AtkinsRéalis

EIA Screening

Cork City Council

August 2024

MODULAR HOUSING MAHON - ESTUARY WAY

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Client signoff

Client	Cork City Council
Project	MODULAR HOUSING MAHON - ESTUARY WAY
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1. Introduction

Cork City Council (CCC) has appointed AtkinsRéalis to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report for the proposed Modular Housing Development at Estuary Way (St. Michael's Drive) (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) in Co. Cork. The EIA screening report will be submitted as part of the Part 8 planning application for the Proposed Development. The site location is shown in Figure 1-1.

1.1 Project Overview

The proposed development will consist of the construction of 38 no. temporary accommodation modular units each with a private garden and all associated site development works, services provision, road infrastructure, landscaping/public realm works and on street car parking spaces. A typical modular unit can accommodate up to 4 no. people in a 2-bed configuration, depending on the unit. Each unit is designed to be transported by road unescorted and placed in pairs on site. Each unit has a "soft spot" in the circulation area party walls to allow two units to be connected. This would be used to accommodate for larger family units. The units are designed to be mobile and can be used as temporary accommodation or repurposed as permanent housing. The site will also have a public open space at St. Michael's Drive. A layout of the site is shown in Figure 1-2.

It is estimated that the site preparation, and civil and structural construction works will last between 12-18 months. It is also estimated that at its peak, there may be up to 50 personnel working at the site on a given day. Locations of construction compounds and off-site staff and visitor parking during construction will be agreed with Cork City Council but will be located on site.

As taken from O'Mahony Pike Design Statement there will be a total of 38 no. units put on site with the total footprint covered by buildings 2371m². There will be 12 no. standard car parking spaces and 2 no. accessible spaces. The total number of bedspaces will comprise 34 no. type 1A 2-bed units (including the provision for optional layouts Type 1B, 1C and 1D) and 2 no. Type 2A 2-bed accessible units (including provision for optional layout Type 2B). There will also be 2 no. Type 1B communal/office space (including the provision for optional layouts Type 1A, 1C and 1D) units located within the site. There will be 2 no. set-down spaces and communal open space (c. 780sqm). Relocation of the existing bus stop to allow for site entrance and construction of 1 no. ESB unit substation will occur. The units will be comprised of metal (or similar) cladding, double glazed windows and doors, a flat roof with membrane and parapet, and will be built in complete and weatherproof upon arrival to site. Units will be mostly identical with variations in location of bedroom windows to suit internal configuration. An external wall will be built to accommodate services such as the electricity meter box, and this will sperate the house entrance to the back garden. It is proposed to use simple timber and steel porches painted in a select few colours, along with matching unit numbered signs and painted garden gates, to provide some differentiation between the units.

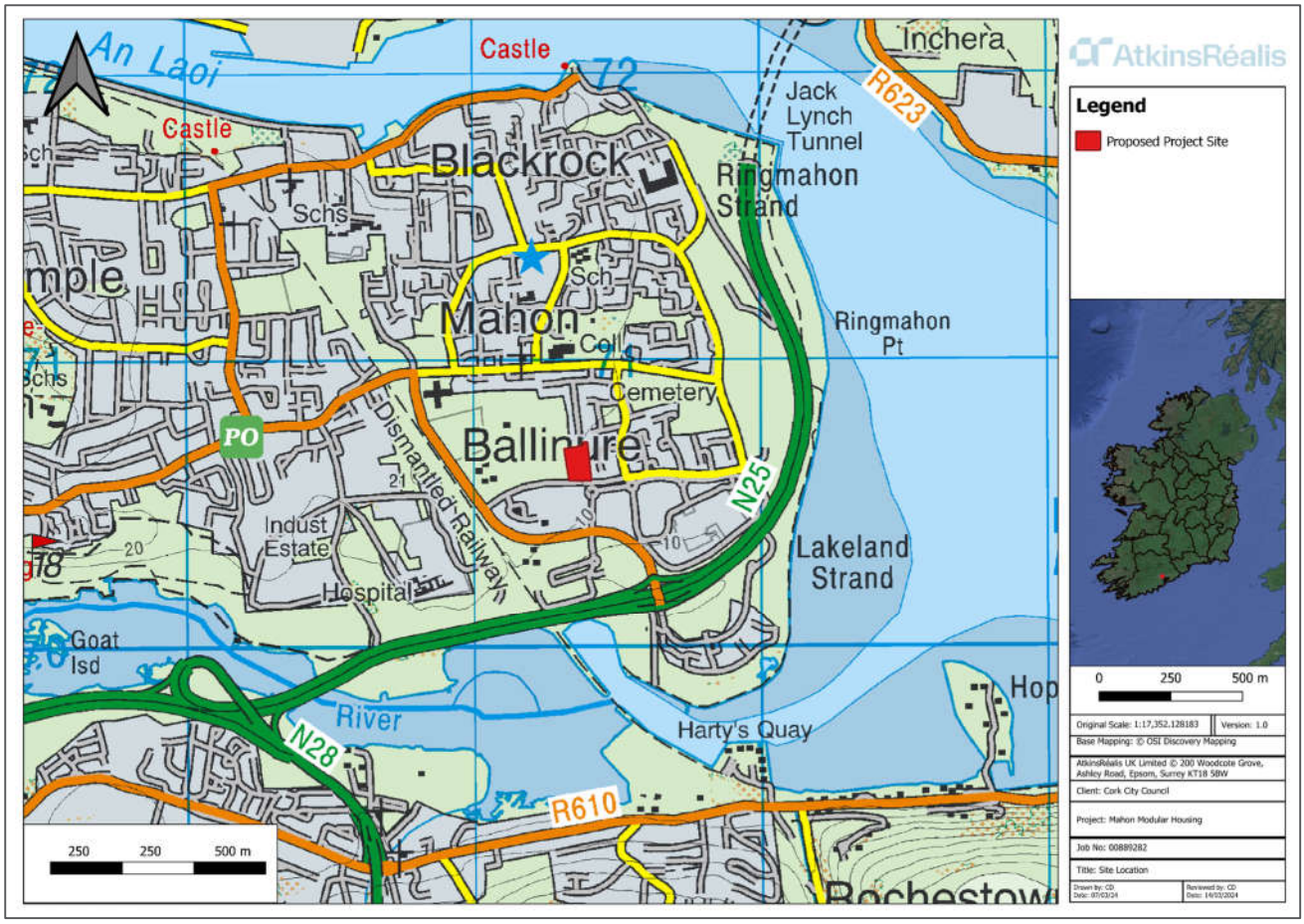

Figure 1-1 – Estuary Way site location at St. Michael's Drive

Figure 1.2 - Aerial view of the proposed project from the southwest (Source: O'Mahony Pike Design Statement, 2024).

1.2 Purpose of this Report

This report has been prepared to support the Part 8 planning application in relation to the proposed Modular Housing Development at Estuary Way (St. Michael's Drive). The purpose of this report is to determine if the development requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The development has been screened to generate a summarised overview of the potential impacts on the receiving environment, and in the context of relevant statutory requirements.

