian and cycle pathway is located along the southern boundary of the campus which provides a connection between Ballinrea Road and the R-611 regional road east of the site. The overall campus accommodates a number of playgrounds, playing pitches, playing courts as well as a total of 183 no. car parking spaces and 5 no. bus parking spaces.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for the use of the facilities of Carrigaline Education Campus outside of normal school hours by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public. This will provide for the removal/revision of identified restrictions set out within Condition Numbers 3 and 4 of the governing permission for the site (An Coimisiún Pleanála ref. PL04.246387). The type of uses that may be facilitated include sport and recreation activities, fitness and training sessions, community meetings, arts and cultural activities including art classes and drama groups, community learning activities and other compatible community uses. No physical works (including floodlighting) are proposed as part of the application. A Social Infrastructure Assessment accompanies the application which included a review of existing sports, recreation and community infrastructure within Carrigaline, together with a review of demographic trends and demand indicators. A Noise Impact Assessment has also been submitted as part of the first party's appeal documentation.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority (PA) decided to grant permission by Order dated 23rd April 2026 subject to 3 no. conditions.

Condition 3

The proposed use of the school facilities by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public outside of normal school hours shall be restricted to between 07:30 and 20:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 and 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: To protect residential amenity.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

Planning Report

The area planner's (AP) report assessed the application in terms of the principle of the proposed development, the justification and rationale for the development and impacts on residential amenity. The AP considered the principle to be acceptable, noted a limited provision of social and community infrastructure on the northern side of the town and together with the additional lands to be zoned as part of Variation No. 1 of the Development Plan, considered there was a need for the community use of the facilities. The AP noted that no information on specific indoor and outdoor uses/activities was provided by the applicant and no details about any resultant traffic, noise and light pollution, however, the AP was satisfied that the development would not give rise to any undue negative impacts on residential amenity. The AP noted that many of the third party concerns were in relation to compliance with conditions of the governing permission and considered that the proper mechanism for dealing with this was through planning enforcement.

In terms of operational hours, the AP considered that there was ambiguity in the application as the public notices stated "in the evening after 18:00 and in the morning before 08:00", however the cover letter stated "between 08:00 and 21:30 seven days per week". Due to the proximity to residential properties, the AP considered it

appropriate that the campus was used no earlier than 07:30 and no later than 20:00 on weekdays in order to protect residential amenity, and no earlier than 09:00 and no later than 18:00 on weekends. The AP recommended a grant of permission subject to conditions. The Senior Executive Planner (SEP) agreed with the AP's assessment and due to the vagueness in the intentions regarding opening hours considered condition 3 appropriate in setting out clearly the revised timescales.

Other Technical Reports

- Area Engineer (*report dated 17/04/26*) – There was no objection to the usage during evenings.
- County Archaeologist (*report dated 21/04/236*) – This report noted no proposed physical works and outlined no objection to the development. A condition was recommended, however, the report deferred to the AP on whether it was appropriate or necessary.
- Environment (*report dated 15/04/26*) – This report outlined no objection to the proposed development.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

There were a number of third party observations submitted to the PA objecting to the extension of opening times on grounds such as noise and disturbance, traffic and parking, anti-social behaviour and drainage issues.

4.0 Relevant Planning History

PL04.246387 (PA ref. 15/4388)

The Commission granted permission for 3 new schools subject to conditions.

Condition No. 3

The schools shall not be used for adult education classes, or any other activities, to which members of the general public would have access, after 18:00 hours, without a separate planning permission for such use having first been obtained.

Reason: In the interest of protecting the residential amenities of neighbouring residential property.

Condition No. 4

The proposed ball courts and pitches shall not be floodlit without a separate planning permission having first been obtained. The proposed site lighting shall not incorporate any floodlighting of these courts/pitches. The ball courts/pitches shall not be used between the hours of 18:00 and 08:30.

Reason: In the interest of protecting the residential amenities of neighbouring residential property.

Condition No. 7

A new pedestrian/cycle link within the site shall be provided from the south-eastern corner of the proposed campus site to adjoining lands so as to link up with the R611 regional road and associated footpath. Details of this link, including boundary treatment and gates, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. The gates from this link to the adjoining lands shall be kept closed between 18.00 and 08.30.

