

SUB THRESHOLD EIA SCREENING REPORT
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Blarney – P8.HCP.26.08

Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment as per the requirements of Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Size of Proposed Development	St Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork: The demolition/removal of existing ESB substation/utilities structures, the foundations of an already demolished structure, hardstanding areas such as tarmac/roads and a pile of waste material (rubble, tarmac, masonry, etc). The construction of a residential development consisting of 138 no. dwelling units, a civic centre containing a public library, community café and a 32 child creche, and all ancillary site works. The proposed development is 1 to 3 storeys in height and is located at St Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork. The development site area is approximately 3.7 hectares. – No significant impacts likely.
Cumulation with other Proposed Development	This screening assessment has considered potential cumulative impacts that could arise from the proposed development in combination with other known projects in the area. – No cumulative impacts are therefore likely.
The nature of any associated demolition works (* see article 8 of SI 235 of 2008)	The proposed development includes the demolition/removal of the foundations of an already demolished structure, ESB structure, tarmac/roads and a pile of waste material (rubble, tarmac, masonry, etc.) Best practice guidance in relation to demolition will be adhered to. – No significant negative impacts likely.
Use of Natural Resources	Energy, including electricity and fuels, will be required during the demolition and construction phases. Construction will use various raw materials typical of the construction of residential developments. No out of the ordinary use of natural resources is likely during the construction process. New planting will be carried out as part of a landscaping plan.– No significant impacts likely. No out of the ordinary use of natural resources is likely during the operation phase. It will be limited to water, consumption of electricity and energy related to the residential occupancy of the completed development. – No significant negative impacts are likely.
Production of Waste	Waste will be generated during the demolition and construction phases and these will be typical of development of this nature. The handling and disposal of waste during these phases will be in full accordance with statutory legislation and associated guidance. – No significant impacts likely. Operational waste generated will be domestic waste from the residential units. All domestic waste will be disposed of in accordance with standard domestic waste disposal practices. – No significant negative impacts are likely.
Pollution and Nuisances	Development of the site will increase traffic in the area for the duration of the demolition and construction phases. Temporary noise, dust and vibration impacts as well as any potential for water pollution, will be addressed as part of standard best practice controls. – No significant impacts likely. The proposed development will be connected to public water and sewer infrastructure. – No significant negative impacts are likely.
Risk of Major Accidents	No significant risks are foreseen, subject to strict compliance with standard environmental controls. – No significant impacts likely.
Risk to Human Health	Additional noise and dust from temporary demolition and construction works may be experienced by residents and other property users in the vicinity, however these aspects will be managed appropriately during demolition and construction. On completion of works, noise and dust levels will return to background levels. Standard water control measures will ensure that run-off of sediment or other pollutants will not enter any watercourses, therefore the proposed project will not have any impact on water quality. – No significant impacts likely.

2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Existing Land Use	The proposed development will result in the construction of a residential development on a brownfield site that is identified as suitable for the provision of residential development as identified under Long-term Strategic Regeneration (ZO 03) in the City Development Plan 2022-2028. The site is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and Blarney Castle is located approximately 250m south of the site. – No significant impacts likely. The completed development will provide for residential units and ancillary uses in an urban environment. The proposed use is compatible with the existing land use. – No significant impacts likely.

2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Relative Abundance, Quality and regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources in the Area	<p>The site is not located within or in proximity to any designated area or Natura 2000 sites. The Knockacorballey Stream runs in a westerly direction approximately 25m from the southern border of the site. The Blarney River runs parallel to the stream, approximately 200m from the southern site border, also flowing in a westerly direction. – No significant impacts likely.</p> <p>The operational phase will not have any out of the ordinary impact on natural resources. – No significant negative impacts are likely.</p>
Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	<p>The development will not impact the absorption capacity of the natural environment. Best practice standards, environmental guidelines measures will be adhered to during the demolition and construction phase in order to avoid potential impacts on natural resources and likely significant impacts are not anticipated. On completion of works, noise and dust levels will return to background levels. – No significant impacts likely.</p> <p>Proposed use is compatible with the built-up nature of the wider geographical area. The dwellings are architecturally designed to integrate with neighbouring properties and within the ACA. – No significant negative impacts are likely.</p>

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS	
Extent of the Impact	<p>The site is located in the Blarney ACA and Blarney Castle is located approximately 250m south of the site. An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) report has been completed, and the possible impact of the proposed development has been carefully considered. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report has been prepared and the site was surveyed for potential ecological impact on any possible habitats within the red line boundary. The construction impacts have potential to cause nuisance associated with noise, dust and traffic. The Construction Management Plan puts in place measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate impacts. – No significant impacts likely.</p> <p>The operational phase will result in the development of permanent residential accommodation and ancillary services that have been designed to integrate with the ACA and the surrounding environment. The nature of the use is appropriate to the location and proximity to existing facilities. – No significant negative impacts are likely.</p>
Transfrontier nature of the Impact	<p>The effects of the development are local in nature and there are no transboundary impacts associated with the proposed development. – No significant impacts likely.</p>
Magnitude and Complexity of the Impact	<p>An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) report has been completed, and the possible impact of the proposed development has been carefully considered. The impact has been mitigated through the work of the Conservation Architect who has advised throughout the design process. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report has been prepared, and careful consideration has been given to any potential impact of the proposed development on the surrounding areas. Some minor impacts will be mitigated through the provision of biodiversity enhancements across the site. The site is located off an urban road in a suburban location. A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be put in place prior to commencement of development at the site to mitigate any potential negative impacts on traffic flow. – No significant impacts likely.</p> <p>The operational phase of the development is moderate in scale and will be actively managed. - No significant negative impacts are likely.</p>
Probability of the Impact	<p>Some level of construction impacts is highly probably, but these will be mitigated by standard best practice techniques. – No significant impacts likely.</p> <p>The operational phase will inevitably change the local environment; however, the change will be consistent with emerging trends in the area. Measures are in place to avoid, reduce, or mitigate any likely negative impacts.</p>
Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact	<p>Any impacts relating to the demolition and construction of the units will be short-term and restricted by planning conditions. No permanent negative impacts are anticipated as a result of the construction phase of the project. – No significant impacts likely.</p> <p>The development will be occupied all year round and impacts will be irreversible.</p>

SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT

The proposed development has been screened to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required, it has taken account of the contents and findings of the Appropriate Assessment Screening (AA) report, the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) and the Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) prepared for the development. It has been concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required. Please refer to Appendix A for report titled; Environmental Impact Assessment (rEIA) Screening Report prepared by OES dated January 2026, Appendix B for report titled; Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) prepared by Dixon Brosnan dated February 2026 and Appendix C for report titled; Blarney Housing; Part 8 Planning Application- Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment by James Bourke Architects dated December 2025.

Name:	
Position:	A/Director of Services - Housing
Date:	19/03/2026

Appendix A

EIA Screening Report

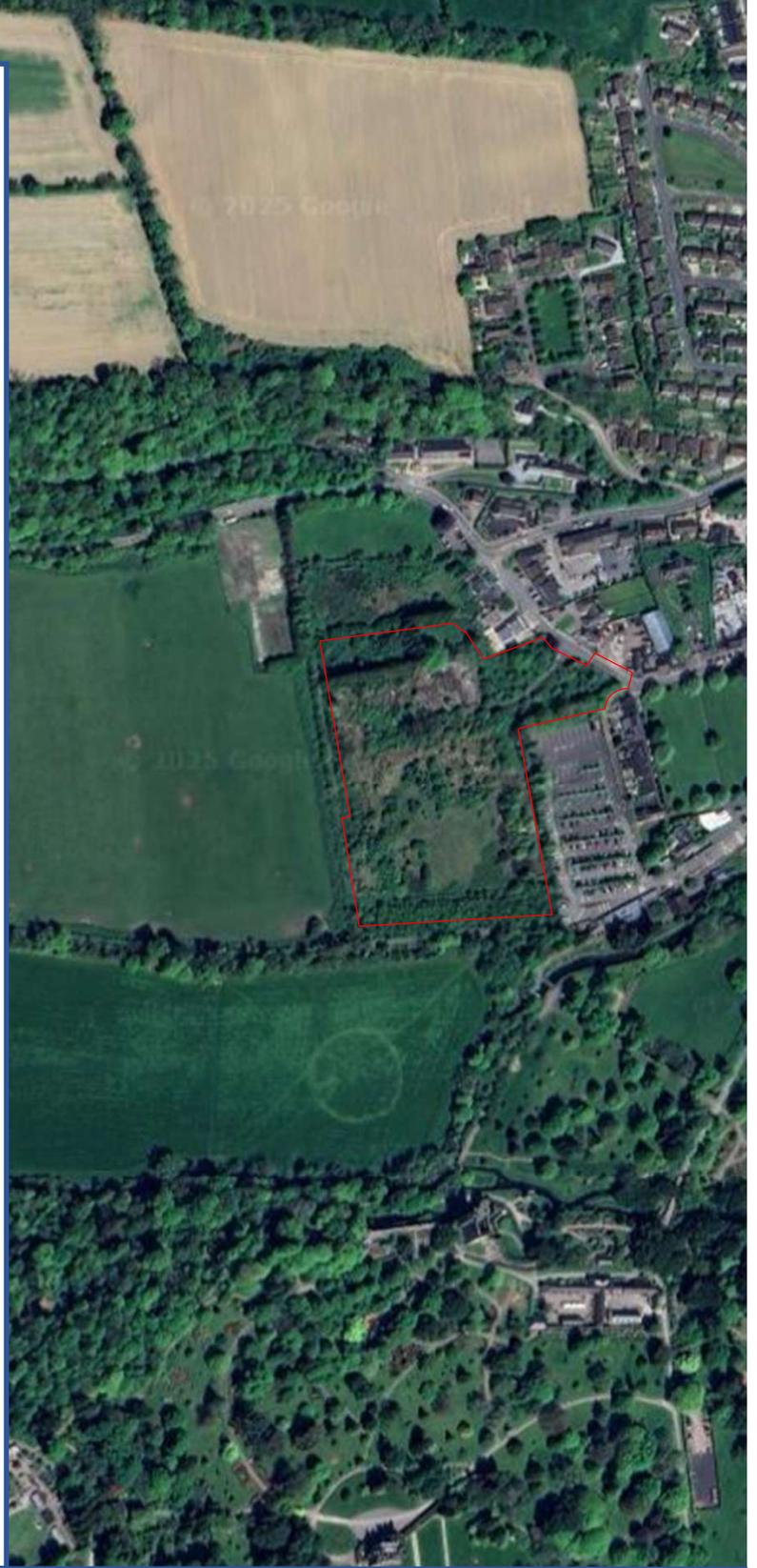
HRP Construction Ltd.

Carrig House, Main St., Ballincollig, Co Cork

Proposed Residential
Development

at

St. Ann's Road
Blarney
Co. Cork



Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report

March 2026

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HRP Construction Ltd.

Proposed Development at St. Ann's Road, Blarney,
Co. Cork

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

HRP Construction Limited are applying for planning permission for the construction of scheme comprising of 138 no. residential units, and a civic centre on a site spanning 3.7 ha.

The proposed development consists of the demolition/removal of existing hardstanding areas associated with the former use of the site and the construction of a number of residential units consisting of 119 no. 2,3 and 4 bed houses and 19 no. 1 and 2 bed apartments/older-living units.

This development will also include the provision of internal roads, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, car parking and bicycle parking, drainage, landscaping and public open space provision, boundary treatments, cycle path, tree removal and planting, public lighting, ducting, ESB substation, bin stores and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

The proposed development also includes all associated and ancillary development and servicing works above and below ground to facilitate the construction and operation of the development which is located at the site of the Former Blarney Park Hotel, St, Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork City.



Figure 1 Proposed Development Layout (Scale 1:500)
(Refer to planning drawings for detailed information)

OES Consulting (OES) have been commissioned by HRP to review the proposed development against the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2025 and to determine whether the proposal should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

This document comprises a report on a screening for EIA and contains the required information to enable the planning authority – Cork City Council – determine the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

1.2 Background to Proposal

Ireland's strategic spatial planning, as articulated in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and its 2025 revised population projections, establishes a compelling quantitative mandate for expansive housing development in Cork, a designated metropolitan area targeted for transformative growth.

The revised NPF projections anticipate the population of the Southern Region, in which Cork is the dominant centre, to increase by approximately 250,000 people by 2040, with Cork City and its hinterland expected to absorb the majority of this growth.

Specifically, the Cork City Development Plan 2022–2028 translates this national imperative into a local requirement for 31,320 new homes within the city boundary alone by 2028, a figure derived from the combined needs of projected household formation and addressing existing deficits.

This demand is spatially allocated, with settlements like Blarney, identified as a “Metropolitan Town” in the Cork County Development Plan 2022–2028, playing a critical role. The Cork City Development Plan 2022 for Blarney and its environs includes a targeted provision for hundreds of new dwellings to accommodate its share of regional growth, thereby preventing urban sprawl by consolidating development within a serviced settlement.

The proposed development sits within this overall national, regional and local framework through the provision of 138 residential units in an appropriately designed setting which provides additional amenities and social facilities to meet the needs of the local community.

2. EIA Screening Methodology

2.1 EIA Screening Methodology

Screening is the first stage in the EIA process, whereby a decision is made on whether or not EIA is required. This Screening Assessment was undertaken with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- The Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended;
- The Planning and Development Regulations 2018, as amended;
- Guidance on EIA, Screening, European Commission, 2001;
- EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2003; and
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009.

The EIA screening exercise initially assesses the development for Mandatory EIA using classifications and thresholds defined in Schedule 5 parts I & II of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

In instances where these thresholds are not met, the EIA screening process advances to sub-threshold development assessment, where the competent authority evaluates whether the project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, with reference to its scale, nature, location and context.

2.2 Sub-threshold Development (Discretionary) EIA Screening

Irish legislation, which implements the EU EIA Directive, addresses the possible need for EIA below the mandatory thresholds. There is a requirement to carry out EIA where the competent/consent authority considers that a development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The key issue for the competent/consent authority in the context of the possible need for EIA of sub-threshold is whether or not such development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) lists the criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the Environment.

Schedule 7A is broken down into the following core areas:

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

Table 2.1 below broadly describes the structure of this document in relation to the points of Schedule 7A.

Table 2.1 Schedule 7A Screening Overview

Schedule Item	Relevant Chapter
Schedule 7A Item 1(a) – Physical Characteristics of the Proposed Development	Chapter 4 and Chapter 5
Schedule 7A Item 1(b) – Location of the Proposed Development	Chapter 4
Schedule 7A Item 2 – Aspects of the Environment Likely to Be Significantly affected	Chapter 6
Schedule 7A Item 3(a) – Likely Significant Effects of Wastes, Residues, and Emissions	Chapter 7
Schedule 7A Item 3(b) - Likely Significant Effects on Natural Resources	Chapter 7
Schedule 7A Item 4 – Schedule 7 Criteria	
1. Characteristics of the proposed development	Chapter 4 and Chapter 5
2. Location of the proposed development	Chapter 4
3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts	Chapter 7

Note that table 2.1 provides a broad overview of the document structure, some chapters may include information which potentially fall into the other categories of a Schedule 7A other than specified in the table above.

3. Screening

A screening exercise was undertaken to determine if Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the proposal, as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended (the Act), and Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended (the Regulations).

3.1 Mandatory EIA (Schedule 5 Activities)

Schedule 5 Part 1 defines specific activities and projects which require mandatory EIA. Part 2 defines activities which, if conducted above a specified threshold, will require mandatory EIA. Below the specified threshold, screening is required to determine if site or activity specific characteristics are such that the potential for significant impact to the environment is likely – if not, EIA is not required.

Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) lists the categories of development requiring an EIA to be undertaken.

The categories of development within Schedule 5 which are relevant to the proposal are listed in Part 2, Section 10 (b) as follows:

10 (b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units

and

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.

As the proposed development relates to the construction of 138 dwelling units, Class 10 (b)(i) **does not apply** as the number of dwellings does not meet or exceed the relevant threshold of 500 units.

As the proposal relates to development within a site of 3.7 Ha and will not take place within a business district (were the threshold is 2 Ha, Class 10 (b)(iv) **does not apply** as the site area does not meet or exceed the most relevant threshold of 10Ha for sites in built up areas.

3.2 Sub Threshold Screening

In instances where thresholds are not met, the EIA screening process advances to sub-threshold development assessment under Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 - 2024, where the competent authority evaluates whether the project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, with reference to its scale, nature, location and context.

In terms of screening, the 2014 Directive - Recital 27 – states:

“The screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment”.

Sections 4 and 5 below provides a description of the proposed development, while Sections 6 and 7 describe the likely significant effects of the development.

As identified in Section 3.2, although the proposed development is a 'project' for the purpose of the EIA Directive and implementing Regulations, it does not meet the mandatory threshold as the number of dwelling units is below the 500 dwellings threshold and development site area is lower than that which would trigger EIA – i.e. 10 Ha.

Notwithstanding that the scale of the proposal does not meet or exceed the relevant thresholds, the sub threshold screening undertaken has regard to the nature and location of the proposal in terms of determine the potential of likely and significant effects.

4. Site Location, Context and Surrounding Environment

4.1 Site Description

The application relates to a proposed residential development at Blarney, Co. Cork. The site is situated on the west side of Blarney Town. The centre of the site is approximately 190m to the west of the square in Blarney.

Cork City suburbs such as Gleann and Killeens are located a 10-to-15-minute cycle to the west and east with Cork City a 30-minute cycle to the south. These areas include social infrastructure facilities such as Blarney Woollen Mills and Blarney Business Park, schools, churches and various other facilities also providing many employment opportunities to residents. The nearest supermarket is just a 3-minute walk away while two other supermarkets as well as other retail amenities are within a 10-minute walk.

Individual residential housing is relatively concentrated close to the site, being predominantly to the northeast, and spreading down to the east of the site, with the closest dwelling situated circa 190m NE of the site.

The main access to the site is a road directly off of the R617, which runs from the N20, southwest through Blarney, down to the R579. This road travels south through Blarney and has an entrance directly to the site along it.

The site is partially developed, having seen previous use as the Blarney Park Hotel, which closed in 2007 and was subsequently demolished, leaving behind partial concrete cover on the site. The environs of the site are characterised by agricultural land and forestry to the north, west and south, in combination with the developed urban area of Blarney containing residential facilities and public amenities to the east of the site.

The site is situated relatively far from any designated areas, with there being only two within an approximate 15km radius - the Blackwater River SAC, which is 14.6km north of the site, and the Cork Harbour SPA, which is 10.1km southeast of the site.

However, the Knockacorbally, and Manin rivers run directly along the south of the site, being 46m and 151m south of the southern boundary of the site, respectively. Both of these rivers join the Shournagh river, which is a tributary of the River Lee. The River Lee flows directly into the Cork Harbour SPA.

Cork Harbour SPA is of great importance as it supports a range of macro-invertebrates, notably *Macoma balthica*, *Scrobicularia plana*, *Hydrobia ulvae*, *Nephtys hombergi*, *Nereis diversicolor* and *Corophium volutator*. Some shallow bay water is included in the site. Rostellan Lake is a small brackish lake that is used by swans throughout the winter. The site also includes some marginal wet grassland areas used by feeding and roosting birds. The site is also of special conservation interest for holding an assemblage of over 20,000 wintering waterbirds. However, the Cork Harbour SPA is located 10.1km southeast of the site, and will, therefore, not be directly or indirectly affected by the activities conducted at the site.

The River Blackwater, which runs approximately 5.4kms to the south of the site, is one of the largest rivers in Ireland - draining a major part of County Cork and parts of Counties Kerry, Limerick and Waterford. Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC is one of the key

attributes of the Fermoy District, being a significant site containing important rare plants and species, ranging from Atlantic salmon to Mediterranean Salt Meadows.

4.2 Existing Activities on Site

The site does not currently see any private or public use, past use of the site for the Blarney Park Hotel having been discontinued in 2007, with demolition of associated buildings having taken place in the intervening time. There are some residual structures on site, including tarmac roads & carparks, existing concrete slabs & foundations all of which will be demolished and removed from the site as part of preparatory works.

4.4 Planning History

Planning permissions granted for activities on site are tabulated on Table 1 below.

Table 4.1 List Planning Permissions for site (in chronological order)

Planning Reference	Application Date	Decision Date	Development Description
92/3009	13/10/1992	30/11/1992	Alterations and extensions to Hotel
92/3722	23/12/1992	19/02/1993	Alterations and construction of new entrance to hotel
93/3132	18/11/1993	14/01/1994	Alterations and extension to existing link corridor from reception area and bedroom block to a residents lounge
94/3432	08/11/1994	23/12/1994	Extension to bedroom block to north of hotel
96/987	20/03/1996	12/07/1996	Construction of an ESB sub- station
97/1561	24/04/1997	19/06/1997	Extension to hotel (18 no. bedrooms)
97/4239	05/11/1997	11/12/1997	Extension to hotel to include 18 no. bedrooms and extension to existing creche (change of plan)
98/2502	11/06/1998	07/08/1998	Construction of two storey licensed premises with parking
12/05084	30/05/2012	22/08/2012	Permission for retention and completion of demolition of former Blarney Park Hotel complex and 4 no. single-storey dwellings; and b) permission for demolition of 1 no. single-storey dwelling and remaining hotel outbuildings;
20/34433	06/2020	12/2020	Mixed use scheme comprising 140-bedroom senior living and convalescent care facility, 60-bedroom hotel, 35 residential units (14 houses, 21 apartments), retail unit (c. 160 sq m) and café.

4.4.1 Planning Policy Context

The site is located in a rural area and the following Cork City Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 Objectives are relevant in the consideration of the proposed development:

City Development Plan Objective SO1 – Compact Liveable Growth

Deliver compact growth that achieves a sustainable 15-minute city of scale providing integrated communities and walkable neighbourhoods, dockland and brownfield regeneration, infill development and strategic greenfield expansion adjacent to the existing city.

City Development Plan Objective SO2 – Delivering Homes & Communities :

Provide densities that create liveable, integrated communities by using a mix of house types, tenures and sizes linked to active and public transport. Provide amenities, services and community and cultural uses to enable inclusive, diverse and culturally rich neighbourhoods.

City Development Plan Objective 3.3: New Housing Supply

Provision will be made for at least 17,118 new homes to be built in Cork over the Development Plan period. This will be achieved by:

- a. Zoning sufficient lands for residential or a mix of residential and other uses to facilitate the delivery of housing;
- b. Designating Transformational sites capable of delivering new homes;
- c. Utilising the Cork City Capacity Study prepared as an input into this Plan to identify residential development potential of sites;
- d. Active land management utilising the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990 and Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015;
- e. Optimising the potential of brownfield sites (see Objective 3.4);

City Development Plan Objective 3.13: Rural Generated Housing

- a. *To sustain and renew established rural communities, by facilitating those with a rural generated housing need to live within their rural community (see Objective 11.9 – One-Off Housing: Demonstrable Need to Reside on Landholding);*
- b. *To discourage urban generated housing in the City Hinterland;*
- c. *The City Hinterland is the area under strongest urban generated pressure for rural housing. Therefore, single rural housing applicants must satisfy Cork City Council that their proposal constitutes an exceptional rural generated housing need and satisfies all the requirements of this Plan. Any application for the development of a single rural dwelling must set out a comprehensive and conclusive demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area.*

City Development Plan Objective 3.35: Safe and Secure City

- a. To ensure a well-integrated urban form that provides a safe environment for all users by maximising visibility and surveillance, increasing pedestrian activity and maximising connections between areas;
- b. To encourage buildings and spaces to be designed with safety and security in mind to avoid anti-social behaviour, reduce and prevent crime and create safe places for all;
- c. To encourage the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the public realm, keeping spaces free of graffiti and litter etc.

The site is located in the townland of Blarney, a rural area, which is classified as, a 'High Value Landscape.

Zoning

The site is zoned for Long-term Strategic Regeneration (ZO 3), which has the following objective:

Zoning Objective 3: *To provide and promote a mix of residential, employment and other uses in the long term, to ensure the creation of a vibrant, compact and sustainable urban area.*

The purpose of this zone is to promote the development of key sites and large-scale regeneration projects for the development of new employment, housing and supporting infrastructure. These sites have a potential to contribute significantly towards the sustainable compact growth of Cork City. Development in this zone should seek to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land in achieving densities that contribute towards compact growth.

4.4.2 Cumulation with other existing projects

From the 2018 document “*Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*”, cumulative effects are stated as “*Effects are not to be considered in isolation but cumulatively i.e. when they are added to other effects. A single effect on its own may not be significant in terms of impact on the environment but, when considered together with other effects, may have a significant impact on the environment. Also, a single effect which may, on its own, have a significant effect, may have a reduced and insignificant impact when combined with other effects*”

Cumulative effects may be borne from any interaction between different impacts within a project. There are no other proposed developments in the area which may give rise to cumulative effects.

5. Proposed Development

HRP Construction seeks permission from Cork City Council to develop:

- (1) Residential development of 138 no. residential units
- (2) Civic Centre
- (3) All ancillary works

The proposal sets out to construct 138 no. residential units together with amenities within the site boundary including a library, creche and café, over an area of 3.7 Ha. The proposal includes the provision of internal roads, footpaths and pedestrian crossings, as well as car parking and bicycle parking.

The proposal involves demolition of existing structures on site, including tarmac roads & carparks, existing concrete slabs & foundations.

The development will also include tree removal and planting within the site boundary, together with the installation of public lighting, bin stores and a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS). These SuDS measures will consist of permeable paving and tree pits being implemented on site. Due to the several identified space constraints in implementing various other SuDS measures (such as swales, wetlands, detention basins etc) one below-ground attenuation tank is proposed for the management of surface water from the roofed and paved areas within the development.

The overall developed area across the various elements of the proposal are tabulated in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Proposed Developed Site Areas

Use	Area
Road	3,382m ²
Concrete Path	9,747m ²
Permeable Paving	1,801m ²
Roof	8,874m ²
Landscaping	12,958m ²
Total Area	36,763m²

6. Aspects of the Environment with Potential to be Significantly Affected

Hydrology

The most likely potential for effects on hydrology from the proposed development include storm water run-off during construction, with open excavations increasing the risk of suspended material running off from the site during periods of heavy rain. This risk will be managed through conventional construction controls to be implemented as part of a site-specific CEMP for the development (submitted under separate cover). The CEMP will take account of the mitigation measures specified in the EclA (submitted under separate cover).

Storm Water

With the site being currently undeveloped, the construction of new residential developments would have an effect on the storm water discharge from the site. Storm water on site could potentially be contaminated by silt or spilled hydrocarbons from fuel on site during construction. Contaminated storm water runoff could have an effect on the water quality of the River Shournagh and River Martin which flows to the south of the site. HRP Construction will implement the necessary environmental control measures in order to mitigate storm water contamination. The contractor will be required to ensure that materials are stored properly on site.

Storm water runoff can increase post-construction due to the increased hardstanding coverage and this will be addressed through SUDS measures to be implemented on site such that there are no adverse effects.

Sanitary (Foul) Wastewater

The area is serviced by the existing Blarney WWTP. Treated effluent from the plant is discharged to the River Shournagh. The proposed works could give rise to an increase in nutrient discharge to the River Shournagh via the Blarney WWTP. This WWTP operates at a 13,000PE and has prescribed ELVs for relevant parameters including total suspended solids (TSS), chemical oxygen demand (COD), ammonia, pH, orthophosphate, total phosphorus and biological oxygen demand (BOD).

Biodiversity

The project area is located within a site previously used for the Blarney Park Hotel. Construction will take place entirely within the boundary of the site. Noise emissions during construction could potentially have an effect on the reproductive cycles of nearby species, such as birds. However, no valuable habitats for SCI species were recorded within the development area, therefore no disturbance is anticipated to SCI birds or other species.

A report was completed in support of the appropriate assessment screening by Dixon Brosnan, concluding that the development at St. Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork, either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

Land and Soils

The proposed development is taking place on overgrown ground containing areas of immature woodland and semi-natural grassland, with some areas of hardstanding. The proposal lays out plans for tree removal within the site boundary, and for replanting of new trees.

Air Emissions

During the construction phase, fugitive emissions from machinery exhausts and materials handling will arise and these will be temporary in nature. Fugitive dust emissions will be controlled through appropriate best construction control techniques (which will be implemented through a project specific CEMP). Combustion emissions will also arise from the operation of plant machinery

Noise

There will be noise associated with construction equipment during the earthworks and site clearance stages of development, together with other mobile plant and equipment associated with building works.

This phase will be temporary and short term and the contractor will comply with best construction noise control techniques (which will be implemented through a project specific CEMP).

Solid Waste (during construction & demolition)

Volumes of solid waste associated with construction of the residential units themselves will be stored briefly on site in a temporary segregation bay before being tankered off by contractors licensed under the Waste Management Act of 1996, the Waste Management (Permit) Regulations of 1998, and the Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations of 2001. Surplus soil and subsoil will be used for fill material on other sites or will be used for capping purposes on site. Waste management during the construction phase will be as per the Construction, Demolition and Environmental Waste Management Plan prepared for the proposed development (submitted under separate cover), which takes account of the management of demolition wastes.

Traffic

The proposal will result in the generation of additional employment and associated increase in traffic entering and leaving the site during both the construction and operational stages of the development.

Use of Natural Resources

The proposed development is on a brownfield site previously used for the Blarney Park Hotel. The development will consist of 138 no. residential units and will therefore result in increased water usage through the carrying out of various domestic activities.

Natural resources may be used in the construction process e.g. excavated topsoil, timber, gravel etc.

The construction phase will require the stripping of some existing trees in the area; however, this will be compensated for via replanting. Excavation of existing hardstanding will also be necessary in order to proceed with the construction phase of the project.

A report was completed in support of the appropriate assessment screening by Dixon Brosnan, concluding that the development will not have any significant effect on nearby Natura 2000 sites and their conservation objectives.

7. Description of the Likely Significant Effects

The checklist for EIA Screening Assessment is set out in Table 7.1 below. This is adapted from the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN02 on Environmental Impact Assessment Screening.

This checklist is designed to address the requirements of Schedules 7 and 7A of the Regulations and to inform the Planning Authority's Council's EIA determination in this case.

Table 7.1 EIA Screening Assessment Checklist

Screening Determination:		
Planning Register Reference:		
Development Summary:	<p>HRP Construction Limited are applying for planning permission for the construction of scheme comprising of 138 no. residential units, and a civic centre on a site spanning 3.7 ha.</p> <p>The proposed development consists of the demolition/removal of existing hardstanding areas associated with the former use of the site and the construction of a number of residential units consisting of 119 no. 2,3 and 4 bed houses and 19 no. 1 and 2 bed apartments/older-living units.</p> <p>This development will also include the provision of internal roads, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, car parking and bicycle parking, drainage, landscaping and public open space provision, boundary treatments, cycle path, tree removal and planting, public lighting, ducting, ESB substation, bin stores and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).</p> <p>The proposed development also includes all associated and ancillary development and servicing works above and below ground to facilitate the construction and operation of the development which is located at the site of the Former Blarney Park Hotel, St, Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork City.</p>	
	Yes / No / N/A:	Comment (if relevant):
Does the application include information specified in Schedule 7A?	Yes	
Other relevant information submitted:	Yes	AA Screening Engineering Report Planning Report CEMP EcIA FRA AHIA T&TA

Does the application include a NIS and/or other reports to enable AA screening?	Yes	AA Screening report indicating that AA can be screened out.
Is an IED/IPC/Waste Licence or Wastewater Discharge Authorisation (or review of licence/ authorisation) required from the EPA for the subject development?	No	
If YES has the EPA been consulted?	N/A	
Have any other relevant ¹ assessments of the effects on the environment been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives –for example SEA or AA?	None Required	AA Screening Undertaken which screened out Stage 2 AA.
Examination:		
1. Characteristics of proposed development (including demolition, construction, operation, or decommissioning):		
	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent):	
(a) The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (including any demolition works):	<p>HRP Construction seeks permission from Cork City Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construct 138 no. residential units 2. Construct a library, community café, and creche. 3. Construct internal roads, crossings and car parking/bicycle parking 4. Install a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) <p>The proposal sets out to utilise an area of 3.7 Ha, which is currently overgrown and containing a number of hardstanding areas, in order to construct new residential units as well as other amenities e.g. creche, café, to be used by these residents.</p> <p>The proposal involves demolition of existing structures on site, including tarmac roads & carparks, existing concrete slabs & foundations and existing dwelling.</p>	
(b) Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects:	No.	