A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment has also been prepared for the Proposed Development (AtkinsRéalis, 2024). The Proposed Development has been assessed with regards to the likely significant effects of the project on European sites within the zone of influence (ZoI) of the Proposed Development. The AA Screening Report concluded that *'the proposed development will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to impacts which would constitute significant effects on the Great Island Channel SAC, Cork Harbour SPA or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it recommended that Cork City Council, as the competent authority, may determine that Appropriate Assessment is not required in respect of the proposed development. Should any aspect of the design or construction methodology for the proposed development be materially changed, a new AA Screening Report would be required.'*

1.3 Site Zoning

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out a strategy for the sustainable development and planning of Cork City building upon the previous Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021. It also outlines the policies and objectives for the future development of the town and its environs.

Some objectives that are relevant to the Proposed Development are as follows:

- ***Objective 3.2 A Diverse, Inclusive and Equal City***

  Cork City Council will seek to ensure that Cork is an inclusive City and meets the needs of all by:

  a. *Providing a land use planning system that ensures an appropriate distribution of land uses, infrastructure and services to give equal access to all residents to live, work, educate, recreate and avail of other services in terms of range and quality;*
  b. *Consciously considering specific population groups in the design of neighbourhoods, places, buildings, streets and spaces to meet the needs of all citizens;*
  c. *Consciously considering specific population groups in the development of planning policy, strategies and frameworks with an emphasis on young people, old people and people with disabilities; and,*
  d. *Promoting measures that reduce concentrations of social inequality between neighbourhoods.*

- ***Objective 3.6 Housing Mix***

  Cork City Council will seek to:

  a. *Implement the provisions of the Joint Housing Strategy and HNDA as far as they relate to Cork City;*
  b. *Encourage the development of an appropriate mix of dwelling types to meet target residential densities, utilising a range of dwelling types and density typologies informed by best practice (as illustrated in "Density Done Well" in the Cork City Density Strategy, Building Height and Tall Building Strategy) with combinations of houses, stacked units and apartments;*
  c. *Within all new residential developments it will be necessary to ensure an appropriate balance of housing tenure and dwelling size to sustain balanced and inclusive communities, including a balance of family*

sized units and smaller dwellings tailored to suit the location (please refer to Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development for those standards);

d. *Deliver at least 20% below-market priced housing across Cork City and ideally within each new residential neighbourhood;*
e. *Encourage the provision of housing for one and two person households in all neighbourhoods to meet the needs of all age groups, including providing for downsizing to release family housing units; and,*
f. *Update Development Plan policy as necessary to reflect emerging national guidance with regard to housing standards.*

As identified within the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 land use zonings within the development site is *'ZO 01, Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods'* with an objective to *'protect and provide for residential uses and amenities, local services and community, institutional, educational and civic uses'.*

It is considered that the Proposed Development is compatible with the zoning requirements of the development strategy for the area, under the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, providing sustainable residential housing and ensuring a diverse, equal and inclusive city.

2. Receiving Environment

The Proposed Development will be constructed within an area of hardstanding that is currently being used a site compound / carpark.

2.1 Hydrology

The Proposed Development is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment area. There are no Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) watercourses within the Proposed Development. To the south of the proposed project is the estuary of the Douglas River. The Douglas estuary discharges into Cork Harbour in the vicinity of Rochestown and Jacob's Island. Douglas estuary and Cork Harbour are categorised by the EPA as Lough Mahon transitional waterbody. Lough Mahon has been assigned 'Moderate' status under the Water Framework Directive and is 'At Risk' of attaining 'Good' status.

2.2 Ecology

There are 2no. European sites within the potential zone of influence (ZoI) of the Proposed Development with the closest designated sites being Cork Harbour SPA located ca. 0.53km south of the site. The other designated site; Great Island Channel SAC is located ca. 4.3km east of the site.

There will be no land take from any of the designated sites within 15km of the Proposed Development and, based on the findings of the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening report (AtkinsRéalis, 2024) there will be no potential significant adverse effects to European sites arising from the Proposed Development.

2.3 Hydrogeology

There are no wells within the project site, with the closest well located ca. 1.72m west of the site. The well use is reported by the GSI (2024) as Public supply – with yield classified as Poor (27.3 m^3d) and is located to a 100m locational accuracy.

There are no designated Public or Group Drinking Water Supply Source Protection Zones within 8km of the Proposed Development (GSI, 2024). The closest Source Protection Zone is the Public Supply Source Protection Area for Carraignabhfear Public Water Supply located ca. 12.4km north of the Proposed Development (GSI, 2024). There are no Group Scheme Preliminary Source Protection areas located within 15km of the Proposed Development site (GSI, 2024).

The Proposed Development is underlain by a regionally important bedrock aquifer which is karstified (diffuse) (GSI, 2024). There are no locally important Gravel Aquifers within the immediate vicinity, with the closest located ca. 1km southwest of the site at their closest; Tramore River Valley. Groundwater vulnerability beneath the northern portion of the site is classified by GSI (2024) as 'High'. The Proposed Development is within the Ballincollig Groundwater Body (EPA Code: IE_SW_G_002) (GSI, 2024).

2.4 Geology

The Proposed Development is underlain by massive and crinoidal fine limestone of the Little Island Formation. There are no karst features within the vicinity of the Proposed Development (GSI, 2024). The closest karst feature is a cave (1707SWK010) located ca. 2.2km to the northwest (GSI, 2024). There are no recorded landslide events in the vicinity of the site. Landslide susceptibility within the site and surrounds is 'made' (GSI, 2024).

There are no Geological Heritage Areas within the project site, with the Beaumont Quarry (Site Code: CC002) being the closest and located ca. 2.1km west of the site.

2.5 Flooding

The site has been assessed in accordance with the “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management” Guidelines. As part of the sequential test, the OPW flood hazard maps have been consulted, as have the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Maps produced by the OPW.

In all cases it was found that the development is at low risk of flooding and the development is deemed appropriate within the proposed site location.

2.6 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

There are no reported Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) features or National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) features located within the project site or the vicinity. The closest feature (Excavation Site – CO074-130) is located ca. 0.15km from the Proposed Development.

3. Description of the Proposed Development

3.1 Nature and Extent of the Proposed Development

3.1.1 Lighting

The public lighting design concept for the Proposed Development is to provide adequate illuminance for vehicular and pedestrian access merging from the main road. The lighting levels shall be compliant with all the relevant standards and guidelines while complementing the Architecture of the development. The design of the public lighting includes low energy LED lighting throughout. Energy efficient light fittings are a key element in reducing the developments energy consumption. High quality optics selected around the ecologically sensitivity areas of the development have also been a key part of the concept design.

The lighting design for the proposed project will use 5 no. luminaires mounted on 6m columns within the site all equipped with a wide street optical distribution beam. The luminaires will be turned on and off by a mounted photocell.

3.1.2 Stormwater Drainage Design

3.1.2.1 Existing Stormwater Drainage

An underground utility survey conducted by Murphy Geospatial in January 2024 revealed details about the stormwater drainage infrastructure in the vicinity the site. Notably, a 900mm diameter concrete stormwater sewer runs along St. Michael's Drive, flowing in an easterly direction.