Reason: In order to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access to the subject site from the R611 and future residential development to the east of the site, and in the interest of permeability.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

This Plan was adopted by elected members on 25th April 2022, and it came into effect on 6th June 2022. There has been 1 no. Variation made which came into effect on 31st July 2026. This related to the acceleration of housing delivery across the County to ensure that the population and housing targets for the County are consistent with the Revised National Planning Framework and take due account of the Section 28 Guidelines NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements.

Volume 1 – Written Statement

Chapter 6 – Social and Community

Objective SC 6-1: Social and Community Infrastructure Provision

- a) Support the provision of social and community facilities which meet the current and future needs of the entire population and which should grow in tandem with development in communities.

Objective SC 6-3: Multi-Use Community Facilities

Support the provision of Multi-Use Community Facilities which encourage sharing amongst community groups and are designed for multi-use activities and future sharing.

Volume 4 – South Cork (Section 1.4 Carrigaline)

The site is located within the settlement boundary of Carrigaline on lands zoned 'Community'. Chapter 18 (Volume 1) outlines the zoning objective (ZU 18-21) for community lands is to promote the provision of educational, community related and healthcare development including, where relevant, the provision of ancillary accommodation and facilities. Appropriate uses in community areas identified include community related facilities such as club meeting facilities such as a scout or guide halls and multiuse community facilities.

Social and Community Facilities

The Ballinrea Education Campus to the North West of the town on lands zoned CL-C-01 accommodates three schools in the town, Gaelscoil and Gaelcholaiste Carraig Ui Leighinn and Sonas Special Junior Primary School. The town has a very strong sense of identity which places the community at its heart. The community association is extremely active running many community initiatives such as the tidy towns, the Carrigaline youth club and new youth café, the community complex and the upkeep of the community park. The County Council will support the provision of new and improved facilities for sports and recreation during the lifetime of this Plan, as the need arises. A cultural and civic centre is one facility which is lacking in Carrigaline. This Plan recognises the need for arts and cultural facilities in Carrigaline as a result of the large population and status of Carrigaline and its location within Metropolitan Cork.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The subject site is not located within any designated natural heritage site. The nearest designated site is Cork Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code 004030) which is located approximately 1.5km southeast of the subject site. This area is also designated as Owenboy River proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).

6.0 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

The proposed development does not come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA, that is, it does not comprise construction works, demolition or intervention in the natural surroundings. I refer the Commission to Appendix 1 in this regard.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

A third party appeal was lodged to the Commission on 19th May 2026 by local residents Tony and Gina Fitzpatrick against the PA's decision to grant permission. Their grounds of appeal are summarised as follows:

- It is respectfully requested that the Commission refuses this application in its entirety. The proposed hours of 07:30 to 20:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays represent an excessive, unsustainable escalation of activity in a low-density residential zone.
- The facility already generates significant acoustic disruption from 08:00 to 18:00 hours and extending these hours will create a wider noise cycle and permanently eliminate weekend noise relief.
- The surrounding roads are not capable of accommodating the additional traffic volumes generated by the proposed development which will impact local residents.
- The intensification of use will result in a change from education use to commercial operations in an established residential area. This is incompatible with the land use zoning of the Development Plan.

- There has been no compelling planning or community necessity justification provided to extend the campus operating hours. The town of Carrigaline is already comprehensively served by purpose-built, publicly funded community infrastructure located on non-residential zones near the town centre. The Carrigaline Lions Youth Centre was excluded from the applicant's Social Infrastructure Assessment and frequently remains closed or underutilised during early morning, late evening and weekends. The Carrigaline Community Complex already meets local needs by hosting adult education classes and evening community events in a highly accessible location. Carrigaline Educate Together, St. Mary's and Holywell National Schools all offer the use of school facilities by local community groups.
- The granting of permission will shift activities away from underutilised, centrally located, town centre zones into a highly noise sensitive, landlocked residential estate.
- There is a history of non-compliance with planning conditions on the original campus planning permission. The 3-metre-wide pathway along the southern boundary of the campus encroaches onto a 20m exclusion zone for a recorded monument and the boundary treatment has not been maintained which is in direct breach of Condition 6 of the governing permission.
- This lack of maintenance has led to invasive gorse to grow around the perimeter of the site. This together with the installation of drainage pipers which has led to over drainage of the site has dried this part of the site which has resulted in this area being at high risk of fire. Gorse only grows in dry conditions and is widely considered one of the most volatile and high-risk fuels. The proximity of the pathway increases the risk due to malicious and accidental fires. This occurred on 1st April 2025 where two gorse fires were ignited at the boundary of residential properties. No protective fire breaks, non-combustible landscaping buffers or vegetation management plans have been introduced to mitigate this proven danger.

