June 2026

Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report

Proposed Large-scale Residential Development

at

Old Fort Road, Ballincollig, Co. Cork

On behalf of

O'Flynn Construction Co. Unlimited Company

MALONE O'REGAN ENVIRONMENTAL

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Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report

Proposed Large-scale Residential Development

O'Flynn Construction Co. Unlimited Company

Old Fort Road, Ballincollig, Co. Cork

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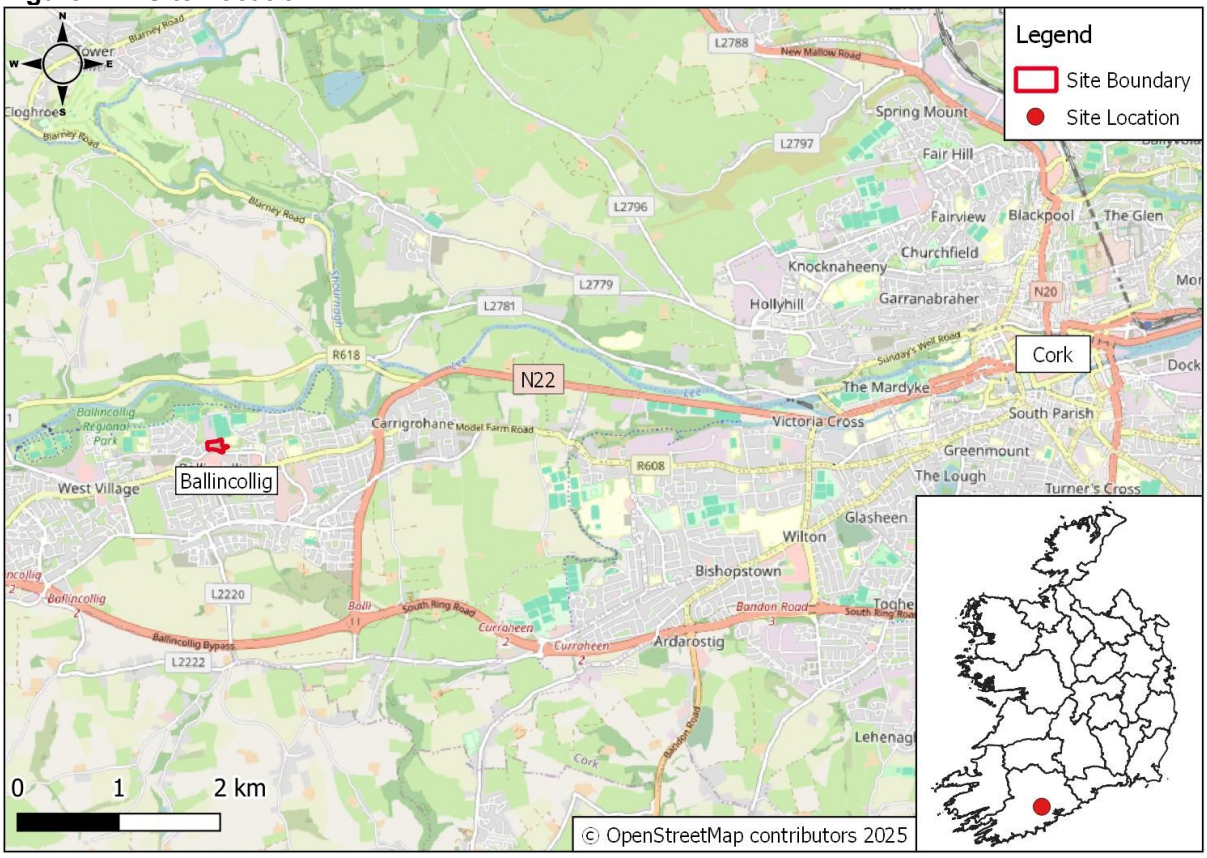
1 INTRODUCTION

Malone O'Regan Environmental ('MOR Environmental') was commissioned by O'Flynn Construction Co. Unlimited Company ('the Applicant') to undertake Appropriate Assessment ('AA') Screening to assess the potential adverse effects, if any, of a proposed Large-scale Residential Development ('LRD') and ancillary works (the 'Proposed Development') at Old Fort Road, Ballincollig, Co Cork (ITM OS Reference X 559274 Y 571071) on nearby sites with European conservation designations i.e., Natura 2000 sites (hereafter: 'European Designated sites').

The Proposed Development will be located on a site (the 'Site') which is circa ('ca.') 1.2hectares ('ha') in size and is located within the townland of Ballincollig, Co. Cork, ca. 7km west of Cork City and is shown in Figure 1-1.

The purpose of the AA Screening was to determine the appropriateness or otherwise of the proposed works in the context of the conservation objectives of nearby European sites through the research and interpretation of the best scientific, geographic and engineering knowledge. The AA Screening seeks to determine whether the Proposed Development will, on its own or in combination with other plans / projects, have a significant effect on the integrity of European sites within the Site's defined zone of influence. This AA Report has been prepared without considering measures intended to avoid or reduce a potential effect on a European site.

Figure 1-1: Site Location



1.1 Planning Background

A review of the Cork County Council ('CCC') and An Coimisiún Pleanála ('ACP') planning sites indicated that three previous planning permissions are associated with the Site. Table 1-1 below details on-site planning permissions.

Table 1-1: Previous Planning Applications Associated with the Site

Planning Reference Number	Planning Authority	Date of Decision	Final Planning Decision	Description
03/122	CCC	12/09/2003	Conditional Permission	*"Mixed-used town centre development (including residential, retail/service, civic and office uses) on the Eastern end of the former Murphy Barracks fronting the Main Street."*
06/13556	CCC	27/06/2007	Conditional Permission	*Construction of a two-storey extension to the shopping centre to include 7 no. retail units and all ancillary staff facilities and storage areas, partial removal of existing surface car park and construction of 78 no. space surface car park, construction of four storey building with 2 no. retail units and retail showroom at ground floor level and 4 no. office units on three upper floor levels, single storey drive-thru restaurant/take away, 20 no. surface car parking spaces with access onto the Spine Rd and 210 no. basement/surface car parking spaces with access via existing entrance from Main St, construction of 2 storey office building with 6 no. units and attached 3 level 444 no. space multi-storey car park and all ancillary site development works to include pedestrian facilities, landscaping, 3 no. kiosk access points to underground parking, fencing, 3 no. ESB substations and signage and modifications to 2 no. permitted vehicular entrances and 2 no. existing entrances*
08/5508	CCC	12/05/2008	Conditional Permission	*The provision of 46 no. additional car parking spaces, adjoining and with access from the multi-level car park permitted under planning ref.06/13556*
08/6613	CCC	02/07/2008	Conditional Permission	*"Provision of 47 no. additional car parking spaces adjoining and with access from the multi-level car park permitted under Pl. Reg. No. 06/13556."*
12/4775	CCC	17/04/2012	Unconditional Permission	*"Construction of two storey extension to shopping centre to include 7 no. retail units and all ancillary staff facilities and storage areas, partial removal of existing surface car park and construction of 78 no. space surface car park, construction of two storey office building with 6 no. units and attached 3 level multi storey carpark and all ancillary site development works to include pedestrian facilities, landscaping, fencing, ESB substations, signage and modifications to 2 no. permitted vehicular entrances and 2 no. existing entrances, extension of duration of permission granted under Planning Reg. No. 06/13556."*
307313	ACP	28/04/2025	Quashed by High Court	*"123 no. apartments, creche and associated site works."*

Planning Reference Number	Planning Authority	Date of Decision	Final Planning Decision	Description
313642	ACP	23/05/2025	Refused Permission	*"123 no. apartments, creche and associated site works."*

1.2 Statement of Authority

This report was approved by Ms. Kathryn Broderick, Principal Consultant - Ecology. Kathryn has over 10 years of experience working in the ecological consultancy sector. As part of her role, Kathryn is required to undertake habitat surveys and appraisals as well as specialist protected species surveys in support of Ecological Impact Assessments and Appropriate Assessments. Kathryn has also completed a diploma in Environmental Law and Planning, with a focus on EIA and AA assessment, providing her with a comprehensive understanding of the legal context and requirements for these assessments.