3.1.2.2 Existing Site Hydrogeology

Rainfall data derived from Met Eireann records indicate the following rainfall parameters are relevant to the site:

- M5-60 = 17.3
- M5-2D = 78.8
- Ratio “R” = 0.22

Ground investigations will be conducted prior to construction. As a basis for the outline design an infiltration rate of 5.1855x10-5 m/s has been assumed for the purpose of sizing the soakaway, based on an adjacent site’s Ground Investigation Report, which included infiltration testing. Guidance from Table 25.1 of the CIRIA SuDS Manual[1] has also been considered, with typical infiltration rates of 1x10-5 m/s to 5x10-5 m/s expected for subsoils of a gravelly/sandy/clayey nature. Nonetheless, site-specific soakaway testing will be performed before commencement to provide a more accurate estimation of the available infiltration rate.

3.1.2.3 Proposed Stormwater Drainage

The surface water drainage strategy for the proposed park development will adhere to the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), as detailed in Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of Punch Consulting Engineers Engineering Planning Report. The overall strategy involves collecting runoff from impermeable surfaces using buried pipework, which will direct the water to two soakaway systems located beneath grassed public open spaces, as such the site is split in two sub-catchments, Sub-Catchment 1 (North) and Sub-Catchment 2 (South).

[1] https://www.ciria.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=C753F&Category=FREEPUBS

Due to the southern sub-catchment of the site having provision for car parking spaces, a by-pass petrol interceptor will be installed as a pre-treatment measure before discharging to the southern soakaway. Additionally, each of the two inlet manholes to the soakaway systems will include a 0.5m sump.

All surface water runoff from the proposed development will be managed within the site boundary, infiltrating naturally into the ground without discharging into any existing surface water drainage networks. This approach ensures a sustainable and self-sufficient means of surface water management, replicating pre-development conditions by returning water to the ground at its source. The existing footpaths on St. Michael's Drive will remain draining to existing gullies on the public carriageway.

The proposed surface water drainage system has been designed using Causeway Flow software, in accordance with the Department of Environment and Local Government's guidance document "Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas"[2]. Further design parameters and guidance were adopted from the following documents:

- Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study, 2005.
- Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works, 2005.
- CIRIA Report C753 – The SuDS Manual v6, 2015.
- CIRIA Report C768 – Guidance on the construction of SuDS, 2017.
- BRE Digest 365 – Soakaway design, 2016.
- Flood Studies Report, 1975.
- Cork City Development Plan, 2022-2028.

A new surface water sewer network, entirely separate from the foul water sewer network, will be provided for the development.

3.1.2.4 Compliance with GDSDS and SuDS Principles

The Proposed Development is designed in full accordance with the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as recommended by the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS)[3]. The GDSDS promotes sustainability by requiring designs to comply with specific drainage criteria that aim to minimize the impact of urbanization by replicating the runoff characteristics of the greenfield site. These criteria ensure a consistent approach to managing the increase in both the rate and volume of runoff, as well as protecting the environment from pollution caused by roads and buildings.

To satisfy SuDS requirements, developments typically incorporate:

- Interception storage.
- Treatment storage (unnecessary if interception storage is adequate).
- Attenuation storage.
- Long-term storage (unnecessary if QBAR growth factors are not applied in attenuation storage design).

In the case of the proposed project, surface water discharge will be managed entirely through infiltration via 2 no. soakaways, which are equipped to handle attenuation storage needs for storm events up to the 1% AEP event. This approach negates the need for off-site surface water discharge, ensuring full interception storage and eliminating the requirement for treatment or long-term storage.

[2] https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/857d0-recommendation-for-site-development-work-for-housing-areas-1998/

[3] https://www.water.ie/projects/local-projects/greater-dublin/publications/

3.1.2.5 SuDS Proposals

The Proposed Development has been assessed in relation to SuDS. A variety of SuDS measures may be adopted to comply with Council recommendations. All SuDS measures are to be implemented with reference to the UK SuDS Manual and Cork City Council drainage requirements.

The SuDS processes decrease the impact of the development on the receiving environment by providing amenity and biodiversity in many cases. Regular maintenance of the SuDS proposals is required to ensure they are operating to their optimal level throughout their design life. The specific measures adopted for the proposed development have been agreed in principle with Cork City Council and comprise the following:

3.1.2.5.1 Rainwater Butts

Runoff from the roof is considered 'clean' and is often reused for facilities such as toilet flushing, landscape irrigation etc. For this development roof runoff from the residential units is being directed to a rainwater butt. The rainwater butt will be equipped with a high-level overspill pipe to connect to the proposed stormwater drainage system.

3.1.2.5.2 Soakaways

The soakaways will provide the required level of attenuation storage within the voids in the proprietary cellular storage system. The base and sides of the soakaways will be lined. The proposed soakaways will accommodate the 1% AEP (annual exceedance probability) rainfall event with an allowance for 20% climate change, using an assumed infiltration rate of 5.885 x 10-5 m/s. Site-specific soakaway testing will be carried out prior to commencement to establish a more accurate estimation of the available infiltration rate. The proposed soakaways will be proprietary cellular storage crate soakaway systems with the following measurements:

- Soakaway North volume 185m³ - 13.5m long by 8m wide by 1.8m deep.
- Soakaway South volume 152m³ – 10m long by 8m wide by 2m deep.
- Total volume = 337m³.

Both soakaways will have a voids ratio of approximately 95%. Additionally, both soakaways will have a 0.5m sump located upstream of the soakaway inlet.

3.1.2.5.3 Petrol Interceptor

It is proposed that all surface water run-off from car park areas will outfall via a Class 1 Bypass Separator located upstream of the proposed southern soakaway. This device will remove hydrocarbons and fine sediment particles from the site runoff and lower the risk of downstream contamination following an oil spillage on site.

Bypass separators fully treat all flows generated by rainfall rates of up to 6.5mm/hr. This covers over 99% of all rainfall events. Flows above this rate are allowed to bypass the separator. These separators are used when it is considered an acceptable risk not to provide full treatment for high flows, for example where the risk of a large spillage and heavy rainfall occurring at the same time is small.

Class 1 devices are designed to achieve a concentration of less than 5mg/l of oil under standard test conditions.

The by-pass separator for the Proposed Development has been sized in accordance with IS EN 858-2:2003.

3.1.3 Foul Water Drainage Design

3.1.3.1 Existing Foul Water Drainage

Uisce Éireann's online records indicate a 300mm diameter foul sewer running along St. Michael's Drive. However, a utility survey conducted by Murphy Geospatial in January 2024 suggests it is a 225mm diameter uPVC pipe. A slit trench will be dug prior to construction to confirm the exact size of the existing foul sewer. For this report, it is assumed Uisce Éireann's records are accurate, and a 300mm diameter foul sewer will be referenced throughout.

It should be noted that investigations, including tracing and CCTV, are underway to confirm whether the 225mm diameter foul water sewer to the north of the site crosses the site. According to the Uisce Éireann Confirmation of Feasibility letter, if the sewer does traverse the site, it will be diverted during the detailed design works.