<p>(c) Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity:</p> <p><i>Will construction or the operation of the proposal use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?</i></p>	<p>Construction and operation of the proposed development will utilise natural resources such as land, water and energy.</p> <p>The development will span an area of 3.7 Ha, containing 138 no. houses, amenities including a library and café, and internal roadways.</p> <p>The construction will involve use of non-renewable resources such as concrete and plastics, together with timber and metals which can be recycled.</p>
<p>(d) Production of waste:</p> <p><i>Will the proposal produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?</i></p>	<p>The construction and operation of the proposal will generate small quantities of solid waste.</p> <p>During construction waste management will be managed in accordance with best construction practice and through a CEMP which will require that best practicable means are used to ensure that wastes are avoided, minimised or reused/recycled where practicable.</p> <p>These wastes will be managed in accordance with the site Resource and Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>Once completed, the development will be serviced by private waste management collections as currently operating in the Blarney area.</p>
<p>(e) Pollution and nuisances:</p> <p><i>Will the proposal release pollutants to ground or surface water, or air (including noise and vibrations) or water, or lead to exceeding environmental standards set out in other Directives?</i></p>	<p>No. The operation of mobile plant and equipment during construction will give rise to emissions to atmosphere of combustion gases, sulphur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen and particulates. Fugitive dust emissions may arise through wind assisted dust generation during earthworks.</p> <p>There will be no new main process emissions to air arising from the proposal.</p> <p>The CEMP shall set out, as a minimum, site specific measures to control and monitor impact arising in relation to construction traffic, dust and air pollutants during the works.</p> <p>Standard construction measures will be employed to minimise fugitive dust emissions including management of spoil, speed limits, damping and use of wheel wash at site access point.</p>
<p>(f) Major accidents and disasters:</p> <p><i>In accordance with scientific knowledge, is there a risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?</i></p>	<p>No. The development of residential dwellings, library café and creche will not give rise to risks of major accidents and/or disasters.</p>
<p>(g) Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution:</p>	<p>No. The development of residential dwellings, library café and creche will not give rise to risks to human health.</p>

<p>2. Location of proposed development:</p>	
<p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development:</p>	<p>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):</p>
<p>(a) Generally, describe the location of the site and its surroundings:</p>	<p>The site is on the western edge of Blarney Village in the site of the former Blarney Park Hotel The site is neighboured by Blarney to the east, containing residential buildings and other public facilities e.g. schools, churches. The land use to the north and west is mostly agricultural, with Blarney Castle being approximately 330m south of the site.</p> <p>The main access to the site is via St. Ann's Road, which is off the R617 regional road, and moves through Blarney.</p> <p>The environs of the site are characterised by agricultural land and forestry.</p>
<p>(b) Is the project located within, close to or has it the potential to impact on any site specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European site - NHA/pNHA - Designated Nature Reserve - Designated refuge for flora or fauna - Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation, protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ local area plan/ draft plan or variation of a plan. 	<p>The project is not located within or in close proximity to any designated site.</p> <p>There are two designated sites within 15km of the proposed development area. Blackwater River SAC (002170) is approximately 14.6km N of the site, however it is not anticipated that the proposed works will have any effect on this site.</p> <p>Cork Harbour SPA (004030) is approximately 10.1km SE of the site and is of great local importance. However, considering its distance from the site, it is also not anticipated to be impacted upon by the proposed development.</p> <p>AA Screening has concluded that the proposed development either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives.</p> <p>Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.</p>

<p>(c) Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies (including riparian areas and river mouths), the coastal zone and the marine environment, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>(d) Is the proposal likely to be highly visible to many people? Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location, or are there any routes or facilities that are used by the public for recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the proposal?</p>	<p>The proposal will be developed on a brownfield site previously used for the Blarney Park Hotel and will likely be visible to the residents of Blarney Village.</p> <p>There are areas of high landscape or feature value on or around the site (Blarney Castle).</p> <p>A landscaping plan will be implemented to retain and reinforce boundary screening.</p>
<p>(e) Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>Features of historical interest were not detected within the site following a search of Records of Monuments and Places (RMP), published by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The site is situated within the Blarney Architectural Conservation Area (ACA).</p> <p>Blarney Castle is approximately 250m south of the site, at its closest point. The accompanying AHIA states that the proposed works may be visible from some viewing angles within Blarney Castle</p>
<p>(f) Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, or occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the proposal?</p>	<p>The site is on the western boundary of Blarney Village, which is a relatively built-up area.</p> <p>Fugitive dust emissions may arise from the site, however no significant effect on the nearby area is anticipated.</p>
<p>(g) Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the proposal?</p>	<p>Blarney Castle is approximately 330m south of the site, however it is not anticipated that the development works will have an effect on the castle grounds.</p> <p>The Knockacorballey Stream runs approximately 25m from the southern border of the site in a westerly direction. The Blarney river runs parallel to the stream, approximately 200m from the southern site border, also flowing in a westerly direction.</p>
<p>(h) Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, and where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal e.g. the status of water bodies under the Water Framework Directive?</p>	<p>The Blarney WWTP exceeded its ammonia ELV in 2024, however this exceedance was not deemed to have a significant effect on nearby watercourses.</p>

<p>(i) Is the site located in an area susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, or flooding which could cause the proposal to present environmental problems?</p>	<p>The site is not located in an area susceptible to flooding, subsidence, landslides or erosion.</p> <p>The Blarney River has a high flooding probability in some areas around the site. However the flood risk assessment prepared by Ayesa has dictated the finished floor levels and as such there is no identified risk of flooding. As per the drainage report completed for the proposal, there will be an underground attenuation tank on site, as well as SuDS measures including tree pits and permeable paving. Considering this, the development is unlikely to have any effect on flooding likelihood or potential impact, and will not pose any risk to local tourism.</p>
<p>(j) Are there any additional considerations that are specific to this location?</p>	<p>Blarney and Blarney Castle are a significant contributor to local and regional tourism.</p> <p>The site is in close proximity (25m) to the Knockacorballey Stream.</p> <p>Nearby watercourses are not designated for amenity, fishery or ecological purposes.</p>

3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts:		
If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below.	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
<p>(including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):</p>		
Population and human health:		
<p>Construction activities will generate noise and emissions to atmosphere.</p> <p>On competition, there will be no sources of noise other than through movement of residents and visitors into and out of the development.</p> <p>On completion there will be no emissions to atmosphere of significance arising from the development.</p>	<p>Mitigation measures will be identified within the CEMP.</p>	<p>No</p>
Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive.^{2 *}		
<p>Cork Harbour SPA is a designated site listed under the European Council Habitats Directive located 10.1km from the development site.</p> <p>There are no direct discharges to this waterbody.</p>	<p>Sanitary effluent will be discharged to the Blarney town sewer for treatment. There will be no direct discharges from the development other than clean uncontaminated stormwater, which will be managed through appropriate SUDS measures.</p> <p>Screening for Appropriate Assessment concluded that AA was not required.</p> <p>Ecological mitigation measures are identified within the EclA.</p>	<p>No</p>
Land, soil, water, air and climate:		

² -And with particular regard to areas specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations.

<p>The operation of mobile plant and equipment during construction will give rise to emissions to atmosphere of combustion gases, sulphur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen and particulates. Fugitive dust emissions may arise through wind assisted dust generation during earthworks although risk has been assessed as low.</p> <p>There will be no emissions to air of significance arising from the development once completed.</p> <p>There will be an increase in the total hardstanding area at the site, leading to increased storm water runoff. This will be collected through a dedicated storm water system using gullies, drainage channels, downpipes and rainwater outlets and a SUDS drainage system will be implemented.</p> <p>Additionally, there are no direct emissions to groundwater onsite. As a result, pollution of water sources within and surrounding the site will not occur.</p>	<p>Mitigation measures will be identified within the CEMP.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape:*</p>		
<p>Features of historical interest were not detected within the site following a search of Records of Monuments and Places (RMP), published by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. However, there are multiple features within a 1km radius of the site.</p> <p>There are 3 lime kilns within 1km of the site: CO073-099, 0.96km SE, CO073-096, 0.87km SW, and CO073-098, 0.53km SW of the site.</p> <p>A church (CO062-201) is located 0.18km NE of the site, in Blarney town.</p> <p>An old woollen mill (CO062-065) sits approximately 0.47km NE of the site.</p> <p>A tree ring (CO062-178) sits 0.14km S of the site.</p> <p>The remains of a bridge over the River Blarney (CO062-240) are 0.23km directly south of the site.</p> <p>An icehouse in the demesne of Blarney Castle (CO062-237), is 0.39km SW of the site, within a forested area.</p> <p>Blarney Castle is 0.27km S of the site and houses multiple historically important monuments including a 3-storey 18th century tower (CO062-239), a cave or 'dungeon' (CO062-177002), a bawn wall of the castle (CO062-177001), and the remains of a tower house and bawn (CO062-177).</p> <p>Another country house declared to be part of the castle (CO073-073001) is 0.52km S of the site.</p>	<p>Mitigation measures will be identified within the CEMP.</p> <p>The proposed development will take place entirely within the boundary of the previously developed Blarney Park Hotel site.</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>Another icehouse (CO073-073002) lies 0.54km SE of the site.</p> <p>A bridge over the River Blarney on the eastern side of Blarney Castle lies 0.95km SE of the site.</p> <p>Beside what is now Blarney GAA Club there is a 'church' (CO062-246), however there are no longer any visible remains of the church. It is 0.89km SE of the site.</p> <p>The site is not specifically used for public access to amenity /recreational activities.</p> <p>There are no public rights of way on site, or which could be affected by the proposal</p> <p>The proposal will take place within the site boundaries, which are a flat, open area. The development will be visible to the surrounding town.</p>		
--	--	--

Cumulative effects:		
N/A	N/A	N/A
Transboundary effects:		
N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Additional Considerations:		
Further relevant information, if any, relating to how the results of any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment have been taken into account (e.g. SEA, AA screening, AA):	The EIA Screening has taken account of the content and findings of the Appropriate Assessment Screening (AA) report and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) prepared for the development.	
Other relevant information/ considerations of note:		
Determination:		
No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EIAR is not required
Real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	EIAR is required
Main Reasons and Considerations:		
See Section 8 of the document for conclusions.		

8. Conclusions

HRP Construction Limited are applying for planning permission for the construction of scheme comprising of 138 no. residential units, and a civic centre on a site spanning 3.7 ha.

The proposed development consists of the demolition/removal of existing hardstanding areas associated with the former use of the site and the construction of a number of residential units consisting of 119 no. 2,3 and 4 bed houses and 19 no. 1 and 2 bed apartments/later-living units.

This development will also include the provision of internal roads, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, car parking and bicycle parking, drainage, landscaping and public open space provision, boundary treatments, cycle path, tree removal and planting, public lighting, ducting, ESB substation, bin stores and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

The proposed development also includes all associated and ancillary development and servicing works above and below ground to facilitate the construction and operation of the development which is located at the site of the Former Blarney Park Hotel, St, Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork City.

This proposed development has been assessed against the criteria specified in Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A of the planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2025.

The assessment concludes that no significant effects are likely, taking account of the nature of the proposal, its scale and intensity, its location relative to sensitive features and its risk profile.

In addition, the proposed development has been screened to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required, and it has been concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required.

Appendix B

Ecological Impact Assessment

DixonBrosnan
environmental consultants

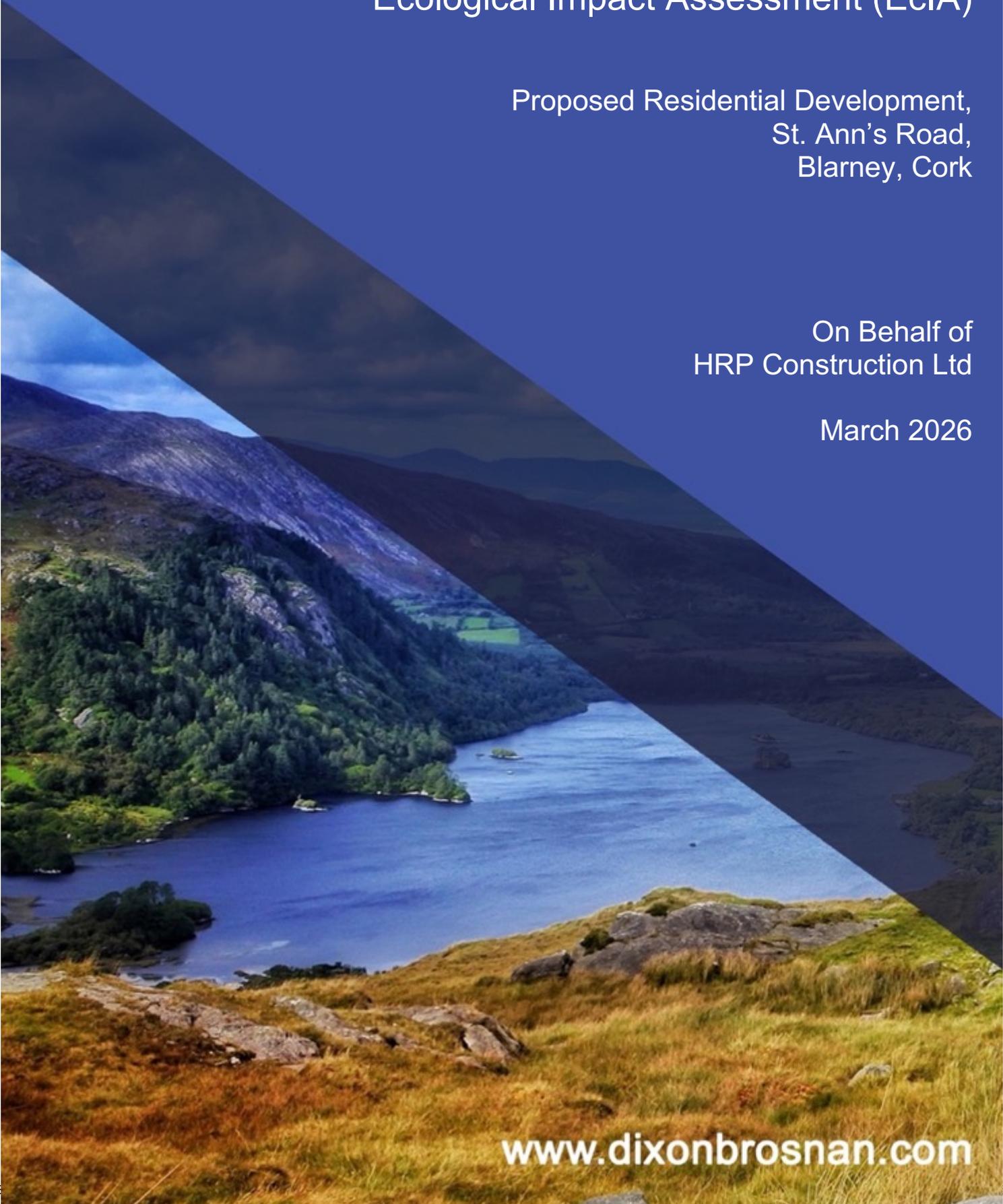
Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)

Proposed Residential Development,
St. Ann's Road,
Blarney, Cork

On Behalf of
HRP Construction Ltd

March 2026

www.dixonbrosnan.com



DixonBrosnan

environmental consultants

Project	Ecological impact assessment (EclA) for Proposed Residential Development, St. Ann's Road Blarney, Cork	
Client	HRP Construction Ltd	
Project Ref.	25106	
Report No.	25106.01	
Client Ref.	-	
Date	Revision	Prepared By
22/10/25	First Draft	Sorcha Sheehy BSc PhD
24/10/25	Issue to client	Carl Dixon BSc MSc
16/12/25	Issue to client (2)	
07/02/26	Issue to client (3)	
10/03/26	Issue to client (4)	
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1. Introduction

DixonBrosnan Environmental Consultants were commissioned to assess the potential impacts of the proposed residential development at St. Ann's Road, Blarney, Co. Cork, and all associated site works on terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna. This report describes and evaluates the habitats with their representative flora and fauna and addresses the potential impacts of the development on the ecology of the site and the surrounding area.

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This appraisal is based on surveys of the proposed development site and a review of desktop data. Although not part of an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) this report follows the structure and protocols detailed in *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (EPA 2022).

2.2 Desktop Review

A desktop study was carried out to identify features of ecological value occurring within the proposed development site and in close proximity to it. A desktop review also allows the key ecological issues to be identified early in the appraisal process and facilitates the planning of surveys. Sources of information utilised for this report include the following:

- National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) - www.npws.ie
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – www.epa.ie
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC)– www.biodiversityireland.ie
- *Cork City Biodiversity Action Plan* (Heritage Council 2009);
- *Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028*;
- Bat Conservation Ireland – <http://www.batconservationireland.org>;
- Birdwatch Ireland - <http://www.birdwatchireland.ie/>
- Invasive Species Ireland - <http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com/>
- Blarney D0043-01 Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Annual Environmental Report 2024 (EPA 2025).

This report follows the Environmental Protection Agency's *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (EPA 2022). It also takes account of the *Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment* (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, August 2018), *Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes* (National Roads Authority, 2009) Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management *Guidelines on Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, Version 1.3* (CIEEM 2024).

Although not forming part of an EIAR, this report generally follows the Environmental Protection Agency's *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (EPA 2022).

Reference was also made to the following key documents where relevant:

- *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping* (Heritage Council, 2011)
- *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000)
- *Guidelines for the treatment of Badgers prior to the construction of National Road Schemes. National Roads Authority, Dublin* (National Roads Authority (NRA) 2005a)
- *Best Practice Guidelines for the Conservation of Bats in the Planning of National Road Schemes* (National Roads Authority (NRA) 2005b)
- *Guidelines for the treatment of bats during the construction of national road schemes* (National Roads Authority (NRA) 2005c)
- *Guidelines for the protection and preservation of trees, hedgerows and scrub prior to, during and post construction of national road schemes.* (National Roads Authority (NRA) 2006)
- *Guidelines for the treatment of Otters prior to the construction of National Road Schemes* (National Roads Authority (NRA) 2008)
- *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*' (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023)
- *Bat mitigation guidelines for Ireland v2. Marnell, F., Kelleher, C. & Mullen, E. (2022) Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 134. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland*
- *Bird Census Techniques* Bibby, C.J., Burgess, N.D., Hill, D.A. & Mustoe, S.H. (2000)
- *Bird Monitoring Methods - a Manual of Techniques for Key UK Species.* Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W. & Evans, J. (1998)

2.3 Legislative Context

Flora and fauna in Ireland are protected at a national level by the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended, and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. They are also protected at a European level by the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EC.

Under this legislation, sites of nature conservation importance are designated in order to legally protect faunal and floral species and important/vulnerable habitats. The relevant categories of designation are as follows:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 to comply with the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC);

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) amended in 2009 as Directive 2009/147/EC; and
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) are listed under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, as amended. A NHA is designated for its wildlife value and receives statutory protection. A list of pNHAs was published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but these have not since been statutorily designated. Consultation with the NPWS is still required if any development is likely to impact on a pNHA.

2.3.1 Relevant European Legislation

- Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (The Habitats Directive);
- Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds (The Birds Directive);
- Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy (The Water Framework Directive);
- Directive 2006/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 September 2006 on the quality of fresh waters needing protection or improvement in order to support fish life (The Fish Directive (consolidated)).

2.3.2 Relevant Irish Legislation

- Wildlife Act 1976 as amended by Wildlife Act 1976 (Protection of Wild Animals) Regulations 1980, Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2010, Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2012, European Communities (Wildlife Act, 1976) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 (The Wildlife Act);
- European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds) Regulations 1985 (S.I. No. 291/1985) as amended by S.I. No. 31/1995 (The Wild Birds Regulations);
- European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997 as amended by S.I. No. 233/1998 and S.I. No 378/2005) (The Habitats Regulations);
- Fisheries (Consolidation) Act, 1959 (as amended) (The Fisheries Act);
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) (The Habitats Regulations); and
- The Flora (Protection) Order 2022 (S.I. No. 235 of 2022).

2.4 Survey Overview

This assessment is based on surveys at the proposed development site and surrounding lands. Site surveys were carried out on the 19th of September 2024, 20th of September, 21st of September 2024 and 13th of October, 20th of October 2025 and 21st of October 2025. It is noted that ecology surveys were carried out at the site in 2020 by Limosa Environmental and

O'Donnell Environmental as part of a previous planning application. These surveys are referred to where relevant.

Habitats

Habitats were mapped according to the classification scheme outlined in the Heritage Council publication *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000) and following the guidelines contained in *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping* (Heritage Council, 2011). Habitats were cross referenced with Habitats Directive Annex I habitats. During these surveys, the site was also surveyed for invasive species and rare floral species (Wyse *et al.*, 2016; Stace 2019).

Non-volant Mammals

A general mammal survey was carried out in conjunction with the habitat survey following NRA guidelines (NRA 2005a, NRA 2005c, NRA 2008). Potential habitat including grassland, scrub and woodland to a minimum of 150m from the site boundary were systematically checked for signs of mammal activity or habitation.

Bats

Bat activity surveys were conducted within the proposed development site under suitable weather conditions on 19th of September 2024, 20th of September, 21st of September 2024 and 13th of October 2025. The surveys were carried out 15 minutes before sunset (Collins 2023). Activity (transect) surveys used Elekon Batloggers and EchoMeter Touch 2 PRO bat detectors. An emergence survey using a Pulsar Helion 2 XP50 Pro Thermal Imaging Camera was also carried out to identify potential emergence points from trees within the survey area. The primary purpose of bat surveys was to assess usage of trees and habitats, located within or in close proximity to the site boundary. Activity surveys were also carried out to identify foraging and/or commuting routes within the proposed development site boundary (i.e., hedgerow, treelines, scrub, semi-natural grassland, etc.).

A preliminary roost assessment was carried at ground level on all mature and semi-mature trees within the proposed development site as per Collins (2023). These assessments followed the guidelines set out in '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th ed)*' (Collins, 2023).

Birds

General bird surveys were carried out in conjunction with habitat surveys during September 2024 and October 2025. Surveys were based on the BTO Common Bird Census (CBC) methodology (Bibby *et al.*, 2000 and Gilbert, 1998) which aims to capture a snapshot of breeding bird activity within the study area.

The study area focused on terrestrial habitats within the proposed development site. The aim of the breeding bird surveys was to identify any valuable bird habitats within the site boundary and to identify birds present within the proposed development site and surrounding landscape.

2.5 Authors/surveyors

This report and survey work was completed by Dr. Sorcha Sheehy PhD (Ecology/ornithology) and Carl Dixon MSc (Ecological Monitoring). Field surveys were completed by Carl Dixon MSc.

Carl Dixon holds an Honours Degree (BSc) in Ecology and a Masters (MSc) in Ecological Monitoring from UCC. He is a senior ecologist who has over 25 years' experience in ecological assessment. Prior to setting up DixonBrosnan Environmental Consultants in 2000, Carl set up and ran Core Environmental Services which included REPS planning for landowners and ecological assessments. Carl has particular experience in freshwater ecology, including electrofishing fish stock assessments and water quality assessments. He also has considerable experience in habitat mapping and mammal ecology including survey work and reporting in relation to Badgers and bats.

We note that Carl Dixon has considerable experience in bat survey and bat mitigation measures/roost design. Carl was the primary coordinator and surveyor for a heritage council-funded project serving all the river bridges in County Waterford for bats. He has designed bat roosts for Lesser horseshoe in conjunction with the NPWS for sites in West Cork and is currently designing a dedicated bat roost for a large pharmaceutical plant in County Limerick. Carl has completed specialized training courses relating to bats in Ireland and the UK and has considerable experience in using a variety of bat survey equipment and subsequent software analysis of data.

Other competencies include surveys for invasive species and bird surveys. Carl has extensive experience with regards to EIAR and NIS mitigation and impact assessment. He has experience in large-scale industrial developments with extensive experience in complex assessments as part of multi-disciplinary teams. Such projects include gas pipelines, incinerators, electrical cable routes, oil refineries and quarries.

Sorcha Sheehy PhD (Ecology/ornithology) is an ecologist and ornithologist who has worked for 15 years in environmental consultancy. She has worked on Screening/NISs for a range of small and large-scale projects with expertise in assessing impacts on birds. Sorcha's PhD research focused on bird behaviour at airports, where she studied bird avoidance behaviour and collision risk to aircraft. Her research involved field observations, post-mortem analysis and radar surveys. Sorcha has worked on bird collision risk assessments at airports throughout Ireland including Dublin airport, Cork airport, Shannon airport and Kerry airport. During her consultancy work Sorcha carried out field-based surveys and environmental reports including NIS, AA screening and EIARs. Notable projects include the Arklow Bank Wind Park, Indaver Ireland Waste Management Facility at Ringaskiddy, Irving Oil Whitegate Refinery (IOWR), Shannon LNG and Greenlink Interconnector.

2.6 Limitations

Standard survey methods were followed to ensure that surveys were completed within the appropriate season. However, any biases or limitations associated with these methods could potentially affect the results collected. Although every effort was made to provide a full assessment and comprehensive description of the study area, natural fluctuations in populations may not be fully reflected due to the instantaneous nature of the field surveys. However, the field surveys together with the background knowledge provided by the desk

study, provides a robust representation of the baseline for the habitats and species within the zone of influence.

It is noted that breeding bird surveys were completed outside the peak breeding bird season i.e. March to mid-July. Ideally breeding bird surveys would be completed for all projects, however, time constraints did not allow dedicated breeding bird surveys for this project. It is noted that birds were still active within the site during the field surveys and these surveys give an indication of birds which use the site for breeding. With the exception of breeding bird surveys, all surveys were completed as per the recommended guidelines and seasons i.e. habitats, flora, invasive species, non-volant mammals and bats. However, given the location of the site, its highly modified nature, availability of recent high quality ecological data, the nature of the proposed development and the limited potential for ecological impacts, the authors are confident in the conclusions of this report in the absence of breeding bird surveys. However, noting the concerns of the City Council, we will carry out breeding bird surveys during summer of 2026 to aid in optimal locations on nest boxes within site boundary.

3. Receiving Environment

3.1 Existing site

The proposed development site is on the western edge of Blarney Village in the grounds of the former Blarney Park Hotel site in Blarney Town (**Figure 1**). The Blarney Park Hotel, which originally opened in 1969 closed in 2007. Following fire damage in 2008, the buildings onsite were demolished and there are currently no buildings within the proposed development site (with the exception of two small plant buildings).

The Blarney Castle and Gardens are located to the south of the site and the main square in Blarney village is located to the east. Lands north and west of the site are largely agricultural with pockets of woodland habitat. The overall site area is approximately 3.7 ha.

3.2 Proposed Development

HRP Construction Limited are applying for planning permission the construction of 138 residential units, a civic centre and all ancillary works.

An overview of the proposed development site layout is shown in **Figure 2**.

3.3 Surface water

Through the incorporation of SuDS features including tree pits and permeable paving, surface water runoff will be temporarily stored and filtered within the development site.

Surface water from all roofed areas, terraced and hardstanding will be collected through a dedicated stormwater system using gullies, drainage channels, downpipes and rainwater outlets. The surface water will then be managed through a series of SuDS components and attenuated prior to discharge.

The proposed surface water outfall is to the existing open drain located along the western boundary of the site, as indicated on Drawing No. 23141-MMS-ZZ-ST-DR-C-10002 – Proposed Surface Water Drainage Layout.. This drain flows into the Knockacorally Stream (a bypass channel for the River Martin) to the south of the proposed development site.

In accordance with Cork City Council recommendations, the allowable discharge rate from the site has been restricted to a reduced Q_{bar} value of 2.0 l/s/ha. This corresponds to a total site discharge rate of 7.40 l/s which will be provided by a hydrobrake vortex control device installed on the last manhole prior to discharge offsite.

When allowance is made for a 1 in 100-year storm event plus a 20% climate change allowance, the required on-site attenuation storage volume is 2,090m³.

It should be noted that all surface water drainage works will be undertaken in accordance with the local authority requirements and Cork City Council standards.

3.4 Foul Drainage

The wastewater drainage for the proposed development has been designed as a separate system to the storm with the final discharge to the existing foul sewer traversing the southern portion of the site as detailed previously and indicated on MMOS Drawing '23141-MMS-ZZ-ST- DR-C-10001 – Proposed Foul Layout Plan'.

All wastewater drainage stacks from the units are to be collected beneath the ground floor slab and directed to the proposed new wastewater network onsite, which is proposed to then discharge to the existing wastewater sewer traversing the southern portion of the site.

The proposed development is to comprise a total of no. 138 residential unit, a civic centre, and all ancillary works. The proposed wastewater flow for this development has been estimated as 0.779 l/s for the average Dry Weather Flow (DWF), and 4.571 l/s for the peak DWF. Uisce Éireann has issued a Confirmation of Feasibility (REF: CDS25004956) stating that a wastewater connection is feasible based on the existing Irish Water infrastructure within the vicinity for the proposed 138 units and civic centre.

Details of the proposed wastewater drainage layout are shown indicatively on MMOS Drawing '23141-MMS-ZZ-ST-DR-C-10001 – Proposed Foul Layout Plan'.

It should be noted that all wastewater drainage works will be undertaken in accordance with Uisce Éireann standard details and codes of practice for wastewater as required.

4. Designated Conservation Areas

4.1 European (Natura 2000) Sites

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and candidate SACs are protected under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are protected under the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC and European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended. Collectively, these sites are referred to as Natura 2000 or European sites.

The proposed development site does not form part of any SPA or SAC (or cSAC). Determination of this project's likely Zone of Impact (Zoi) was achieved by assessing all elements of the proposed project against the ecological receptors within the project footprint, in addition to all ecological receptors that could be connected to and subsequently impacted by the proposed project through impact pathways. To this end, the Zoi extends outside of the proposed development footprint to include ecological receptors connected to the project through overlap /intersection, proximity and connectivity to features such as waterbodies. A potential pathway to one of these designated sites i.e. Cork Harbour SPA (**Table 1** and **Figure 3**) was identified. Given the distances involved and the absence of hydrological or other connections, no pathway for impact on any other European site has been identified.