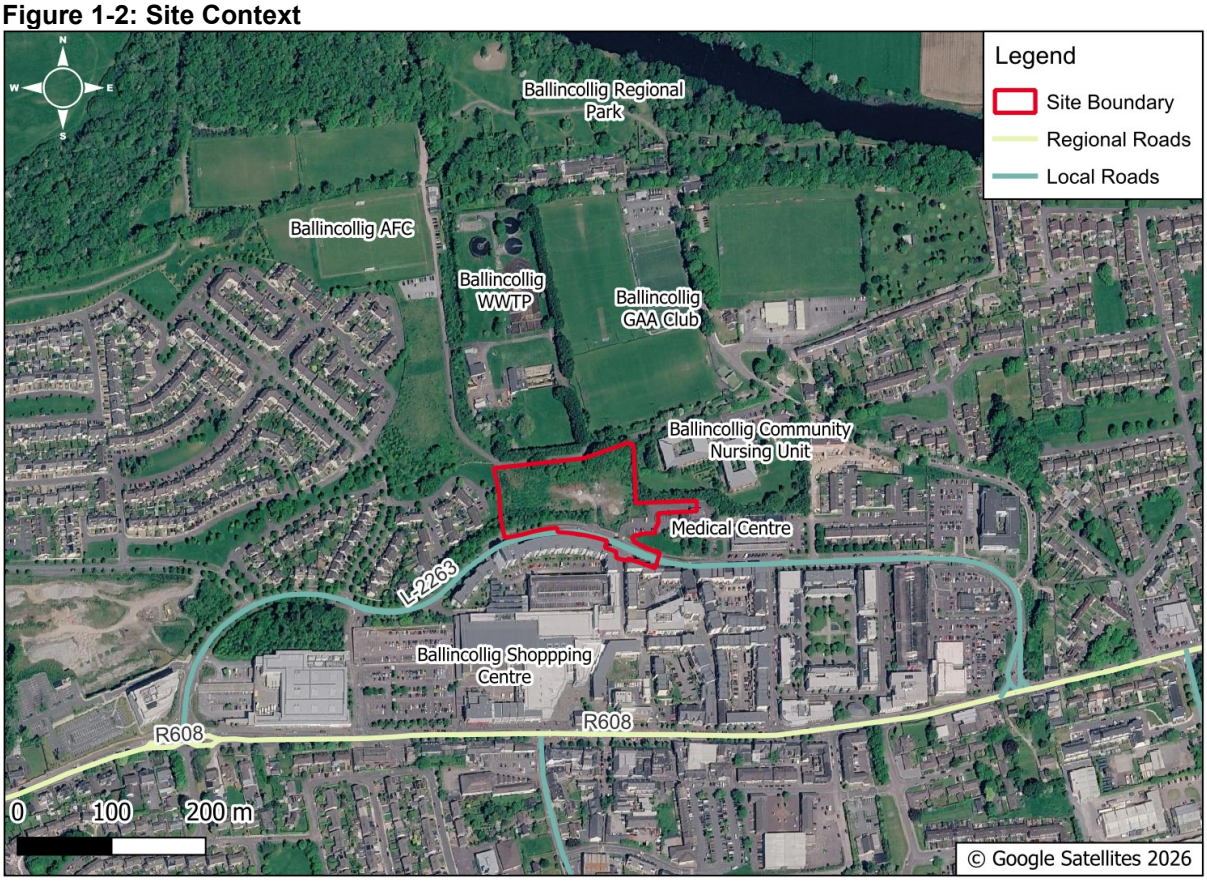
1.3 Site Context and Description

The Site is located on a ca. 1.2ha site within the townland of Ballincollig, Co. Cork. The Site is located ca. 200m to the north of the main street of Ballincollig and is accessed via Old Fort Road / L2263.

The Site is predominantly comprised of areas of spoil and bare ground, which are recolonising with scrub, and features sections of treeline along the southern and northern boundaries of the Site.

The Site is bordered to the west by an existing housing development, to the east by the Ballincollig Community Nursing Unit, to the north by the Ballincollig Wastewater Treatment Plant, and sports playing fields associated with Ballincollig GAA Club and Ballincollig AFC, beyond which lies the Ballincollig Regional Park. The L2263 / Old Fort Road is located along the southern perimeter of the Site, followed by existing residential apartments. Refer to Figure 1-2 below.

Figure 1-2: Site Context



1.4 Watercourses within the Vicinity of the Site

As per the Environmental Protection Agency ('EPA') maps, there is one hydrological feature of note within close proximity of the Site: the River Lee (Cork).

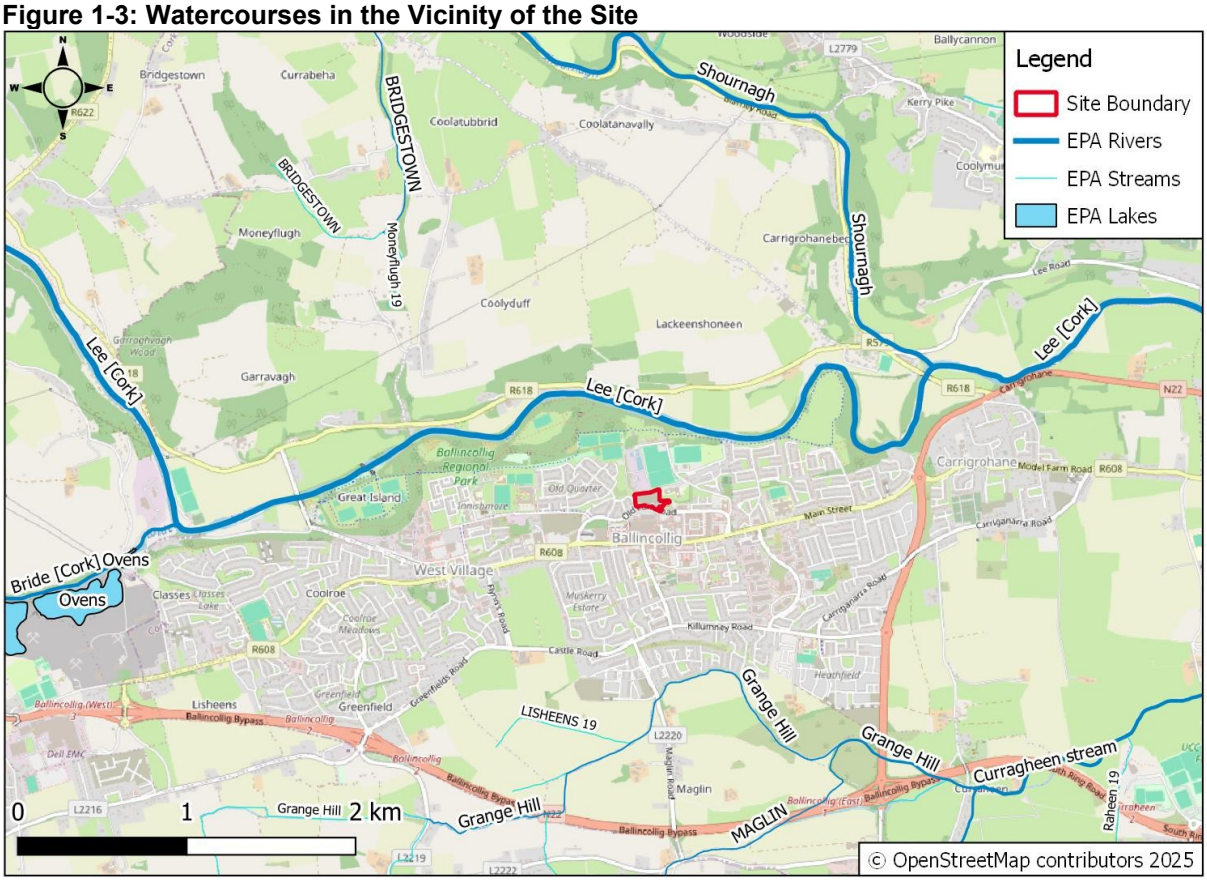
The River Lee (Cork) is located ca. 430m to the north of the Site, at its closest point. This river flows in an easterly direction before draining into Cork Harbour. Cork Harbour forms part of the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area ('SPA'), ca. 15km downstream of the Site.