3.1.3.2 Proposed Foul Water Drainage

The proposed foul water sewers have been designed using Causeway Flow software in accordance with the DOE's "*Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas*"[4]. The foul loading has been calculated in accordance with "*Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure*" (particularly clause 36, Appendix C and Appendix D)[5] published by Uisce Éireann.

It is proposed that the foul sewer will discharge by gravity to the existing 300mm diameter public foul sewer on St. Michael's Drive.

A Pre-Connection Enquiry Form has been issued to Uisce Éireann in relation to the proposed development. Uisce Éireann has provided a response, advising that the wastewater connections is feasible without any infrastructure upgrade.

3.1.4 Watermain Design

3.1.4.1 Existing Watermain

Uisce Éireann record drawings indicate that a 250mm ductile iron watermain runs parallel to the southern boundary of the site, along Saint Michael's Drive. This was subsequently confirmed by a utility survey conducted by Murphy Geospatial in January 2024.

3.1.4.2 Proposed Watermain

It is generally accepted that the design loading for foul drainage can be used to evaluate an approximation of the water demand on the site. With reference to Uisce Éireann's Code of Practice for Water Infrastructure, the average daily flow is calculated as the number of persons multiplied by the flow rate per person. The average day peak week flow is taken to be 1.25 x the average flow, and the peak demand is taken to be the average day peak week flow multiplied by a peaking factor of 5.

On the basis of calculations within the Engineering Planning Report, the development will have an increase in average water demand of 0.2257l/s and a peak water demand of 1.1284l/s.

It is proposed to construct a 100mm diameter watermain to serve the proposed development based on the above calculated demand. The proposed watermain will connect to the existing 250mm diameter ductile iron watermain on St. Michael's Drive.

This feed will provide potable and firefighting water to the proposed development. A bulk water meter shall be provided at the site boundary at the location of the proposed connection to the existing watermain. The watermain layout has been designed in accordance with "Uisce Éireann Code of Practice for Water Infrastructure". All watermains are to be constructed in accordance with Uisce Éireann Code of Practice and the Local Authority's requirements. Fire coverage is to be reviewed and certified by the fire consultant.

To reduce the water demand on Local Authority water supplies and to reduce the foul discharge from the development, water conservation measures will be incorporated in the sanitary facilities throughout the development, e.g., dual flush toilets, monobloc low volume push taps and waterless urinals.

Rainwater harvesting via rainwater butts is also proposed as part of the SuDS design, to service non-potable water supply. This will also serve to improve water reduction.

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[4] https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/130190/a57a21d6-9194-48ad-888c-8b7f2aab8a8b.pdf#page=null

[5] https://www.water.ie/docs/connections/faqs/Wastewater-Code-of-Practice.pdf

A Pre-Connection Enquiry Form has been issued to Uisce Éireann in relation to the proposed development. Uisce Éireann has provided a response, advising that water servicing is feasible without any infrastructure upgrade.

3.1.5 Flooding

Planning guidelines on flood risk and development have been published by the OPW and Department of Environment, Heritage, and Local Government (DoEHLG).

3.1.5.1 Fluvial Flood Risk

Fluvial flooding occurs when a river exceeds its capacity and overflows onto the adjacent floodplain. The Proposed Development is not located near any rivers, so there is no fluvial flood risk to the site.

3.1.5.2 Pluvial Flood Risk

Pluvial flooding results from overland flows of rainfall-generated runoff before it can enter any watercourse or sewer, typically associated with high-intensity rainfall. The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) mapping does not identify pluvial flood risk for this site. Additionally, the proposed drainage network is designed to accommodate a 100-year return period plus a 20% climate change allowance, mitigating pluvial flooding concerns.

3.1.5.3 Groundwater Flooding

According to the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) groundwater flooding probability maps[6], there is no groundwater flooding risk in this area.

3.1.5.4 OPW Flood Maps

The OPW Past Flood Event Local Area Summary Report has identified flood events within 2.5 km of the study area, however none of these events directly affect the site area.

3.1.5.5 Flood Risk Assessment Conclusion

The site has been assessed in accordance with the “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management” Guidelines. As part of the sequential test, the OPW flood hazard maps[7] have been consulted, as have the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Maps produced by the OPW.

In all cases the site is deemed appropriate for the proposed residential development.

3.1.6 Road and Access

3.1.6.1 Proposed Roads & Access

Access to the site will be via a new entrance on St. Michael’s Drive. The proposed road layout has been designed following the principles outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)[8] and the Recommendations for Site Development Works. DMURS aims to facilitate the creation of safer, more attractive, and vibrant streets that promote and sustain communities and neighbourhoods. This includes accommodating cars, other vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users.

[6] https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=848f83c85799436b808652f9c735b1cc

[7] https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/

[8] https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3360b1-design-manual-for-urban-roads-and-streets/

Research indicates that narrow carriageways are highly effective for traffic calming. This principle has been integrated into the development's design, resulting in a proposed internal carriageway with a shared surface width of 4.8 meters, compliant with Section 4.4.1 of DMURS.

Auto track assessments were performed on the proposed road network to ensure that emergency vehicles, such as fire tenders, can safely navigate the internal road network and turning heads.

3.1.7 Parking

The Proposed Development will include 12 standard car parking spaces and 2 disabled parking spaces, totalling 14 car parking spaces. This is below the maximum permitted number of 36 spaces under the Cork City Development Plan (CCDP) 2022-2028 (Table 11.13 of the CCDP)[9].

The provision of 2 disabled parking spaces exceeds the 5% requirement under the CCDP 2022-2028. Additionally, 2 set-down spaces will be provided in front of the pedestrian/vehicular gates to the development. Three of the 14 car parking spaces (1 per 5 parking spaces) will be equipped with Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points. The remaining spaces will have the infrastructure for future installation of EV charging points. Bicycle parking is planned to be within the private gardens of the residences; therefore, no designated bicycle parking spaces are proposed.

3.1.8 Landscape Design

All areas of the Proposed Development will receive a landscape treatment of a high standard in terms of materials and specification; both for hard and soft landscape elements. The landscape design relates to the following key areas:

3.1.8.1 Open Space – Central Courtyard

An overlooked courtyard space is proposed within the centre of the scheme. This space shall be edged by the units immediately to the north and south of the space, new walling to the west to aid privacy and set-down and turning area/shared surface to the east with further units edging the zone. A series of pathways surrounding the space offer multiple opportunities and connections for engagement. The following key elements are proposed within the central open space: -

- Pathways which link to surrounding pedestrian routes
- Structural tree planting
- A naturalised zone with native hedge planting, a wildflower mix meadow feature insect houses. Seating in the form of rounded informal boulders are also proposed within this zone to offer opportunity for engagement with nature and contemplation as well as social interaction.
- Callisthenic unit to offer opportunity for active exercise/HIIT training (set on a tiger mulch base)
- Bench seating
- Tree planting coordinated with a soakaway and associated services.
- Shrub planting and naturalised bulb planting.