Cork Harbour SPA is a large, sheltered bay system, with several river estuaries - principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas, Owenboy and Owennacurra. The SPA site comprises most of the main intertidal areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas River Estuary, inner Lough Mahon, Monkstown Creek, Lough Beg, the Owenboy River Estuary, Whitegate Bay, Ringabella Creek and the Rostellan and Poul nabibe inlets. Cork Harbour is of major ornithological significance, being of international importance both for the total numbers of wintering birds (i.e., > 20,000) and also for its populations of Black-tailed Godwit and Redshank. In addition, it supports nationally important wintering populations of 22 species, as well as a nationally important breeding colony of Common Tern. Several of the species which occur regularly are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

Table 1. European sites and their location relative to the proposed development site

European sites name and code	Distance from site boundary (at closest point) and potential source-pathway-receptor link	Qualifying interests (QI)/ Special Conservation Interests (SCI)
Special Protection Area (SPA)		
Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030)	10.1km southeast (19.8km downstream). A small drainage ditch runs along the western site boundary and connects to the Knockacorbally Stream to the south of the proposed development site. The Knockacorbally Stream is a 2 nd order tributary	Birds A193 Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) A028 Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>)

European sites name and code	Distance from site boundary (at closest point) and potential source-pathway-receptor link	Qualifying interests (QI)/ Special Conservation Interests (SCI)
	<p>of the River Shournagh (flowing into the River Shournagh via the River Martin). During operation, the proposed surface water drainage network will discharge the western drainage ditch. The River Shournagh/River Lee/Lee Estuary meets the Cork Harbour SPA c.19.8km downstream of the proposed development site. Therefore, although unlikely, surface water run-off/discharges during the construction or operational phases could potentially flow into the Cork Harbour SPA via the River Shournagh and its tributaries.</p> <p>Wastewater from the site will ultimately discharge into River Shournagh via the Blarney Wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) approximately 18.4km upstream of Cork Harbour SPA. This could potentially impact on water quality within the Cork Harbour SPA.</p> <p>Although unlikely given the distance involved, surface water run-off/discharges during the construction or operational phases as well as wastewater discharges from the proposed development could potentially impact on Cork Harbour SPA via the onsite drainage ditch (and River Shournagh). Habitats within or near the proposed development area could also potentially provide ex-situ foraging grounds for SCI species outside the Cork Harbour SPA.</p>	<p>A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)</p> <p>A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)</p> <p>A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)</p> <p>A056 Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)</p> <p>A156 Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>)</p> <p>A052 Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)</p> <p>A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)</p> <p>A054 Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)</p> <p>A149 Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)</p> <p>A017 Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)</p> <p>A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)</p> <p>A004 Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>)</p> <p>A050 Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>)</p> <p>A160 Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)</p> <p>A005 Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>)</p> <p>A069 Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>)</p> <p>A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</p> <p>A142 Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)</p> <p>A179 Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)</p> <p>A182 Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>)</p> <p>A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)</p> <p>Habitats</p> <p>Wetlands</p>

European sites name and code	Distance from site boundary (at closest point) and potential source-pathway-receptor link	Qualifying interests (QI)/ Special Conservation Interests (SCI)
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)		
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	14.6km north. No hydrological or other pathway	<p>Habitats</p> <p>1130 Estuaries 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)*</p> <p>Species</p> <p>1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) 1092 White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) 1095 Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) 1096 Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) 1099 River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) 1103 Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax fallax</i>) 1106 Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) 1355 Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) 1421 Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>)</p>



Figure 3. Location of the proposed development boundary and Natura 2000 sites located within likely zone of impact of the site | Source: EPA Envision mapping <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> | Not to scale

4.2 Nationally Protected Sites

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) are national designations under the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended. A Natural Heritage Area (NHA) is designated for its wildlife value and receives statutory protection. These areas are considered nationally important for the habitats present or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitats needs protection. Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000), NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation.

Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995 and have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. These sites are also of significance for wildlife and habitats. Prior to statutory designation, pNHAs are still subject to limited protection, in the form of:

- Agri-environmental farm planning schemes support the objective of maintaining and enhancing the conservation status of pNHAs;
- There is a requirement for the Forest Service to gain NPWS approval before they will pay afforestation grants on pNHA lands; and,
- A recognition of the ecological value of pNHAs by Planning and Licensing Authorities.

The NHAs and pNHAs located in the vicinity of the proposed development site are listed in **Table 2** and are shown in **Figure 4**.

The closest pNHA are the Blarney Castle Woods pNHA, located 185m south. Increased lighting at the site could potentially create light spillage within this pNHA.

The proposed development site is hydrologically connected to the River Shournagh and River Lee via the local drainage ditch. Effluent from the proposed development will ultimately be conveyed to Blarney WWTP for treatment prior to discharging into the waters of the River Shournagh. Therefore, there is a potentially hydrological connection to this pNHAs via surface water/wastewater discharges.

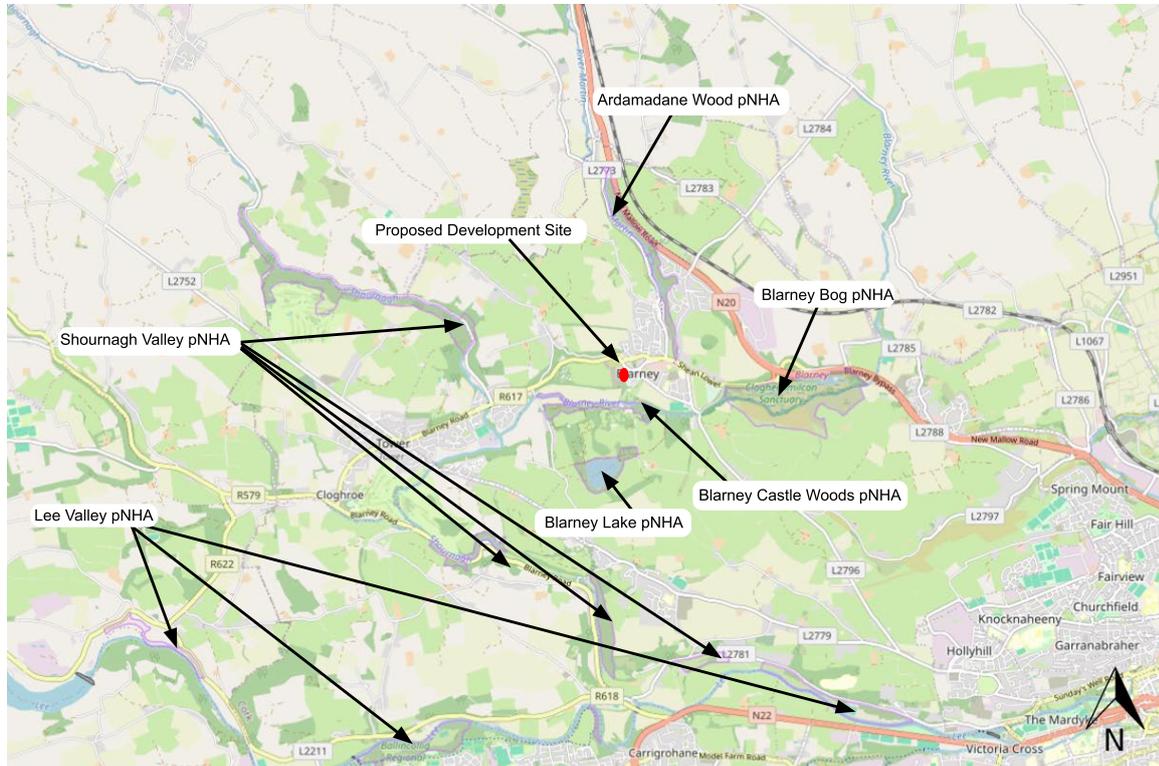


Figure 4. Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) in the vicinity of the proposed development site | Source: EPA Envision mapping <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> | Not to scale

Table 2. National sites and their location relative to the proposed development site

NHAs & NHAs/pNHAs	Site Code	Overlaps with European site	Site Description	Distance at closest point and potential source-pathway-receptor link
Blarney Castle Woods pNHA	001039	No	This site is situated 1km south-west of Blarney in the grounds of Blarney Castle. The wood is bounded to the north by the Blarney River and to the south by the parklands surrounding the castle.	185m south.
Ardamadane Wood pNHA	001799	No	Ardamadane Wood is located north of Blarney village, 6km north-west of Cork City. It is situated along the banks of the River Martin	535m northeast. Located upstream of the proposed development site.

NHAs & NHAs/pNHAs	Site Code	Overlaps with European site	Site Description	Distance at closest point and potential source-pathway-receptor link
				No hydrological or other connection
Blarney Lake pNHA	001798	No	Blarney lake is situated 1km south west of Blarney, close to Blarney Castle. The lake is of artificial origin and is surrounded by a narrow band of woodland predominantly oak (<i>Quercus</i> spp.), Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) and fir (<i>Abies</i> spp.).	719m south Located upstream of the proposed development site. No hydrological or other connection
Shournagh Valley pNHA	000103	No	Shournagh Valley pNHA includes two sections of the River Shournagh and comprises areas of wet woodland, scrub, scrub woodland and old estate mixed woodland. Dippers (<i>Cinclus hibernicus</i>) and Grey wagtail (<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>) are known to feed along and around the river channel.	1.6km west-northwest. 3.8km downstream A potential source-pathway-receptor link has been identified between the source (proposed development) and the receptor (Shournagh Valley pNHA) via a potential pathway (surface and wastewater discharges)
Blarney Bog pNHA	001857	No	Blarney Bog is a small area of Reed Canary-grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>) fen, situated in the flat valley floor of the River Blarney. It is located 0.5km west of Blarney Town and 4.5km north-west of Cork City.	1.2km east Located upstream of the proposed development site. No hydrological or other connection

NHAs & NHAs/pNHAs	Site Code	Overlaps with European site	Site Description	Distance at closest point and potential source-pathway-receptor link
Lee Valley pNHA	000094	No	The Lee Valley pNHA occupies five different sections of the River Lee valley and is of regional conservation importance for the diverse range of semi-natural habitats that occur. The site supports wet broadleaved woodland, wet grassland, dry broadleaved woodland, unimproved dry grassland, freshwater marsh. A number of wetland bird species are known to breed in the site including Mallard, Heron, Sedge and Grasshopper warblers and Reed bunting. Small blue and White wood butterfly, both locally distributed species also occur	3.3km south. 9.6km downstream A source-pathway-receptor link has been identified between the source (proposed development) and the receptor (Lee Valley pNHA) via a potential pathway (surface and wastewater discharges)

4.3 Ramsar Sites

The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. A key commitment of Ramsar Contracting Parties is to identify and place suitable wetlands onto the List of Wetlands of International Importance. Cork Harbour is listed as a Ramsar site, which is a non-statutory designation.

4.4 Important Bird Areas – Cork Harbour

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) are sites selected as important for bird conservation because they regularly hold significant populations of one or more globally or regionally threatened, endemic or congregator bird species or highly representative bird assemblages. The European IBA programme aims to identify, monitor and protect key sites for birds all over the continent. It aims to ensure that the conservation value of IBAs in Europe (now numbering more than 5,000 sites or about 40% of all IBAs identified globally to date) is maintained, and where possible enhanced. The programme aims to guide the implementation of national conservation strategies, through the promotion and development of national protected-area programmes. Through their designation they aim to form a network of sites ensuring that migratory species find suitable breeding, stop-over and wintering places along their respective flyways.

The function of the Important Bird Area (IBA) Programme is to identify, protect and manage a network of sites that are important for the long-term viability of naturally occurring bird

populations, across the geographical range of those bird species for which a site-based approach is appropriate. The proposed development site has a potential hydrological connection via the River Lee and Lee Estuary to the Cork Harbour IBA (Site Code: IE088).

The site qualifies for designation under the IBA Criteria (2000) listed in **Table 3**:

- A4iii - The site is known or thought to hold, on a regular basis, $\geq 20,000$ waterbirds or $\geq 10,000$ pairs of seabird of one or more species.
- B1i - The site is known or thought to hold $\geq 1\%$ of a flyway or other distinct population of a waterbird species
- B2 - The site is one of the most important in the country for a species with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe and for which the site-protection approach is thought to be appropriate.
- C3 - The site is known to regularly hold at least 1% of a flyway population or of the EU population of a species threatened at the EU level (not listed on Annex 1 of The Birds Directive).
- C4 - The site is known to regularly hold at least 20,000 migratory waterbirds and/or 10,000 pairs of migratory species of one or more species.
- C6 - The site is one of the five most important in the European region in question for a species or subspecies considered threatened in the European Union.

Table 3. Provides a summary of the Cork Harbour IBA trigger species.

Species	Current IUCN Red List Category	Season	Year(s) of estimate	Population estimate	IBA Criteria Triggered
Eurasian Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)	NT	winter	1995	1,669 individuals	B2
Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)	NT	winter	1996	456 individuals	B2
Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>)	NT	winter	1996	1,399 individuals	B1i, C3
Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)	LC	winter	1995	12,050 individuals	B1i, B2, C3
Common Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>)	LC	winter	1996	1,344 individuals	B1i, C3
Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	LC	breeding	1995	102 breeding pairs	C6
A4iii Species group - waterbirds	n/a	winter	-	20,000 individuals	A4iii, C4

4.5 Salmonid Waters – River Lee

The River Lee main channel from source to Cork City waterworks at Lee Road is a designated salmonid fishery under the EC (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations of 1988 (SI 84 of 1988), implementing the Freshwater Fish Directive (78/659/EEC). The section of the River Lee downstream of the confluence with the River Shournagh forms part of this designation. The River Lee and its larger tributaries are known to support Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar* as well as other Annex II species such as Lamprey. The River Lee is known to contain populations of Brown Trout *Salmo trutta* and European Eel *Anguilla anguilla*.

5. Habitats and Flora

5.1 Habitats

Habitat surveys were carried out on the 19th of September 2024 and 20th of October 2025. Habitat mapping was carried out in line with the methodology outlined in the Heritage Council Publication, *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping* (Heritage Council, 2011). The terrestrial and aquatic habitats within or adjacent to the proposed development site was classified using the classification scheme outlined in the Heritage council publication *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000) and cross referenced with Annex I Habitats where required.

As described in **Section 3.1**, the proposed development site was formerly home to hotel which closed in 2007. A review of aerial photography between 2012 and 2025, illustrates how the site has become colonised by vegetation over time. Large areas of the site were covered by buildings and hard standing areas with planted/managed vegetation up until 2012, with vegetation largely confined to planted treelines and flower beds (**Figure 5**). After demolition of site's buildings (between 2012 and 2015), vegetation at the site was unmanaged and began to extend outside planted boundaries (**Figure 6**). By 2018, much of the northern area of the site had become recolonised by scrub vegetation (**Figure 7**), however the original linear planting is still distinguishable. Aerial photography from 2025 indicates that large areas of the site have succeeded to scrub and self-seeded vegetation, resulting in a complex mosaic of habitats with indistinct boundaries (**Figure 8**).

A current overview of habitats recorded within the site is shown in **Figure 9** and the habitats recorded on site are described in **Table 4**. Photographs of the site are also included below. The ecological value of habitats has been defined using the classification scheme outlined in the *Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes* (National Roads Authority, 2009) which is included in **Appendix 1**. It should be noted that the value of a habitat is site specific and will be partially related to the amount of that habitat in the surrounding landscape. Habitats that are considered to be good examples of Annex I and Priority habitats are classed as being of International or National Importance. Semi-natural habitats with high biodiversity in a county context and that are vulnerable, are considered to be of County Importance. Habitats that are semi-natural, or locally important for wildlife, are considered to be of Local Importance (higher value) and sites containing small areas of semi-natural habitat or maintain connectivity between habitats are considered to be of Local Importance (lower value).

No Annex I habitats were recorded within the proposed development site. No protected species were recorded during the site visits. The Arboricultural (Holly Arboricultural)

assessment which accompanies this application has been cross referenced where relevant, but the nomenclature and classification of habitats at the site differs as these assessment are based on different criteria.



Figure 5. Proposed Site Layout



Figure 6. Aerial view of proposed development site in 2015. | Source Google Earth



Figure 7. Aerial view of proposed development site in 2018. | Source Google Earth



Figure 8. Aerial view of proposed development site in 2025. | Source Google Earth

Table 4. Habitats present within proposed development site and their relative value

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
<p>Scrub WS1/Dry meadows and grassy verge GS2/ Spoil and bare ground ED2</p>	<p>The proposed development site, in particular the former car parking areas and areas where the buildings have been demolished, consists of an untidy mixture of planted and self-seeded species. Depending on the substrate early, successional species have also become established. The result is a complex mosaic of native naturalised and exotic species with areas of bare ground/spoil, remnants of stone walls and the remnants of planted trees and flower beds. There are large areas of tarmac and concrete that are gradually breaking down as plants become established.</p> <p>Exotic species include Cypress, Cotoneaster, Wisteria, Eucalyptus, Poplar, Buddleia, Sweet chestnut, ornamental Heather, Non-native Oak (Red oak), Cherry, Lime and Norway maple.</p> <p>Due to the variety of ground conditions, drainage patterns and light/shade a diverse mixture of native species have become established in some areas. Although none are considered particularly rare there are large areas dominated by immature Willow with saplings of Pedunculate Oak, , Ash, Hawthorn, Downy birch, Silver birch, Hazel and Gorse becoming established.</p> <p>Ground floor species include St. John's wort, Yarrow, Hawkweed, Dandelion, Cocksfoot, False oat grass, Greater plantain, Red fescue, Red clover, Canadian fleabane, Ribwort plantain, Wild Rose, Wild strawberry, Scarlet pimpernel, Harte's tongue fern, Ladies fern, Prickly sow thistle, Horsetail, Meadowgrass, Field woundwort, Germander speedwell, Polypody, Broadleaved dock, Sun spurge, Knapweed, Ivy, Nettle, Spear thistle, Hogweed, Nipplewort and Herb Robert.</p> <p>GS2 habitat has links with the Annex I habitat 'lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) (6510)'. The habitat mosaic within the proposed development site is not a good example of this habitat type.</p>  <p>Plate 1. Areas of former carpark colonised with scrub vegetation</p>	<p>Local importance (Higher value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 842 842 871">Plate 2. Scrub and grassland areas</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 904 411 1021">Hedgerow WL1/Treeline WL2 HR1</p>	<p data-bbox="464 904 1225 1025">This hedgerow runs along the eastern boundary of the site alongside an area of fencing. In the absence of management, it is becoming quite gappy with a high percentage of mature, multi-stemmed Hawthorn, which have developed into trees. Ivy covering on trees is moderate.</p> <p data-bbox="464 1059 1225 1240">Other tree species include immature to semi mature Ash and Sycamore as well as immature Holly. One mature Ash is present at the northern edge of the boundary. Understorey species include Nettle, Bramble, Gorse, Cocksfoot, Broadleaved dock and Ivy. There is a low stonewall at the base of part of this hedgerow, however it is overgrown with dense Ivy.</p>  <p data-bbox="464 1760 1011 1789">Plate 3. Eastern hedgerow dominated by Hawthorn</p>	<p data-bbox="1254 904 1377 1025">Local importance (Higher value)</p>
<p data-bbox="204 1823 411 1939">Hedgerow WL1/Treeline WL2 HR2</p>	<p data-bbox="464 1823 1225 1944">Running along the eastern boundary is a mature hedgerow/treeline dominated by Beech. Ash and occasional mature Hawthorn are also present. Understorey species include immature Hazel, Holly, Elm and Snowberry (which is commonly distributed along this entire boundary)</p>	<p data-bbox="1254 1823 1377 1944">Local importance (Higher value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	<p>Trees within the boundary are quite widely spaced with some patches of scrub including Hedge woundwort, Nettle, Bramble, Dandelion, Wood avens, Dock and Willowherb distributed along this boundary.</p>  <p>Plate 4. Section of hedgerow/treeline along eastern boundary</p>	
<p>Hedgerow WL1/Treeline WL2 HR3</p>	<p>This hedgerow runs along both sides of the site entrance. This hedgerow is characterized by very densely planted semi-mature Beech which cast a heavy shade. Occasional Elder. There is virtually no understory apart from occasional Ivy and Bramble.</p>  <p>Plate 5. Beech hedge/treeline at site entrance</p>	<p>Local importance (higher value)</p>
<p>Scrub WS1</p>	<p>At the north-east corner of the site there is an area of dense scrub which is largely impenetrable and is contiguous with the treeline/hedgerow boundary along the external boundary. This is developing into immature woodland with Ash, Oak and Willow. There is a large stand of Dogwood presumably derived from previous landscape associated with the hotel. Immature Beech and Hawthorn are also present. A group of Lime are also present within this area.</p>	<p>Local importance (Higher value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 797 895 824">Plate 6. Dense scrub at northeast of site</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 860 437 949">Scrub WS1/Dry meadows and grassy verge GS2</p>	<p data-bbox="464 860 1225 1043">Adjacent to the area of dense scrub described above, the area is dominated by dry meadows and grassy verge grassland which is overgrown and rank. It is being invaded by scrub with some individual trees. Species noted, include Knapweed, False oat grass, Cocksfoot, Field thistle, Nettle, Yorkshire fog, Creeping buttercup, Self-heal, Ribwort plantain, Red fescue, Ragweed, Clover.</p> <p data-bbox="464 1077 1225 1167">Scrub species include dense tickets of Bramble with some areas of Snowberry becoming established. There are immature trees becoming established including Ash, Sycamore, Elm and Oak saplings.</p> <p data-bbox="464 1200 1225 1323">GS2 habitat has links with the Annex I habitat 'lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) (6510)'. The habitat mosaic within the proposed development site is not a good example of this habitat type.</p>  <p data-bbox="464 1879 1050 1906">Plate 7. Semi-natural grassland with establishing scrub</p>	<p data-bbox="1254 860 1374 983">Local importance (Lower value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
Scrub WS1/Immature woodland WD2	<p>At the northeast of the site, near the site entrance an area of scrub and immature woodland has developed in the absence of disturbance. Two mature Pedunculate Oak are also present. This area has been colonised by a mixture of dense Bramble scrub, with a large number of immature trees becoming established, particularly Oak, Willow, Ash, Cherry and Sycamore are also present. Immature Holly alongside Bramble and Dogwood from dense scrub. There is still some evidence of planted trees including a Weeping willow, Norway maple and Beech along the boundary with the road. Crab apple was also noted.</p> <p>Ground flora is limited by the dense scrub but includes common species such as Willowherb, Cleavers, Cocksfoot, Ragweed, Herb Robert, Red fescue, Woody nightshade and Ivy.</p>  <p>Plate 8. Immature woodland/scrub has developed near entrance to the site</p>	Local importance (Higher value)
Treeline WL2 TL1	<p>This treeline is loosely connected from east to west, with the western side dominated by planted conifers and the eastern section dominated by planted broadleaved. Along the eastern section, is an untidy planted treeline with semi-mature Horse chestnut and non-native Oak (Red Oak) and Maple. The understory includes self-seeded Ash, Oak and Hawthorn with Bramble and Wild rose.</p> <p>The western section is a line of densely planted, mature Lawson's Cypress. These trees cast a heavy shade with little understory vegetation.</p>	Local importance (Lower to Higher value)

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 875 938 902">Plate 9. Broadleaved trees at eastern extent</p>  <p data-bbox="464 1480 1034 1507">Plate 10. Lawson's cypress treeline at western extent</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 1541 352 1568">Treeline WL2</p> <p data-bbox="204 1653 252 1680">TL2</p>	<p data-bbox="464 1541 1225 1630">This treeline is created by densely planted, mature Lawson's Cypress. These trees cast a heavy shade with little understory vegetation. This treeline is contiguous with TL1 described above</p>	<p data-bbox="1251 1541 1374 1664">Local importance (Lower value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 875 842 904">Plate 11. Lawson's cypress treeline</p>	
Buildings and artificial structures BL3	<p data-bbox="464 936 1225 1025">Two small concrete buildings are located within the HR1 hedgerow/treeline. These buildings are of concrete/brick construction and have been badly affected by fire internally.</p>  <p data-bbox="464 1628 1121 1657">Plate 12. Two small concrete structures along HR1 hedgerow</p>	Local importance (Lower value)
Dry meadows and grassy verges GS2	<p data-bbox="464 1686 1225 1877">This area of partially open grassland at the south of the site has an indistinct boundary where scrub encroachment is actively invading this habitat. Species noted include Red fescue, False oat grass, Yorkshire fog, Cocksfoot, Common bent, Lesser stitchwort, Dandelion, Buttercup, Field thistle, Ragweed, Germander speedwell, Marsh woundwort. Occasional immature Oak and Willow are present on the periphery.</p> <p data-bbox="464 1906 1225 1964">GS2 habitat has links with the Annex I habitat 'lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) (6510)'. The low diversity</p>	Local importance (Lower value)

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	<p>habitat mosaic within the proposed development site is not a good example of this habitat type.</p>  <p>Plate 13. Semi-natural grassland at south of the site</p>	
<p>Treeline WL2</p> <p>TL3</p>	<p>A poorly defined treeline runs along the western boundary with a mixture of planted and self-seeded species. Hawthorn is dominant with occasional Cypress. Large areas of Bramble in the understory. Wild rose and Hawkweed also noted.</p> <p>A dry drainage ditch runs along part of the this boundary. No water was recorded in this drain during the site surveys. This drain connects to the Knockacorally Stream to the south of the proposed development site. Due the stop start nature of this project, surveys were not completed during the summer months. However, surveys in October (typically one of Ireland's wettest months) found the drain onsite was dry. Therefore, it is fair to extrapolate that the drainage ditch is dry during the summer months.</p>	<p>Local importance (Higher value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 904 943 931">Plate 14. Hedgerow along western boundary</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 965 352 992">Treeline WL2</p> <p data-bbox="204 1077 252 1104">TL4</p>	<p data-bbox="464 965 1225 1025">This treeline is formed a line of planted <i>Griselinia</i>, formerly a hedge which has developed into a treeline in the absence of management.</p>  <p data-bbox="464 1543 831 1570">Plate 15. Understorey of <i>Griselinia</i></p>	<p data-bbox="1254 965 1374 1088">Local importance (Lower value)</p>
<p data-bbox="204 1603 440 1664">Scrub WS1/Treeline WL2</p>	<p data-bbox="464 1603 1225 1816">A poorly defined band of scrub/ treeline runs through the centre of the site. A distinguishing feature is a number of large semi-mature <i>Eucalyptus</i> and mature <i>Cherry (Prunus amanagowa)</i>, otherwise dominated by a patchy mixture of immature <i>Willow</i> and <i>Wild Rose</i>. Most of the trees within this area are immature and consist primarily of scrub. <i>Gorse</i> and <i>hazel</i> also present as well as non-native species such as planted <i>heathers</i> and <i>Cotoneaster</i> are also present.</p>	<p data-bbox="1254 1603 1374 1727">Local importance (Higher value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 880 995 904">Plate 16. Loose scrub/treeline at centre of the site</p>	
Scrub WS1	<p data-bbox="464 943 1225 1093">Along the southern boundary of the site, there is an area of developing scrub which forms a boundary along a chain link fence. Dominant species are Bramble and Wild rose. To the south of the proposed development site, this area is connected to semi-mature woodland, most likely associated with the Blarney Castle Estate.</p>  <p data-bbox="464 1632 903 1657">Plate 17. Scrub along southern boundary</p>	Local importance (Higher value)
Scrub WS1/Immature woodland WS2	<p data-bbox="464 1695 1225 1845">At the north of the site, contiguous with the northern areas of treelines, TL1, TL2 and TL4), an areas of dense scrub and immature woodland has developed. This areas includes high number of semi-mature Willow with dense thickets of Bramble alongside occasional self-seeded Beech and Cypress. There are no large or mature trees within habitat.</p>	Local importance (Higher value)

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 887 1102 913">Plate 18. Scrub/immature woodland at north-west of the site</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 949 437 1128">Depositing lowland river FW1 Knockacorbally Stream (IE_SW_19S010300)</p> <p data-bbox="204 1218 437 1274">Outside proposed development site</p>	<p data-bbox="459 949 1230 1227">In general, this is a relatively large watercourse with large areas of glide habitat interspersed with small sections of riffle immediately downstream of the proposed development site boundary. It has high Banks up to 8ft on both sides is quite heavily shaded. Light substrate stable banks. No signs of excessive erosion. Overshading vegetation includes Sycamore growing alongside Beech and Ash on the boundaries. More open areas support intermittent stands of Water crowfoot. Other species noted include Woodrush, Woody nightshade, Harte’s tongue fern, Watercress and Duckweed.</p> <p data-bbox="459 1261 1230 1317">Brown trout were recorded within the river. An Otter holt was recorded c.100m southwest of the proposed development site along this stream.</p>  <p data-bbox="459 1910 1230 1966">Plate 19. Knockacorbally Stream to the south of the proposed development site</p>	<p data-bbox="1249 949 1378 1070">Local importance (higher value)</p>

Habitats	Comments	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)
	 <p data-bbox="464 869 986 902">Plate 20. Otter holt along Knockacorbally Stream</p>	



Figure 9. Habitat map of proposed development site

5.2 Flora

The National Biodiversity Data Centre's (NBDC) online database provides data on the distribution of species within 10km grid squares. The site of the proposed development lies within 10km square W67 of Ordnance Survey Ireland's National Grid System. The NBDC lists some 506 flora species as being present within grid square W67. Endangered and protected species recorded by the NBDC are listed in **Table 5**. One species recorded within W67 is listed under the Flora (Protection) Order 2022 (S.I. No. 235 of 2022). No rare, notable or protected plant species were recorded during the site surveys.

Table 5. NBDC listed endangered and protected flowering species for hectad W67

Species name	Title of dataset	Designation
Allseed (<i>Radiola linoides</i>)	Vascular plants: Online Atlas of Vascular Plants 2012 Onwards	Threatened Species: Near threatened
Bur Chervil (<i>Anthriscus caucalis</i>)	BSBI tetrad data for Ireland	Threatened Species: Near threatened
Corn Marigold (<i>Glebionis segetum</i>)	Irish Vascular Plant Data - Paul Green	Threatened Species: Near threatened
Little-robin (<i>Geranium purpureum</i>)	Vascular plants: Online Atlas of Vascular Plants 2012 Onwards	Threatened Species: Near threatened
Pale Flax (<i>Linum bienne</i>)	Vascular plants: Online Atlas of Vascular Plants 2012 Onwards	Threatened Species: Near threatened

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5.3 Invasive Species

Non-native plants are defined as those plants which have been introduced outside of their native range by humans and their activities, either purposefully or accidentally. Invasive non-native species are so-called as they typically display one or more of the following characteristics or features: (1) prolific reproduction through seed dispersal and/or re-growth from plant fragments; (2) rapid growth patterns; and, (3) resistance to standard weed control methods.

Where a non-native species displays invasive qualities and is not managed it can potentially: (1) out compete native vegetation, affecting plant community structure and habitat for wildlife; (2) cause damage to infrastructure including road carriageways, footpaths, walls and foundations; and, (3) have an adverse effect on landscape quality. The NBDC lists a number of high impact invasive species which have been recorded within grid square W67 (**Table 6**).

Table 6. NBDC list of high impact invasive species recorded in W67

Species group	Species name
Bird	Canada Goose (<i>Branta canadensis</i>)
Flowering plant	Canadian Waterweed (<i>Elodea canadensis</i>)
Flowering plant	<i>Fallopia japonica x sachalinensis</i> = <i>F. x bohemica</i>
Flowering plant	Giant Hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>)

Species group	Species name
Flowering plant	Japanese Knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>)
Flowering plant	Nuttall's Waterweed (<i>Elodea nuttallii</i>)
Flowering plant	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>
Insect - beetle (Coleoptera)	Harlequin Ladybird (<i>Harmonia axyridis</i>)
Terrestrial mammal	American Mink (<i>Neovison vison</i>)
Terrestrial mammal	Coypu (<i>Myocastor coypus</i>)
Terrestrial mammal	Sika Deer (<i>Cervus nippon</i>)

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The Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011), Section 49(2) prohibits the introduction and dispersal of species listed in the Third Schedule, which includes Himalayan Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam, as follows: “any person who plants, disperses, allows or causes to disperse, spreads or otherwise causes to grow [...] shall be guilty of an offence.”