Under the Water Framework Directive ('WFD') 2000/60/EC, the EPA classifies the status and the risk of not achieving good water quality status for all waterbodies in Ireland [1]. According to the WFD 2019-2024 monitoring events, the water quality within the River Lee (Cork) closest to the Site is considered to be '*moderate,'* and the status of this river is considered *'not at risk'* [1].

The Site is situated within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay WFD Catchment [Catchment_ID: 19], which spans two subcatchments: Lee(Cork)_SC_050 subcatchment [Subcatchment_ID: 19_9] and Lee(Cork_SC_060 [Subcatchment_ID: 19_8] [1].

The location of the key surface water feature in the vicinity of the Site is illustrated in Figure 1-3 below.

Figure 1-3: Watercourses in the Vicinity of the Site



1.4.1 Drainage Ditches

The Office of Public Works ('OPW') Flood Maps identify Drainage Districts, Arterial Drainage Schemes and Benefited Areas [2]. Arterial Drainage Schemes were works that were carried out under the Arterial Drainage Act, 1945 to improve land for agriculture and to mitigate flooding. The Benefited land identifies land that was drained as part of the Drainage District to improve land for agriculture and mitigate flooding.

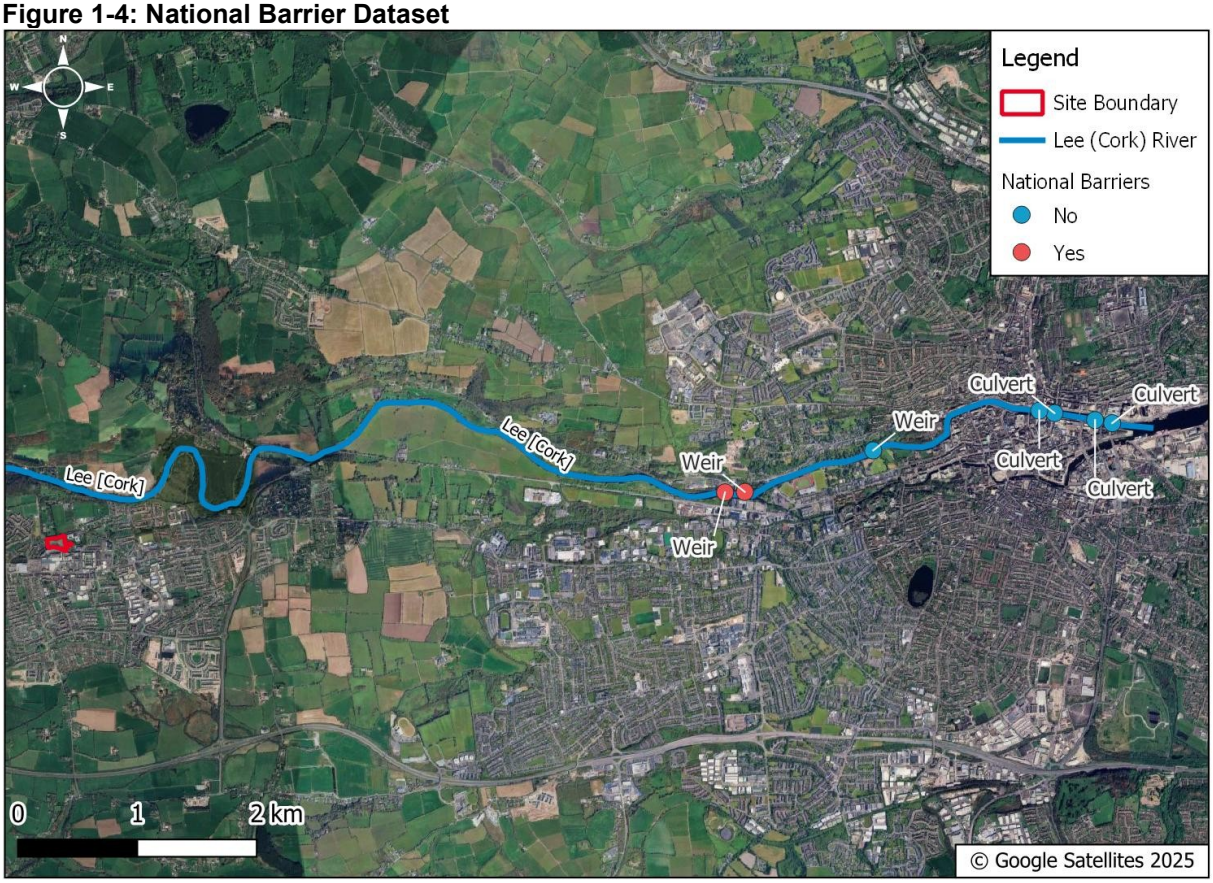
The Site walkover did not identify any drainage ditches within the Site boundary of the Proposed Development. In addition, the Site does not form part of any of the benefited areas under the Arterial Drainage Schemes [2].

1.4.2 National Barriers Scheme

Irish rivers are heavily fragmented by weirs, dams, sluices, culverts, bridges and other artificial barriers. Therefore, the National Barriers Programme ('NBP') database was created as a national database of potential barriers to fish passage and includes assessing structures which can impact on both fish passage and hydromorphology [3].

As per the NBP Dataset, seven barriers were identified along the River Lee (Cork) river waterbody. Two of these barriers were identified as weirs, which act as barriers. One was identified as a weir, which does not act as a barrier. Four were identified as culverts which do not act as barriers. Please refer to Figure 1-4 below.