3.1.8.2 Southern Open Space

This open space is located south of the boundary railings proposed as part of the scheme. The space seeks to engage with the wider community as well as future residents of the scheme. The proposed entrance road and pedestrian links ‘divide’ the space to the south; with the proposed boundary railings featuring a native hedge to provide a quality backdrop and improve local biodiversity. Whilst 2no. trees require removal to the east of the entrance way to facilitate the installation of a soakaway unit and associated services, further tree planting is proposed with similar species. A series of east-west pathways offer opportunity for walkers, along with spaces for resting and engagement. The space

[9] https://www.corkcity.ie/en/cork-city-development-plan/

shall also receive shrub planting, a wildflower meadow mix and naturalised bulb planting which will complement and enhance the local landscape.

3.1.8.3 Front Gardens/Internal Access Roads

It is proposed that the internal access roads will receive specimen trees, suited to a streetscape development. Size, seasonal interest, colour and variation have all been considered in choosing specific trees for these locations. Supporting shrub planting will be included along these routes to ensure an overall unified approach is adopted. Planting within the front gardens of the modular units shall comprise of a mix of shrub herbaceous plant material with hedging at select location to aid privacy as necessary. The shrub planting shall be structural in nature. Herbaceous planting is envisaged which will provide seasonal interest and colour.

3.1.8.4 Boundary Edge

Along the southern edge of the site, the active site shall receive a 2.0m high flat bar railing which shall be edged by a native hedge. This consistent treatment along the public road edge with the complimenting linear green space will offer a strong and rich character to the scheme and will enhance and offer an aesthetically pleasing edge.

Walling in the form of a 2m high rendered finish (to all public sides) with concrete capping is proposed to the western boundary of the scheme. To the north and east of the scheme the existing walling shall be retained and repaired/reinstated/increased to provide an overall height of 2m where there is evidence of damaged or missing sections.

3.1.8.5 Planting Programme

Planting on site will commence with the completion of the works and as a result the programme is closely tied to construction operations. Ground preparation will precede planting and will include weed clearance and soil amelioration where necessary.

Planting will largely be carried out during the dormant period from November – March, with grass seeding carried out from April – September. Landscape maintenance for each area will be carried out for a period of 12 months from the practical completion date. A 12 month defects liability period will be set in place for all plant material with plant failures being replaced in the following planting season.

Seeding mix for the general grass amenity area will include a mixture of 40% perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), 40% creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and 20% chewings fescue (*Festuca rubra commutata*).

4. EIA Screening Process

4.1 Desk-Based Studies

In undertaking this Environmental Impact Screening Assessment, AtkinsRéalis completed a detailed desk-based assessment using data from the following sources:

- Relevant guidance documents and legislation (listed in Section 4.2 below);
- Relevant published data from Government websites like the EPA's Catchment website (www.catchments.ie), the Geological Survey of Ireland (www.gsi.ie), the Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028 etc;
- Information provided by Cork City Council on the Proposed Development.

4.2 EIA Screening Legislation and Guidance

The Project Types listed in Annex I and Annex II of the 1985 EIA Directive were transposed into Irish Planning & Development legislation in Schedule 5 Parts 1 and Part 2, respectively. EIA Regulations ((Planning and Development) Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I No. 296 of 2018)) transposing the 2014 EIA Directive were adopted and came into operation on 1st September 2018. These regulations amend the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No.600 of 2001); they seek to transpose EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and to give further effect to the 2011 Directive, as follows;

- An EIAR is required as a matter of course on specified large-scale projects which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023), Schedule 5, Part 1 – Development for the purposes of Part 10.
- Each EU Member State has discretionary consideration for the requirement of an EIA in relation to Class 2 Project Types. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023), Schedule 5, Part 2 – Development for the purposes of Part 10. If the proposed project is listed under Schedule 5, Part 2, but does not exceed the relevant stated thresholds, it is considered to be 'sub-threshold'. Part 10, Article 92 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended states "'sub-threshold development' means development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5, which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development". Any sub-threshold developments should be evaluated to determine if the project is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.
- Criteria to evaluate whether significant impacts on the receiving environment will arise from a Proposed Development are listed under Schedule 7 of the relevant Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023). A list of the relevant information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of sub-threshold EIA screening is presented in Schedule 7A of the Regulations, and summarised below;

1. A description of the Proposed Development, including in particular:
   a. a description of the physical characteristics of the whole Proposed Development and, where relevant, of demolition works; and,
   b. a description of the location of the Proposed Development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the Proposed Development on the environment resulting from:
   a. the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and,

b. the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

The Proposed Development has been screened in accordance with:

- Section 3.2 of the '*Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*' (EPA, 2022);
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Developments;
- ORP Practice Note PN02 Environment Impact Assessment Screening (2021);
- European Commission (2017), Environmental Impact Assessment Projects, Guidance on Screening;
- the Environmental Impact Directive (85/337/EEC) and all subsequent relevant amendments; and,
- the Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2023), including S.I. No. 296 of 2018 - European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, which came into operation on 1st September 2018.

Figure 4-1 overleaf provides a summary of the main steps involved in the EIA screening process.