First Party Appeal

The Commission should also note that the decision of the PA has been appealed by the applicants. The appeal relates to Condition No. 3 and is summarised as follows:

- It is requested that the Commission amends Condition No. 3 to permit the use of school facilities to between 07:30 and 21:30 hours on Mondays to Fridays and between 09:00 and 18:00 hours on Saturdays and Sundays.
- The campus operators and school communities receive a large volume of frequent requests from local sports clubs, community organisations and other groups seeking permission to use the campus facilities outside normal school hours. This reflects an identified shortfall in the availability of accessible indoor and outdoor facilities within the area, particularly at evenings and weekends when demand is highest. The application was supported by a Social Infrastructure Assessment which demonstrated existing community accessible facilities in Carrigaline are under pressure and demand is expected to continue in line with historic and planned growth.
- The assessments completed and precedent confirm that community use of such facilities can operate up to 2200 hours, however, the applicants are only seeking use to 21:30 hours due to the relationship with neighbours. It is not intended to make the external yard area to the east of the Gaelscoil available for community use between the hours of 20:00 and 21:30 weekdays recognising the submissions from residents in the adjoining estate. *(The Commission should note that a map illustrating the outdoor amenity areas is submitted with the appeal).*
- Typical community uses that may be facilitated by the proposal include sports and recreation activities, fitness and training sessions, community meetings, arts and cultural activities (e.g. art classes, drama, music groups), community learning initiatives and other compatible community uses which can be accommodated within the existing facilities outside normal school hours. This is in accordance with the governing land use zoning objective of the site.
- The rationale for capping the evening weekday use to 2000 hours has not been set out by the Council. The application was lodged to remove and revise the restrictions contained within Conditions 3 and 4 of the governing permission (refs. 15/04366 / PL04.246387). The submitted planning cover statement requested for the facility to be available between 08:00 and 21:30 hours seven

days per week reflecting identified community needs. However, the 07:30am morning operating hours conditioned by the PA are welcome.

- There is no commentary by the PA on why the requested 21:30 may not be appropriate which is contrary to the 2007 Development Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. This states that decisions and conditions must be clear, unambiguous and clearly understood. It is contended that the condition is unreasonable and it has not been established that it is necessary.
- The applicants have no objection in principle for the use of the facility between 09:00 and 18:00 hours on Saturdays and Sundays, as stipulated by the Council.
- The Department of Education's Procedures on the Use of School Buildings and School Sports Facilities Outside of School Hours (June 2024) provide the current national policy framework. The benefits identified by the Department include supporting community life, serving the need for community facilities in areas of new residential development, and supporting an active and healthy lifestyle consistent with Healthy Ireland policy. Condition No. 3 precludes indoor use of the campus precisely in the evening and weekend windows in which these policy benefits are realised.
- The use of the facilities will be outside of school hours and there is sufficient car parking available to accommodate visitors with no material impacts on the local road network. The PA's area engineer did not raise any concern in respect of traffic arising from the proposed development. It is contended that the extension of the conditioned hours to 21:30 will not result in materially different transport impacts.
- The use of internal facilities will vary. The largest internal space on the campus is the sports hall in the Gaelcholáiste where basketball training may be accommodated as well as martial arts or other sporting groups (yoga, pilates etc).
- There are no floodlights proposed as part of the proposed development. The grassed pitch or ball courts in the school do not have floodlights. The lighting around the school lights footpaths and access routes for health and safety only. Condition No. 4 of the governing permission expressly prohibited floodlights

around the pitches and courts. Therefore, additional light pollution would not occur as a result of outdoor activities. In terms of indoor lighting, these areas will be located centrally in the campus and away from residences. The Area Planner noted that the campus includes for mature landscape planting around its perimeter. The Environment Section did not raise any concerns in respect of perceived lighting pollution.