Figure 1-4: National Barrier Dataset



1.5 Guidance and Legislative Context

The following guidance documents were adhered to for the preparation of this AA report:

- Office of the Planning Regulator ('OPR') Practice Note PN01, *Appropriate Assessment for Screening for Development Management,* The Office of the Planning Regulator [4];
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission [5];
- *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management [6];
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC,* European Commission [7];
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities*, DoEGLH [8]; and,
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10*, DoEGLH [9].

This AA Screening report was prepared in accordance with and in compliance with the following legislation:

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna, better known as "The Habitats Directive". This provides the framework for legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the

legislative means to protect habitats and species of community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive was transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. 477 / 2011) (as amended) [10].

For completeness, the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states "*European site*" means:

- A candidate site of Community Importance ('cSCI');
- A site of Community Importance ('SCI');
- A Special Area of Conservation ('SAC');
- A candidate Special Area of Conservation ('cSAC'); or,
- A Special Protection Area ('SPA').

SACs are designated under the Habitats Directive, and SPAs are designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC as amended 2009/149/EC) (better known as "The Birds Directive").

Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment.

> *"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implication for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public".*

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, and compensatory measures. First, the project should aim to avoid any negative effects on European sites by identifying possible effects early in the planning stage and designing the project in order to avoid such effects. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse effects on the site(s) remain. If the project is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, it must be rejected unless it follows the process established under Article 6(4). If the project is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI test) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effects.

1.6 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

There are four distinct stages to undertaking an AA as outlined in current European Union ('EU') and Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government ('DoEHLG') guidance:

Stage 1: Screening

This process identifies the potential effects of a plan or project on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and considers whether these effects are likely to be significant. If potentially significant effects are identified, the plan or project cannot be screened out and must proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

Where potentially significant effects are identified, an assessment of their potential mitigation is required; this stage considers the appropriateness of those mitigation measures in the context of maintaining the integrity of the European Designated sites. If potential significant effects cannot be eliminated with appropriate mitigation measures, the plan or project must either be rejected or the assessment must proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

This process examines alternative ways to achieve the objectives of the plan or project that avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the European Designated site if mitigation measures are deemed insufficient. If alternative solutions are identified, then the [lan or project may be amended to fit the new parameters. If no viable alternative solutions exist, then the plan or project must either be rejected, or the assessment can move to Stage 4.

Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest ('IROPI')

Assessment where no alternative solution exists for a plan or project, and where adverse effects remain. This includes an assessment of compensatory measures, which, in the case of projects or plans, can be considered necessary for IROPI. If the plan or project is deemed IROPI, then a robust compensation and mitigation package will be devised to support the project, and it may be allowed to proceed.

2 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Screening determines whether AA is necessary by examining:

1. Whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of a European site; and,
2. Whether the project will have a potentially significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Screening involves the following:

i) Description of a plan or project;

ii) Identification of relevant European sites and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives;

iii) Assessment of likely effects – direct, indirect and cumulative – undertaken based on available information as a desk study, field survey or primary research as necessary; and,

iv) Screening Statement with conclusions.

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Determining Zone of Influence

The starting point for this assessment was to determine the Zone of Influence. The Zone of Influence ('ZoI') comprises the area in which the Proposed Development may potentially affect the conservation objectives (or qualifying interests) of a European site.

Previous guidance for 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland' noted that a distance of 15km is recommended for the identification of relevant European sites [8]. However, guidance from the Office of the Planning Regulator ('OPR') and guidance from the NPWS recommend that the distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors and the potential for in-combination effects (cumulative) [9, 4]. For some projects, the distance could be greater than 15km, and in some cases, less than 100m.

The definition of the ZoI for the proposed works includes evaluating the following:

- Identification of the European sites that are situated within, in close vicinity or downstream within the zone of influence of the Proposed Development;
- Identification of the designated habitats and species and Conservation Objectives for the identified European sites;
- Identification of the environmental conditions that stabilise and increase the qualifying interests of the European sites towards favourable conservation status;
- Identification of the threats / effects – actual or potential that could negatively affect the conservation objectives for the European sites;
- Identifying the activities of the proposed works that could give rise to significant adverse effects; and,
- Identification of other plans or projects for which in-combination effects would likely have significant adverse effects.

2.1.2 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

European sites are only at risk from significant effects where a source-pathway-receptor link exists between a Proposed Development and European sites. This can take the form of a direct effect (e.g. where the Proposed Development is located within / in close vicinity to the boundary of a European site), or an indirect effect where effects outside of the European site but affect ecological receptors within (e.g. effects to water quality which can affect estuarine habitats at a distance from the impact source).

The likely effects of the Proposed Development on any European site have been assessed using a source-pathway-receptor model. A source-pathway-receptor model is a standard tool used in environmental assessment and is recommended by OPR Guidance [11, 12]. The model comprises:

- A source: any potential effects from the Proposed Development, e.g. the runoff of sediment / construction pollution;
- A pathway: the means or route by which a source can affect the ecological receptor; and,
- A receptor: the qualifying interests and / or special conservation interests of the European sites.

In order to establish the ZoI of the Proposed Development works, the likely key environmental effects / changes associated with the Proposed Development were determined, having regard to the project characteristics set out in Section 3.3 of this report. The ZoI for various potential impact pathways are discussed in Section 4.1.

2.1.3 Desk-Based Studies

A desk-based review of information sources was completed, which included the following sources of information:

- Review of aerial maps of the Site and surrounding area;
- The National Parks and Wildlife Service ('NPWS') website was consulted with regard to the most up-to-date details on conservation objectives for the European sites relevant to this assessment [13];
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre ('NBDC') website was consulted with regard to species distributions [14];
- The Environmental Protection Agency ('EPA') Maps website was consulted to obtain details about watercourses in the vicinity of the Site [1];
- The Inland Fisheries Ireland ('IFI') website was consulted to obtain details about the National Barrier Programme [3];
- The CCC Planning Portal to obtain details about existing / proposed developments in the vicinity of the Site [15]; and,
- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's planning portal – the National Planning Application Database was reviewed to obtain details about existing / proposed developments in the vicinity of the Site [16].

2.1.4 Field Survey

An initial Site walkover was undertaken as part of the previous application on 27th August 2021.

An updated habitat walkover was undertaken on 25th September 2025. A follow-up habitat survey was undertaken on 9th October 2025 using the Heritage Council's '*Guide to Habitats in Ireland'* [17] and conducted in line with the Heritage Council's '*Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey & Mapping'* [18]. This is the standard habitat classification system used in Ireland and includes both a desk-based and field-based assessment.

All surveys aimed to assess the extent and quality of habitats present on the Site and to identify any potential ecological receptors associated with the European sites. The assessments were also extended to identify the potential for these habitats to support other features of nature conservation importance, such as species afforded legal protection under either Irish or European legislation.

2.1.4.1 Invasive species

The Site was visually assessed for the presence of any noxious / invasive species that are regulated under the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 374/2024) [19], such as Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) and Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

The Site was also assessed for the presence of non-regulated invasive species that have the potential to effect local biodiversity.

2.1.4.2 Survey Limitations

There was limited access to a scrub area in the northeast section of the Site. Access to part of the treeline along the northern boundary was also impeded by a steep change in gradient, in which there was inaccessible scrub habitat.