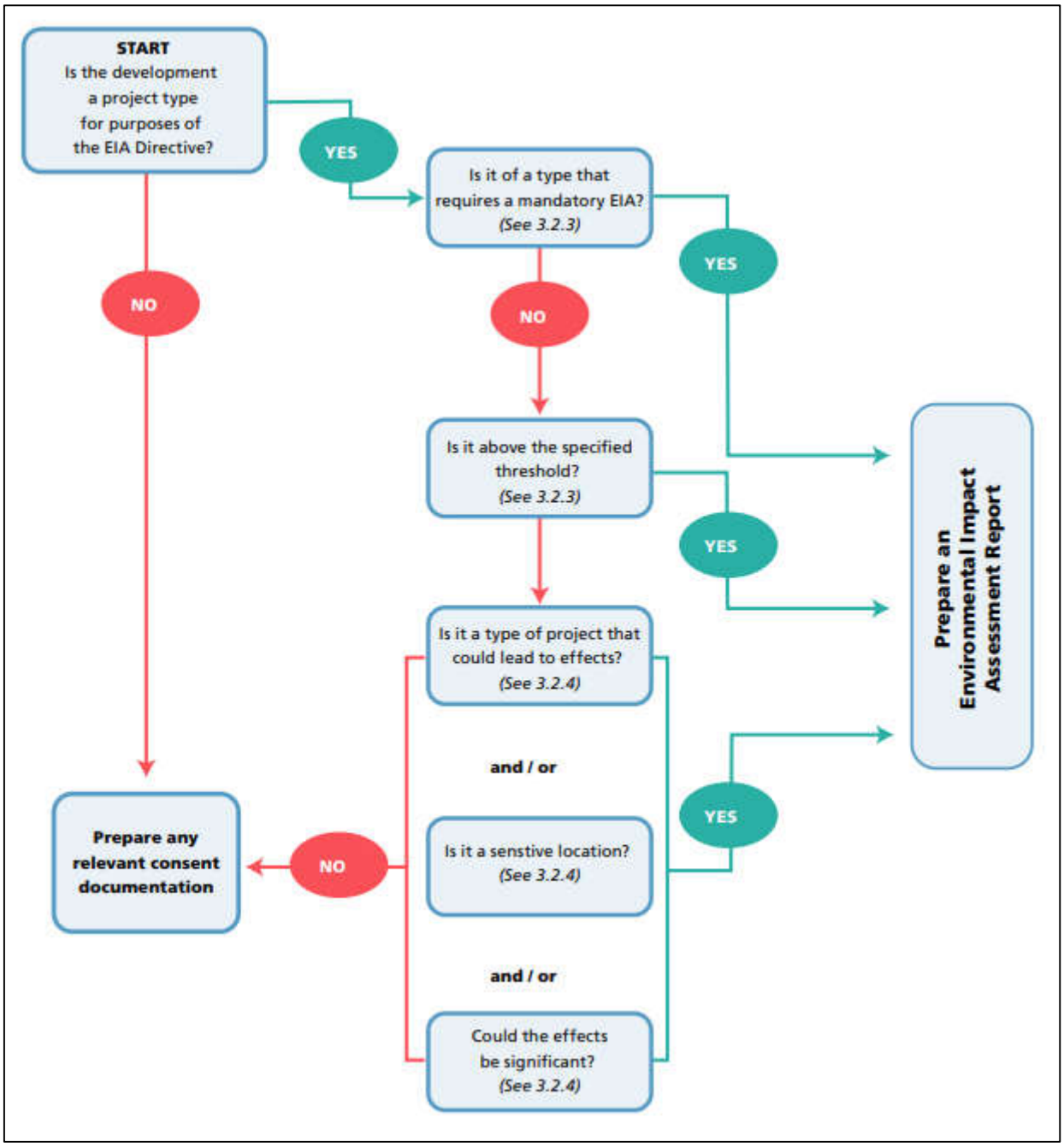

Figure 4-1 - EIA Screening Process (Source: 'Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (EPA, 2022)).

4.3 The Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended - Screening

The 1985 EU EIA Directive differentiates between those projects that automatically requires an environmental impact assessment (listed as Annex 1 projects) and those which may require an assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects (Annex II projects). These project types have been transposed into Irish legislation under Parts 1 and 2 respectively of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The Proposed Development was screened using the following criteria:

- If the Proposed Development is of a type listed in Schedule 5, Part 1;
- If not, whether:
  - it is listed in Schedule 5, Part 2;
  - it meets any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 5, Part 2;
  - any part of it is located within sensitive area; or
  - it would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

4.3.1 Part 1 Type Projects

The Proposed Development has been screened against the list of Project Types which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment and therefore require a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment, under Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023. **This project does not fall within any category of development requiring a mandatory EIA; hence the preparation of an EIAR is not required under Schedule 5 Part 1.**

4.3.2 Part 2 Type Projects

The Proposed Development has been screened against the types of development, various processes and activities listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023. The Proposed Development falls within the following categories which provide that an EIA must be completed – subject to specified thresholds being met or exceeded.

Table 4-1 Screening for Part 2 of Schedule 5

Class	Applicability	Screening
10 (b) (i)	Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.	The Proposed Development comprises the development of 38no. mobile modular units (dwelling units), which is well below the 500unit threshold. Additionally, modular units are temporary in nature – used for temporary accommodation however they can be repurposed as permanent housing. **Hence the preparation of an EIAR is not required under Schedule 5 Part 2 (10) (b) (i).**
10(b) (iv)	Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.	The Proposed Development is ca. 1.01 hectares (ha) in size and is not located within a business district. The Proposed Development is below the other relevant thresholds (i.e. 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere). **Hence the preparation of an EIAR is not**

		required under Schedule 5 Part 2 (10) (b) (iv).
15.	Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.	Based on the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, it is considered that there is no potential for significant effects on the environment, as detailed further in the following sections of this report. **Hence the preparation of an EIAR is not required under Schedule 5 Part 2 (15).**

The Proposed Development is therefore screened out for an environmental impact assessment under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

There are no exacting rules as to what constitutes “significant” in terms of environmental effects. The responsibility is on Planning Authorities to carefully examine every aspect of a development in the context of:

- characterisation of the project;
- location of the project; and,
- type and characteristics of potential impacts.

It is generally not necessary to provide specialist studies or technical reports to complete this screening process, rather to investigate whether further studies may be required, and where risks, if any, to the integrity of the receiving environment may lie.

For the purposes of screening sub-threshold developments for EIA, all of the relevant information as presented within EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, (Schedule 7A) has been provided on behalf of the applicant, Cork City Council. The potential for the project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 – 2023 (Schedule 7).

The findings of the EIA screening assessment prepared for the project has informed our professional opinion as to whether an EIAR is warranted for the proposed project, with due regard to all relevant statutory requirements and technical guidance. However ultimately it is the responsibility of the relevant planning authority to decide as to whether an EIAR is required for a particular project, based on screening conducted by the planning authority.

5. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

5.1 Determining if the project is likely to have significant effect on the receiving environment

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7 and 7A has been provided on behalf of Cork City Council and is presented within this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001-2023 (Schedule 7), as presented within the tables below.

5.1.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Table 5-1 below details the development characteristics criteria, as required under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

Table 5-1 – Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria	Proposed Development
▪ *Size and design of the project*	
Will the size and design of the whole project be considered significant?	No. The site area is ca. 1.01ha and the scale and nature of the Proposed Development is not considered significant within the urban setting. Refer to the detailed description in Section 3 above.
▪ *Cumulation with other projects*	
Will other existing project and/ or approved project be able to affect the project.	A search of the Cork City Council Planning Applications, An Bord Pleanála planning portal, Uisce Éireann and Transport Infrastructure Ireland project portals has been undertaken for the applications submitted within the past 5 years in the vicinity of the scheme (last reviewed 06/06/24). Some of the granted applications have already been completed and of those which are not completed, most are generally small scale in nature (i.e. residential extension works, or property improvement works). Completed or granted applications of such small scale (such as residential improvements) have not been considered further in terms of potential for cumulative impacts. For the purposes of this study, only significant new developments that are likely to generate a significant number of trips and developments have been considered, as follows: ▫ 2140402: (A) Part demolition, renovation, and extension of 1 No. existing single storey semi-detached dwelling, demolition of 2 No. existing commercial shed units & 1 No. external temporary storage unit with associated concrete base (B) Construction of 13 new dwelling units made up of one 3 storey apartment block (C) Construction of revised existing vehicular entrance off Ballinure Cottages with on-site circulation roadway & associated Car Parking Areas, pedestrian footpaths, hard and soft landscaping and communal open space areas (D) Construction of a secure Bike store with roof and railing enclosure Bin Storage shed unit, proposed boundary walls and railings to main entrance with masonry walls to