- The PA and Environment Section did not raise any noise concerns with the proposed development. The Area Planner considered that the landscaping conditioned under the governing permission is sufficient to mitigate any noise generated on site as a result of the proposed development.
- Notwithstanding this, the applicant has prepared a Noise Impact Assessment submitted as part of this appeal. It involved a baseline monitoring survey on the grounds of the campus, assessment of noise levels for the evening time period and assessment of the predicted internal ambient noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive locations. The assessment confirms that noise generated in the interior of the school buildings, the external car parking areas and use of the pitch and courts to the north will not result in any significant noise effects between the requested additional operating hours.
- The assessment did not assess the external yard area to the rear (east) of the Gaelscoil as it is not intended to make this space available to community groups between the hours of 20:00 to 21:30 on weekdays. This decision was taken as a courtesy to adjoining residents.
- The Commission has previously directed the removal of conditions restricting community access to multi-use sports and community facilities where they are not warranted by the planning evidence on file. The Commission directed the removal of a condition in ABP-302270-18 which restricted the use of a new facility to a community centre and GAA club only.
- As part of ABP-322651-25 the Commission upheld a 22:00 hours operating time for an all-weather sports pitch after third party appeals contended that the time would be injurious to residential amenity in terms of noise, traffic and disturbance. The Inspector relied upon a separation distance of c. 25 metres to the nearest residential dwelling and the nature of the use which did not involve

any amplified music. The separation distance in this case is c. 33 metres and there is no amplified music or floodlights proposed.

7.2. Applicant Response to Third-Party Appeal

The applicant also issued a response to the third-party's grounds of appeal on 22nd June 2026 which is summarised as follows:

- The appellants' property is c. 75 metres from the nearest external space that may be used by the community and c. 140 metres from the closest car parking area. It is submitted that their grievance relates to the proximity of the existing cycle/amenity path to the south of the campus.
- There is no commercial use proposed. The application is being made to support the social and community needs in Carrigaline only. The use is not-for-profit in support of community needs only. There is no evidence provided that supports the claim that the activity is commercial scale.
- There is no evidence provided regarding any existing noise issues from the school campus. The submitted noise assessment confirms no impact on the appellant's property.
- There is no potential for any traffic impact on the appellant's property which is located c. 140 metres from the nearest car park. The Area Engineer raised no concerns in respect of traffic and the campus benefits from high quality road infrastructure.
- There is no basis to the claim that the proposal is contrary to planning policy. The area planner considered the site's community zoning objective supported the multi-use of educational facilities as well as national, regional and local policy.
- The Lions Youth Centre does not meet the needs of the local community. The Carrigaline Local Area Plan in 2015 acknowledged the deficiency in the necessary social and recreational infrastructure to meet the growing needs of the community and noted a deficit of usable open space in the town. Carrigaline has grown from 15,770 persons in 2016 to 18,239 persons in 2022 and the Development Plan identifies a target population of 20,495 persons by 2028.

The deficit in community infrastructure is real and the proposed development will help meet the shortfall.

- Condition 7 of the governing permission required the details of the pedestrian/cycle track to be agreed with the PA, which it was. Similarly, a programme of landscaping was delivered as part of the development and an operational maintenance programme exists on the campus for the upkeep of the grounds.
- The pedestrian/cycle infrastructure is gated and closed outside of operational hours and its use is tightly monitored and regulated by the schools campus. It is not proposed to alter this and the gates will not be opened to accommodate the community use. Therefore, there will be no increased use of the path.

7.3. Planning Authority Response

The PA did not issue a response to either the third party or first party grounds of appeal.