No third schedule invasive species were recorded during the site surveys.

A number of other invasive species were recorded during the site surveys including the Cotoneaster, Buddleia, Red Oak, Snowberry and Dogwood. These species are classified as medium impact species by the NBDC. Although their impacts are not fully understood/assessed, they are fast growing species which can outcompete native species and suppress ground flora.

These species have a scattered distribution within the site. These species are not listed in SI 477 of 2011 and therefore there is no statutory obligation to remove them. However, they have may have an adverse impact on landscape quality, native biodiversity or infrastructure.

6. Fauna

6.1 Otter

Otters, along with their breeding and resting places are protected under the provisions of the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, 2010 and 2012. Otters have additional protection because of their inclusion in Annex II and Annex IV of the Habitats Direct which is transposed into Irish law in the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I 94 of 1997), as amended. Otters are also listed as requiring strict protection in Appendix II of the Berne Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and are included in the Convention on International Trade of Endangered species (CITES).

Although rare in parts of Europe they are widely distributed in the Irish countryside in both marine and freshwater habitats. Otters are solitary and nocturnal and as such are rarely seen. Thus, surveys for Otters rely on detecting signs of their presence. These include spraints (faeces), anal gland secretions, paths, slides, footprints and remains of prey items. Spraints are of particular value as they are used as territorial markers and are often found on prominent

locations such as grass tussocks, stream junctions and under bridges. In addition, they are relatively straightforward to identify.

Otters occasionally dig out their own burrows but generally they make use of existing cavities as resting places or for breeding sites. Suitable locations include eroded riverbanks, under trees along rivers, under fallen trees, within rock piles or in dry drainage pipes or culverts etc. If ground conditions are suitable the holt may consist of a complex tunnel and chamber system. Otters often lie out above ground especially within reed beds where depressions in the vegetation called “couches” are formed (NRA, 2008). Generally, holts or resting areas can be located by detecting signs such as spraints or tracks.

In contrast natal holts which are used by breeding females can be extremely difficult to locate. They are often located a considerable distance from any aquatic habitats and Otters may also use habitats adjoining small streams with minimal or no fish populations. In addition, natal holts are usually carefully hidden and without obvious sprainting sites. Otters do not have a well-defined breeding season. It is noted that Otters are largely nocturnal, particularly in areas subject to high levels of disturbance as evidenced by the presence of Otters in the centre of Cork City (Sleeman and Moore 2005).

A review of existing records showed that Otter or signs of Otter have been recorded on 217 occasions in W67, the most recent being November 2023 (Source NBDC). Otters are known to use the River Shournagh and its tributaries. The internal drain at the west of the site was dry during site surveys and there are no wetland habitats or waterbodies within the proposed development site which could support foraging Otter.

An Otter holt was recorded c.100m southwest of the proposed development site along the Knockacorally Stream (downstream of proposed development). Otter spraints and slides were also recorded at this location suggesting that this is an active holt. It is noted that this holt was also recorded during the 2020 surveys of the site (Limosa Environmental). Brown trout were recorded within the Knockacorally Stream during the site surveys and this stream, as well as the River Shournagh and River Martin downstream, are likely to provide valuable foraging habitat for Otters.

6.2 Bats

6.2.1 Bat Background Data

In Ireland, nine species of bat are currently known to be resident. These are classified into two Families: *Rhinolophidae* (Horseshoe bats) and *Vespertilionidae* (Common bats). The Lesser Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* is the only representative of the former Family in Ireland. All the other Irish bat species are of the latter Family and these include three pipistrelle species: Common *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and Nathusius' *Pipistrellus nathusii*, four *Myotis*: Natterer's *Myotis nattereri*, Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*, Whiskered *Myotis mystacinus*, Brandt's *Myotis brandtii*, the Brown Long-eared *Plecotus auritus* and Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri* bats.

Whiskered and Natterer's bats are listed as 'Threatened in Ireland', while the other species are listed as 'Internationally Important' in the Irish Red Data Book 2: Vertebrates (Whilde, 1993). The population status of both Whiskered and Natterer's bats was considered 'indeterminate' because of the small numbers known of each, a few hundred and

approximately a thousand respectively. Ireland is considered to be an international stronghold for Leisler's bat, whose global status is described as being at 'low risk, near threatened' (LR; nt) by the IUCN (Hutson, *et al.*, 2001).

Near threatened status is applied to those taxa that are close to being listed as vulnerable (facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future on the basis of a range of criteria defined by the IUCN). The Irish population of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat is estimated at 14,000 individuals and is considered of International Importance because it has declined dramatically and become extinct in many other parts of Europe. Data collected shows that the species increased significantly between from the early 1990's to present.

All bat species are protected under the Wildlife Acts (1976 & 2000) which make it an offence to wilfully interfere with or destroy the breeding or resting place of all species; however, the Acts permit limited exemptions for certain kinds of development. All species of bats in Ireland are listed in Schedule 5 of the 1976 Act and are therefore subject to the provisions of Section 23 which make it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat
- Wilfully interfere with any structure or place used for breeding or resting by a bat
- Wilfully interfere with a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

In addition to domestic legislation bats are also protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) with all bat species are listed in Annex IV of the Directive. The Irish government is also a signatory to the 1979 Bonn convention (Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals) and the 1982 Bern convention (The convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats) and has a commitment to the 1991 Eurobats agreement (Agreement on the conservation of bats in Europe).

A review of existing bat records within grid squares W67 (sourced NBDC) showed that seven of the nine Irish bat species have been recorded locally (**Table 7**).

Table 7. Presence of Irish bat species within W67

Common name	Scientific name	Presence
Brown Long Eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Present
Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Present
Leisler's Bat/ Lesser Noctule	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Present
Lesser Horseshoe Bat	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	Absent
Nathusius' Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Absent
Natterer's Bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Present
Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato</i>	Present
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Present
Whiskered Bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Present

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It is noted that other species which have not been included within this database could potentially occur. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is the only species of bat listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC). A Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost has been recorded at Ovens, approximately 7.2km southwest of the proposed development site (undisclosed location). However, a personal communication from Tom O'Donnell of O'Donnell Environmental has confirmed that signs of roosting Lesser Horseshoe have previously been recorded in the Blarney Castle Grounds.

Lesser Horseshoe Bats normally forage in woodlands/scrub within 2.5km of their roosts (Bontadina *et al.* 2002); Consequently, in order to link roosting and foraging sites, linear features such as hedgerows, treelines and stone walls provide vital connectivity for this species, most importantly within 2.5km around each roost (Schofield, 2008). Although Lesser horseshoe were not recorded within the proposed development site during 2020, 2024 or 2025 surveys, linear features in this area may provide connectivity for this Annex II species.

A study by Lundy *et al.* (2011) examined the relative importance of landscape and habitat associations across Ireland. Maximum Entropy Models (MEM) were constructed for each bat species using records from the National Bat Database from 2000-2009. This method allows species' records that have not been collected in a systematic survey to be analysed. The results help explain patterns of species' occurrence and predict where species might occur. Landcover (CORINE), topography, climate, soil pH, riparian habitat and human bias factors were incorporated into the models. The analyses provide a picture of the broad scale geographic patterns of occurrence and local roosting habitat requirements for Irish bat species. This also provides a 'habitat suitability' index. The index ranges from 0 to 100, with 0 being least favourable and 100 most favourable for bats. The habitat indices for all Irish bats for the landscape around the proposed development site is shown in **Table 8**.

Table 8. Model Predicted Habitat suitability indices for All Irish bat species

Bat species	Common Name	Habitat indices
All Bats		33.67
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Soprano pipistrelle	44
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Brown long-eared bat	46
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common pipistrelle	42
<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	Lesser horseshoe	1
<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Leisler's bat	43
<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Whiskered bat	42
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Daubenton's bat	31
<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Nathusius' pipistrelle	12
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Natterer's bat	42

Source: NBDC 09/09/25

6.2.2 Tree Survey/Roost Assessment

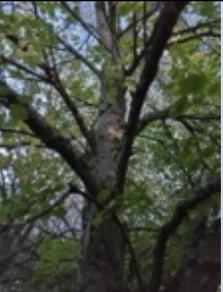
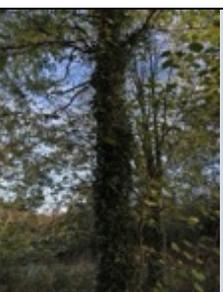
A description of trees earmarked for removal and/or trees with potential to support roosting bats is included in **Table 9**. Although foraging activity was observed, no activity indicative of emergence or direct emergence of bats was recorded during the site surveys. However, bats can use trees as temporary roosts and therefore the presence of occasional bats cannot be altogether excluded. It is notoriously difficult to find bats roosting in trees, and few tree roosts have been recorded in Ireland to date. All of the Irish bat species have however been confirmed to roost in trees, and it is likely that bat tree roosts are very under-recorded in Ireland (Roche *et al.* 2014). Bats breed, rear young, hibernate, rest and take shelter in tree roosts. Bats may use tree roosts at a particular time of the year and not at other times, and may regularly move from one roost to another. Small roosts within mature trees with dense ivy can be difficult to detect and may be used sporadically. Roost features in trees are created through fungal decay or physical damage of tree tissues which form hollows, cavities or fissures where bats may hide. Bats can crawl into very tight spaces of only 1-2 cm width, and may also roost between boughs and old-growth ivy cover, or beneath loose bark. Bat roost features are more often associated with larger, older tree specimens, but bats may also roost in small/young trees where suitable physical roost features have formed (Andrews 2016).

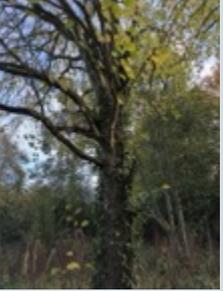
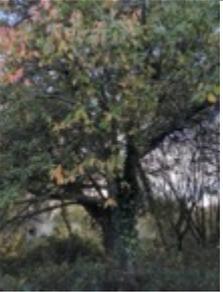
Two trees with moderate potential to support roosting bats were recorded i.e. a large mature Ash (363) and a large mature Eucalyptus (380). A semi-mature Sweet Chestnut (375) is of low to moderate potential. All other trees onsite are classified as no, negligible or low potential for roosting bats. It is noted that trees 380 and 375 are earmarked for removal to facilitate development.

Table 9. Preliminary ground roost assessment of trees within the proposed development site

Tree number (Cross ref with arboricultural report)	Photograph	Description
363		<p>Large mature Ash. Ivy covering is moderate, although most of the stem diameters are low. Dead branches with cracks/crevices.</p> <p>Moderate roost potential</p>
377		<p>Mature red Oak multi-stemmed from approximately 5ft. Ivy coverage light. No significant cracks or crevices</p> <p>Low potential for bats</p>

Tree number (Cross ref with arboricultural report)	Photograph	Description
378		<p>Mature Red Oak. Dominated by central trunk with side branches. Ivy coverage light. No significant cracks or crevices</p> <p>Low potential for bats</p>
373		<p>Sweet chestnut. Semi-mature. One large central trunk. Branching at top. Ivy coverage light. No significant cracks or crevices</p> <p>Low roost potential</p>
374		<p>Sweet chestnut. Semi-mature. Branching from approximately 6 ft. Some ivy coverage particularly in the upper reaches but generally quite light growth and low diameter stems. No significant cracks or crevices.</p> <p>Low potential for bats</p>
375		<p>Sweet Chestnut. Semi-mature. One large Central trunk. Ivy dense. No obvious cracks or crevices.</p> <p>Low to moderate potential for bats.</p>
371		<p>Pedunculate Oak. Semi-mature. Main trunk branching from 4 ft to top of canopy. Light ivy coverage</p> <p>Low to negligible potential</p>

Tree number (Cross ref with arboricultural report)	Photograph	Description
372		<p>Pedunculate Oak. Semi mature. Some loose bark on lower sections. Ivy extends from base to nearly the top of the canopy, but low coverage and low diameter stems. Some dead branches but no significant cracks or crevices.</p> <p>Low potential for bats</p>
368		<p>Small leaved lime. Mature. No Ivy covering. Tree branching from 4 ft. No significant cracks or crevices</p> <p>Low potential for roosting bats.</p>
367		<p>Small leaved lime. Semi-mature. Ivy covering from base to top of the main trunk. Generally ivy is not particularly dense. No significant cracks or crevices.</p> <p>Low potential for bats</p>
366		<p>Small leaved lime. Semi-mature. One large central trunk. Ivy covering extends from base to top of canopy but coverage generally light.</p> <p>Low to negligible potential for bats.</p>
365		<p>Small leaved lime. Semi-mature. One large central trunk with some dead branches in the top. Ivy coverage is low to moderate.</p> <p>Low potential for roosting bats.</p>

Tree number (Cross ref with arboricultural report)	Photograph	Description
364		<p>Small leaved lime. Semi-mature. No significant ivy coverage or cracks or crevices.</p> <p>Negligible potential.</p>
369		<p>Cherry. Mature. Strongly branching from approximately 4 ft. No significant cracks or crevices.</p> <p>Low potential for bats</p>
370		<p>Cherry. Branching from 6 ft. No significant cracks or crevices. No significant ivy coverage</p> <p>Low to negligible potential</p>
380		<p>Large mature eucalyptus with relatively dense ivy. Damaged bough. Loose bark characteristic of this tree.</p> <p>Moderate potential.</p>
379		<p>Mature eucalyptus. Loose bark characteristic of this tree. No significant cracks/crevices. No ivy coverage.</p> <p>Low potential</p>

6.2.3 Bat Activity Surveys

It is noted that bat activity surveys were previously carried out at the site in 2020 (O'Donnell Environmental). These surveys recorded Common and Soprano Pipistrelle, Leisler's Bat, Brown Long-eared bat, Daubenton's Bat, Whiskered bat and Myotis bat.

2024 Emergence/activity surveys

Bat activity surveys commenced on the 19th of September 2024. Transect walkovers surveys were carried out using a handheld EchoMeter Touch 2 PRO bat detectors (See **Figure 10**). The emergence survey focused on the northeast of the site near two small buildings (which are the only significant structures present within the site) and a large mature Ash tree immediately to the rear of these buildings. The buildings were assessed as being of low to negligible potential for bats and the mature Ash was assessed as being of moderate potential for bats.

Leisler's activity was sporadic throughout the survey and were the earliest recorded species with signals recorded from 19.57 onward. The sporadic signals were indicative of a small number of bats sporadically commuting or foraging over the site and in the wider landscape. No significant, prolonged periods of activity were recorded.

No bats were recorded emerging from either of the small modern buildings on site and no emergence from the mature trees on site was recorded. Subsequently, transects were walked through the site to assess for activity.

Common and Soprano Pipistrelle were both recorded throughout the survey with activity commencing at for Soprano Pipistrelle at 19.58 and for Common Pipistrelle at 20.00. Sporadic activity was recorded throughout the survey period however the signals were generally not indicative of high numbers. Foraging was recorded along the southern boundary with brief foraging/commuting also recorded along the treeline/hedgerow along the western boundary. Foraging by both species was also recorded at the around northern section of the site. This area is characterised by a mix of treeline, recolonising scrub and sections of grassland. Signals were indicative of a small number of bats, estimated at 1-2 of each species.

Two Brown Long-eared bat were recorded overflying the site from south to north and subsequently this species was recorded foraging in the northern section of the site from 9.00. The overgrown habitats in this area of the site are likely to provide foraging habitat for a small number of bats.

2024 Passive Detector Surveys

Two Elekon Batloggers were deployed on the 20th of September 2024 in static mode as indicated below. Detectors were retrieved on 21st of September 2024.

Batlogger K1 was located on the southern periphery of the site where it adjoins an area of woodland. This was to assess potential commuting/foraging along this boundary and within the woodland adjoining the proposed development site. Batlogger L1 was located in the northern section of the site to assess activity patterns.

Assessment of the data from static detector K1 indicated moderate levels of bat activity with Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Leisler's Bat the most common species. One

brief signal was recorded for Brown Long-eared bat. The data was indicative of relatively consistent foraging activity by a small number of each species with activity recorded between 20.40 and 05.10.

A similar pattern of activity was recorded in detector L1 located in the northern section of the site with activity commencing at 20.45 but ceasing later at 07.35. The highest level of activity was recorded for Soprano Pipistrelle and to a lesser extent Common Pipistrelle with 103 and 43 recordings respectively. Leisler's activity was relatively low with most activity recorded early in the survey period. A small number of signals were recorded for Brown Long-eared bat which is probably indicative of one bat foraging in the dense foliage in the northern section of the site. A small number of signals were also recorded for a myotis bat (probably Natterers) which is probably indicative of foraging activity.

2025 bat surveys

An activity survey was carried out on October 13th 2025. Although this is late in the activity season for bats, the survey was carried out during a settled dry spell of weather with suitable temperature. The same transects as those used in 2024 were utilised.

Activity patterns were generally similar to those obtained in 2024 with sporadic activity by Soprano Pipistrelle and Common Pipistrelle. No signals for Leisler's bat were recorded which may be due in part to seasonal factors. A signal for an unidentified myotis bat was recorded early in the survey period close to the woodland along the southern boundary and one signal for Brown long-eared was also recorded in the southern section of the site which was probably indicative of commuting bats. Activity levels dropped off later in the survey with only sporadic activity by pipistrelle bats in the more sheltered areas of the site recorded later in the survey period.

Conclusions

There are no trees or buildings considered of high potential value for roosting bats and no roosting bats were detected during surveys in 2024 and 2025.

The site supports a mosaic of habitats which have developed naturally on a unused site. The result is a poorly defined mixture of native and non-native scrub trees, grassland, disturbed areas and hard surfaces. There are also dense thickets of scrub developing along planted treelines/hedgerows.

Although the habitats in themselves are not considered of high value for bats, the mosaic of habitats, including dark sheltered areas with grassland scrub and trees, does provide foraging habitat and a number of bat species.

As expected, the most common species were Common and Soprano Pipistrelle followed by Leisler's. Low levels of activity were detected for Brown long-eared and Myotis bats. The woodland which adjoins the southern boundary is also likely to be of value for foraging bats.

Overall, the site is considered of moderate value at a local level as it supports a relatively broad range of bats, although the number of individual bats recorded within the overall site is relatively low.



Figure 10. Bat activity survey

6.3 Other terrestrial mammals

Nineteen other species of terrestrial mammal have been recorded within hectad W67. Seven of these are protected under the Irish Wildlife Act; namely Badger (*Meles meles*), Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), Irish Hare (*Lepus timidus subsp. hibernicus*), Irish Stoat (*Mustela erminea subsp. hibernica*), Pygmy Shrew (*Sorex minutus*), Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*) and Sika Deer (*Cervus nippon*).

6.3.1 Badger

Badgers and their setts are protected under the provisions of the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended, and it is an offence to intentionally, knowingly or unknowingly kill or injure a protected species, or to willfully interfere with or destroy the breeding site or resting place of a protected wild animal. Badger setts are formed by a complex group of interlinked tunnels and therefore works in proximity to setts can potentially cause damage a protected species. Badgers are also protected under Appendix III of the Berne. The NBDC has 64 records of Badger in W67, the most recent sighting in September 2016. Agricultural grassland provides primary foraging habitat for Badger, as this type of grassland is enriched, which easy access to a high-density of earthworms. Broadleaved woodland is also a high value habitat for Badger. No signs of Badger were recorded within the proposed development site. The scrub mosaic habitat onsite is sub-optimal for Badger and this habitat is of lower value than areas of woodland and improved grassland in the vicinity.

6.3.2 Irish Hare

Irish Hare is one of three lagomorphs found on the Island of Ireland and the only native lagomorph. It is listed on Appendix III of the Berne Convention, Annex V(a) of the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and as an internationally important species in the Irish Red Data Book. The overgrown nature of the site means this is largely unsuitable for Irish Hare, which prefer open semi-natural grassland and heathland habitats. No signs of Irish Hare were recorded onsite.

6.3.3 Irish Stoat

Irish Stoat is one of the species protected under regulations (Protection of Wild Animals) in 1980 which enabled Ireland to comply with the provisions of the Bern Convention of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, which was ratified by Ireland in April 1982. Given its broad habitat use, Irish Stoat could potentially occur in the proposed development site. Given their broad range of habitat use, Irish Stoat could potentially occur at the site. No signs of Irish Stoat were recorded onsite.

6.3.4 Red Squirrel

Red Squirrel is also listed on Appendix III of the Berne Convention can be found throughout Ireland. Red squirrels feed mainly on tree seeds, although they can utilise fungi, fruit and buds as they become available in the woodland. This species has been recorded on 41 occasions in W67. Red Squirrel are known to use Blarney Castle and Woodlands to the south of the proposed development site and the wider Blarney area. No signs of Red Squirrel were recorded during the site surveys. While Red Squirrel could potentially use this site, their preference for more mature woodland means that this is not critical habitat for this species. Red squirrels show a preference for forest over 35 years of age, falling to over 25 years of age in Norway spruce (Andrén and Delin, 1994). However, the site may provide some connectivity to the wider environment.

6.3.5 Sika Deer

Sika Deer is a non-native species to Ireland. They prefer forest with dense understorey, thickets, natural woodlands and commercial plantations, but will also forage in open grassy areas with dense cover nearby. Sika Deer are highly opportunistic feeders, foraging on grasses to a range of shrubs and tree species. Sika Deer could potentially use the site. No signs of Sika Deer were recorded during site surveys.

6.3.6 Hedgehog

Hedgehog is also listed on Appendix III of the Berne Convention can be found throughout Ireland, with male hedgehogs having an annual range of around 56 hectares. Generally, hedgehogs prefer edge habitat and pasture but in recent years have begun to colonize urban areas. The hedgerow and scrub habitats at the site is likely to provide habitat for Hedgehog. No signs of Hedgehog were recorded onsite.

6.3.7 Pygmy Shrew

Pygmy Shrew is common throughout mainland Ireland and has a preference for habitats such as hedgerows and grasslands. The hedgerow and scrub habitats at the site are likely to provide habitat for Pygmy Shrew. No signs of Pygmy Shrew were recorded onsite. c

6.4 Reptiles and Amphibians

According to records held by the NBDC, Common Frog has been recorded within W67.

Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) is listed on Annex V of the EU Habitats Directive and is protected under the Wildlife Acts. The Smooth Newt is the only member of the Urodela (the tailed amphibians) found in Ireland. While commonly encountered near water bodies, adult newts are actually terrestrial, only returning to water bodies to breed. There is no suitable habitat for amphibians within the site boundary. Due the stop start nature of this project, surveys were not completed during the summer months. However, surveys in October (typically one of Ireland's wettest months) found the drain onsite was dry. Therefore, it is fair to extrapolate that the drainage ditch is dry during the summer months and would be suitable for breeding amphibians.

Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) is Ireland's only native terrestrial reptile and is so protected under the Wildlife Act. Ideal habitats for the species are south-facing, damp tussocky grassland, scrub covered hillsides, dunes or banks, and woodland tracks, and it also resides in peat bogs, dry grasslands and heathlands. The species has not been recorded in the surrounding landscape (NBDC) and it is unlikely that the species occurs within or in proximity to the proposed development site. The site of negligible value for reptiles.

6.5 Birds

A general bird survey was carried out in conjunction with habitat surveys. During the survey, all birds seen or heard within the development site were recorded. Certain bird species are listed by BirdWatch Ireland as Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BOCCI). These are bird species suffering declines in population size. BirdWatch Ireland and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds have identified and classified these species by the rate of decline into Red and Amber lists (Gilbert *et al.* 2021). Red List bird species are of high conservation concern and the Amber List species are of medium conservation. Green listed species are regularly occurring bird species whose conservation status is currently considered favourable. Species recorded during the site visits are shown in **Table 10**.

No evidence of rare birds such as Kingfisher and Hen harrier (Annex I species) were recorded or would be expected to occur.

Table 10. Bird Species recorded during site survey

Species		Birds Directive Annex	BOCCI	
			Red List	Amber List
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Blackbird			
<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Blackcap			
<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Blue Tit			
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Bullfinch			
<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Buzzard			
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Chaffinch			
<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	Dipper			
<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Dunnock			
<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Goldcrest			x
<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Goldfinch			
<i>Parus major</i>	Great Tit			
<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Greenfinch			x
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House sparrow			x
<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Jackdaw			
<i>Pica pica</i>	Magpie			
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard			x
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Robin			
<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Rook			
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song thrush			
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Starling			x
<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Treecreeper			
<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Woodpigeon			
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Wren			

The proposed development site supports a range of common bird species. The mixture of immature woodland, scrub and grassland habitats onsite provide a range of foraging and nesting opportunities for birds. Five amber list species were recorded during the site surveys i.e. Goldcrest, House sparrow, Starling, Mallard and Greenfinch. It is noted that Mallard and

Dipper were recorded on the Knockacorballly Stream to the south of the proposed development site. While there are no specialised habitats for birds within the site, such as wetlands, buildings etc, the density of colonising vegetation creates locally valuable habitat for common bird species. There is no suitable habitat for nesting Barn Owl, although the species are known to occur locally (Carl Dixon pers. obs.).

The proposed development site contains suitable nesting and foraging habitat for a range of common bird species. The scrub, semi-natural grassland and mature trees within the site provide moderately valuable nesting and feeding resources for local bird species.

As noted above bird surveys were completed outside the peak breeding bird season i.e. March to mid-July. However, birds were still active within the site during the field surveys and these surveys give an indication of birds which use the site for breeding.

The site is largely devoid of any buildings, except for two small modern structures in poor condition. There are no significant old mature, native, trees and the habitats located within the site boundary have been highly modified with a preponderance of non-native species. There are no specialist habitats or significant potential nesting sites for rare or uncommon birds within the proposed development site.

In general, the assemblage of birds expected to use the site is predictable and includes a range of common bird species that typically occur in suburban gardens, farms, industrial sites etc.

Overall, there is no evidence to indicate that the site is a particular value for breeding birds, and it is considered highly improbable that it would support any rare or uncommon bird species. Therefore, the absence of breeding bird surveys does not have significant implications for the design of the project, the proposed mitigation or the assessment of potential impacts.

6.6 Other species

A search of the NBDC database was carried out to determine if any protected, rare or notable species of invertebrates within 2km of the proposed development site (W67C).

A number of threatened invertebrate species have been recorded within W67C i.e. *Donacia marginata*, Red-tailed Bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*), Brown Snail (*Zenobiellina subrufescens*), Ear Shelled Slug (*Testacella (Testacella) haliotidea*), Prickly Snail (*Acanthinula aculeata*), Silky Snail (*Ashfordia granulata*) and Spotted Keeled Slug (*Tandonia rustica*). Non-marine molluscs including Spotted Keeled Slug (*Tandonia rustica*) and Ear Shelled Slug (*Testacella (Testacella) haliotidea*), has been recorded in woodland in the vicinity of Blarney village. However, the scrub/immature woodland is not valuable habitat for these species, which prefer more mature woodland.

The dominance of non-native species means this site is likely to be less valuable than a natural, native scrub area, however, the recolonizing habitats are likely to provide locally valuable habitat for common invertebrate species.

There are no habitats suitable for fish or aquatic invertebrates within the proposed development site. However, the site is hydrologically connected to the River Shournagh (and River Martin) via the proposed surface water discharge (to the Knockacorballly Stream).

The Knockacorbally Stream, a 2nd order tributary of the River Shournagh, runs along the southern boundary of the proposed development site. Brown trout were recorded along this stream as well as an Otter holt. The River Shournagh and its tributaries support salmonid species and other fisheries but is not designated as a salmonid river under the WFD. A catchment-wide electro-fishing survey was conducted in 2018 by Inland Fisheries Ireland along the River Martin and River Shournagh. The results showed that these two rivers together had a mean catch of 17.97 salmon fry/5min in 2018. High abundances of salmon fry were observed at sites along all the main rivers.

7. Water Quality

7.1 River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (3rd Cycle)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) sets out the environmental objectives which are required to be met through the process of river basin planning and implementation of those plans. Specific objectives are set out for surface water, groundwater and protected areas. The challenges that must be overcome in order to achieve those objectives are very significant. Therefore, a key purpose of the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) is to set out priorities and ensure that implementation is guided by these priorities.

The third-cycle RBMP aims to build on the progress made during the first cycle. Key measures during the first cycle included the licensing of urban waste-water discharges (with an associated investment in urban waste-water treatment) and the implementation of the Nitrates Action Programme (Good Agricultural Practice Regulations). The former measure has resulted in significant progress in terms both of compliance levels and of the impact of urban waste-water on water quality. The latter provides a considerable environmental baseline which all Irish farmers must achieve and has resulted in improving trends in the level of nitrates and phosphates in rivers and groundwater. It is acknowledged, however, that sufficient progress has not been made in developing and implementing supporting measures during the first and second cycles.

Overall, RBMP assesses the quality of water in Ireland and presents detailed scientific characterisation of our water bodies. The characterisation process also takes into account wider water quality considerations, such as the special water-quality requirements of protected areas. The characterisation process identifies those water bodies that are At Risk of not meeting the objectives of the WFD, and the process also identifies the significant pressures causing this risk. Based on an assessment of risk and pressures, a programme of measures has been developed to address the identified pressures and work towards achieving the required objectives for water quality and protected areas. Data relating to the waterbodies is included in **Table 11**. The location of WFD monitoring locations relative to the proposed development site are illustrated in **Figure 11**.

Table 11. Water Framework Directive Data 3rd Cycle – Relevant data

Catchment: Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay (Code 19)
This catchment includes the area drained by the River Lee and all streams entering tidal water in Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay and between Knockaverry and Templebreedy Battery, Co. Cork, draining a total area of 2,153km ² . The largest urban centre in the catchment is Cork City. The other main urban centres in this catchment are Ballincollig, Macroom, Carrigaline, Crosshaven, Blarney, Glanmire, Midleton, Carrigtohill, Cobh, Passage

Catchment: Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay (Code 19)

West and Belvelly. The total population of the catchment is approximately 328,854 with a population density of 153 people per km².

Several small coastal rivers drain the area to the southeast of Cork Harbour and the area at the eastern extreme of the catchment is drained by the Womanagh River which flows into the sea on the western side of Youghal Bay.

The Lee-Cork Harbour catchment comprises 18 sub-catchments with 92 river water bodies, three lakes, 13 transitional, six coastal water bodies and 16 groundwater bodies. There are five heavily modified and no artificial water bodies in the catchment.

2nd Cycle data summary

The proposed development site is located within the Manin_SC_10 sub-catchment. Two out of five river water bodies within this sub-catchment are AT RISK: Martin_010 due to Poor biological status; Martin_040 due to elevated phosphate concentrations. Blarney_010 is under REVIEW due to elevated nutrients.

Damage to the riparian habitat and dumping of plant debris have impacted ecological conditions within Martin_010. Urban runoff was highlighted as the likely significant pressure within Martin_040. Waste water treatment may be impacting nutrient conditions within Blarney_010.

Waterbodies relevant to the proposed project 3rd Cycle data

Waterbody	WFD Risk	WFD Status (2019-2024)	Pressure Category
Martin_040	At risk	Moderate	Diffuse source run-off
Shournagh_030	At risk	Good	None
Shournagh_040	At risk	Good	None
Lee (Cork)_090	Not at risk	Moderate	None
Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper	At risk	Moderate	Diffuse Sources Run-Off, combined sewer overflows.