	remaining boundaries, and all associated site works, drainage, attenuation and sit services. ▫ 2140052: Demolition of an existing dwelling and associated shed and the construction of a mixed-use convenience retail, residential and café development and all ancillary site development works at "Villa Maria" and adjacent lands, Skehard Road, Cork. Based on the nature scale and location of the above projects, and the fact that a CEMP will be implemented by the appointed contractors for both projects, as well as for the Proposed Development, there are no significant in-combination impacts anticipated.
▪ *Nature of any associated demolition works*	
Will the construction of the project include any significant demolition works.	No. There are no demolition works proposed for the Proposed Development.
▪ *Use of natural resources*	
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground which are non-renewable or in short supply?	The use of natural resources would be kept to a minimum; aggregates and soil would be re-used on site, where possible. Although not considered required, should vegetation clearance be required, it would take place outside of the nesting season (February – August). If this is not possible, an ecologist will survey the vegetation for breeding birds no longer than 24 hours prior to clearance. If nesting birds are identified, then an alternative approach to the work will be used.
▪ *Production of waste*	
Will the project produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Construction waste will be kept to a minimum with only contaminated waste being removed off site. The following waste streams will be produced during the construction: ▪ Waste produced by the construction of the modular units. ▪ Generic construction waste. All soil requiring disposal offsite will require waste classification in accordance with EPA requirements as set out in the documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2015), and 'Determining if waste is hazardous or non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018), and all relevant waste management legislation. In addition to screening against relevant WAC, the preparation of a waste classification tool (hazwaste online / EPA paper tool or similar etc.) will be required to be carried out in order to determine the relevant LoW / EWC code for the transport of any waste soils which require offsite removal and disposal.
▪ *Pollution and nuisances*	
Will the project release any pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Regional air quality in the vicinity of the Proposed Development is 'good' (EPA, 2024). The closest suburban Air Quality Monitoring Station to the Proposed Development is Heatherton Park, (Station Code: CK3) located ca. 3.8km to the west. Management of dust will be in line with relevant best practice measures such as those set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2011). Due to the nature and scale of the development detailed in

	Section 3, it is anticipated that the construction works and operation of the Proposed Development will not have a significant effect on air quality.
▪ *Will the project cause:*	
Noise and vibration	Noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2014). The construction phases will have noise barriers in place as required, to minimise / eliminate noise disturbances to sensitive receptors i.e. residential units located adjacent to the site while construction is taking place. Works will be scheduled during day-time hours. Construction contractors will be required to comply with the requirements of the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations, 1988 as amended in 1990 and 1996 (S.I. No. 320 of 1988, S.I. No. 297 of 1990 and S.I. No. 359 of 1996), and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 371 of 2006). Due to the nature and scale of the project, detailed in Section 3 it is anticipated that the construction works, and operation of the Proposed Development will not have a significant effect with regards to noise.
Release of light	The lighting will be designed to minimise the effects of light pollution on neighbouring properties. Low energy LED lighting will be used to illuminate areas.
Heat	The development will not cause release of heat.
Energy	The development will not cause release of energy.
Electromagnetic radiation	The development will not cause release of electromagnetic radiation.
Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants, including leachate, onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or sea?	The potential for accidents or incidents causing oil and chemical spillages are limited. With the adoption of site-specific risk management and remediation measures, as appropriate, during construction, no adverse impacts would arise and the residual effects on sensitive receptors would not be significant. The Contractor will be required to prepare a site-specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be agreed with Cork City Council in advance of commencement of site works. Excavation works will be monitored and in the event that contaminated materials are encountered these will be segregated from uncontaminated soils, temporarily stored (any stockpiles will be lined and covered by heavy duty 1000-gauge plastic), sampled and analysed for relevant parameters (Waste Acceptance Criteria suite e.g. Rilta Disposal Suite). Any contaminated soils will be characterised as per the requirements of the relevant Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) under the relevant European Communities Council Decision (EC) (92003/33/EC). The waste material will be classified in accordance with the requirements of the EPA as set out in the following documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018). Any contaminated soils will be transported by appropriately permitted hauliers and disposed of to an appropriate EPA licensed Waste Facility in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation. Waste disposal records will be maintained by the Contractor.
▪ *Risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the project concerned*	

Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Ireland in general is at low risk of natural disasters: earthquakes are rare and of low magnitude, there are no active volcanos, and severe weather events are rarely experienced. Flooding is experienced throughout Ireland on a regular basis. The site has been assessed in accordance with the "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines. As part of the sequential test, the OPW flood hazard maps[10] have been consulted, as have the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Maps produced by the OPW. In all cases the site is deemed appropriate for the proposed residential development. Possible accidents relevant to the development include vehicle collisions and fire, for both of which there will be plans in place to minimise the risk of harm caused by emissions or discharges. Major accidents affecting the development include generic risk of fire or explosion. All these events will be covered by risk assessments and contingency plans which apply to the Proposed Development. In the event of accidents or fire, measures will be in place to limit emissions to land, water and air, as far as practicable. With these arrangements in place the impact of emissions on human health and sensitive receptors in general would be mitigated such that adverse impacts would be unlikely to arise in the event of an accident.
Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	The location is not susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme/adverse climatic conditions. Flooding is the most common and relevant for the proposed works. The site has been assessed in accordance with the "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines. As part of the sequential test, the OPW flood hazard maps11 have been consulted, as have the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Maps produced by the OPW. In all cases the site is deemed appropriate for the proposed residential development.
▪ *The risks to human health*	
Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	Construction will be undertaken in accordance with the commitments to be set out in a site-specific CEMP prepared by the appointed Contractor, such that no significant construction effects on construction workers, residents and the environment would arise. Given the nature of the scheme impacts on population during operation, from water contamination, noise and vibration or air quality and climate are not anticipated to be significant.

[10] https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/
[11] https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/

5.1.2 Location of the development

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, requires a description of the location of the Proposed Development, with regards to the environmental sensitivity of the geographical area likely to be affected by the project. Table 5-2 below details the criteria considered and provides an assessment relating to same.

Table 5-2 - Location of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria	Proposed Development
▪ *Existing and approved land use*	
Are there existing or approved land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	The Proposed Development is located within urban lands in an existing carpark / compound area. The construction of the development could have an effect on neighbouring properties. A CEMP will be produced to identify potential environmental issues and control measures for their avoidance/mitigation. The contractor will inform and work with all stakeholders to address concerns. Control measures to avoid/mitigate impacts will be included in the CEMP. There are no existing, approved land uses for health, education, or community facilities in general, on, or around, the location will be affected by the Proposed Development. The construction, operation or decommissioning of the scheme will not involve actions which will cause significant physical changes in the topography of the area.
▪ *The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground*	
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project?	The reuse of soil/rock materials from within the site, as per the circular economy principles, will be undertaken as much as possible. Material will be imported for the works including in-fill and concrete. As noted above, excavation works will be monitored and in the event that contaminated materials are encountered these will be segregated from uncontaminated soils, temporarily stored (any stockpiles will be lined and covered by heavy duty 1000-gauge plastic), sampled and analysed for relevant parameters (Waste Acceptance Criteria suite e.g. Rilta Disposal Suite). Any contaminated soils will be characterised as per the requirements of the relevant Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) under the relevant European Communities Council Decision (EC) (92003/33/EC). The waste material will be classified in accordance with the requirements of the EPA as set out in the following documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018). Any contaminated soils will be transported by appropriately permitted hauliers and disposed of to an appropriate EPA licensed Waste Facility in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation. Waste disposal records will be maintained by the Contractor.