However, given the nature and size of the habitats on site and its location within an urban / residential setting, it is not considered that this survey limitation will alter the findings of this assessment and therefore no further surveys are considered necessary as part of the AA.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Applicant intends to apply for permission for development at Old Fort Road in Ballincollig town centre. The development will consist of the following components:

- A Large Scale Residential Development ('LRD') located at Old Fort Road, Ballincollig, Cork, comprising the construction of 157 no. residential apartments (consisting of a mix of 1 and 2 bed units), in a development of 3 no. blocks ranging in height from 2 to 6 storeys;
- 1 no. childcare facility; and,
- All associated site development works including footpaths, cycle lanes, car and cycle parking, drainage, bin stores, lighting, boundary treatment, landscaping/amenity areas, plant rooms and an ESB Substation. The provision of a new tabletop junction and access to the site will be provided along Old Fort Road

Further details can be found in the Planning and Engineering reports prepared as part of the overall planning application. The drawing 25030-PL-100 Site Plan Ground Floor Plan in Appendix A.

3.1 Drainage

The foul and surface water / stormwater drainage network for the Proposed Development will connect to existing services already on the Site.

Surface Water Drainage

There is an existing surface water drainage system on-site, which forms a part of the Ballincollig Town Centre development. The Site will therefore drain to the Ballincollig Town Centre main drainage. There is an existing 900DIA storm pipe which enters the site from the east and flows northwest and ultimately to its discharge point at the River Lee. This existing pipe will be diverted as it runs through apartment block B & C. The existing capacity of the storm pipe as it travels through the site is 3556l/s, but immediately upstream of the Site, the gradient is ~1:350 with a capacity of 1061l/s. The diverted pipe has a decreased capacity from 3556l/s due to a longer run being required to avoid the apartment blocks and existing foul pipe. The main run of the diverted pipe slopes at 1:63 and has a capacity of 2513l/s, which is larger than the upstream pipe and will not have a reduction to the capacity of the overall scheme. An existing way leave is present for the 900DIA pipe, and a 10m way leave is present for the diverted run of pipe.

Refer to JODA Engineering Consultants Drawing 3866-JODA-02-ZZ-DR-C-2001 (Storm Layout) for further details.

Foul Water Drainage

There is an existing foul drainage system at the Site. The existing foul drainage system runs along the eastern boundary (225mm) and along a portion of the northern boundary (300mm) from east to west. It is proposed to add a series of foul manholes on the Site, adjacent to each housing block. This proposed drainage system will run south to north and drain into the existing foul drainage network along the northern boundary.

There is an existing 225mm wastewater gravity sewer located at the southeast corner of the site, which flows north to an existing manhole within the northern Site boundary. The flow direction is west from the existing manhole towards the Ballincollig Wastewater Treatment Plant ('WWTP'), where the discharge point is. There is an existing way to leave on the west-flowing pipe, which will be retained .

Uisce Éireann has issued a Confirmation of Feasibility (CDS25007197) regarding the capacity of the existing infrastructure, a copy of which is included in Appendix 1 of the JODA Engineers Report.

Details on the Drainage Layout can be found in the JODA Engineering Services Report.

3.2 Proposed Watermain

The water supply to this development will be taken from an existing 250mm internal diameter HDPE pipe running along the road to the south of the Site, supplied from the Inniscarra water supply reservoir. A 150mm watermain is to connect to the existing 250mm watermain in accordance with the Irish Water Code of Practice for Water Infrastructure and the Irish Water 5Infrastructure Standards.

Uisce Éireann has issued a Confirmation of Feasibility (CDS25007197) statement for the development. Refer to Appendix A of the JODA Engineers Report.

3.3 Site Access

The Site will be accessed via an existing entrance on the L2263 / Old Fort Road.

3.4 Landscaping

A comprehensive Landscape Design Pack has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin detailing the landscape design strategy and design principles for the Proposed Development. Accompanying this pack includes the following documents and drawings:

- Tree Survey;
- Tree Survey and Tree Protection Measures;
- Landscape Plan;
- Landscape Sections;
- Boundary Treatment; and,
- Planting Schedule, SuDS and Playground details.

Further details on the proposed landscaping can be found in the above-listed documents and drawings prepared by Brady Shipman Martin and submitted as part of the planning application.

3.5 Construction Procedures

During the Construction Phase, the methods of working will comply with all relevant legislation and best practice guidelines in reducing the environmental adverse effects of the works. Although Construction Phase adverse effects are generally of a short-term duration and are localised in nature, the adverse effects will be reduced as far as practicable through compliance with current construction industry guidelines.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP') will be prepared by the appointed contractor and will be submitted to the planning authority in advance of works commencing at the Site. The following guidance will be referred to and will be followed during the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development to prevent water pollution that may occur within the area:

- C532 – Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites. Guidance for Consultants and Contractors [20];
- C811 - Environmental Good Practice on Site (5th edition) [21];
- C697 – The SUDS Manual [22]; and,
- C698 - Site Handbook for the Construction of SUDS [23].

A construction compound and site offices will be set up at the entrance of the Site.

Working hours will generally be restricted to between 08:00 – 18:00 hours Monday to Friday inclusive and between 08:00 – 14:00 hours on Saturdays. Construction work will not be permitted on Sundays, public holidays or at night-time except where safety concerns necessitate it or if agreed in advance with the Planning Authority.

4 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES

In accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance [24], a list of European sites that can be potentially affected by the Proposed Development has been compiled. Guidance for Planning Authorities prepared by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government [8] states that defining the likely zone of impact for the screening and the approach used will depend on the nature, size, location and the likely significant effects of the project. The key variables determining whether or not a particular European site is likely to be negatively affected by a project are:

- The physical distance from the Site to the European site;
- The presence of impact pathways;
- The sensitivities of the ecological receptors; and,
- The potential for in-combination effects.

All SPAs and SACs within 15km have been considered to assess their ecological pathways and functional links.

There is one European site located within 15km of the Site – this is identified in Figure 4-1 and Table 4-1.