Source: EPA envision mapping and www.catchments.ie

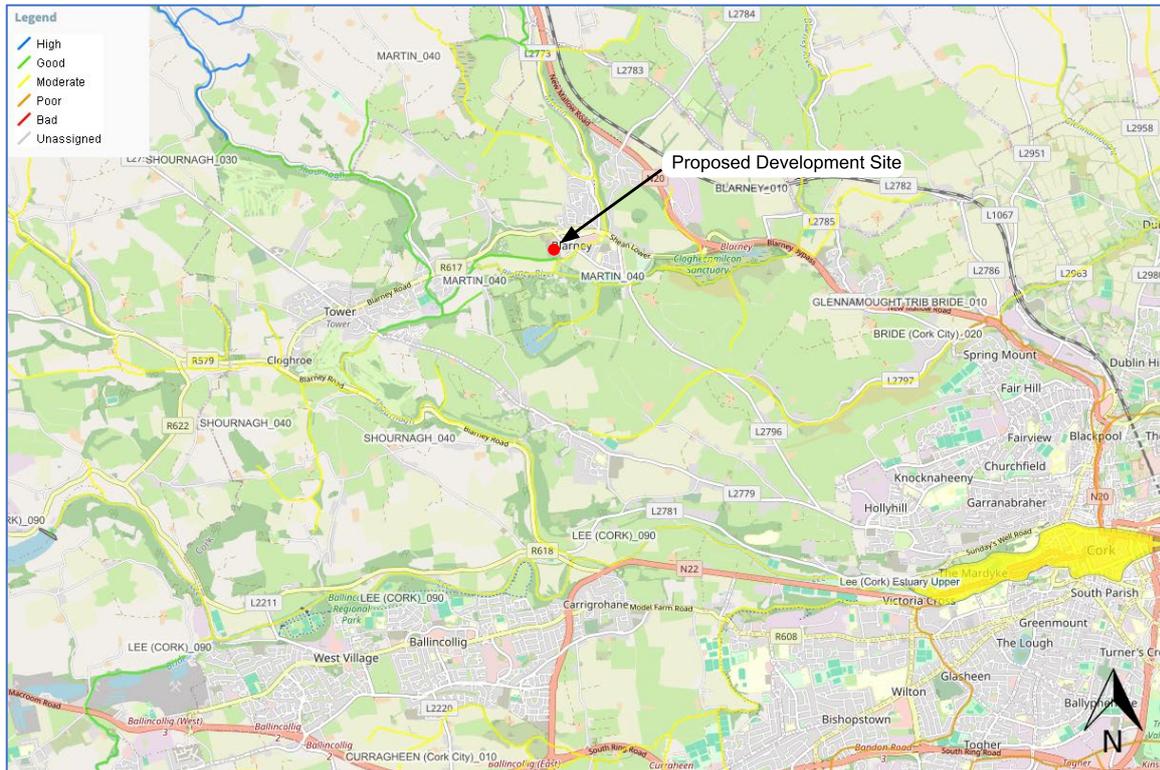


Figure 11. WFD Status of waterbodies in the vicinity of the proposed development | | Source EPA envision mapping | not to scale

7.2 Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive

The Wastewater Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 684 of 2007) gives effect to the requirements of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (Directive 91/271/EEC) and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) in Ireland. The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD) lays down the requirements for the collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater and specifies the quality standards which must be met — based on agglomeration size — before treated waste-water is released into the environment.

The priority objective for this river basin planning cycle is to secure compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and to contribute to the improvement and protection of waters in keeping with the water-quality objectives established by this Plan. Achieving this objective entails addressing waste-water discharges and overflows where protected areas (i.e. designated bathing waters, shellfish waters and Freshwater Pearl-Mussel sites) or high-status waters are at risk from urban waste-water pressures.

As part of the proposed development wastewater discharging from the proposed development will be conveyed to the Blarney WWTP (Reference D0043-01) for treatment prior to discharging into the River Shournagh.

8. Evaluation of Potential Impacts

During construction and operation, potential impacts could arise from increased noise and disturbance which could result in the disturbance/displacement of birds and mammals. Scrub, immature woodland (with mature trees in some areas) and grassland habitat will be removed. Increased traffic and noise associated with the site works could potentially increase levels of disturbance which could result in the disturbance/displacement of birds and mammals.

Increased dust levels during construction could have localised impacts on vegetation and habitats. During occupancy of the residential development, there will be increased activity and disturbance in line with current background levels.

Discharges of silt, were they to occur through inadequate control of surface water run-off, could impact on fisheries habitat and aquatic ecology in local waterbodies. Minor spills of hydrocarbons during construction could impact on groundwater or surface water quality with resultant impacts on aquatic ecology. Wastewater discharges during operation may also impact on water quality with the River Shournagh.

Potential impacts on designated European sites (SAC/cSAC/SPA) are specifically addressed in an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report which has been submitted as part of this application.

8.1 Do Nothing' Impact

Areas of mature/semi-mature trees alongside developing scrub habitats provide locally valuable habitat for fauna. If habitats were left unmanaged a general pattern of succession from grassland to scrub would be expected to occur. If sufficient time elapsed without development, the unused areas of the proposed development area would be expected to develop a covering of woodland with a mix of native and introduced species. In the absence of development, the site would continue to provide potential habitat for a locally common of flora and fauna.

8.2 Impact Appraisal

When describing changes/activities and impacts on ecosystem structure and function, important elements to consider include positive/negative, extent magnitude, duration, frequency and timing, and reversibility (IEEM, 2018).

Section 3.7 of the *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, (EPA 2022) provides standard definitions which have been used to classify the effects in respect of ecology. This classification scheme is outlined below in **Table 12**.

Table 12. EPA Impact Classification

Impact Characteristic	Term	Description
Quality	Positive	A change which improves the quality of the environment.
	Neutral	No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
	Negative	A change which reduces the quality of the environment.
Significance	Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
	Not Significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.

Impact Characteristic	Term	Description
	Slight	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
	Moderate	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging trends.
	Significant	An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Very Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Profound	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.
Duration	Momentary Effects	Effects lasting from seconds to minutes.
	Brief Effects	Effects lasting less than a day.
	Temporary Effects	Effects lasting less than a year.
	Short-term	Effects lasting one to seven years.
	Medium-term	Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
	Long-term	Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
	Permanent	Effects lasting over sixty years.
	Reversible Effects	Effects that can be undone.
	Frequency	Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)
	Irreversible	When the character, distinctiveness, diversity, or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.
	Residual	Degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.
	Synergistic	Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents.
'Worst Case'	The effects arising from a development in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.	

9. Potential Impacts

9.1 Designated Sites

DixonBrosnan prepared a screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) (which accompanies this planning application). This report investigated the potential for the proposed development to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites (SAC/cSAC/SPA) either alone or in

combination with other plans or projects. The screening report identified a potential pathway for impact on Cork Harbour SPA via surface water runoff/discharges. However, given the distance downstream of the site, no significant effects were identified. Similarly no significant effects on downstream pNHAs i.e. Shournagh Valley pNHA, Lee Valley pNHA have been identified.

The closest pNHA is the Blarney Castle Woods pNHA, located 185m south. In the absence of mitigation, increased lighting at the site could potentially create light spillage within this pNHA. However, operational lighting has been designed in line with bat lighting guidelines (in compliance with lighting requirements) to minimise impacts on local bat populations. This will minimise light spillage within the proposed development site and will prevent impacts on valuable habitats to the north and south of the site. Construction lighting mitigation has also been specified. No significant effect on the Blarney Castle Woods pNHA are predicted to occur.

9.2 Habitats/Flora

Impacts on habitats are generally restricted to direct removal of habitats. Indirect impacts may occur via damage and disturbance arising from vehicular activities and storage of overburden and materials. Levels of dust during construction are predicted to be low and effectively managed by mitigation. The impact on vegetation in adjoining habitats from wind-blown dust is predicted to be imperceptible. No rare floral species were recorded within the study area. Based on the criteria outlined by EPA 2022, as described above, the predicted impacts are detailed in **Table 13**. No Annex I terrestrial habitats will be directly or indirectly impacted.

Table 13. Predicted impacts as a result of the proposed development

Habitats	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)	Predicted impacts
Scrub WS1/Dry meadows and grassy verge GS2/ Spoil and bare ground ED2	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. This includes areas of developing scrub over areas previously used as car parking areas and buildings for the hotel. This habitat provides locally valuable habitat for fauna. Negative, moderate and long-term.
Hedgerow WL1/Treeline WL2 HR1	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be retained as outlined in the CSR Landscape Masterplan (which accompanies this application). Neutral, imperceptible, long-term
Hedgerow WL1/Treeline WL2 HR2	Local importance (Higher value)	This hedgerow will be largely retained. As outlined in the CSR Landscape Masterplan and Tree Protection plan (Holly Arboricultural TPP5925) (which accompany this application), tree protection measures will be implemented to ensure that this boundary is

Habitats	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)	Predicted impacts
		protected and retained during construction works. Neutral, imperceptible, long-term
Hedgerow WL1/Treeline WL2 HR3	Local importance (higher value)	This hedgerow will be removed to facilitate development. This is a dense Beech hedgerow adjoining the site entrance road. Negative, slight, long-term.
Scrub WS1	Local importance (Higher value)	This hedgerow will be removed to facilitate development. This is an area of dense scrub near the site entrance, which includes a number of semi-mature and mature Lime trees. Negative, slight, long-term
Scrub WS1/Dry meadows and grassy verge GS2	Local importance (Lower value)	This hedgerow will be removed to facilitate development. This is an area of developing scrub near the site entrance. Negative, slight, long-term
Scrub WS1/Immature woodland WD2	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. This is an established areas of scrub/immature woodland near the site entrance. There are two semi-mature Pedunculate Oak within this area. Negative, moderate, long-term
Treeline WL2 TL1	Local importance (Lower to Higher value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. While part of this habitat includes non-native Cypress (which are of lower value), there are a number of mature and semi-mature broadleaved trees in this area include mature Red oak, semi-mature Pedunculate oak and semi-mature Sweet Chestnut. Negative, moderate, long-term
Treeline WL2 TL2	Local importance (Lower value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. This is a densely planted Cypress treeline with low ecological value. Negative, slight, long-term
Buildings and artificial structures BL3	Local importance (Lower value)	Two small plant buildings will be removed. They are of no ecological value. Neutral, imperceptible, long-term.
Dry meadows and grassy verges GS2	Local importance (Lower value)	A small area of open semi-natural grassland will be removed to facilitate development. This

Habitats	Ecological value (NRA guidelines)	Predicted impacts
		area is of moderate diversity, but is of low local value. Negative, imperceptible, long-term
Treeline WL2 TL3	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be retained. As outlined in the CSR Landscape Masterplan and Tree Protection plan (Holly Arboricultural TPP5925) (which accompany this application), tree protection measures will be implemented to ensure that this boundary is protected and retained during construction works. Neutral, imperceptible, long-term
Treeline WL2 TL4	Local importance (Lower value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. This is an overgrown Griselinia treeline with low ecological value. Negative, slight, long-term
Scrub WS1/Treeline WL2	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. This area includes a number of mature and semi-mature non-native trees alongside developing native and non-native scrub. . Negative, moderate, long-term.
Scrub WS1	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be retained. As outlined in the CSR Landscape Masterplan and Tree Protection plan (Holly Arboricultural TPP5925) (which accompany this application), tree protection measures will be implemented to ensure that this boundary is protected and retained during construction works.
Scrub WS1/Immature woodland WS2	Local importance (Higher value)	This habitat will be removed to facilitate development. This includes an area of developing native and non-native scrub. Negative, moderate, long-term

9.3 Invasive species

The following invasive species were recorded on the site: Cotoneaster, Buddleia, Red Oak, Snowberry and Dogwood.

No third schedule invasive species were recorded. The invasive species recorded onsite are medium impact species.

An invasive species management plan will be developed (post planning) for this development to ensure that all invasive species are removed. The removal of invasive species from the site will have a positive, imperceptible and long-term impact on the retained and newly planted habitats.

9.4 Bats

The proposed development site supports foraging and commuting bats. Surveys carried out during 2024 and 2025 indicate that this area supports low numbers of common i.e. Common and Soprano Pipistrelle, Leisler's and less common bat species Brown long-eared and Myotis. No records for Lesser Horseshoe bat were recorded during the site surveys.

Surveys carried out in the Blarney-Ballincollig area in 2022 and 2023 recorded Lesser Horseshoe Bats in a woodland block west of Blarney Castle, along linear landscape features from the west of Blarney Castle and in two separate blocks of woodland at the west and east of Blarney Castle. Surveys also confirmed roosting within the Dungeon associated with Blarney Castle. While Lesser Horseshoe were not recorded within the lands adjoining the proposed development site, linear features around the site (in particular the southern site boundary adjoining Blarney Castle and Gardens) may provide connectivity to Lesser Horseshoe and other bat species.

Although the habitats within the proposed development site in themselves are not considered of high value for bats, the mosaic of habitats, including dark sheltered areas with grassland scrub and trees, does provide foraging habitat and a number of bat species.

Boundary treelines/hedgerows, particularly along the western, northern and southern boundaries, provide foraging and commuting habitat for bats. No signs of roosting bats were recorded, although a small number of trees provide moderate roosting potential for bats. Other areas of the site are less valuable for bats i.e. scrub and grassland within the site's interior and eastern treeline/hedgerow, although bat activity was recorded within these areas.

Boundary treelines/hedgerows along the eastern, southern and western edges of the site will be retained as outlined in the CSR landscape plan. However, vegetation within the interior of the site and along the northern boundary will be removed to facilitate development. As part of the CSR Landscape plan, a mixture of native and non-native street planting and native hedgerow planting will be used as part of the proposed development. The removal of scrub and mature/semi-mature trees alongside increased lighting will remove dark foraging/commuting areas for bats. While retained and enhanced habitat are likely to provide foraging and commuting habitat in the medium and long-term, the removal of areas of scrub and mature/semi-mature trees within the site is likely to reduce the value of retained habitats onsite.

Artificial night lighting negatively impacts bat species by impeding their ability to forage successfully and to move efficiently through the landscape. While some species, such as Leisler's Bat, exploit insects which accumulate around lights on occasion, most Irish bat species are too sensitive to light to benefit from such prey accumulations, and their foraging opportunities and commuting movements are generally negatively affected by lighting (Mathews *et al.* 2015). Some bat species which are recorded in the locality are highly averse to artificial light, including Brown Long-eared Bat, Natterer's Bat, Whiskered Bat, Daubenton's Bat and Lesser Horseshoe Bat (Rydell 1992; Rowse *et al.* 2016). Furthermore, all Irish bat

species require dark conditions for roosting (Bat Conservation Ireland 2010). Bat roosting opportunities are known to be negatively affected by lighting, as some cases of roost abandonment, delayed emergence, or reduced growth of bat pups in response to light spill near roosts have been reported (Boldogh, Dobrosi and Samu 2007). The operational lighting has been designed in line with bat lighting guidelines (in compliance with lighting requirements) to minimise impacts on local bat populations. The lighting plan has taken into account the presence (and potential presence) of light sensitive species such as Brown long-eared, Myotis species and Lesser Horseshoe Bat. The lighting design and layout of boundary paths has been chosen to minimise light spillage within the proposed development site and will prevent impacts on valuable boundary habitats, in particular along the southern and western boundary of the site. Further detail on operational lighting is included in **Section 11.3.2**. The site layout (with footpaths set back from the southern boundary) and lighting plan have been redesigned to reduce light spillage onto the western and southern boundary habitats (refer to MBA lighting report). This will ensure there is no significant light spillage and/or changes in light levels to habitats adjoining or to the south (i.e. Blarney Castle and Gardens) of the proposed development site.

Whilst no bat roosts were detected within trees, there are number of trees at the site with PRFs to support roosting bats. The presence of occasional bats in mature and semi-mature trees earmarked for removal cannot altogether be excluded and in the absence of mitigation direct impacts on bats cannot be ruled out. Mitigation measures will be implemented during tree removal, to ensure there is no direct injury to roosting bats. Biodiversity enhancement measures, including bat boxes, will be provided which will provide alternative bat roosting habitat.

The proposed development site provides habitats of low to moderate value for common species i.e. Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle and Leisler's as well as well as more uncommon species of Myotis and Brown Long-eared bats. There is potential for Lesser Horseshoe Bat to commute along habitat on the boundary and in the vicinity of the site. The habitats appear to provide commuting habitat for bats to the wider landscape. The landscape plan will retain boundary habitat and provide new planting, to retain the commuting corridor within the site. The lighting plan has been designed to avoid lighting of sensitive habitats and to ensure that where lighting is proposed along internal roads, footpaths etc, that this has been designed in line with the bat conservation guidelines. The impact of the proposed development on local bat populations is predicted to be negative, slight and long-term.

9.5 Otter

The drainage ditch onsite, is dry for at least part of the year and does not support fish or amphibians or provide foraging habitat for Otter. An Otter holt was recorded within 150m of the proposed development site along the Knockacorbally Stream i.e. c100m southwest. While Otters could potentially pass through the site while travelling between feeding grounds, the site itself is not of value for Otter. Increased activity and human presence and additional lighting has the potential to disturb or displace Otters. Although no works are proposed in the vicinity of the holt, construction works could cause indirect disturbance to the holt. A derogation licence will be required alongside mitigation to prevent impacts on breeding Otters in the vicinity of the site (see **Section 11.4.3**). This application for derogation was submitted to the NPWS in December 2025. It is noted that the habitats along the site boundaries will be largely retained and this will be minimise disturbance to habitat outside the proposed development

site boundary. Lighting has been designed in line with wildlife guidelines (in compliance with local authority requirements) to minimise light spillage outside the site boundary.

Construction works could potentially indirectly affect fish stocks and aquatic invertebrates within watercourses downstream, which could potentially provide a food source for Otter. However, a range of mitigation and design measures will protect water quality during construction and operation. Further details on surface water and aquatic species are included in **Section 9.9**.

The impact on Otter from construction works is predicted to be negative, slight and short-term at a local geographic level due to construction works. Overall, the impact on Otter is predicted to be neutral, imperceptible and long-term.

9.6 Other Mammals

The habitats within the proposed development site are likely to provide habitat for a number of mammal species and provide connectivity to the wider environment e.g. Hedgehog, Pygmy Shew and Irish Stoat.

The habitats to be affected are common and there is no evidence to indicate that the proposed development areas are of particular value for these species in the context of the surrounding countryside. It is noted that many of the boundary habitats onsite will be retained. However, construction works could potentially impact on mammal commuting routes around the site.

Landscape planting, includes native and non-native trees and as well as meadow grassland. As trees and shrubs mature these will provide shelter for small mammal species such as Hedgehog and Pygmy Shrew. Lighting has been designed to minimise impacts on nocturnal foraging mammals (See **Section 11.3**). The impact of the proposed development on other mammals is predicted to be negative, moderate and short-term, reducing to negative, slight in the long-term.

9.7 Birds

The terrestrial bird species recorded within the proposed development site are typical of the terrestrial habitats onsite and are generally common. The most significant impacts on breeding birds will be the potential for direct impacts during the construction phase through habitat loss, fragmentation and modification. The proposed development will result in the loss of scrub, immature woodland, mature and semi-mature trees and grassland within the site, which will lead to a reduction in the numbers of birds which this site can support. In the absence of mitigation, potential impacts include disturbance and injury to eggs, young and nests, and long-term loss of potential nesting sites habitat.

During the construction phase increased noise is likely to disturb and/or displace some breeding birds from the site. The duration of works means that works are likely to overlap with several breeding bird seasons. However, noise levels will fall off quickly outside the site boundary. The majority of species recorded within the site are woodland edge species which are typically recorded on this urban fringe habitat. Some of these species are likely to continue to breed and/or forage within the retained treeline/hedgerow habitats, albeit at lower numbers. Many of these species may be habituated to human activity and disturbance, given the location of the site within an urban edge setting.

Given the mobile nature of birds, the common nature of habitats within the site and the availability of alternative foraging habitat in the immediate vicinity, the impact from disturbance will be slight to moderate during the construction phase at a local level. Mitigation measures will be implemented during site clearance works to ensure there is no direct injury/mortality to breeding birds.

The landscape plan, including areas of native/non-native trees and wildflower areas, will create alternative habitat for breeding birds in the medium to long term. Meadow grassland habitat within the proposed development site is also likely to create habitat for birds in the medium to long term. However, in the short term, there will be a slight loss of habitat with the removal of vegetation at the west of the site.

Increased activity and human presence and additional lighting has the potential to disturb or displace other birds from retained habitats during the operational phases. However, the majority of species recorded during the site surveys are typical of the urban landscape e.g. House sparrow, Robin, Blackbird, Chaffinch etc. These species are likely to habituate to the residential setting and continue to use habitats within the proposed development site.

The proposed development site does not provide habitat for wintering wading birds and waterbirds due to the overgrown nature of the site. No SCI birds were recorded during the site surveys.

The impact of the proposed development on birds is predicted to be negative, moderate and short-term, reducing to negative, slight in the long-term.

9.8 Other species

No signs of amphibians were recorded and there are no wetland habitats within the site boundary. No impact on amphibians or reptiles are predicted to occur.

The proposed development area is only likely to support common invertebrate species. The use of native tree planting as well as the creation of meadow grassland areas will encourage invertebrate use of newly landscaped habitats during the operational phase of the development. Biodiversity measures for invertebrates i.e. insect hotels, loggeries etc, will also provide alternative habitat. Given that the habitats which will be affected are relatively common in the surrounding landscape, any impact on these species will be slight to not significant.

As outlined in **Section 11**, a range of construction mitigation and operational design measures will be implemented to ensure that local water quality is protected. Impacts on aquatic fauna are predicted to be neutral, imperceptible and long-term.

9.9 Surface Water Runoff

Potential impacts on aquatic habitats which can arise from surface water emissions associated with the construction phase of the proposed development include increased silt levels in surface water run-off and inadvertent spillages of cement and/or hydrocarbons from fuel and hydraulic fluid.

High levels of silt can impact on fish species, in particular salmonids. If of sufficient severity, adult fish could theoretically be affected by increased silt levels as gills may become damaged by exposure to elevated suspended solids levels. If of sufficient severity, aquatic invertebrates

may be smothered by excessive deposits of silt from suspended solids. In areas of stony substrate, silt deposits may result in a change in the macro-invertebrate species composition, favouring less diverse assemblages and impacting on sensitive species. Cement can also affect fish, plant life and macroinvertebrates by altering pH levels of the water. Aquatic plant communities may also be affected by increased siltation. Submerged plants may be stunted and photosynthesis may be reduced. Such run-off if severe could potentially impact on water quality and thus could impact on aquatic species.

Inadvertent spillages of hydrocarbon and/or other chemical substances could introduce toxic chemicals into the aquatic environment via direct means, surface water run-off or groundwater contamination. Some hydrocarbons exhibit an affinity for sediments and thus become entrapped in deposits from which they are only released by vigorous erosion or turbulence. Oil products may contain various highly toxic substances, such as benzene, toluene, naphthenic acids and xylene which are to some extent soluble in water; these penetrate into the fish and can have a direct toxic effect. The lighter oil fractions (including kerosene, petrol, benzene, toluene and xylene) are much more toxic to fish than the heavy fractions (heavy paraffins and tars). In the case of turbulent waters, the oil becomes dispersed as droplets into the water. In such cases, the gills of fish can become mechanically contaminated and their respiratory capacity reduced (Svobodova et al. 1993). Aquatic plant communities may also be affected by increased siltation. Submerged plants may be stunted and photosynthesis may be reduced. Significant impacts on fish stocks or invertebrate prey could potentially impact on piscivorous species i.e., Otter, Cormorant, or wading birds e.g., Golden Plover and Curlew using habitat downstream due to a reduction in prey availability.

The proposed development site is hydrologically connected to the River Shournagh. During construction works (and in the absence of mitigation) silt-laden stormwater run-off during site preparation, site clearance, dewatering of excavations and construction of site access roads as well as spillages of fuel and oil and concrete / cement run-off could potentially impact on water quality within the River Shournagh. During operation surface water from the site will discharge to an onsite drainage ditch. In the absence of mitigation, hydrocarbons from the parking areas could be carried in the stormwater and increased volumes of stormwater as a result of increased areas of impermeable surfaces could also occur during operation. A Construction Environmental Waste Management Plan (CEWMP) has been submitted with this application with a range of general and site specific measures to protect local water quality throughout the construction period.

During operation, the proposed surface water management system is designed, as much as is feasible, in accordance with the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as embodied in the recommendations of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. As outlined above, surface water will be discharged to an existing open drain at the west of the site. SuDS measures will include tree pits and permeable paving. These will manage surface runoff before being diverted to three onsite attenuation tanks and ultimately discharge (via hydrocarbon interceptor) to the local drain. Each tank is designed to provide storage for a 1-100 year storm event plus a 20% climate change allowance, with discharge limited to the greenfield runoff rate of 18.2l/s. The combined attenuation volume across the three tanks equates to approximately 1,627m³.

A petrol interceptor will also be installed upstream of the discharge point to remove hydrocarbon pollutants from surface water runoff prior to discharge. Each tank is connected to a hydro-brake manhole which controls the discharge rate to the open drain.

Ayesa carried out a flood risk assessment at the proposed development site. The subject site lies within Flood Zones C as per the CFRAM flood maps. Mitigation measures to reduce residual risk of flooding on the proposed development include the appropriate setting of FFLs and the overall slope of hardstanding levels away from the buildings to reduce surface water inundation. Greenfield runoff rates from the proposed development site will ensure there is no risk of flooding to surrounding lands.

Construction and operational phase runoff from the site will be effectively managed to ensure there is no impact on local water quality or any other watercourse downstream of the site e.g. Knockacorally Stream, River Martin, River Shournagh. Given the proposed water control measures no significant impact on local water quality is predicted to occur from the proposed development.

9.10 Wastewater Discharges

The proposed residential development could potentially result in an increase in nutrients discharging to River Shournagh via the Blarney Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Increased nutrients can potentially impact on freshwater habitats by changing baseline ecological conditions and increasing algal growth, which in turn could impact on feeding local flora and fauna.

Wastewater from the proposed development will be conveyed for treatment to Blarney WWTP. The Blarney agglomeration is served by a wastewater treatment plant with a Plant Capacity Population Equivalent (P.E.) of 13,000. The agglomeration consists of one primary discharge point which discharges to the River Shournagh.

The WWTP obtained a discharge licence (Reg: D0043-01) from the EPA and has assigned emission limit values (ELV's) for a range of parameters to ensure a high degree of protection to the River Shournagh and surrounding waters. The discharge licence assigns ELV's for total phosphorous (Total P), chemical oxygen demand (COD), total suspended solids (TSS), biological oxygen demand (BOD), Ammonia, pH and orthophosphate. The ELVs are set based on the full design capacity (Population Equivalent (P.E.) 13,000) and are aimed at providing a high degree of protection to the receiving water body and to ensure the receiving waterbody is capable of accommodating the proposed discharge without causing or exacerbating a breach in the relevant standards.

The 2024 Annual Environmental Report for Blarney WWTP was reviewed. The AER notes that the final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2024. The non-compliance's with the ELVs were in relation to Ammonia – as N (mg/l). This non-compliance is related to the hydraulic load at the WWTP where the annual mean hydraulic loading is greater than the peak Treatment Plant Capacity. The annual maximum hydraulic loading is also greater than the peak Treatment Plant Capacity. However, the AER notes that the discharge from the wastewater treatment plant does not have an observable negative impact on the Water Framework Directive status.

In 2024 the agglomeration PE for Blarney WWTP was 10,150 with a design capacity of 13,000 P.E.. A Pre-Connection Enquiry was submitted to Uisce Eireann to determine if the connection of the proposed development to Uisce Eireann network could be facilitated. A response has confirmed that the connection is feasible without upgrade (CDS25004956).

While there appears to be compliance issues at Blarney WWTP, these are not having an observable negative effect on the Water Framework Directive. The addition of the effluent discharge from the proposed housing development to the Blarney WWTP is well within its design capacity and will not compromise the operational capability of the WWTP to treat effluent to comply with emission limit values. Therefore, the impacts from the proposed development will be negligible given the current operating conditions at the WWTP. Minor increases in nutrient levels potentially discharged by the WWTP will not have a significant impact on water quality within the River Shournagh.

10. Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts on fauna chiefly relate to increased noise and activity levels and potential impacts on water quality. A planning search of Cork City Council planning portal was conducted to identify permitted projects in the vicinity of the proposed development site. Projects which, due to their nature or scale were unlikely to result in an in-combination impact, or to which there was no pathway, were excluded.

312893. Demolition of buildings, construction of 143 no. residential units (105 no. houses, 38 no. apartments), creche and associated site works.. Monacnapa, Blarney, Co. Cork.

316790 Inclusion of the land on the residential zoned land tax draft map at Monacnapa, Blarney Town Centre, Cork

2341736. Alverna, St. Ann's Road, Blarney, Cork, T23E440. The development will consist of: The construction of a new single-storey dwelling adjoining the existing dwelling located to the north, construction of a new single-storey rear extension and elevational alterations to existing dwelling, a new additional vehicular entrance to serve the existing dwelling and all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development.

341746. Permission is sought for the construction of an all-weather pitch, perimeter fence, gates, ballstop netting, landscaping, drainage and all associated site works, to replace 2 no. ball courts and a grass playing field permitted under An Bord Pleanala ref PL04.247742 (Cork County Council ref 16/6473).. Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal , Shean Lower , Blarney.

2443031 Permission for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) at this site at Ringwood, Shean Upper, Blarney, Cork. The proposed development will consist of a largescale residential development (LRD), representing Phase 1 of the development in the Blarney East / Ringwood Expansion Area, and comprising of 246no. residential dwellings. Ringwood , Shean Upper , Blarney

The remaining developments which have been granted planning during the last 24 month period are small in scale.

A range of mitigation measures will be implemented during construction to effectively prevent adverse effects on local water quality during construction. The measures to be implemented

will effectively prevent any significant discharges of hydrocarbons or excess levels of silt from the individual elements of the project thus ensuring that no in-combination impacts will occur. Furthermore, operational design measures, including SuDS measures, will ensure there are no impacts on local water quality or flooding risk and therefore no cumulative impacts from operational surface water discharges will occur.

Short-term cumulative disturbance effects on local wildlife may occur during construction works. The loss of habitat alongside other developments proposed in the Blarney area is likely to have slight, negative cumulative impact on local fauna.

11. Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures have been drawn up in line with current best practice and include an avoidance of sensitive habitats at the design stage and mitigation measures will function effectively in preventing significant ecological impacts. The following mitigation measures will be implemented:

A Construction Environmental Waste Management Plan (CEWMP) has been prepared (by MMOS Consulting Engineers) for the proposed development and this contains construction mitigation measures, which are also set out in this report.

Mitigation measures (of relevance in respect of any potential ecological effects) will be implemented throughout the project, including the preparation and implementation of detailed method statements. The works will incorporate the relevant elements of the guidelines outlined below:

- *NRA (2010) Guidelines for the Management of Noxious Weeds and Non- Native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads. National Roads Authority, Dublin.*
- *Murphy, D. (2004) Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites. Eastern Regional Fisheries Board, Dublin.*
- *IFI (2016) Guidelines on protection of fisheries during construction Works in and adjacent to waters (IFI, 2016)*
- *H. Masters-Williams et al (2001) Control of water pollution from construction sites. Guidance for consultants and contractors (C532). CIRIA.*
- *E. Murnane, A. Heap and A. Swain. (2006) Control of water pollution from linear construction projects. Technical guidance (C648). CIRIA.*
- *E. Murnane et al., (2006) Control of water pollution from linear construction projects. Site guide (C649). CIRIA.*

All personnel involved with the proposed development will receive an on-site induction relating to construction and operations, and the environmentally sensitive nature of the local watercourses and to re-emphasise the precautions that are required as well as the control measures to be implemented. Site managers, foremen and workforce, including all subcontractors, will be suitably trained in risks and preventative measures.