8.0 Assessment

8.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including 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 and national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows:

- Planning History and Background
- Zoning
- Justification for Proposed Development
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Traffic Safety

Planning History and Background

8.2. The Commission should note that the applicants are seeking permission for the use of the school's facilities outside of normal school hours by local community groups,

clubs and members of the general public. I note that such use was prohibited as part of Conditions 3 and 4 of the governing permission for the site (An Coimisiún Pleanála ref. PL04.246387). Condition 3 prohibited any use of the facilities for adult education classes or other activities by the general public after 18:00 hours and Condition 4 prohibited the use of the ball courts and pitches between the hours of 18:00 and 08:30. I note that the applicants' description of the application has sought the revision of these conditions.

- 8.3. The applicants have outlined that the typical proposed uses that may be facilitated will include sports and recreation activities, fitness and training sessions, community meetings, arts and cultural activities (e.g. art classes, drama, music groups), community learning initiatives and other compatible community uses. I note that the PA considered that there was ambiguity in the extended hours applied for by the applicants as the public notices requested the use of the facilities in the evening after 18:00 and in the morning before 08:00, however, the applicant's cover letter requested the use of the facilities between 08:00 and 21:30 hours, seven days per week. Due to this ambiguity and in the interest of protecting residential amenity the PA conditioned the opening hours to between 07:30 and 20:00 hours Monday to Friday and between 09:00 and 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays. The Commission should note that whilst the applicant has appealed this condition, the overall grant of permission has also been appealed by a third party.

Zoning

- 8.4. The Commission should note that the school campus is located on lands zoned 'community' within the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 (herein referred to as "*the CDP*"). Objective ZU 18-21 of the CDP outlines that the objective of this zoning is to promote the provision of educational and community related development, and it outlines that multiuse community facilities are appropriate uses within this zoning. Therefore, having regard to the land use zoning objective pertaining to the site, I consider that the use of the school's facilities by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public outside of normal school hours would be acceptable in principle.

Justification for Proposed Development

- 8.5. The third-party appellant has questioned the justification put forward by the applicants and considers that the town of Carrigaline already has sufficient community infrastructure closer to the town centre. I note that the application was accompanied by a Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA) which included a review of existing social and community infrastructure within the town, the demographic and growth rate of the town and demand for such infrastructure. It noted that the population of Carrigaline increased from 15,770 in 2016 to 18,239 in 2022. I also note that letters from Carrigaline Camogie Club, Carrigaline Basketball Club, Carrigaline Ladies Football Club, Carrigaline United AFC, Cumman na bhFiann and Cork Taekwon-Do North Mon-Carrigaline Club are provided as part of Appendix 1 of the SIA, all of which support the application. Furthermore, I note that the PA considered that there was a need for the proposed development due to the increase in residential zonings within the town as part of Variation No. 1 of the CDP and to the limited provision of such community infrastructure within the town, including on the northern side of the town.
- 8.6. I note that Variation No. 1 of the CDP has outlined a revised 2034 population target of 27,755 for Carrigaline. Furthermore, Objective SC 6-1 (Social and Community Infrastructure Provision) and Objective SC 6-3 (Multi-use Community Facilities) of the CDP support the provision of social and community facilities, including multi-use community facilities designed for sharing amongst community groups, in order to meet current and future needs of the population. Therefore, having regard to the revised population targets for Carrigaline as set out in Variation No. 1 of the CDP and on the basis of the information submitted by the applicants and to the letters from the various clubs within Carrigaline supporting the development, it is my view that adequate justification has been demonstrated to extend the opening hours of the campus outside of normal school hours for the use by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public.
- 8.7. The Commission should note that I have also had regard to the Department of Education 'Procedures on the use of school property and school sports facilities outside of school hours' (June 2024) which encourages schools to make their property and sports facilities available to the local community. I consider that the proposed extension of opening hours would be in accordance with these procedures.