Figure 4-1: European sites within 15km of the Site

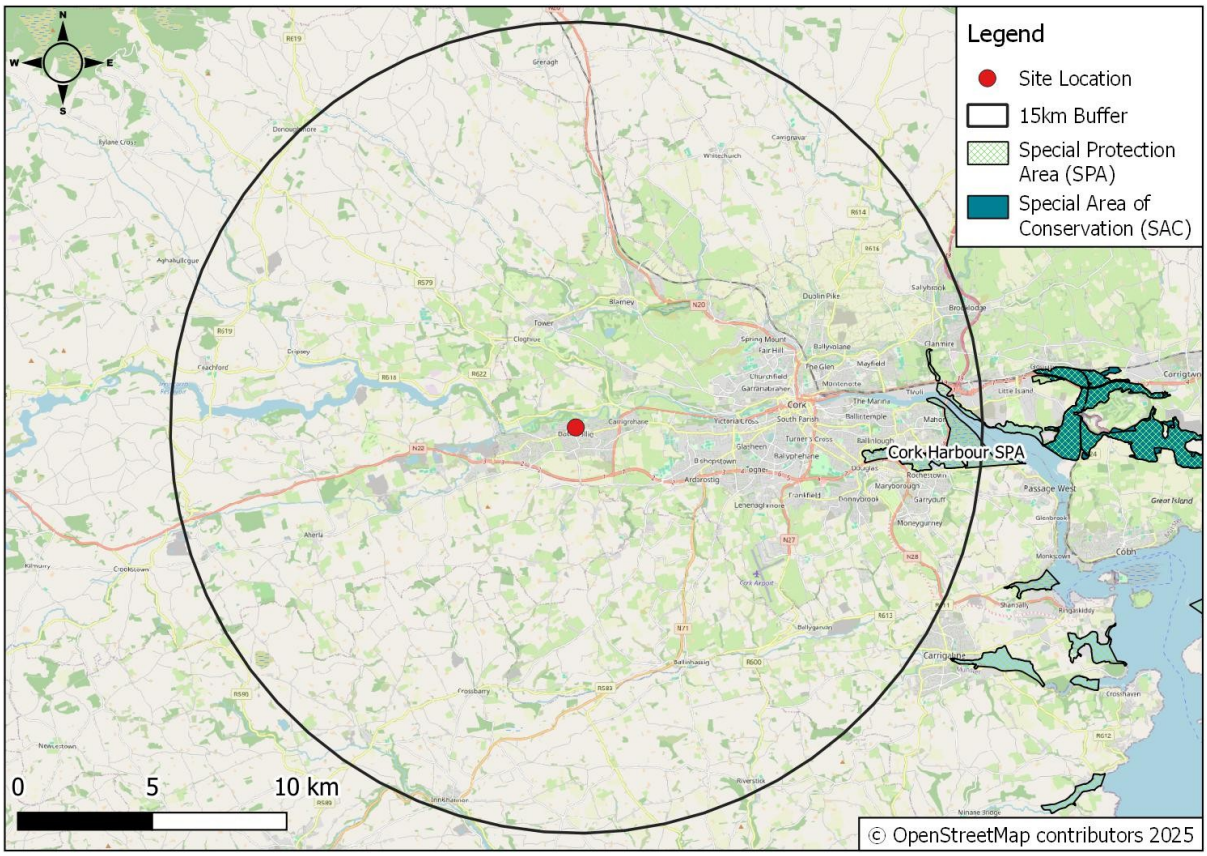


Table 4-1: European Sites within 15km of the Site

Site Name	Code	Distance (km)	Direction from the Site
Special Protection Area ('SPA')			
Cork Harbour SPA	004030	Ca. 10.6km	E

4.1 Identification of European Sites within ZoI

The ZoI comprises the area in which the Proposed Development may potentially affect the conservation objectives (or qualifying interests) of a European site. The definition of ZoI for the proposed works, as outlined in Section 2.1, is evaluated by multiple factors and discussed below. Please note that the extent of ZoI differs for different environmental aspects, e.g. air, water, etc.

4.1.1 Habitat Loss / Degradation

The following section provides details of the most up-to-date habitat survey, which was undertaken for the Site on 9th October 2025. A description of the habitats and features of ecological significance is outlined below and illustrated in Figure 4-2.

Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3)

Artificial surfaces were present along the southern boundary of the Site, comprised of existing footpaths and the local road (L2263 / Old Fort Road). This habitat also extends into the Site from the main entrance off Old Fort Road and occupies the southeastern portion of the Site, continuing eastwards towards the Ballincollig Nursing Home. No notable species were identified.

Refuse and Other Waste (ED5)

Stockpiles of dead wood, garden waste and rubbish were recorded within the central section of the Site. Vegetation had begun to establish within some of these piles; species identified included bramble (*Rubus fructicosus*), and various grass species.

Recolonising Bare Ground (ED3)

This habitat was located primarily within the eastern section of the Site, with a small section also recorded in the northwestern corner of the Site. Species recorded included: common fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*), moss species, red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), smooth cat's ear (*Hypochaeris glabra*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), bramble, ribwort plantain (*Plantain lanceolata*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), pussy willow saplings (*Salix caprea*), butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*), tansy ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), hairy willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), common dogwood saplings (*Cornus sanguinea*), common alder saplings (*Alnus glutinosa*), lesser knapweed (*Centura nigra*), virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), common gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) and one isolated plant of drooping sedge (*Carex pendula*).

Spoil and Bare Ground (ED2)

A large portion of the western section of the Site was comprised of stockpiles of rubble and soil that were recolonised with some vegetation. The species present within this habitat included: butterfly bush, winter heliotrope (*Petasites pyrenaicus*), smooth cat's ear, bramble, ribwort plantain, large bindweed (*Calystegia sylvatica*), virginia creeper, Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), common gorse, red clover, big root geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum*), red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), common vetch (*Vician sativa*), dandelion, bitter dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), doves's foot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*), lesser knapweed, greater bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus pedunculatus*), pussy willow saplings, soft shield fern (*Polystichum setiferum*),

herb robert (*Geranium robertianium*), horse weed (*Conyza canadensis*), moss spp., slender false garlic (*Allium gracile*) creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*) sun spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and pedunculate oak saplings (*Quercus robur*).

Scrub (WS1)

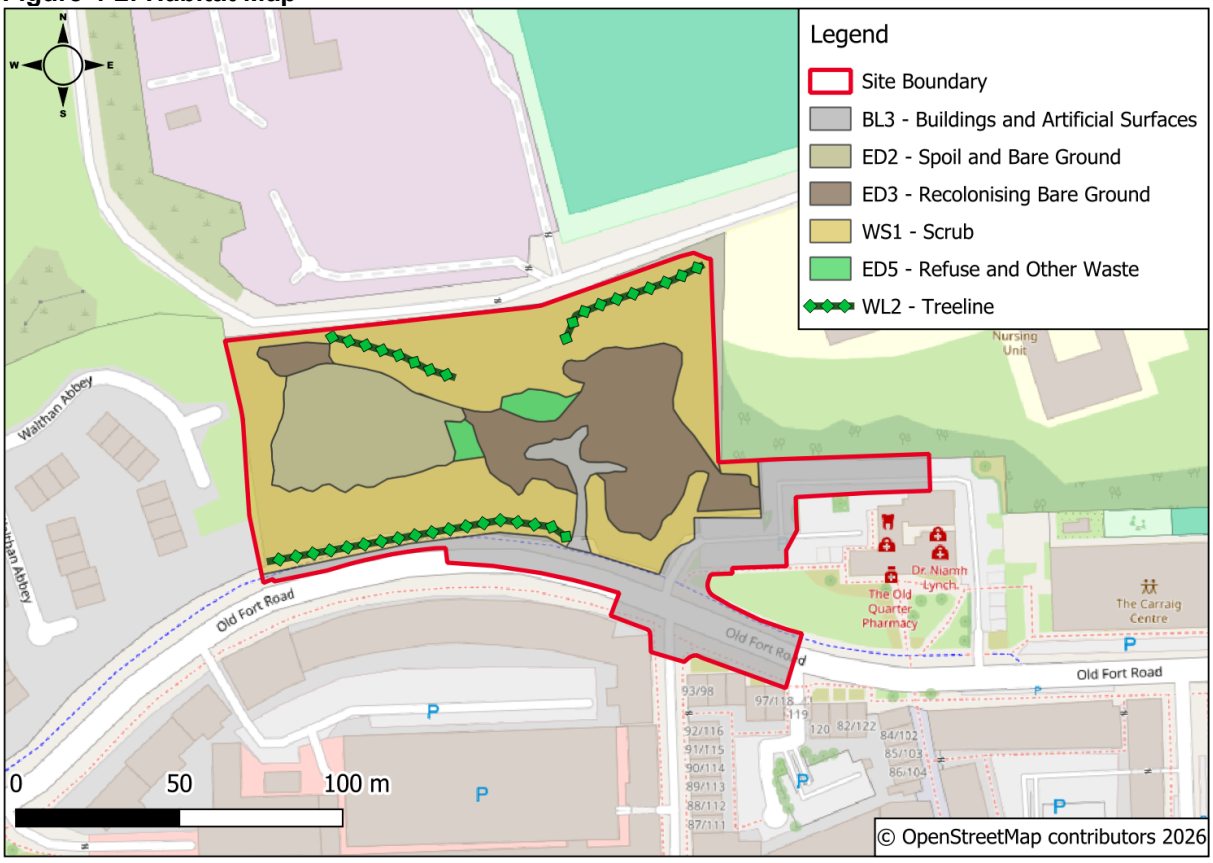
This habitat was recorded along the western boundary, within the northern boundary, and along sections of the eastern boundary. An area of scrub was also noted to the east of the main Site access. The species identified within this habitat included: Pussy willow, common alder, common gorse, bramble, red osier dogwood, butterfly bush, woodland figwort (*Scrophularia nodosa*), common alder saplings, creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*), Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*), ribwort plantain, horseweed, old man's beard (c*lematis vitalba)*, common dogwood, pedunculate oak saplings, common sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*,), smooth cat's ear, dandelion, red clover, hawthorn (*Crategus monogyna*), winter heliotrope, lesser knapweed, meadow buttercup, willowherb, drooping sedge, common vetch, Yorkshire fog, tansy ragwort, creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), dogrose (*Rosa canina*), bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), common nettle and cleavers (*Galium aparine*).