All staff and subcontractors have the responsibility to:

- Work to agreed plans, methods and procedures to eliminate and minimise environmental impacts,
- Understand the importance of avoiding on-site impacts, including noise and dust, and how to respond in the event of an incident to avoid or limit environmental impact;
- Respond in the event of an incident to avoid or limit environmental impact;
- Report all incidents immediately to the site manager;
- Monitor the workplace for potential environmental risks and alert the site manager if any are observed; and
- Co-operate as required, with site inspections.

11.1 Water Protection Measures

11.1.1 Water Sources at Site

The following are the sources of water that are likely or that may be encountered during the construction works.

Rainwater: The primary source of water to the site is rainwater. The anticipated average annual rainfall at the site is anticipated to be approx. 1228mm annually. The rainfall intensity varies by season and is predicted by Met Eireann to be as much as 109.4mm for a 1-in-100-year event over a 24-hour duration. Heavy rainfall can have significant effects on the site. It can cause flooding and the overwhelming of site drainage systems. Flooding can have an adverse effect on on-site stored materials which would not normally pose a risk. The contractor will be required to ensure that materials are therefore properly stored on site, and to plan site activities to ensure that works such as heavy excavation, drainage, and foundation works are postponed during adverse weather conditions.

Surface Water: Surface waters tend to include watercourses and waterbodies. To the south of the site, the River Martin flows through Blarney. A preliminary flood risk assessment indicates that the site is situated on elevated ground within the Blarney area, outside of the designated flood plains and areas of known fluvial or tidal flooding as identified by the OPW Flood Maps. Surface water runoff management will be a critical consideration in the site's drainage design to prevent localised flooding or erosion during extreme rainfall events. As such, prior to the commencement of construction, the Contractor is required to develop an appropriate preparation, mitigation, and operation plan to deal with the associated risks, and to plan site activities to ensure that works such as heavy excavation, drainage, and foundation works are postponed during such an event. Prior to the commencement of construction, the Contractor is required to develop an appropriate plan for the preparation, mitigation, and operation to deal with any associated risks, and to plan site activities to ensure that works such works are postponed during such an event in an appropriate manner.

Groundwater. The contractor will be required, in advance of, and during site establishment, to undertake a series of trial holes to establish the ground water levels.

11.1.2 Potential Sources of Water Pollution on Site

The following are a list of potential water pollutions that could arise on the construction site.

Suspended Solids: The contractor is to employ measures to ensure that water pollution does not arise as a result of suspended solids pollution. Sources of suspended solids pollution include, but are not limited to; excavation works, earth stockpiles, plant and wheel washing, and the build-up of mud on site roads. Good practice construction measures are proposed in the following sections that the contractor will be required to employ to ensure that suspended sediments from the above potential sources do not enter nearby drainage systems or any watercourse in accordance with CIRIA C532 – Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites – Guidance for Consultants and Contractors.

Oils and Hydrocarbons: Oils are a potential source of pollutants on a construction site. Diesel, lubricating oil, fuel, petrol, and hydraulic fluids are used quite readily on construction sites for various types of machinery and refuelling and maintenance are required regularly on sites. The contractor will need to employ good practice measures to prevent these potential pollutants entering nearby drainage systems or any water course. These measures will include bunded areas for the storage of fuels, regular maintenance of machinery to ensure that no leakages occur, measures to protect the site from vandalism, and the provision of a designated refuelling area on site or refuelling off-site. Any fuel storage on site should be carefully controlled and considered to ensure that the risks associated with adverse weather conditions including heavy rainfall and high winds are accounted for.

Concrete and Cement Products: It is important that cement products are carefully stored to withstand various weather conditions such as heavy rainfall and high winds to prevent run-off and dust pollution. Concrete products can cause contamination during wash down of the trucks which can cause a large volume of uncontrolled runoff. Precast concrete is to be used on site where feasible. Concrete pours are not to take place on site during intense rainfall. Good practice measures are to be employed on site to prevent such uncontrolled runoff.

11.1.3 Surface Water Management Techniques

The contractor will be required to submit proposed methods for managing surface water runoff from the site during the construction operations. The following operations will require particular attention.

Excavations for foundations works:

Excavations works will require works below ground level and to control the groundwater in the areas being excavated the contractor will require to isolate the area by digging trenches to the perimeter of the foundation area with suitable falls and sumps. The perimeter drains in an open excavation such deep excavation should include French drains.

Discharge of ground water will be via silting ponds where suspended solids can be removed, and the water quality can be monitored.

11.1.4 Oil and Fuel delivery points:

A designated fuel transfer area should be provided on-site, and this is typical good practice on well-managed construction sites. The contractor will be required to install an impermeable

paved and bunded area that is capable of handling and intercepting fuel spillages. All tanks should be fully bunded and placed on a firm and secure foundation.

11.1.5 Formwork and concrete operations

Concrete should always be placed in a controlled method to prevent spillages in accordance with good construction practice. Where possible, concrete should be placed using a concrete pump. As noted above, it is important that the machinery is well-maintained.

At the delivery and wash-down point, it is important that measures are employed to prevent spillages from concrete delivery trucks contaminating the ground. Where appropriate, pre-cast concrete is to be used and concrete pours are not to be undertaken during periods of intense rainfall.

11.1.6 Spillage Procedure

A spillage procedure is to be developed which shall be enacted in the event of the release of any sediment, cement products, hydrocarbons, or other pollutants into any waterbody. In the event of such a spillage, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Cork City Council, Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI), and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) are to be notified immediately. A hydrocarbon spill kit is to be available on site at all times, such kits are to be maintained on site and appropriate staff trained in their use.

11.2 Noise and Working Hours

To moderate impacts on the surrounding area and in order to mitigate noise levels emanating from the site, all site development and building works will be carried out only between the hours of 08.00 to 18.00 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 08.00 to 16.00 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Public Holidays. Any deviation from these times will be submitted to the Cork City Council for approval.

The Contractor will be required to carry out noise monitoring at a defined location on the boundary on an ongoing basis during the works. The contractor must ensure that construction noise will comply with the requirements of BS5228-1:2009: Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open sites. Noise during construction shall not exceed 65dB (A), Leq 30 minutes, and the peak noise shall not exceed 75 dB (A) when measured at any point off site.

The contractor is to have a point of contact available during the works at all times and if exceedances are recorded, the contractor will be required to adopt alternative construction methodologies and measures to ensure that the limits are complied with.

Noise monitoring will be addressed with the contractor on an ongoing basis by the Engineer, and it will be on the agenda at weekly site meetings.

11.3 Lighting

The primary mitigation which will be implemented for this project relates to bats, as these are considered the most sensitive species in relation to night time lighting. It is noted that the mitigation proposed will also lessen in the impact in relation other nocturnal species such as

Hedgehog. Potentially lighting associated with the site works could cause disturbance/displacement of Bats and other nocturnal wildlife. If of sufficient severity and duration, there could be impacts on reproductive success. Lighting mitigation measures will follow *Bats & Lighting Guidance Notes for: Planners, engineers, architects and developers* (Bat Conservation Ireland, 2010). The following measures will be applied in relation to construction and operational lighting:

11.3.1 Lighting during construction

Site lighting will typically be provided by tower mounted temporary portable construction floodlights. The floodlights will be cowled and angled downwards to minimise spillage to surrounding properties. The following measures will be applied in relation to site lighting:

- Lighting will be provided with the minimum luminosity sufficient for safety and security purposes.
- Lights will be switched off when not in use; and
- Lighting will be positioned and directed so that it does not to unnecessarily intrude on adjacent ecological receptors and structures used by protected species...
- Works will primarily take place during hours of daylight to minimise disturbance to any nocturnal mammal species.

11.3.2 Lighting During Operation

The lighting scheme has taken into account best practice, as published by the UK Bat Conservation Trust, in respect of mitigation strategies, to minimise the impact of outdoor lighting upon bat populations.

- LED type lanterns, of the Warm White type will be utilised where possible. Colour Temperature of 3,000 kelvin, as is considered least disruptive to the emergence of bats from roosts at dusk, and subsequent movement from habitats to foraging locations.
- Lanterns are of the fully cut off type with no light output above the horizontal plane.
- Height of columns kept as low as possible taking cognisance of need to make lanterns vandal resistant
- Lighting will be faced away from the retained boundary habitats to minimise the impact on bats foraging along these areas. The positioning of lighting along eastern treeline will be carried out in consultation with a supervising ecologist.
- Timers and/sensors should be used where possible.

11.4 Ecology

11.4.1 General

All personnel involved with the project will receive an on-site induction relating to operations and the environmentally sensitive nature of retained habitats onsite as well as the hydrological connection to local waterbodies.

The Wildlife Amendment Act 2000 (S.46.1) provides that it is an offence to cut, grub, burn or destroy any vegetation on uncultivated land or such growing in any hedge or ditch from the first of March to the 31st of August. Exemptions include the clearance of vegetation in the course of road or other construction works or in the development or preparation of sites on which any building or other structure is intended to be provided. None the less it is recommended that vegetation be removed outside of the breeding season where possible. In particular, removal during the peak-breeding season (April-June inclusive) should be avoided. Such a timeframe would also minimise the potential disturbance of breeding birds outside of the proposed development site boundary.

A landscape plan has been included with the application (CSR Landscape masterplan). The plan includes tree planting, wildflower meadow encouragement (though maintenance) and hedgerow planting.

A Tree Protection drawing (Holly Arboricultural TPP5925) and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan (BS5837:2012) have been submitted with this application. This outlines areas of trees to be retained and the measures proposed to protect these trees for the duration of construction works.

11.4.2 Bats

As noted above lighting mitigation measures have taken into account measures outlined in the *Bats & Lighting Guidance Notes for: Planners, engineers, architects and developers* (Bat Conservation Ireland, 2010).

During the site works, general mitigation measures for bats will follow the National Road Authority's '*Guidelines for the Treatment of Bats during the Construction of National Road Schemes*' NRA (2005c) and '*Bat mitigation guidelines for Ireland v2*'. Marnell *et al.* 2022). These documents outline the requirements that will be met in the pre-construction (site clearance) stage to minimise negative effects on roosting bats, or prevent avoidable effects resulting from significant alterations to the immediate landscape.

No bat roosts were recorded within trees earmarked for removal. However, the presence of occasional roosting bats in mature and semi-mature trees cannot be altogether ruled out. A large number of trees will be removed prior to/during construction. The following precautionary measures will be implemented during all tree felling.

- Tree-felling should ideally be undertaken in the period late August to late October/early November. During this period bats are capable of flight and may avoid the risks of tree-felling if proper measures are undertaken. Felling during the winter months is to be avoided as this creates the additional risk that bats may be in hibernation and thus unable to escape from a tree that is being felled. Additionally, disturbance during winter may reduce the likelihood of survival as the bats' body temperature is too low and they may have to consume too much body fat to survive.

- Immediately prior to felling, the trees should be examined for the presence or absence of bats, and/or other bat activity. This survey should be carried out by a suitably qualified bat specialist and should include a visual inspection of the tree during daylight hours followed by a night time detector survey. The survey should be carried out from dusk through the night till dawn to ensure that bats do not re-enter the tree.
- For trees classified as moderate value (or low to moderate value) in **Table 9**; tree-felling will not be undertaken in June, July and early August, in order to ensure that breeding populations of bats are protected. Bats typically form maternity roosts from late May onwards and single young are born in June or July. The young are totally dependent upon their mothers and are unable to fly, or to take any evasive action, that would save them from the dangers imposed by the felling or major surgery of a tree.
- Soft-felling will be used on all felled trees as follows; Felled trees will not be mulched immediately. Such trees will be left lying several hours and preferably overnight before any further sawing or mulching. This will allow any bats within the tree to emerge and avoid accidental death. The bat specialist will be on-hand during felling operations to inspect felled trees for bats. If bats are seen or heard in a tree that has been felled, work will cease and the local NPWS Conservation Ranger will be contacted.
- Trees will be retained where possible and no ‘tidying up’ of dead wood and spilt limbs on tree specimens will be undertaken unless necessary for health and safety.
- Treelines/hedgerows earmarked for retention, but adjacent to tree removal areas and thus at risk, will be clearly marked by a bat specialist to avoid any inadvertent damage.

11.4.3 Otter

Measures will be implemented during construction works to ensure that there will be no disturbance or mortality of otter during the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development in line with NRA (2008) *Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters Prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes*. As there is an Otter holt within 150m of the proposed development site boundary (and construction works area), a derogation licence application is currently being processed by the NPWS (not received at time of report update). A derogation licence will be required before the commencement of any works. The following mitigation measures will also be implemented.

- Works will take place within a defined working area to reduce the footprint of the Proposed Development to minimise potential for impact to Otter foraging or resting habitat;
- There will be no in-stream activities along the Knockacorballa Stream
- Any excavations will be covered at night to prevent Otter from falling in or becoming trapped;
- Any lights will be turned off after working hours;
- A pre-construction survey will be carried out to ensure no change in the baseline information to ensure that mitigation measures remain relevant. This should be conducted no more than 10-12 months in advance of construction. Should there be a

change in Otter behaviour or new holts created a derogation licence from the NPWS may be required;

- No works should be undertaken within 150m of any holts at which breeding females or cubs are present. Otter breeding may take place during any season so breeding activity at holts needs to be determined on a case-by-case basis. No wheeled or tracked vehicles (of any kind) should be used within 20m of active, but non-breeding, otter holts. Light work, such as digging by hand or scrub clearance should also not take place within 15m of such holts, except under licence;
- A Noise and Vibration Management Plan will be developed by the appointed contractor.

11.5.3. Birds

The Wildlife Amendment Act 2000 (S.46.1) provides that it is an offence to cut, grub, burn or destroy any vegetation on uncultivated land or such growing in any hedge or ditch from the first of March to the 31st of August. Exemptions include the clearance of vegetation in the course of road or other construction works or in the development or preparation of sites on which any building or other structure is intended to be provided. None the less it is recommended that vegetation be removed outside of the breeding season where possible. In particular, removal during the peak-breeding season (April-June inclusive) should be avoided. Such a timeframe would also minimise the potential disturbance of breeding birds outside of the proposed development site boundary.

Breeding bird surveys during summer of 2026 to aid in optimal locations on nest boxes within site boundary.

11.5.4 Biodiversity Enhancement

Bats

Bat boxes will be installed prior to any tree felling works. Given the diversity of bats which use the site, a range of bat boxes have been specified. The boxes have been selected to provide a range of roosting opportunities for different species and colony sizes. They can be sited on existing trees. The boxes will be installed by the project ecologist considering relevant factors including foraging resources, commuting routes, future landscape development, and lighting and will be regularly checked for usage as part of an ongoing ecological monitoring programme.

Bat boxes will be installed on mature and semi-mature trees which are earmarked for retention within the site (See **Figure 12**).

Bat boxes are more likely to be used if they are located where bats are known to feed and for this reason bat boxes within the proposed development site have been location on mature/semi-mature treelines where bat activity has been recorded.

Boxes should be put as high (ideally over 4m) as possible on the tree to try and avoid predation from cats on the ground or nearby structures. Bats use dark treelines or hedgerows for navigation, so boxes will not be installed in proximity to proposed street lighting. Bat boxes will be installed in a south/south-east/south-west aspect.

Vincent Pro Bat Box

Two Vincent Pro bat boxes will be provided. This box features three vertical chambers of different sizes, providing ideal roosting space for a variety of species. Beneath the crevice entrances is a ladder which provides a rough surface for bats to land. Limited cleaning is required for these boxes as the droppings will fall out of the bottom of the chambers. The front and top of the box are black which helps the box to absorb heat. This bat box can be used by Leisler's, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown long-eared, Natterer's and Whiskered Bat.



Vincent pro bat box



Bat Colony Box 1FF



Bat Box 3FF



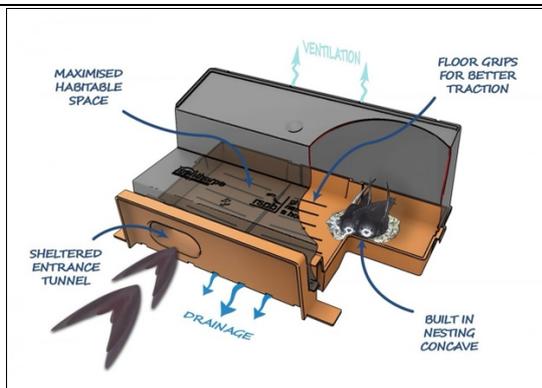
Hedgehog highway example



Hedgehog dome



Example of installed Swift bricks in use.



Interior of Manthorpe swift brick.

Bat Box 1FF

Two Bat Box 1FF will be provided. Suitable for Pipistrelle and Nathusius' Pipistrelle Bats as well as Daubenton's Bats and Long-Eared Bats. The Flat Bat Box 1FF is a crevice roost that is open at the bottom. It can be used even in extremely steep locations and it is maintenance-free, i.e. it does not have to be cleaned.

Bat Colony Box 3FF

Two Bat Colony Boxes (3FF) will be provided. This type of box is readily used for forming large colonies, by Daubenton's Bats and Brown Long-Eared Bats. The 3FF is self-cleaning, i.e. the Bat droppings can fall out freely from the underside without blocking the entrance if the box is densely occupied.

Other mammals

Hedgehog boxes/highways.

Hedgehog highways will be provided between the properties to allow free movement of small mammals through the gardens/development. This requires a small hole (c. 13cm by 13cm

square) to be included at the base of garden fencing to provide passage for Hedgehogs along the boundary of development site. Regarding mammal connectivity at the site, the priority for this site during operation is to prevent access by dogs to the Otter holt to the southwest of the site. Therefore, the holes on the boundary fence (13cm x 13cm) will only allow free access of smaller mammals, i.e. Hedgehog, Pygmy shrew etc, but not larger mammals such as Badgers and Foxes. There is no indication that this is an important site for Badger (or Fox).

Three SCHWEGLER Hedgehog Dome (or similar) will be provided. These will be located under the retained woodland habitats. This dome encourages Hedgehogs to settle in a particular area and provides year-round shelter, including during the winter months. This will be located somewhere protected from wind and rain. Ideally this will be filled with hay (supplied with the dome) but alternatively use dry leaves and straw, as well as cut up newspaper and wood shavings.

These will be located adjacent or within suitable habitat but will not be situated near internal or external roads.

Birds

Breeding bird surveys during summer of 2026 to aid in optimal locations on nest boxes within site boundary.

Swift

The swift is a Red List bird of conservation concern in Ireland because its population has declined by over 40% in the last 15 years. Conservation actions across the country are helping to recover populations. Swifts are faithful to their nest sites. Nest box projects, especially built-in nest boxes, can provide safe long-term homes for new breeding pairs of Swifts.

Commercial Swift nest bricks are made from hollow brick or concrete composite designed to allow access by Swifts and manufactured to modern building regulation standards. They can be integrated into the walls of buildings during the construction phase.

Twenty swift bricks will be positioned on the apartment building at the north-east of the site and step down building at the centre of the site as **Figure 12**. These will be installed following the *Swift Conservation Ireland Guidelines* (2019). These will be placed at least 5m above ground level with an open area of the building i.e., free of overhanging ledges, vegetation, and other obstacles. There will be no directional lighting in the vicinity of this area. Bricks will be positioned in rows to encourage colonial nesting. It is noted that Swift bricks will not overheat in the way that externally fitted boxes do and therefore they can be placed on any aspect of the building.

Swifts look for nest sites at locations with established colonies. Swifts are known to occur in the Blarney area (Source NBDC), although none were recorded during the site surveys. To increase the chances of attracting Swifts to a new nest location, a recording of a Swift call should be played. Swift calls can be broadcast from a small speaker placed as close as possible to the nest box or brick. New nest box sites where no lures are played are less likely to be successful in attracting nesting Swifts. This will be carried out under licence of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

The following procedures will be followed during the playing of calls:

- Volume will be set at a 'normal' noise level. Playing the call too loudly will distort the sound.
- Swifts look for nest sites during two specific time periods: in May and June (to nest that year) and in June and July (to nest the following year). The latter group are younger birds.
- The following recommended times will be used:
 - from dawn, for 3-6 hours
 - in the evening, from 6.00pm to dark.
- Swifts will only look for nest sites in fine weather. Playing the calls in cold, wet weather is ineffective.

Nest boxes used by swifts do not require the cleaning and maintenance required by some other species. However, every few years check the bricks remain secure and for signs of possible damage.

 <p>1B Schwegler nest box</p>	 <p>1ZA Schwegler wren roundhouses</p>
	

Log pile example	Examples of insect hotels
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Eight house martin artificial nest cups/swallow nest cups will be installed onsite on a number of dwellings as per **Figure 12**. Details will follow the guidance as per House Martin Conservation UK & Ireland '*Artificial nest cup installation guide*'.

- As shown in drawings, all nest cups will be placed at a minimum height of 3m.
- Nest cups will be installed under the apex, soffits and/or eaves of the buildings outlined in drawings.
- Nest cups will have a north, east or westerly aspect.

House martins and Swallows leave droppings which can be an issue for some households, but they are easily removed with a hosepipe or brush.

Other breeding birds

In order to enhance the site for nesting birds five nesting bird boxes (a range of bird box types) will be installed at the proposed development site (See **Figure 12**). 1B Schwegler nest box will be installed high on retained trees. The 1B nest boxes will be installed at a height of 1.5 metres whilst the large bird nest boxes should be positioned at least 3m in height. 1ZA Schwegler wren roundhouses will be located in hedgerows, thickets and overgrown areas. The 1ZA will be hung in retained hedgerows along the eastern and western boundaries.

Log Piles/Loggeries

Building invertebrate habitats can provide shelter to many beneficial insects and offer a great foraging habitat for birds and other mammals.

Dead wood is one of the most valuable habitats for urban wildlife. The decline of the availability of deadwood is linked to the decline of many woodland birds due to the loss of foraging opportunities provided by this habitat.

Key points

- Install the logs vertically
- Site the loggery in a shaded part of a site
- Do not use concrete to bed the logs in. The beetles require the logs to be in contact with the soil
- Do not use well-rotted logs as they will have little wood left as food

Log piles will be installed under retained treeline and woodland habitats using the felled trees at the site (as outlined in Landscape master plan). Log piles are suitable for invertebrates, small mammals and birds and can be easily installed in wooded areas of parks or open

spaces. They are really just stacks of logs piled up and allowed to rot down. Left undisturbed they will support a good range of biodiversity.

Insect hotels

Three insect hotels will be installed on meadow grassland areas. Insect hotels are excellent for attracting a wide range of invertebrate species. Perforations allow for insect access and a chamber with bamboo below for solitary bees. This can be positioned anywhere in the site where pollination is to be encouraged. The nesting tubes are ideal for solitary bees to build their nests in, the vertical slots are designed to encourage butterflies, other refuge holes are perfect for ladybirds and lacewings and the pinecones offer an excellent habitat for a range of other species.

11.6 Invasive species

A site specific invasive species management plan will be developed (post planning) for this development to ensure that all invasive species are removed.

12. Conclusions

Habitats within the proposed development site include a mix of semi-natural grassland and developing scrub and immature woodland alongside areas of planted non-native treelines and native hedgerows. The site, which previously included a hotel, has been left unmanaged for a number of years which has allowed these habitats to develop in the absence of active management. While there are mature and semi-mature trees within the site, the habitats onsite are of relatively recent origin with the majority of scrub/immature woodland developing in the past 8 years. Although the habitats in themselves are not considered of high value for wildlife, the mosaic of habitats, including dark sheltered areas with grassland scrub and trees, does provide foraging habitat and a number of bats, birds and other wildlife.

The proposed development will require the removal of the interior vegetation at the site, i.e. scrub, immature woodland, semi-natural grassland and semi-mature/mature trees. Boundary treelines/hedgerows along the eastern, western and southern boundary will be retained. This will retain connectivity between valuable woodland habitats to the north and south of the proposed development site. While the landscape plan provides for new tree planting, the proposed development is likely to impact commuting and foraging bat habitat within the site. The removal of habitat combined with increased lighting at the site will have a negative impact on local bat populations. Through the implementation of bat protection measures, such as retention of boundary vegetation, planting of native and non-native tree species, avoidance and minimisation of artificial light spill, and provision of roost spaces, residual impacts on bats will be minimised. Mitigation measures will also be implemented during tree removal to ensure there is no direct injury/mortality impacts on bats. However, the impact of the proposed development on local bat populations is predicted to be negative, slight to moderate and long-term.

An Otter holt was recorded c.100m from the proposed development site boundary. There are no works proposed within this area and mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure that there is no impact on breeding Otters (within the holt) during construction works. No residual effects on Otter are predicted to occur.

During construction, there will be increased noise and disturbance which could potentially impact on birds and non-volant mammals. Given the availability of alternative habitat in the vicinity, the impact on birds, non-volant mammals and other wildlife is likely to be slight to moderate and short-term. This impact will reduce to slight in the long-term as landscape planting matures. The habitats to be affected are common and there is no evidence to indicate that the proposed development areas are of particular value for terrestrial (non-volant) mammals in the context of the surrounding countryside. The impact of the proposed development on birds is predicted to be negative, moderate and short-term, reducing to negative, slight in the long-term.

No third schedule invasive species were recorded within the proposed development site. A site specific invasive species management plan will be developed (post planning) for this development to ensure that all invasive species are removed.

The proposed development is not located within or immediately adjoining any designated site i.e. SAC, sSAC, SPA, NHA or pNHA. Mitigation measures have been proposed to protect local water quality. Operational lighting has been designed in line with bat lighting guidelines (in compliance with lighting requirements) to minimise impacts on valuable habitats to the north and south of the site. No significant effect on the Blarney Castle Woods pNHA are predicted to occur.

No difficulties in the effective implementation of the prescribed mitigation measures have been identified. No impact from the spread of invasive species will occur.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. NRA 2009 Guidelines

Table 1: Examples of valuation at different geographical scales

Ecological valuation: Examples
<p>International Importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'European Site' including Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Site of Community Importance (SCI), Special Protection Area (SPA) or proposed Special Area of Conservation. • Proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA). • Site that fulfills the criteria for designation as a 'European Site' (see Annex III of the Habitats Directive, as amended). • Features essential to maintaining the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network.⁴ • Site containing 'best examples' of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. • Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level)⁵ of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive; and/or ○ Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive. • Ramsar Site (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially Waterfowl Habitat 1971). • World Heritage Site (Convention for the Protection of World Cultural & Natural Heritage, 1972). • Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO Man & The Biosphere Programme). • Site hosting significant species populations under the Bonn Convention (Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site hosting significant populations under the Berne Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979). • Biogenetic Reserve under the Council of Europe. • European Diploma Site under the Council of Europe. • Salmonid water designated pursuant to the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988, (S.I. No. 293 of 1988).⁶
<p>National Importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site designated or proposed as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA). • Statutory Nature Reserve. • Refuge for Fauna and Flora protected under the Wildlife Acts. • National Park. • Undesignated site fulfilling the criteria for designation as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA); Statutory Nature Reserve; Refuge for Fauna and Flora protected under the Wildlife Act; and/or a National Park. • Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level)⁷ of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or ○ Species listed on the relevant Red Data list. • Site containing 'viable areas'⁸ of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive.
<p>County Importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of Special Amenity.⁹ • Area subject to a Tree Preservation Order. • Area of High Amenity, or equivalent, designated under the County Development Plan. • Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the County level)¹⁰ of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive; ○ Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive; ○ Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or ○ Species listed on the relevant Red Data list. • Site containing area or areas of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive that do not fulfil the criteria for valuation as of International or National importance.

- County important populations of species, or viable areas of semi-natural habitats or natural heritage features identified in the National or Local BAP, 11 if this has been prepared.
- Sites containing semi-natural habitat types with high biodiversity in a county context and a high degree of naturalness, or populations of species that are uncommon within the county.
- Sites containing habitats and species that are rare or are undergoing a decline in quality or extent at a national level.

Local Importance (higher value):

- Locally important populations of priority species or habitats or natural heritage features identified in the Local BAP, if this has been prepared;
- Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the Local level)¹² of the following:
 - Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive;
 - Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive;
 - Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or
 - Species listed on the relevant Red Data list.
- Sites containing semi-natural habitat types with high biodiversity in a local context and a high degree of naturalness, or populations of species that are uncommon in the locality;
- Sites or features containing common or lower value habitats, including naturalised species that are nevertheless essential in maintaining links and ecological corridors between features of higher ecological value.

Local Importance (lower value):

- Sites containing small areas of semi-natural habitat that are of some local importance for wildlife;
- Sites or features containing non-native species that are of some importance in maintaining habitat links.

⁴ See Articles 3 and 10 of the Habitats Directive.

⁵ It is suggested that, in general, 1% of the national population of such species qualifies as an internationally important population. However, a smaller population may qualify as internationally important where the population forms a critical part of a wider population or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle.

⁶ Note that such waters are designated based on these waters' capabilities of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*).

⁷ It is suggested that, in general, 1% of the national population of such species qualifies as a nationally important population. However, a smaller population may qualify as nationally important where the population forms a critical part of a wider population or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle.

⁸ A 'viable area' is defined as an area of a habitat that, given the particular characteristics of that habitat, was of a sufficient size and shape, such that its integrity (in terms of species composition, and ecological processes and function) would be maintained in the face of stochastic change (for example, as a result of climatic variation).

⁹ It should be noted that whilst areas such as Areas of Special Amenity, areas subject to a Tree Preservation Order and Areas of High Amenity are often designated on the basis of their ecological value, they may also be designated for other reasons, such as their amenity or recreational value. Therefore, it should not be automatically assumed that such sites are of County importance from an ecological perspective.