Impact on Residential Amenity

- 8.8. The Commission should note that the third-party appellant has raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposed extension of opening hours on their residential amenity in terms of noise and has requested the application to be refused in its entirety. In contrast, the Commission should note that the applicants have requested that Condition No. 3 of the PA's grant of permission be revised in order to allow the use of the campus facilities between the hours of 07:30 and 21:30 Monday to Friday. The applicants have not sought any revision to the weekend hours conditioned by the PA.
- 8.9. Having reviewed the outdoor amenity map submitted by the applicants, I note that the third party appellant's property within Carrigcourt is located approximately 75 metres south of the existing outdoor playgrounds east of Scoil Sonas, approximately 140 metres south of the existing outdoor hard play areas east of the Gaelscoil and approximately 320 metres south of the existing outdoor grassed pitch and hardcourts north of the Gaelscholaiste. The nearest car park to the appellant's property is located 150 metres west. The building of Scoil Sonas is approximately 85 metres from the appellant's property, whilst the buildings of the Gaelscoil and Gaelcholáiste are approximately 150 metres and 240 metres respectively.
- 8.10. I note that the hard play areas east of the Gaelscoil are approximately 15-20 metres from the rear boundaries of the residential properties within Carrig na Curra estate to the east of the campus. However, I note that the applicants have stated in their grounds of appeal that it is not proposed to use these facilities for community groups on weekdays between the hours of 20:00 and 21:30. Therefore, these facilities will only be used between the hours of 07:30 and 20:00 on weekdays and between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00 at weekends (i.e. as conditioned by the PA under Condition No. 3).
- 8.11. The Commission should note that a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has been submitted by the applicants as part of their grounds of appeal against Condition No. 3. I note that the NIA has assessed the noise impact at a number of noise sensitive locations (NSLs) including the third party appellant's estate (NSL3) and the Carrig na Curra estate east of the campus. A baseline noise survey was carried out at three locations (A1-A3) at the boundaries of the campus on 15th May 2026 between 19:00

hours and 22:17 hours. Noise measurements were undertaken in general accordance with International Standard ISO 1996-1:2016 using ISO class 1 sound analysers and included attended noise measurements and background noise measurements over a 15 minute period. The weather conditions described were 'good' with no rain, clear skies and winds typically less than 5 m/s. The measurement results concluded that the dominant noise sources consisted of road traffic.

- 8.12. The NIA also assessed the proposed operational noise levels from the use of the pitch, courtyards and internal sports halls as well as the car parking areas. I note that the external yard east of the Gaelscoil was not included. The predicted operational noise levels were calculated using SoundPlan modelling software on a worse case scenario during 20:00 and 22:00 hours and the impact at the nearest NSLs was assessed in accordance with British Standard BS 4142. The nearest NSL was described as NSL3.
- 8.13. The assessment concluded that there would be a low impact at all NSLs for the evening period of 20:00 hours to 22:00 hours as well as compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Guidance Note for Noise NG4. Section 5.5 of the NIA assessed the noise impact at NSL3 and recorded a predicted noise impact of 36dB(A) at the façade of NSL3. Furthermore, in accordance with BS8233:2014 a fully open window is predicted to provide up to 10dB of attenuation and 15dB of attenuation for a partially open window. The assessment found that the predicted internal noise levels at NSL3 would be below the BS8233:2014 guidance criteria for both daytime and nighttime noise levels.
- 8.14. On the basis of the information provided by the applicant, to the separation distances of the outdoor amenity areas, car parking areas and internal sports halls to the third party appellant's property and to the applicants stated intention to not make available the external yard east of the Gaelscoil between the hours of 20:00 and 21:30 on weekdays, it is my view that the proposed extension of operational hours to between 07:30 and 21:30 Mondays to Fridays, as well as between 09:00 and 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays, would not result in a significant adverse impact on adjoining residential amenity in terms of noise. Therefore, on the basis of the information submitted, I have no significant concerns in recommending the revision of Condition No. 3 to the opening hours as requested by the applicants in their grounds of appeal. However, in the interest of clarity, it is my recommendation that an additional condition

is attached that restricts the operational hours of the external yard east of the Gaelscoil.

- 8.15. The Commission should also note that Condition No. 4 of the governing permission for the site prohibited any floodlighting for the ball courts and pitches and the applicant has stated that no floodlighting is proposed as part of the proposed development. Therefore, having regard to this, I am satisfied that the proposed development would not result in any significant impact on residential amenity in terms of light pollution. Additionally, I have no significant concerns regarding light pollution from the interior of the buildings due to the separation distances to properties and boundary treatments of the site.