Treeline (WL2)

One treeline was located adjacent to the southern perimeter of the Site. Two mature treelines were also present along the northern boundary. Species present within this habitat included: mature pedunculate oak and mature Lawson's cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), pussy willow, downy birch (*Betula pubescens*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus),* common alder, common dogwood, European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and small leaved lime.

The understorey comprised of bramble, holly (*Ilex acquifolium*), red osider dogwood, old man's beard, butterfly bush, common gorse, hawthorn, horseweed, tansy ragwort, smooth cat's ear, hoary willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), harts tongue fern (*Asplenium scolopendrium*), herb robert, hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), ivy *(helix hedra*), common vetch, meadow buttercup, red clover, soft shield fern, winter heliotrope, dogrose, elder saplings (*Sambucus nigra*) and large bindweed.

Figure 4-2: Habitat Map



The Site is not located within or adjacent to any European designated sites, and no designated habitats were identified within the Site. The Site is located within an urban setting, comprising scrub, an area of artificial surfaces and recolonising bare ground.

Therefore, it can be stated that there will be no direct impacts associated with the designated habitat loss resulting from the Proposed Development.

Given the lack of direct hydrological connection and the intervening lands / distance separating the Site from the European sites, it can be stated that no impacts are associated with habitat loss or degradation as a result of the Proposed Development.

4.1.2 Water Quality Impairment

Potential water quality effects would typically be associated with the release of sediment and other pollutants to surface water during the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development. Therefore, the ZoI would be considered to include the receiving waterbodies adjacent to and downstream of the Site during the Construction Phase within 5km, which is the distance used as the starting point for the assessment of waterbodies based on accepted best practice and professional expertise.

As outlined in Section 1.4, there is no direct hydrological connection between the Site and any nearby EPA watercourses or European sites as listed in Table 4-1. Furthermore, there will be no direct discharges from the Proposed Development to any watercourse during the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development. It should also be noted that the Proposed Development will be separated from all watercourses by the existing urban infrastructure, including the Ballincollig WWTP, residential properties, sports fields and areas of hardstanding.

In addition, all construction work associated with the Proposed Development will be confined to the Site, and there will be no direct discharges from the Proposed Development to any watercourse during the works.

All works will be carried out in accordance with best practice guidelines. Appropriate measures in relation to the storage of fuels and other materials, as well as general Site maintenance, will be implemented on the Site. These measures include the refuelling of vehicles, the addition of hydraulic oil / lubricants to vehicles, and the storage of hazardous construction materials in designated bunded areas. Pollution control kits will also be maintained on the Site, and all Site personnel will be trained in their use and made aware of their location.

During the Operational Phase of the Proposed Development, surface and foul water drainage will be directed through new foul drainage infrastructure. This will connect to the existing public sewer system, which leads to the Ballincollig UWWTP, as outlined in Section 3 above. No attenuation tank is required due to the existing storm sewer having sufficient capacity for any increase in run-off caused by impermeable areas within the Proposed Development. Please refer to the Drainage Impact Assessment prepared by JODA Engineering Services as part of this planning submission for full SUDS details.

Taking the above into account, it can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects on the European Sites without taking mitigation measures into account, and as such, impacts associated with water quality impairment have been screened out from further consideration.

4.1.3 Air Quality Impairment

According to the Institute of Air Quality Management ('IAQM') Guidelines, potential adverse effects from dust arising from construction to ecological receptors occur within 50m of a construction Site [25]. This is a temporary nuisance impact only.

The closest European Site is Cork Harbour SPA, which is located ca. 15km from the Site at its closest point. Therefore, it can be concluded that no impacts associated with dust will occur as a result of the Proposed Development, given the distance separating the Site from the European sites.

It is not considered that the Proposed Development will result in any significant effect on any European site as a result of construction dust.

4.1.4 Noise / Disturbance

Noise from the construction activity has the potential to cause disturbance to resting, foraging and commuting qualifying species of the European sites. As there will be no piling or in-river works required for the Proposed Development, there is no potential for underwater noise impacts beyond the immediate vicinity of the Site.

Individual species will provoke different behavioural responses to disturbances at different distances from the source of disturbance:

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (formerly the National Roads Authority) has produced a series of best practice planning and construction guidelines for the treatment of certain protected mammal species (i.e. otter), which indicate that disturbance to terrestrial mammals would not extend beyond 150m [26]; and,
- Studies have noted that different types of disturbance stimuli are characterised by different avifaunal reactions; however, in general, a distance of 300m can be used to represent the maximum likely disturbance distance for waterfowl [27].

The ZoI for noise / disturbance is therefore established as the Site with a 300m buffer. The Cork Harbour SPA is located outside this ZoI. Furthermore, there are no habitats on site which

are suitable for any of the designated bird species. It should also be noted that a Noise Assessment report was prepared by AWN for the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development and submitted as part of the overall planning application.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects on the European sites and, as such, impacts associated with noise and disturbance have been screened out from further consideration.

4.1.5 Invasive Species

No high-impact invasive species (including those that are regulated under the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 374/2024) [28]) were recorded within the Site.

Five medium impact invasive species were identified on the Site, namely, butterfly bush, winter heliotrope, sycamore, Virginia creeper and Himalayan honeysuckle. These species are non-regulated.

Butterfly bush was present across numerous locations on the Site. Removal will be managed in an appropriate manner as part of the Proposed Development. As discussed above, no impact pathways (including hydrological connections) were identified between the Site and any European Site. Therefore, the control of butterfly bush on site will not affect any European site, and impacts associated with the spread of this species are not considered likely.

