



Our Ref: SHD Bearna
An Bord Pleanála Reference: ABP-302216-18

03 September 2018

The Strategic Housing Unit,
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Via email: strategichousing@pleanala.ie

Re: Notification to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016; Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017

Re: Proposed Strategic Housing Development in respect of the demolition of existing outbuildings and the construction of 197 No. new dwellings in addition to a multi- purpose community room, vehicular and pedestrian link bridges, parking, bicycle and bin storage areas, public realm landscaping as well as all associated site development works and services

A chara

On behalf of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, I refer to correspondence received in relation to the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated heading.

Nature Conservation

The Department refers to the above Strategic Housing Development application and associated reports at Trusky East, Bearna, Co. Galway.

The following observations are made by the Department in its advisory role as a prescribed body under planning legislation. They are not exhaustive but are intended to assist An Bord Pleanála in meeting the obligations that arise in relation to nature conservation in the context of the current planning application.

The proposed development is approximately 950m west of the European site, Galway Bay Complex SAC (site code 00268) and Inner Galway Bay SPA (site code 004031). It is recommended that the Board would consider if the the proposed development would have indirect or cumulative effects on these European sites, including as a result of increased amenity and recreational pressures near the margins of Galway City; the growing infrastructural needs, including roads and cycleways; and the



wastewater from the site which will be treated in and discharge to Galway Bay and to the SAC and SPA.

The application area (approximately 7.2ha) comprises a network of small fields of grassland, with encroachment by bracken and scrub, and a small area of dry heath. The Trusky Stream, a minor watercourse, passes through the site and a total of seven new bridges are proposed; three for vehicular access and four pedestrian bridges. Almost all areas of natural/semi-natural habitat will be lost or modified as a result of the proposed development. The likely effects of bridge or culvert construction on the watercourse, taking design into account, are not assessed in Ecological Impact Assessment and it is unclear whether areas of 'riparian habitat' can be retained in the final development.

A bat survey was undertaken on 31/05/18, and established that Soprano and Common Pipistrelle Bats utilise the site. While it appears that there are no bat roosts on the site, all bats are strictly protected (Annex IV of the Habitats Directive) by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011. The Board should consider any potential adverse effects of the proposed development on bats, nesting birds, and any other protected species.

You are requested to send further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) via **eReferral**, where used, or to manager.dau@chg.gov.ie; if emailing is not possible, correspondence may alternatively be sent to:

The Manager
Development Applications Unit (DAU)
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90

Is mise, le meas

Diarmuid Buttimer
Development Applications Unit