Traffic Safety

- 8.16. The third party appellant also raises concerns that the surrounding road network is not capable of accommodating the additional traffic as a result of the proposed extension in opening hours. I note that the PA's area engineer (AE) noted that there were no alterations proposed to the existing entrance to the campus and that the proposal would utilise existing infrastructure. The AE had no objection on traffic safety grounds.
- 8.17. Having inspected the site on 13th July 2026, and therefore, outside of normal school times, I observed that there was adequate car parking provision throughout the campus as well as adequate internal road infrastructure. Due to the nature of the proposed development which seeks to use such infrastructure outside of normal school hours, I have no significant concerns in terms of the impact of the extension of opening hours on traffic safety.

Other Issues

- 8.18. I note the third party appellant has raised concerns regarding compliance with the conditions of the governing permission for the site. These concerns relate to the maintenance of landscaping and the construction of the pathway along the southern boundary of the site. I note that the PA considered that the appropriate mechanism regarding concerns over non-compliance with planning conditions was through planning enforcement. I am in agreement and note that the matter of enforcement falls under the jurisdiction of the PA.

9.0 Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

- 9.1. I have considered the project in light of the requirements of Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The subject site is located approximately 1.5km northwest of the nearest point associated with Cork Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code 004030). No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 9.2. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:
- To the nature of the proposed development being an extension in operating hours of existing school facilities and to the absence of physical works,
 - To the nature of the site comprising of an existing school campus and to the separation distance and level of intervening lands between the development and European sites in terms of potential ex-situ effects.
 - Taking into account the screening determination of the PA.
- 9.3. I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. Likely significant effects are excluded, and therefore, AA under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, is not required.

10.0 Water Framework Directive (WFD)

- 10.1. An assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken with regard to the objectives set out in Article 4 of the European Union Water Framework Directive. Having considered the nature, scale, and location of the proposed development, it is concluded that the proposal will not result in any risk of deterioration in the status of any water body, including surface waters (rivers and lakes), groundwater, transitional waters, or coastal waters. This applies to both qualitative and quantitative status, and in respect of temporary and permanent effects.

10.2. In addition, the proposed development will not adversely affect the achievement of established environmental objectives, including the protection, maintenance, and improvement of water body status, as required under the Directive. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the requirements of Article 4.

11.0 Recommendation

It is my recommendation to the Commission that permission is **Granted**, subject to conditions, for the reasons and considerations set out below.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the planning history of the site and to the existing use of the site for educational purposes, to the 'ZU 18-21: Community' land use zoning objective pertaining to the site under the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, where it seeks to promote education and community related development and where multiuse community facilities are considered an appropriate use, and to the pattern of development in the vicinity, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed use of the school's facilities by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public outside of normal school hours would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or property in the vicinity and would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would be in accordance with Objective SC 6-1 (Social and Community Infrastructure Provision) and Objective SC 6-3 (Multi-use Community Facilities) of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 which support the provision of social and community facilities, including multi-use community facilities designed for sharing amongst community groups, in order to meet current and future needs of the population. 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 in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. Apart from any departures specifically authorised by this permission, the development shall comply with the conditions of the parent permission, An Coimisiún Pleanála reference PL04.246387, unless the conditions set out hereunder specify otherwise.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

3. (a) The use of the schools' facilities by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public outside of normal school hours shall be restricted to between the hours of 07:30 and 21:30 Monday to Friday, and between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

(b) The use of the external yard area to the east of Gaelscoil Charraig Uí Leighin shall be restricted to between the hours of 07:30 and 20:00 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: To protect residential amenity.

Declaration

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.

Gary Farrelly
Planning Inspector

20th August 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-501373-CK-26
Proposed Development Summary	The use of the school's facilities by local community groups, clubs and members of the general public outside of normal school hours. The proposed development will provide for the removal/revision of identified restrictions contained within Conditions No. 3 and No. 4 of the governing permission PL04.246387.
Development Address	Carrigaline Education Campus, Ardnacloghy, Carrigaline, County 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)?	
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?	

~~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)?~~

Inspector: _____ Date: 20th August 2026