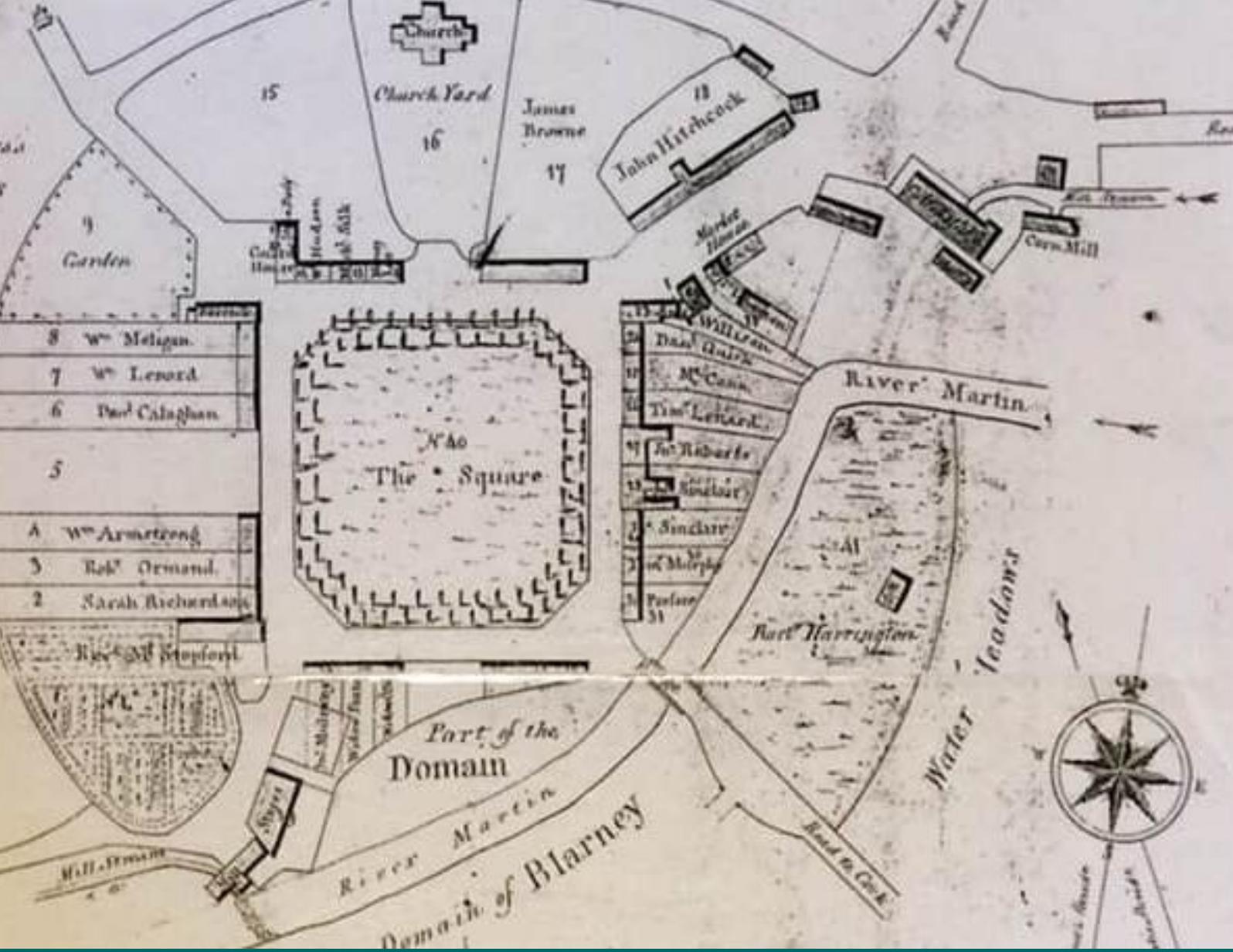
¹⁰ It is suggested that, in general, 1% of the County population of such species qualifies as a County important population. However, a smaller population may qualify as County important where the population forms a critical part of a wider population or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle.

¹¹ BAP: Biodiversity Action Plan

¹² It is suggested that, in general, 1% of the local population of such species qualifies as a locally important population. However, a smaller population may qualify as locally important where the population forms a critical part of a wider population or the species is at a critical phase of its life cycle

Appendix C

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment



Blarney Housing; Part 8 Planning Application Co. Cork.

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment -C

December 2025



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Part One: Introduction, Methodologies, and Heritage Protection

Part One: Introduction, Methodologies, and Heritage Protection

1.01 Overview of Report

This Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) has been carried out on behalf of our client, HRP Construction Ltd, to provide an assessment of a Part 8 submission for a proposed housing project in Blarney, Co. Cork. The project has been designed by Deady Gahan Architects (DGA), taking into account design feedback by James Bourke Architects (JBA) relating to the historic context of the site. The purpose of this report is (i) to provide an overview of the historical context of the site and identify any built fabric of note in the area and (ii) to assess the impact of the proposal on the character of the area, with particular reference to views from Blarney Castle.

1.02 Project Background

The development site, measuring approximately 3.7 hectares, is located in Blarney. The proposed development will consist of:

- The construction of 138 no. residential units comprising a mix of 4-bed semi-detached houses; 3-bed detached houses, 2 and 3 bed semi-detached and townhouses; and a block of 1 and 2-bed apartments
- A civic centre
- All associated ancillary development

In February 2025, comments were provided from the Cork City Council Conservation Officer on an earlier design. Taking into account this feedback, JBA were engaged as conservation consultants to review the design and provide feedback / suggested design alterations to the house types. The alterations sought to better reflect the historic context of Blarney and to compliment the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). A revised design for the proposed civic centre was also provided by JBA. The overall design was then updated by DGA to form the basis of the current Part 8 submission.

1.03 Overview of Methodologies

This report has been written in accordance with the ICOMOS Guide to Recording Historic Buildings (Butterworth Architecture, 1990) and the RIAI

Guidelines for the Conservation of Buildings, 3rd Edition (RIAI, 2010). The report is based on site visits, map research, historical research, and visual inspections.

Heritage Protection

1.04 Statutory Protection

All development should be assessed on consistency with statutory heritage policies, designations and guidelines. Ireland has ratified European and International conventions in relation to the protection of its built heritage. These, along with a large body of conservation charters and associated conventions and documents, are an essential framework for good practice in the protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment.

(A) Planning and Development Act 2000

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that Planning Authorities compile and maintain a Record of Protected Structures. The RPS is a mechanism for the statutory protection of our built heritage. A protected structure may be included in the RPS on account of its architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. Each owner and occupier of a protected structure is legally obliged to ensure that the structure is maintained and protected from endangerment, whether by direct action or neglect.

When a structure is protected the protection includes the structure, its interior, the land within its curtilage and other structures within that curtilage (including their interiors), and all fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of all these structures. All works which would materially affect the character of the Protected Structure, or a proposed protected structure, require planning permission even when those works would otherwise be exempt.

There are a total of 6 Protected Structures within the study area (Blarney Village Centre/ Blarney Castle). Of these, the most relevant to the site is Blarney Tower House & Bawn, due to the impact of the proposed works on views from the castle.

In addition to the RPS the designation of historic areas as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) under Section 81 of the Planning & Development Act is a way to protect the character of Ireland's historic areas. An Architectural Conservation Area

(ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, technical, social, cultural, or scientific, interest, or that contributes to the appreciation of a Protected Structure

The Study Area is partially located within an ACA.

(B) National Monuments Act 1930-2004

Structures and/or sites may be protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930- 2004. This can be in addition, or as an alternative, to protection under the Planning and Development Acts. The protection of structures under the National Monuments Acts takes place at national level within the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Sites protected under the National Monuments Acts are contained in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). The RMP is established and maintained by the National Monuments Section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Any works to structures included on the RMP are subject to various provisions, including a Section 12 Notification process to the Minister prior to works progressing on site.

There are eight structures in the study area listed on the RMP, many of which are associated with Blarney Castle.

(C) Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill 2023

When fully enacted the Historic and Archaeological Heritage Bill will revise and replace the existing National Monuments Acts and other related legislation/enactments with a modernised legislative code for the protection of historic monuments and archaeological heritage. Under this new legislation the monument will become a Prescribed Monument.

The provisions of the new bill are planned to be enacted in the near future, and any promoters of works will need to be familiar with the new legislative provisions to ensure an efficient permission application and execution of any works.

(D) National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage is a unit within the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government engaged in

compiling an evaluated record of the architectural heritage of Ireland. The NIAH survey was established on a statutory basis by the enactment of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999.

There are a total of 18 structures included on the NIAH in the Study area. Of these, eight are part of the Blarney Woolen mills complex.

(E) Wildlife Acts

The Wildlife Acts 1976 - 2000 are the principal statutory provisions providing for the protection of wildlife (both flora and fauna) and the control of activities which may impact adversely on the conservation of wildlife and their habitats. The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is the Competent Authority for the servicing of a number of wildlife-related international agreements and implements a number of EU Regulations, Directives and International Conventions.

Competing conservation requirements of the natural and the built heritage may give rise to dilemmas. Conservation Rangers from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government can be consulted and may be able to suggest measures to avoid damage to the habitats of fauna.

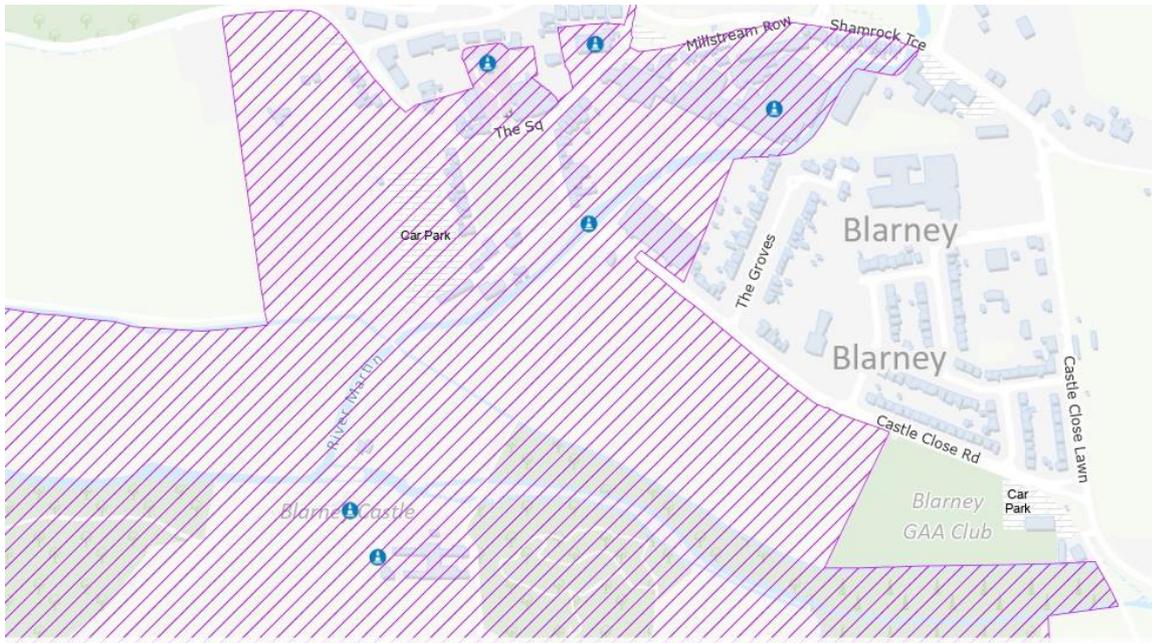


Fig 1.01. Extract from the digital map of Cork City Council Development Plan showing the location of Blarney ACA and the Protected Structures in the area.

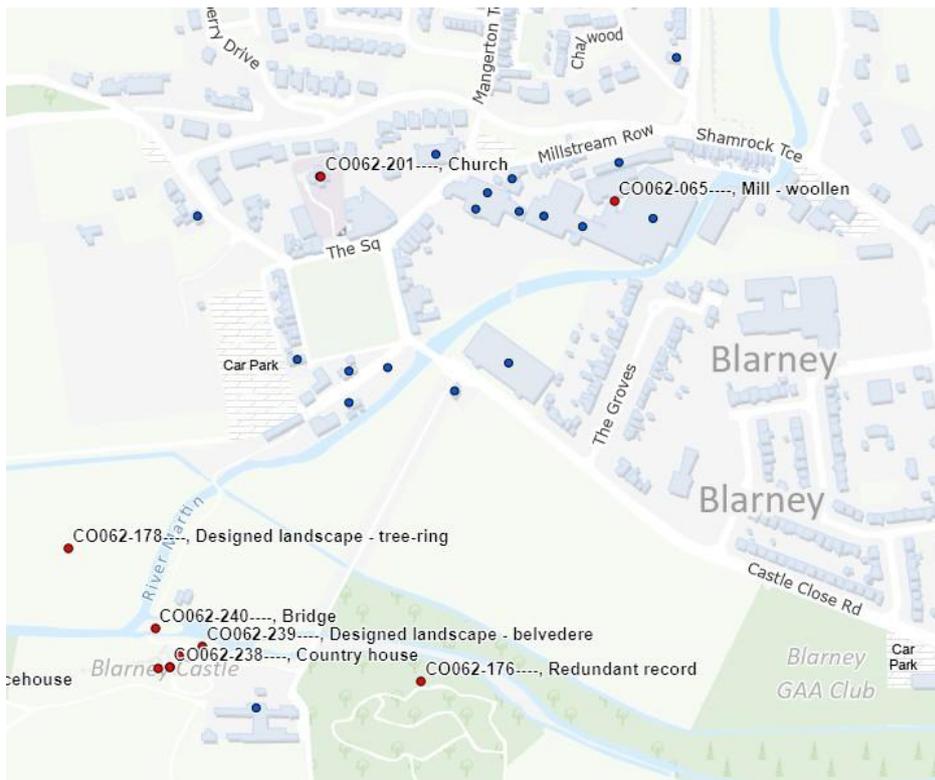
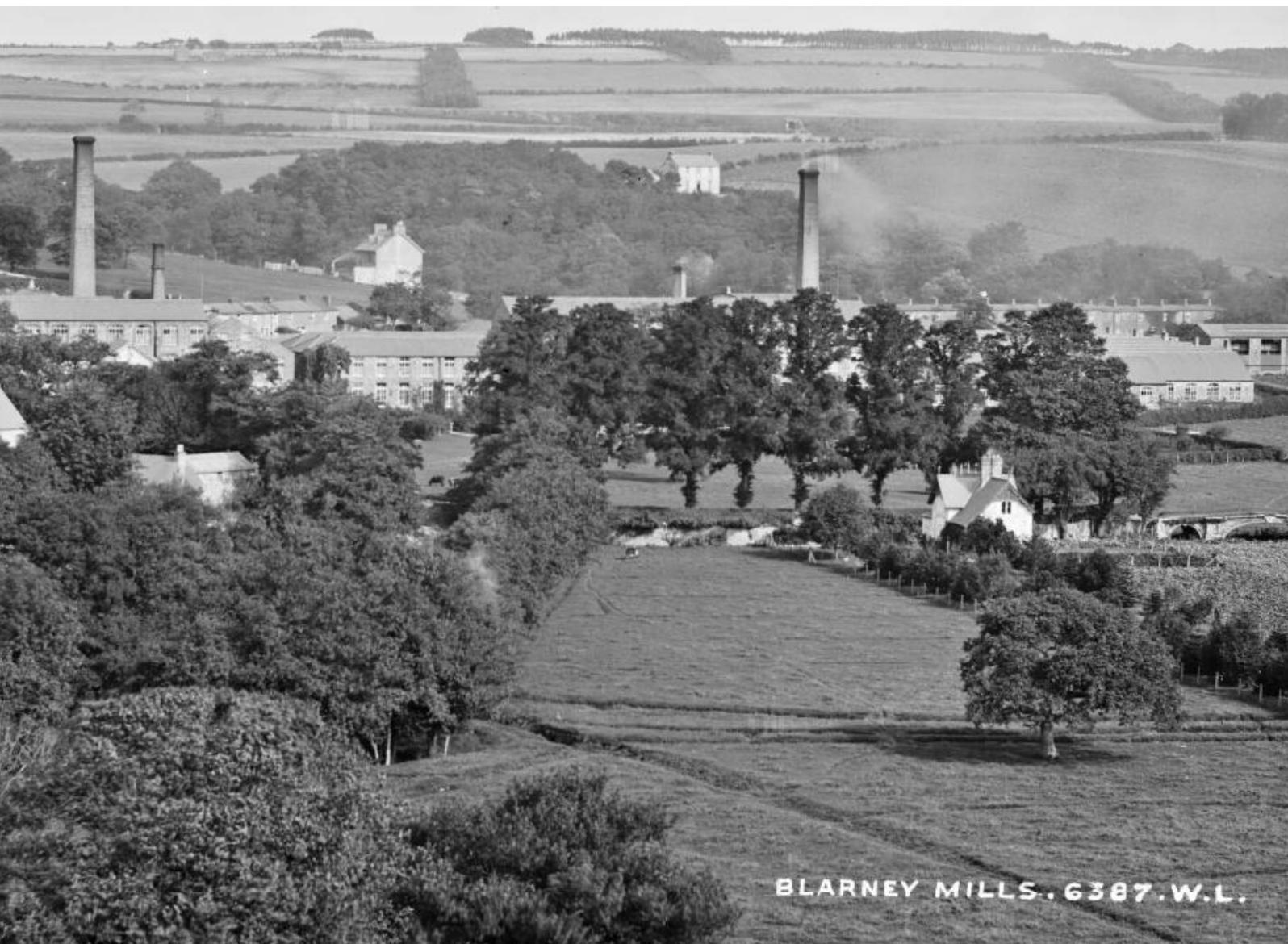


Fig 1.02. Extract from the Historic Environment Viewer showing the location of the NIAH records and structures included on the RMP.



Part Two: History and Chronology of Blarney

Part Two: History and Chronology

2.01 Blarney Castle and House

The settlement at Blarney became a stronghold of the MacCarthy of Muskerry. The site of Blarney Castle is the oldest known area of settlement in the village, where a wooden hunting post once sat on the limestone outcrop. A second stone structure was built in place of this in the eleventh century, and this in turn was demolished and a third castle was built in the fifteenth century, the remains of which still stand today.

After the Nine Years War in the late seventeenth century, the MacCarthy lands were forfeited and eventually came into the possession of Sir James Jefferyes, Governor of Cork. He built a mansion adjacent to the castle and undertook extensive landscaping works. The Rock Close is reputed to have been built on a druidic site from pre-historic times. The house was substantially destroyed by a fire in the 1820s, with just the wing walls remaining. A new house in the Scottish baronial style was completed on a site to the south of the castle in 1874 and is intact today. The property passed through marriage to the Colthurst family, who still occupy it today.

2.02 Blarney Village and Woollen Mills

In the early 1700s, Blarney village was a very small settlement and likely consisted of simple cabins. In the mid-late 1700s, Sir John Jefferyes set out to construct a planned town, which forms the basis of the square at the village centre today. Blarney was developed as an industrial village, with the focus being on the linen trade. Jefferyes established a number of water-powered mills in Blarney, mainly producing linen and cotton. Arthur Young provides a description of the town from between 1776-1778. According to his account, the textile industry was thriving:

in 1765, when Mr. Jefferys began to build this town, it consisted only of two or three mud cabins; there are now 90 houses. He first established the linen manufactory, building a bleach-mill, and houses for weavers etc., and letting them to manufacturers from Cork, who have been so successful in their works as to find it necessary to have larger and more numerous edifices, such as a large stamping mill for printing linens and cottons, to which annexed another bleach-mill, and since there has been a third erected; the work carried on is that of buying yarn, and weaving it into linens,



Fig 2.01. Photograph of Blarney Castle from the NLI Lawrence Collection, c1865-1914.



Fig 2.02. Photograph of Blarney House from the NLI Lawrence Collection, c1865-1914.

The square was designed as the focal point of the village, a social heart for the mill workers whose cottages enclosed it. It is a good example of a classical Georgian town planning exercise with square plan form and the Church of Ireland Church of the Resurrection centrally located on axis to the north. This was built 1766 and overlooks the village green. It is thought that square was originally enclosed by buildings on all four sides, which appears to be visible on the map from the 1700s. The square is described by Young as:

composed of a large handsome inn and manufacturers houses, all built of excellent stone, lime and slate. A church, by the first fruits and liberal addition of above £300 from Mr. Jefferys.

The historic OSI maps show that in addition to worker's houses, the buildings around the green once included institutions of note including the 18th century market house on the north-east corner, the RIC barracks centrally on the east side, a courthouse, and a late 18th century schoolhouse on the south-east corner. Apart from the set piece square, the village evolved along established roads leading to and from the settlement, responding to the topography of the land to produce an informal incremental linear form.

The textile industry of Blarney went through various phases of success over the years. The initial phase of mill building overseen by Sir John Jefferyes appear to have been initially very fruitful enterprises. However, the industry was badly affected by the collapse in trade caused by the 1820 banking crisis. In Samuel Lewis' description of Blarney, 1837, he describes the then relatively recent regression of the village as follows:

The village, though now of little importance, was once the most thriving in the county, and between the years 1765 and 1782, when the linen manufacture was carried on, had not less than 13 mills in operation, erected by St. John Jefferyes, Esq., at an expense of about £20,000. The cotton trade was afterwards introduced and flourished for a time, but has decayed; and the only establishments now in operation are a spinning-mill belonging to M. Mahony, Esq., in which about 120 persons are employed in spinning and dyeing woollen yarn for the extensive camlet manufactory in Cork; and a paper-mill, erected by G. Jenkins, Esq., which employs about 170 persons.

Fortunately for the village, the mill of M. Mahony, now Blarney Woollen Mills, described above,

became a catalyst for renewed industry and growth over time. The Mahonys were a famous milling family, who moved their primary operations from Glanmire to Blarney in 1823-1824. The Mahony mill led to the creation of jobs and housing in the village, which undertook a growth spurt in the mid-1800s. While the original mill building burnt down in 1869, it was soon rebuilt on a much larger scale. The enlarged building complex brought an increase in required staffing numbers, and the Mahonys began the development of over 100 terraced houses close to the mill in the mid-1800s. At the height of the Martin Mahony & Bros. woollen mills production it was said that there were in excess of 1,000 people employed in the factory. The houses constructed by the Mahonys around the village are of note due to their incorporation of curved felt roofs. The roof structure consists of Belfast roof trusses covered with tarred roofing felt, which was a quick and efficient means of production.

The nineteenth century also saw the development of the town as a tourist destination. The accessibility of the village and of the castle was vastly improved when the Cork and Muskerry Light railway was completed in 1887, with the line continuing to operate until 1934. The line ran from Cork to Blarney, a distance of 18 miles. The platform still exists today, and a number of buildings associated with the railway are included on the NIAH. The development of the railway line has been referenced to have necessitated demolition of the houses along the south side of the planned village square, but no buildings are visible in this location in early OSI maps (1840), suggesting that they may have been removed for other reasons.

Blarney Woollen Mills continued to operate until 1973, one of the few large-scale mills in Ireland to survive the Industrial Revolution. The mills were sold and reopened as a heritage, craft, and souvenir shop which is a well know tourist destination today. This, along with Blarney Castle, make Blarney one of the most important tourist destinations in Cork.

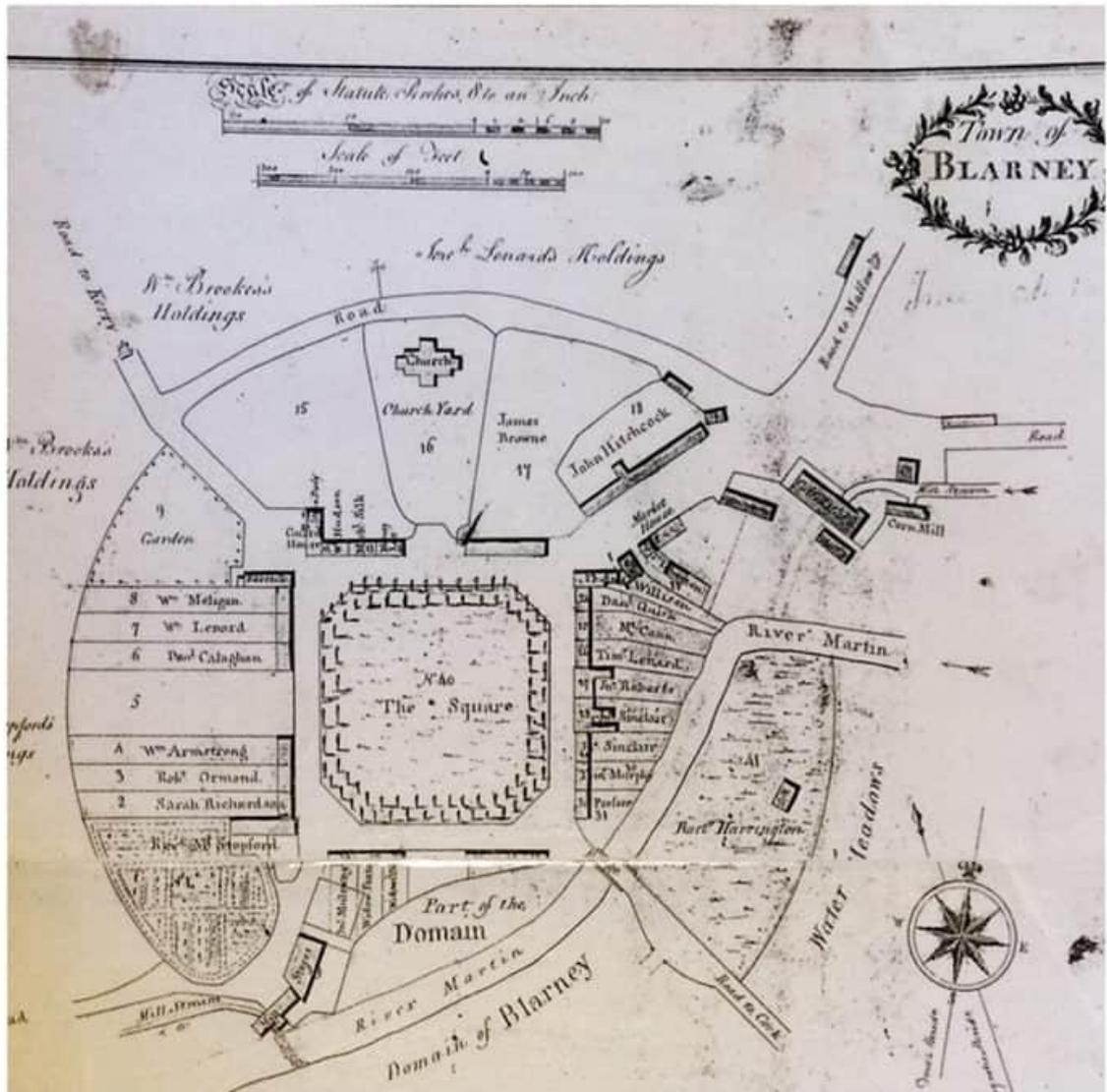


Fig 2.03. 1700s map of Blarney depicting the central town square. The Church of the Resurrection occupied a prominent position along the north axis. Mill buildings are visible to the north-east of the square. A built edge is depicted along the south side of the square, but buildings are not clearly visible in this location (part of the map is obscured). There is a centrally located gap in the built edge along the west side of the square.

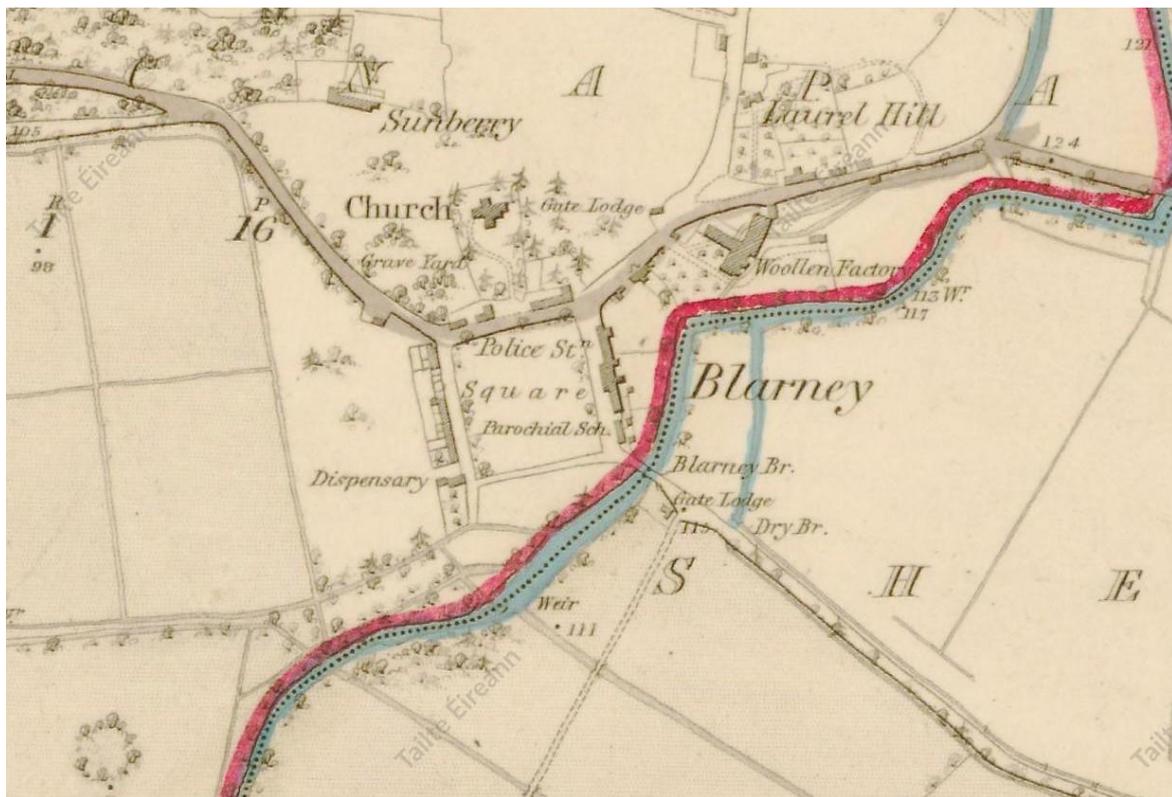
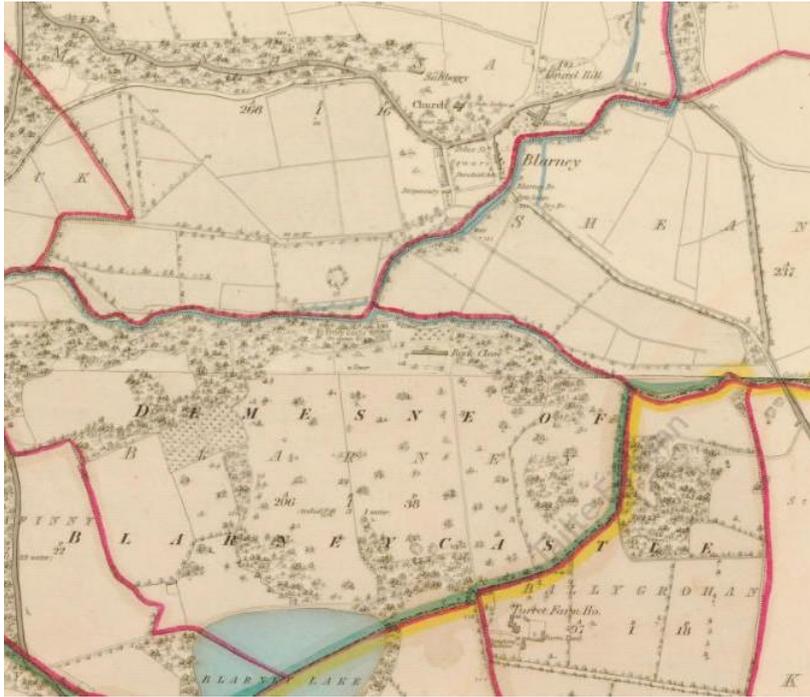


Fig 2.04. First edition OSI map, 1840.

The village square is clearly depicted and indicates a dispensary to the south-west corner (Stopford House), police station along the east side, and parochial school to the south-east corner. The south edge of the square is free from any buildings at this time. Some gaps are visible in the built edge on the other sides also. The woollen mills are clearly depicted as ‘woollen factory’. A large house named ‘Laurel Hill’ is visible opposite the mill (later St. Helen’s Convent). The Church of the Resurrection is also visible. To the south of the village, Blarney Castle is show in ruins, and there is no indication of Blarney house or stable yard.

2.03 Character Analysis of Blarney Village and ACA

There are a wide variety of building typologies which contribute to the character of Blarney village and ACA. It is significant of Blarney, and in particular the ACA, that the character of the village is defined by the combination of the formality and classical symmetry of the planned square and the informality of expression of the buildings themselves, which are for the most part modest vernacular dwellings.