	Therefore, because of the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources used for the Proposed Development, effects on the environment will be not likely and not significant, in this respect.
▪ *Absorption capacity of the natural environment*	
Are there any other areas on or around the location which has the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths?	There are no watercourses within the Proposed Development Site. An AA Screening (AtkinsRéalis, 2024) prepared for the Proposed Development concluded that '*the proposed development will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to impacts which would constitute significant effects on the Great Island Channel SAC, Cork Harbour SPA or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it recommended that Cork City Council, as the competent authority, may determine that Appropriate Assessment is not required in respect of the proposed development. Should any aspect of the design or construction methodology for the proposed development be materially changed, a new AA Screening Report would be required.*' Based on the location of the Proposed Development, there is no potential for impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to coastal zones and the marine environment?	Based on the nature and scale of the it is not anticipated that it will have a significant effect on the coastal zone or marine environment.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to mountain and forest areas?	There are no mountain or forest areas within 2km of the Proposed Development and therefore no effect on this habitat type.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC?	A screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been prepared for the Proposed Development (AtkinsRéalis, 2024) which investigated the potential for the Proposed Development to have significant effects on a European Site(s) either alone or in combination with other plans or developments. The AA Screening concluded that there is no potential for impacts on the absorption capacity of the natural environment under national legislation.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure?	The absorption capacity of the natural environment is characterised as follows: The area around the Proposed Development is urban in nature. There are 2no. European sites within the potential zone of influence (ZoI) of the Proposed Development: Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC. Based on the nature, scale and location of the Proposed Development as detailed om Section 3, there is no potential for effects on the absorption capacity of the natural environment.

	There are no reported Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) features or National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) features located within the project site or the vicinity. The closest feature (Excavation Site – CO074-130) is located ca. 0.15km from the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development is located within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment area. Leaching of pollutants to groundwater is a risk during the construction phase, however, best practice measures will be employed through adherence to the CEMP which will be prepared and accidental spills will be dealt with through prescribed spill response measures.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to densely populated areas?	No. There is no significant effect on the absorption capacity of the natural environment in relation to densely populated areas as a result of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development will result in a positive impact in terms of facilitating active travel for the population of the surrounding area.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or Archaeological significance?	There are no reported Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) features or National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) features located within the project site or the vicinity. The closest feature (Excavation Site – CO074-130) is located ca. 0.15km from the proposed development. There is no potential for impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment.

5.1.3 Characteristics of potential impact

Table 5-3 below details the types and characteristics of potential impacts of the Proposed Development as required under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

Table 5-3 - Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria	Proposed Development
▪ *The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)*	
Outline the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The spatial extent of the Proposed Development measures ca. 1.01 hectares. The expected duration of the construction works is 12-18 months. Direct impacts associated with the proposed works are likely to be located within the environs of the site, chiefly associated with impacts on neighbouring properties, pedestrians and vehicular movement within the local area. Traffic management will be implemented during construction so as to minimise disruption to traffic flow. Due to the nature of the proposed works it is likely that the resident population would potentially be affected by the development.
▪ Nature of the impact	
Outline the nature of the impact.	There could be potential adverse construction and operation impacts arising from temporary disruption or disturbance associated with the

	Proposed Development. This has potential to result in noise and air quality impacts but with the implementation of the control measures included in the CEMP it is unlikely that impacts would give rise to significant environmental effects. Potential adverse operational impacts of the development would be associated with footfall as well as the lighting. The design will be developed to reduce operational impacts by incorporating control measures. Cork City Council will engage with stakeholders including the adjacent residents and commercial, premises throughout the design and construction stages to address any concerns.
▪ *Transboundary nature of the impact*	
Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	Given the location of the site no transboundary effects will occur.
▪ *The intensity and complexity of the impact*	
Outline the intensity and complexity of the impact.	The impacts identified are unlikely to cause significant changes in environmental conditions within the site and surrounding area.
▪ The probability of the impact	
Outline the probability of the impact.	During construction, conventional construction and best environmental practice techniques can be readily deployed. In order to minimise disruption, a CEMP will be implemented. There is no significant environmental impact during the operational phase anticipated, the Proposed Development will have an overall positive impact as it will provide active travel opportunities for the local population.
▪ *The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact*	
Outline the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.	It is expected that the duration of construction works will be 12-18 months. Normal working hours during the construction period are expected to be Monday to Friday 07:00 to 19:00, and Saturday 08:00 to 14:00. During the construction stage it may be necessary to carry out some work outside of normal working hours however, this will be kept to a minimum and only undertaken following approval from Cork City Council. The noise and air quality impact peaks during construction will be intermittent with a potential background level of nuisance as they will depend on the construction activities which are for their nature variable and not continuous. It is not expected that noise levels will be significant during the operational stage. The selection and implementation of established best practice procedures as set out by the appointed Contractor will ensure potential environmental impacts during the construction phase are offset.
▪ *Cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development*	
Could this project together with existing and/ or approved project result in cumulation of impacts together during construction/ operation phase?	As discussed previously, there are no approved developments in the vicinity with which cumulative impacts could arise.
▪ *Possibility of effectively reducing the impact*	

What measures can be adopted to avoid, reduce, repair or compensate the impact?	The design of the Proposed Development is being developed to reduce both construction and operational impacts. During construction the impact of the proposed works would be further reduced through the implementation of the CEMP. During operation, potential impacts would be reduced by the inclusion of design measures, operational control plans including Cork City Council guidance and standards.

6. Potential for Significant Effects on the Receiving Environment

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7A has been provided on behalf of the client and is presented within Section 5 of this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2023) (Schedule 7), as presented within Section 3.4 of this screening report.

It is considered that due to the size, nature, and characteristics of the Proposed Development, no significant effects on the receiving environment are expected; hence the preparation of a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

7. Screening Conclusion

This EIA screening report has been carried out in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023 (which give effect to the provisions of EU Directive 2014/52/EU). The report assessed the impacts of the Proposed Development in conjunction with committed developments in the surrounding area.

Based on all available information, and taking account of the scale, nature and location of the Proposed Development it is our opinion that the preparation of an EIAR is not a mandatory requirement (under Schedule 5, Part 1 and 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 - 2023). The project is deemed a sub-threshold development; hence the potential for significant environmental effects arising as a result of the Proposed Development has been evaluated, in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Acts 2001-2023.

Key findings are summarised as follows;

- Due to the limited nature of the works it is considered that there will be no significant cumulative impacts with other developments in the general area;
- Limited noise, vibration and dust emissions may be generated during construction; however, this is anticipated to be minimal in effect and will cause no significant impacts; and,
- There will be no significant impact on biodiversity, groundwater, surface water or traffic;

In summary, no significant adverse impacts to the receiving environment will arise as a result of the Proposed Development.

Accordingly, we consider that the preparation of an EIAR is not required for the proposed Modular Housing Development at Estuary Way (St. Michael's Drive). However, the competent authority will ultimately determine whether an EIA is required or not.

AtkinsRéalis

AtkinsRéalis
Atkins House
150 Airside Business Park
Swords
Co. Dublin
K67 K5W4