Virginia creeper presence was confined to a small section of the recolonising bare ground in the central section of the Site. One Himalayan honeysuckle plant was identified inside the southeastern Site boundary. Removal of these species will also be managed in an appropriate manner as part of the Proposed Development.

No other invasive species were identified on the Site.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects on the European sites and, as such, impacts associated with the spread of invasive species have been screened out from further consideration.

4.2 ZoI Conclusion

The Site is not located within or directly adjacent to any European sites; however, the boundaries of one are located within 15km from the Site.

Given the short duration and localised nature of the construction works, the distance separating the Site from the Cork Harbour SPA, the intervening lands separating the Site from all European sites and the lack of impact pathways, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in adverse effects to any European Site and has therefore been screened out from further consideration.

4.3 Conservation Objectives

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain a favourable conservation status at candidate and European Designated sites. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

According to the EU Habitats Directive, favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and,

- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined below.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- Population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and,
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

5 SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Using professional experience, guidance and judgement, the following factors have been taken into account in identifying potential significant effects on the identified European sites:

- Distance from any European site;
- Qualifying Interests;
- Special Conservation Interests;
- Conservation Objectives;
- The nature of the on-site habitats;
- The location of the Site; and,
- The scale of the Proposed Development.

Based on these factors, **no potential significant effect has been taken forward for further consideration**. This is based on the available information from the field and desk-based assessment as outlined in Section 4.

Overall, the screening exercise **did not identify any other factors** that could result in any direct or indirect loss or disturbance to any of the Annex I habitats or Annex I or II species for which the European sites are designated. It can be stated that the Proposed Development will not cause:

- Any reduction or impacts on designated habitats or European sites;
- Direct or indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment of any European site;
- Any serious or ongoing disturbance to species or habitats for which any European site is designated; or,
- Direct or indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations at any European site.

Based on the Source-Pathway-Receptor ('SPR') risk assessment principle, there is no ecological or functional link between the Proposed Development and any European sites.

5.1 Analysis of 'In-Combination' Effects

The Habitats Directive requires competent authorities to make an appropriate assessment of any plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

As described above, the proposed work alone is unlikely to have any direct or indirect adverse effects on any of the European sites located within 15km of the Site.

A review of the CCC Planning ePlan website did not identify any current or previous granted plans or projects in the immediate vicinity that are considered likely in-combination with the Proposed Development to result in significant effects on European sites [15]. It should be noted that there are an additional two residential developments currently before CCC seeking planning permission.

This statement is supported by:

I. The distances separating the Site from European sites;
II. The lack of impact pathways between the Site and European sites:
III. The urban setting of the local environment; and,

IV. The small scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development.

Taking the above into account, it is therefore concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects in-combination with any other plans or projects on the Cork Harbour SPA.

6 SCREENING CONCLUSIONS AND STATEMENT

The screening process has examined the details of the Proposed Development and has considered the potential for causing adverse effects on European sites and their qualifying features of interest within a 15km radius of the Site.

One European site is located within a 15km radius of the Site – the Cork Harbour SPA. However, given scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development, and the lack of impact pathways between the Site and European sites, as described in Section 4 and Section 5, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any significant effects either directly or indirectly on the conservation objectives or status of the listed European site and will not result in the direct loss or disturbance of any Annex I habitats and / or Annex II species for which the European site is designated.

It can be stated that the Proposed Development will not cause:

- Any reduction in the area or the habitat of any European site;
- Direct or indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment of any European site;
- Any serious or ongoing disturbance to species or habitats for which any European site is designated; or,
- Direct or indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations of any European site.

It has been objectively concluded, following an examination, analysis, and evaluation of the relevant information, that the Proposed Development either alone, or in-combination with other plans, projects or land uses, will not have any direct or indirect significant effects on any European sites in light of the Site's conservation objectives and best scientific knowledge, and no reasonable scientific doubt exists in relation to this conclusion.

Accordingly, the progression to Stage 2 of the AA process (i.e., preparation of a Natura Impact Statement) is not considered necessary.

7 REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



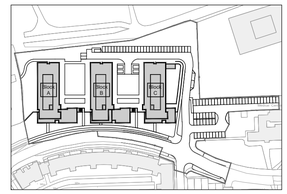
Site Plan - Ground Floor Plan

Scale 1:500@A1

N

NOTE:
- DO NOT SCALE. USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY
- THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT SPECIFICATIONS AND DRAWINGS.
- ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE.
- IN THE EVENT OF ANY DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN DRAWINGS THE CONTRACTOR IS TO INFORM THE ARCHITECT IMMEDIATELY

REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRWN	CHKD.	APP'RD
A	23.09.2025	Issued for 247 Meeting	COC	PH	PH
B	10.12.2025	Issued for 328 Meeting	COC	PH	PH
C	17.04.2026	Issued for Info	COC	PH	PH
D	08.06.2026	Issued for Info	COC	PH	PH



N

Key Plan

Scale 1:2500@A1

NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETERS
2. FURNITURE AND FITTINGS SHOWN ARE INDICATIVE

LEGEND-

- 1-Bed Units Min
- 1-Bed Units +10%
- 2-Bed (3-person) Units Min
- 2-Bed (3-person) Units +10%
- 2-Bed (4-person) Units Min
- 2-Bed (4-person) Units +10%
- SITE BOUNDARY
- ADJOINING SITE ALSO IN CONTROL OF THE APPLICANT
- RIGHTS OF WAY / WAYLEAVES
- INDICATES FINISHED FLOOR LEVEL

Reference Index:
Map Series | Map Sheets
1:1,000 | 6380-20
1:1,000 | 6380-19

CAR PARKING

	Regular	Disabled
New Spaces	48	5
Repurposed Spaces	38	0
TOTAL	91	
Car Space to Unit Ratio	0.6	

UNIT SUMMARY

	1-Bed		2-Bed (3-Person)		2-Bed (4-Person)		Total
	Min	+10%	Min	+10%	Min	+10%	
	28	49	3	5	70	2	
TOTAL	77		8		72		157
Unit Mix %	49.0 %		5.1 %		45.9 %		

UNIT TYPES		Description	Number	Area	1-Bed	2-Bed (3P)	2-Bed (4P)		+10%
1921_1B-01		1-Bed	28	45.6 m²	28				
1921_1B-02		1-Bed	34	49.5 m²	34				34
1921_1B-03		1-Bed	12	49.7 m²	12				12
1921_1B-04		1-Bed	3	50.6 m²	3				3
1921_2B-01		2-Bed (3P)	3	63.4 m²		3			
1921_2B-02		2-Bed (3P)	5	70.6 m²		5			5
1921_2B-03		2-Bed (4P)	62	73.2 m²			62		
1921_2B-04		2-Bed (4P)	7	73.2 m²			7		
1921_2B-06		2-Bed (4P)	2	81.8 m²			2		2
1921_2B-07		2-Bed (4P)	1	78.2 m²			1		
Totals					77	8	72		56
					49.0%	5.1%	45.9%		35.7%
Total Units					157				
Net Site Area					1.206 Ha				
Net Density					130.2 per Ha				

WILSON ARCHITECTURE

OMM|W

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Apartment Development
Ballincollig
OFlynn Construction

Site Plan
Ground Floor Plan

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN BY	CHECKED	REVISION No.	DRAWING NO.
1:1000@A3 1:500@A1	June 2026	CG	PH	D	2530 - PL - 100

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