The domestic character of the village consists of a variety of forms, with the houses being a mixture of single and two storey dwellings, freestanding, attached or in terraces. They are of solid construction, generally being simple planar forms with typical vernacular vertical opening proportions and solid/void ratios. There is often a hierarchy of openings, which are larger at ground floor. Windows are traditionally vertical painted timber sliding sashes, singly or grouped. Doors are traditionally solid painted timber, panelled or, on more modest buildings, vertically boarded. Many buildings exhibit an articulation and emphasis of the doorways, which are often deeply recessed to form a sheltered entrance. The roofs are typically steeply pitched with slate roofs, flush verges and simple stepped render eaves details. A number of the dwellings have felt barrel vaulted roofs, namely the workers cottages built by the Mahonys in the 1800s. Dormers are found in some of the buildings, typically later additions. The houses incorporate a variety of render finishes, with roughcast and smooth finishes and plain render plinths, platbands, eaves bands, and window and door surrounds. Ancillary structures such as garden walls and archways help to unify the streetscape and add another layer of interest to the built fabric of the village.

There are a number of domestic scale buildings surrounding the square which are of historic note, many of which have had civic functions over the years. Stopford House (later Emerald House), located to the south-west corner, and was originally built as the rector's house. It is visible as a dispensary in the early OSI maps and was a civil war barracks in the 1920s. A handball alley was present to the rear of the house in the 25'' OSI maps. A schoolhouse was present to the south-east corner of the square. There was a hotel along the east side of the green (Smith's Hotel, later the Blarney Castle Hotel), along with a court-house (now the library) and police barracks. This was the site of an IRA attack in 1920, which resulted in considerable damage to the adjoining Smiths Hotel.

The relative simplicity in form and detailing found in the majority of the buildings around the village square is in contrast to the elaborate detailing exhibited in Blarney House (1874) and gate lodge (1874). The sandstone and limestone country house is in the Scottish baronial style and displays a great attention to detail, incorporating turrets, stepped crenelated gables, gargoyles, and carved string and eaves courses. The gate-lodge, while plainer, also incorporates finely executed masonry detailing, as well as griffins to the gable ends, terracotta ridge cresting, timber bargeboards, and a timber verandah.

Also of particular note in the context of Blarney ACA is the industrial heritage of the village, which is evident in the buildings associated with the Woollen Mills. The buildings around what is now the heritage centre typically date to around 1860-1890 and are predominantly of stone construction, with brick detailing and some brick volumes present. Many buildings have segmental headed windows with brick detailing including brick cills, voussoirs, and black-and-start surrounds. Roofs are pitched slate throughout. The features add colour of the mill complex and texture to the built fabric, and elements such as brick towers provide a notable vertical punctuation in the streetscape. The architectural language found in the mill complex is also present in the stables of Blarney House, a detached H plan farmyard complex with rubblestone walls and camber headed window openings with red brick block-and-start surrounds, voussoirs and stone sills.

The millers house, an integral part of the mill complex, is of a contrasting style, with an irregular plan and hipped slate roofs, canted bay, dormer windows, and recessed round headed door opening. Walls are rendered with square-headed window openings having limestone lintels and sills. The form and expression of this building is in contrast to the simple rectangular masses found in the majority of the mill complex, and the external expression also contrasts with the industrial context of the building's surroundings.

The other complex of note in the village is the former railway station, to the south of the village square. The station itself, dating to 1887, is striking in its simple design and incorporates corrugated iron walls. The nearby station masters house, built c. 1890, is of timber construction, with a timber clapperboard walls, and timber veranda with corrugated iron roof. A nearby store/ goods shed, built c. 1890, also has timber clapperboard walls.

According to the NIAH, the use of clapperboard and corrugated iron was relatively uncommon throughout the country at this time, but railway companies were quick to recognise the rapid and inexpensive construction possibilities of these mass-produced materials.

Other stand-alone buildings of historic interest in the village are the Church of the Resurrection, a 1776 Board of First Fruits church in a classical design, and the Church of the Immaculate Conception, a 1900 Roman Catholic church. Finally,

Blarney Castle and historic gardens are an integral component of the ACA. There are a number of notable structures in the grounds of the castle, including an ice-house, tree-ring, bridge, belvedere, and lime kiln. The Rock Close is thought to have been built on a druidic site from pre-historic times, and the demesne contains many ancient yew and oak trees.

For NIAH and RMP records of the various structures in the study area, please see the appendix of this report.

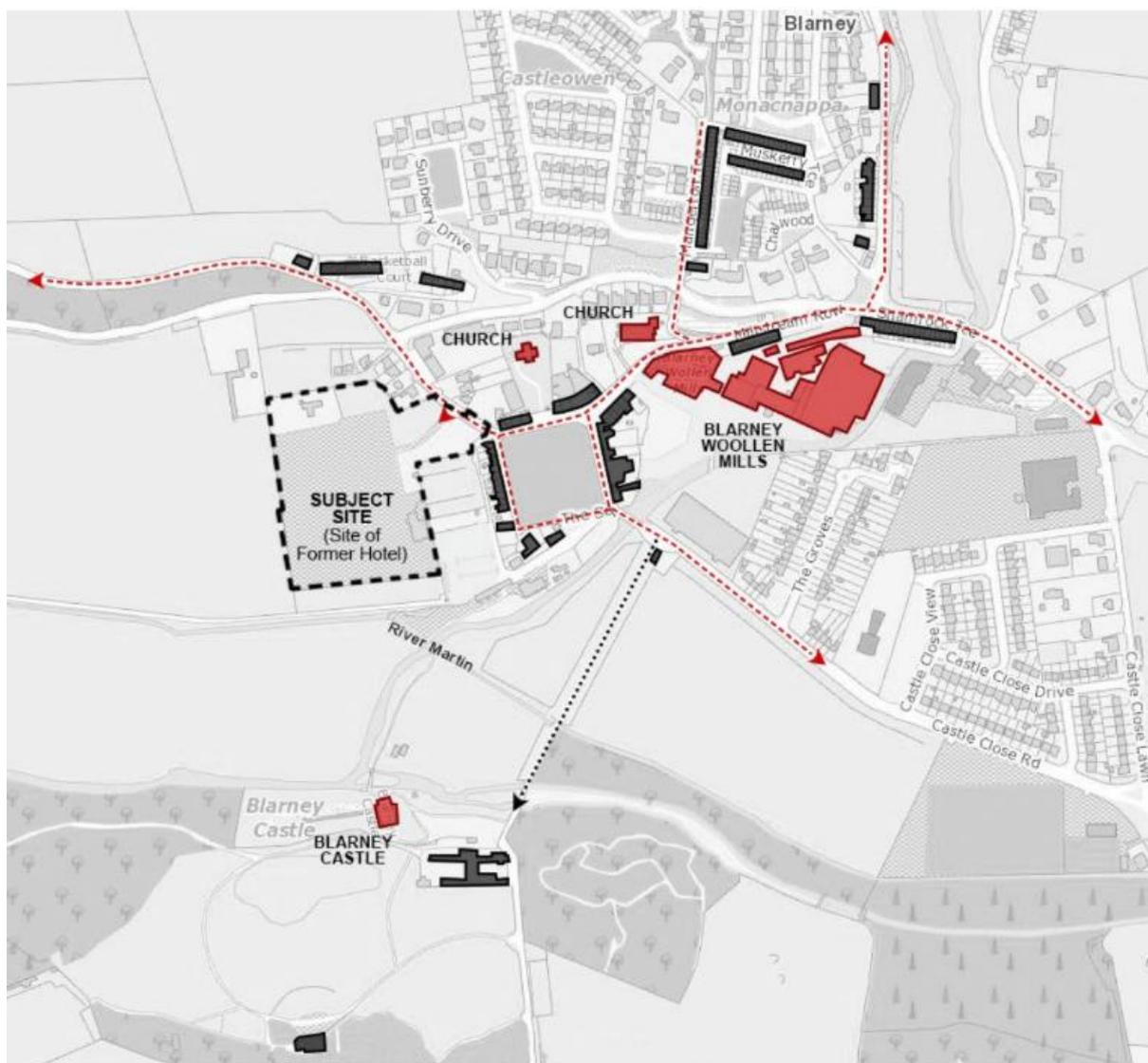


Fig 2.06. Site Plan by DGA highlighting the location of structures intact today which are visible on the historic OSI maps



Fig 2.07. Photograph from the NLI Lawrence Photograph Collection. Hotel in Blarney Square (Smiths Hotel, now Blarney Castle Hotel) 1865-1914.



Fig 2.08. Photograph of the Hotel in Blarney Square (Smiths Hotel, now Blarney Castle Hotel) c.1895 © Rare Irish Stuff. com



Fig 2.09. Character Reference 01: Blarney Village square (domestic)



Fig 2.10. Character Reference 02: Blarney Woollen Mills (industrial)



Part Three: Proposed Works with Conservation Impact Assessment

3.01 Introduction to Conservation Approach

The current design has been undertaken by DGA, taking into account feedback on the design provided by JBA in March 2025. Revised designs were provided by JBA, reflective of the site analysis undertaken and feedback provided by Cork City Council Conservation Officer based on a previous design. The comments from the Conservation Officer and requirements for the development can be summarized as follows:

- A high standard development that respects the setting of Blarney Castle and compliments and enhances the character of the ACA.
- Demonstrating an understanding of the local context and contributing positively to the receiving built environment.
- Further development of the proposed house types in terms of design and materials reinterpreting the relevant features and materials of the ACA in an appropriate and contemporary manner avoiding pastiche.
- Further development of window proportions.
- Variety/breaking up of long singular roof.
- Clarification of materials.

The vernacular homes are the primary point of reference, most notably those in the nearby village square. While the various historic buildings within the site context undoubtedly contribute positively to the character of the ACA, they are considered to be of less relevance in terms of the detailing of the proposed development, which in our opinion should be more attuned to the typical domestic heritage in the village. The industrial heritage of the woollen mills forms a secondary reference in terms of the detailing and expression of the proposed larger scale buildings, namely the library and apartment block.

The site design proposed by DGA focuses on four principal Character Areas, providing variety to the streetscapes. The proposed Character Areas are identified by their own distinctive external treatment and material palette. Notwithstanding this, a number of principles in the external

treatment are consistent across all houses and which in terms of design and materials look to the reinterpreting of the relevant features and materials of the ACA in an appropriate and contemporary manner. These include:

- Variety in the ridge heights of the houses in direct response to the conservation officer's requirement for 'breaking up of the long singular roofs'. This variety in roofscape will enhance the overall development character when viewed from Blarney Castle, will reflect the character of the village and will help breakdown the perceived scale of the development.
- The use of steeply pitched gable roofs, sometimes with dormers, which allow for the stepped roof profiles. This configuration of the dwellings sets up hierarchical roof forms with dominant and secondary roofs. Plain roof profiles with flush verges and stepped eaves detail reflect the vernacular heritage of the village.
- The incorporation of a limited number of porches and single storey bay windows which act as focal points on key vistas.
- Traditional opening proportions and solid/void ratio with controlled distances between window sills and heads, and a hierarchy of window openings (larger at ground floor).
- The articulation and emphasis of entrance doorways, many of which are recessed.
- The use of a material palette which reflects the historic character of the area, namely; pitched roofs, which should be in natural slate, a mixture of smooth and roughcast render walls, brick volumes and / or detailing, and timber sliding sash windows (areas O1 and O2 only).
- Coherence of design across street elevations, with the use of ancillary structures such as garden walls, archways to unify elevations



Fig 3.01: Sample street elevation by James Bourke Architects, March 2025

3.02. Character Areas

The proposed layout by Deady Gahan Architects divides the site into four character types. As noted in their design report, a goal of the subject development is to assemble the proposed housing typologies in clusters that create a variety of neighbouring types. The layout focuses on the creation of distinctive streetscapes, strong node points and backdrops along view lines through the use of feature buildings and different material finishes. Each character area will form a different neighbourhood characterised by specific architectural and landscaped treatments, and the use of different character zones will assist in placemaking and provide variety across the site.

Buildings in Character Areas 01, 02, and 03 are all dwelling units, and draw on the domestic character of Blarney. Character Area 04 is reserved for the larger volumes of the library / community centre / café and apartment block. This refers to the industrial heritage of the village, most notably the buildings of Blarney Woolen Mills.

The external treatments of the character zones have been chosen to reflect the dominant domestic character in Blarney, i.e.: render houses. The three domestic character zones reference vernacular typologies, with pitched slate roofs and simple eaves details, and emphasis on vertical windows, and stepped forms to break down their massing.

Character Area 01 defines the site entrance and the edges along the access street. It is the area which most closely relates to the existing building typology in Blarney, and acts as a link between the village and proposed development. It is characterised by a combination of plain and rough-cast render walls, with simple raised render window and door surrounds and a raised render plat-band. The windows have a vertical emphasis in keeping with the Blarney streetscapes. Timber sliding sash windows are proposed. Low level render walls are incorporated in front of houses to create a hierarchy of public and private spaces.

Character Area 02 defines the built edge surrounding the central open space. This is the more formal area of the site and brick detailing has been incorporated in the design. The majority of the building walls are plain render, in keeping with the existing townscape, but decorative brick elements have been incorporated in the form of window heads, eaves, and door surrounds. A limited number of volumes have been designated as brick ones, but these only occur on secondary volumes, reinforcing the dominance of the render palette in the scheme. Similar to Character Area 01, windows have a vertical emphasis, and timber sliding sash windows are proposed. Low level brick walls with metal railings are incorporated in front of houses.

Character Area 03 is characterised by a more modern style, with references to the vernacular in their simple and crisp detailing. This area is defined by plain off-white render walls and simple windows. Deeply recessed doorways articulate the elevations.

Character Area 04 refers to the industrial heritage of the village, being a modern interpretation of a brick warehouse. The monopitch metal roofs emphasise the contrasting industrial character. The volumes which make up the civic centre are broken down through the use of flat roof glazed links, reducing the apparent massing on site. Recessed and projecting bays on these buildings articulate the facades, and there is a play between vertical and horizontal planes.

Fig 3.03. Character Area Locations





Area 01



Area 02



Area 03



Area 04



Fig 3.04. Character Areas, 3d views

3.03 Visual Impact from Blarney Castle

The development is located within Blarney ACA and within the viewshed of Blarney Castle. The impact of the development on the views from Blarney Castle has been an understandable source of concern. The importance of Blarney Castle necessitates the development to respond to the site context in an appropriate and sensitive manner. The scale, location, massing, form and setting of the houses have evolved through a considered design approach to mitigate the impacts of the proposed design.

The views are noted by Lewis in 1837 as follows;

'The top of the castle commands a very fine view over a rich undulating tract intersected by the rivers Blarney, Comane, and Scorthonac, and bounded on the north-west by the lofty chain of the Boggra mountains'

These views from the castle northwards towards the village have altered over the years, particularly with the expansion of Blarney village in the late 20th-21st centuries, predominantly to the north and east of the historic town square, with this area of the village now being more suburban in character. While the construction of a new housing development to the west of the square will represent a new settlement pattern which will affect the viewshed of the Castle, the site is a sensible location for development, being close to the village centre and infrastructure. The aim of the works to date has been to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development through careful design.

Photomontages undertaken by G-Net 3d clearly display the potential impact of the proposed houses on the setting of Blarney Castle. These views demonstrate the success of the mitigation measures employed in the design namely:

-The buildings are generally restricted in height to 1-2 storey volumes, with the exception of the central 3 storey step-down apartment building. The low rise approach limits the visual impact of the development.

-The roofscape is broken down through the use of stepped roof profiles. The massing is also broken down by limiting the lengths of terraced buildings and

-The incorporation of a buffer zone of vegetation along the southern end of the site softens the visual impact of the proposal.

-The centrally located green space and road to the south of this forms a visual axis from the castle which provides a break in the built line.

-The use of appropriate materials and vernacular details will assist in integrating the development into the existing village.

While the proposed development will evidently have an impact on the views from Blarney Castle, in our opinion adequate measures have been taken to mitigate this impact, and the development does not unduly diminish the significance of the protected structure.



Fig 3.05. Aerial view of Blarney in 1956 (Morgan Aerial Collection, NLI) vs Google Satellite imagery illustrating the suburban expansion of Blarney in relatively recent years, most notably to the north of the historic core.



Fig 3.06. Photomontages by G-Net 3d demonstrating the visual impact of the proposal on the Blarney Castle viewedshed.

3.04 Impact on Blarney ACA

A significant portion of the site is located within Blarney ACA. As there is no existing built heritage within the site, it is assumed that the inclusion of this section of land within the ACA is primarily due to its proximity to and visibility from Blarney Castle. The impact on this element has been previously outlined.

In terms of the impact of the proposal on the village core, in our opinion this will be relatively limited. An existing surface carpark forms a buffer space between the village square and the east side of the site, and the distance between the development and town square ensures that the visual impact of the development on the historic village core is not a source of concern.

The proposed civic centre defines the entrance to the development, with a proposed plaza located to the south-east of it. This area forms a connection point to the village square via a green pedestrianised zone, which softens the potential visual impact of the development on the village square and creates an important link between the existing settlement and proposed development. The plaza is an open and inviting entrance to the proposed development.



Fig 3.07: Site layout plan with approximate extent of Blarney ACA highlighted pink



Fig 3.08. Photomontages by G-Net 3d demonstrating the visual impact of the proposal at the entrance of the site

3.05 Impact on Other Buildings of Note

The nearest building of historic interest is a small dwelling to the north-west of the site entrance, which is included on the NIAH (20845001). The NIAH record includes the building as it had maintained much of its original fabric, and states that it is *'a notable twentieth century addition to the predominantly nineteenth century architectural heritage of the area.'*

The proposal, and in particular the civic centre, will have a visual impact on this building. Mitigating factors are as follows:

-The building has been subject to restoration in recent years, with planning permission granted for the construction of a new dwelling to the southern side (reference 2341736), which is the side closest to the proposed cafe. Some of the original features (e.g. windows) will be replaced as part of these works. These works have significantly altered the original character of the building.

- The civic centre steps down towards the boundary adjoining this building, with the café being a single storey volume, minimising its visual impact on the neighbouring dwelling. There is a planted boundary proposed to the north of the café, with a central green space, which will act as a buffer to the building included on the NIAH.

The proposal will also have an impact on the views from the Church of the Resurrection. However, these views are not thought to be of particular importance to the church, which is set up on axis with the village square and whose principal view is towards this square (south). The impact of the proposal on the church is not thought to be of particular significance.

3.05 Conclusion

JBA have carried out a review of the current proposal. Gable ended buildings with a hierarchy of forms and stepped plans respond to the building typology encountered in Blarney and to its vernacular heritage. The design and materials look to the reinterpreting of the relevant features and materials of the ACA. The variety in the ridge heights of the houses, which was in direct response to the conservation officer's requirement for variety and 'breaking up of the long singular roofs' breaks down their massing and diminishes their visual impact. In our opinion, the proposed alterations demonstrate an understanding of the local context and contribute positively to the built environment of Blarney. While the development has an undeniable visual impact on the viewshed of Blarney Castle, in our opinion the impact has been adequately mitigated and the development does not result in any unacceptable diminishment of the significance of the protected structure.

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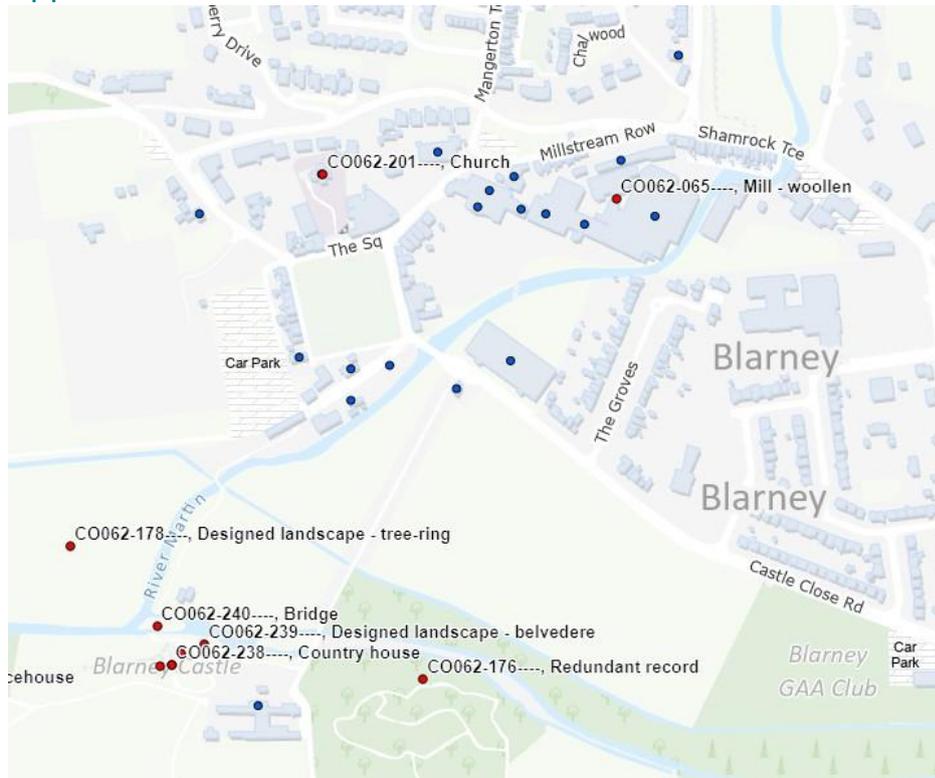
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Appendix A: NIAH Records





Survey Data

Reg No	20845001
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural
Original Use	House
In Use As	House
Date	1930 - 1950
Coordinates	160817, 75771
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached three-bay single-storey house, built c.1940, having box bay windows to front (north-east). Extensions to side (north-west) and rear (south-west) elevations. Flat roof with rendered parapet, concealed rainwater goods with uPVC downpipes and rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls with plinth and platbands. Lean-to tiled canopy to front (north-east) elevation surmounting box bays and entrance. Square-headed window openings with rendered sills and plinths to bay windows having replacement timber casement windows. Square-headed window openings with render sills having timber boarding in place elsewhere. Square-headed door opening with glazed timber door.

Appraisal

Located just off the main square in Blarney this house is one of group of similarly designed houses, though it is the only one to maintain much of its original fabric intact. Its flat roofed form contrasts with the pitched roofed traditional housing stock, and indicates an awareness of contemporary continental architectural fashions. It is a notable twentieth century addition to the predominantly nineteenth century architectural heritage of the area.

Emerald House, The Square, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845015
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic
Previous Name	Emerald Place
Original Use	House
In Use As	House
Date	1830 - 1850
Coordinates	160920, 75626
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description

Detached four-bay two-storey house, built c.1840, with gable-fronted end-bay to front (south) and extension to rear (north). Now also in use as guest house. Pitched artificial slate roof with rendered chimneystacks, timber bargeboards with final to gable-fronted bay. Roughcast rendered walls with render plinth and sill band to first floor. Square-headed window openings with stone sills, having two-over-two pane timber sliding sash windows. Square-headed door opening to front elevation with timber and glazed door. Rendered enclosing wall to east having wrought-iron gate with square-profile rendered piers.

Appraisal

Set within its own grounds, this simply designed building is marked as a dispensary on the first edition OS map. The building is enhanced by the retention of historic features and materials including the mid nineteenth-century style two-over-two pane sash windows. The gable-fronted bay with timber bargeboards was probably a later addition.

Church of the Resurrection (Garrycloyne), The Square, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845002
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social
Original Use	Church/chapel
In Use As	Church/chapel
Date	1775 - 1780
Coordinates	160943, 75814
Date Recorded	23/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Freestanding cruciform-plan gable-fronted double-height Church of Ireland church, built 1776, comprising three-bay nave, having porch to front (west), single-bay transepts to sides (north, south) and single-bay chancel to rear (east). Underground vault to southern end of church. Pitched slate roofs with rendered eaves course and uPVC rainwater goods. Rendered bellcote to west gable and cross finial to south gable. Roughcast rendered walls with channelled quoins, plinth, architrave and paired corner pilasters to transepts and camber-headed recesses to gabled elevations. Round-headed statuary niches with cut limestone surrounds and sills throughout. Tooled limestone plaque to porch. Square-headed window openings to western end of nave having rendered and tooled limestone surrounds, sills and keystones having twelve-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows. Bipartite square-headed window openings eastern end of nave having cut limestone surround, sill and colonette mullion having lead-lined stained glass windows. Venetian window set in segmental-arched recess to south and north elevations of transepts. Cut limestone surrounds, mullions and sills with lead-lined stained glass windows. Group of three round-headed windows to east elevation of chancel within segmental-headed carved limestone surround. Having stone sill and lead-lined stained glass windows. Square-headed door opening to porch having cut limestone surround, double-leaf timber panelled doors and limestone stepped approach. Round-headed door opening to north transept having rendered surround with blind flanking sidelights. Timber panelled door with Y-tracery fanlight and limestone stepped approach. Set within segmental-headed recess. Square-headed door opening to south elevation having cut limestone surround, voussoirs and step with timber panelled door, giving access to vault. Graveyard surrounding site having upstanding and recombinant grave markers. Rubble stone boundary wall with cast-iron railings and square-profile rubble stone piers flanking cast-iron gates.

Appraisal

A handsome late eighteenth century church occupying a prominent site overlooking the town's main square. Its classical design differs greatly from the Gothic Revival churches which were built by the Church of Ireland throughout the nineteenth century. The church's pediment is echoed on all elevations which creates a pleasing symmetry, while the heavy cornice, substantial quoins and paired pilasters articulate the building.

Blarney Railway Station, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



▶ || 📍 View on map

Survey Data

Reg No	20845016
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Technical
Previous Name	Blarney Railway Station
Original Use	Railway station
In Use As	Shop/retail outlet
Date	1885 - 1890
Coordinates	160973, 75613
Date Recorded	23/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached five-bay single-storey former railway station, built 1887, having cat-slide canopy and former platform to front (south-east). Now in use as shop. Pitched corrugated-iron roof with timber finials to gables and uPVC rainwater goods. Timber brackets supporting veranda. Corrugated-iron walls. Square-headed window openings having timber casement windows. Square-headed door openings with glazed timber doors to front elevation and double-leaf timber panelled door to side (north-east) elevation.

Appraisal

This unusual structure is striking in its simple design. The Cork and Muskerry Light Railway, which was funded under the Tramways and Public Expenses (Ireland) Act of 1883, operated from 1887 to 1934. The eight and a half mile line from Cork city to Blarney was built by contractor Robert Worthington. This building retains much of its original fabric including corrugated-iron, timber casement windows, eaves brackets and gable finials. Together with the associated structures, include the timber railway master's house and goods store located directly across the road, this group makes a significant contribution to the town's architectural, social and industrial heritage.

Blarney Railway Station, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845018
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Technical
Previous Name	Blarney Railway Station
Original Use	Station master's house
In Use As	Outbuilding
Date	1880 - 1900
Coordinates	160976, 75580
Date Recorded	23/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached two-bay single-storey former station master's house, built c.1890, composed of two adjoining timber structures having timber veranda to north-west, west and south-east elevations. Now in use as store. Pitched roof (material not visible) with timber bargeboards and finials to gables, remains of cast-iron rainwater goods. Timber battened walls with carved panelling to plinth level. Square-headed window openings having uPVC casement windows. Square-headed door opening with timber panelled door. Corrugated-iron roof to veranda supported on timber posts with timber railings. Double-leaf wrought-iron gates to front of site.

Appraisal

A picturesque structure which retains much of its character and fabric intact, with the verandah being a particularly attractive feature. The clapperboard and corrugated-iron utilised in its construction are notable, as though relatively uncommon throughout the country, railway companies were quick to recognise the rapid and inexpensive constructional possibilities of these mass produced materials. The Cork and Muskerry Light Railway, which was funded under the Tramways and Public Expenses (Ireland) Act of 1883, operated from 1887 to 1934. The eight and a half mile line from Cork city to Blarney was built by contractor Robert Worthington. It forms part of a group of former railway structures with the former station to the north and good shed to the east, which together are an integral part of the town's social, industrial and architectural heritage.

Blarney Railway Station, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



 View on map

Survey Data

Reg No	20845017
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Technical
Previous Name	Blarney Railway Station
Original Use	Store/warehouse
In Use As	House
Date	1880 - 1900
Coordinates	161014, 75618
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached four-bay single-storey former goods shed, built c.1890, having recent lean-to porch flanked by breakfront bays to front (south-east) and recent extensions to sides (south-west, north-east). Now in use as house. Flat-roofed felt clad roof with recent concrete block chimneystack. Timber clapperboard walls. Square-headed window openings having replacement uPVC windows. Square-headed door opening having glazed timber door set in glazed porch. Wrought-iron gate to north-east of site.

Appraisal

A modest structure which retains much of its character and fabric intact. The clapperboard utilised in its construction is notable, as it an uncommon material throughout the country, though along with corrugated-iron, was used by railway companies which were quick to recognise the rapid and inexpensive constructional possibilities of these mass produced materials. The Cork and Muskerry Light Railway, which was funded under the Tramways and Public Expenses (Ireland) Act of 1883, operated from 1887 to 1934. The eight and a half mile line from Cork city to Blarney was built by contractor Robert Worthington. It forms part of a group of former railway structures with the former station and master's house to the west, which together are an integral part of the town's social, industrial and architectural heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, SHEAN LOWER, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845014
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Factory
In Use As	Factory
Date	1920 - 1960
Coordinates	161137, 75622
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description

Detached eighteen-bay single-storey factory, built c.1940. Pitched saw tooth aluminium roof with single-pitch monitors and aluminium rainwater goods. Roughcast rendered walls with plinth. Square-headed window openings having concrete sills and aluminium casement windows. Square-headed door openings having concrete block surrounds with single and double-leaf glazed timber doors. Concrete wall to front of site having square-profile piers with stone cladding.

Appraisal

Built as part of Blarney Woollen Mills complex, this factory is an excellent example of the continued evolution of industrial architecture. At the time of its construction it was built using the most up to date materials and makes an interesting mid twentieth century addition to this predominantly nineteenth century group. Its angled roof lights and large window openings were designed to maximise natural light, which was made possible by the utilisation of modern materials. It is an important reminder of the town's industrial heritage.

Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845003
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic, Social, Technical
Original Use	Church/chapel
In Use As	Church/chapel
Date	1880 - 1920
Coordinates	161063, 75838
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Freestanding gable-fronted double-height Roman Catholic church, built c.1900, comprising nave with clerestory having porch to front (west), eight-bay single-storey side aisles to sides (north, south), octagonal chapel to north-west corner and sacristy to north-east. Outshoots to north elevation of side aisle housing confession boxes. Glazed outshoots to south elevation of side aisle now accommodating doors. Pitched slate roofs with terracotta ridge cresting and aluminium rainwater goods. Conical slate roof to octagonal chapel. Limestone copings to gables with bellcote to west, wrought-iron cross finials to east and west gables. Pitched slate roofs to clerestory windows with terracotta finials. Roughly dressed stone walls having red brick quoins, sill and impost courses. Buttresses to east and west elevations of nave with red brick quoins and tooled limestone quoins. Elliptical recess to apex of east gable having rubbed yellow brick surround. Blind lancet recesses to east elevation having rubbed yellow brick surround and tooled limestone sill. Recessed quatrefoil window opening with yellow brick surround and limestone plate tracery to front elevation of nave, having lead-lined stained glass windows. Paired pointed arch window openings to rear elevation with red and yellow brick surrounds, limestone sills and lead-lined stained glass windows. Paired pointed arch window openings to front elevation, side aisles and sacristy having yellow brick surrounds, limestone sills and lead-lined stained glass windows. Ocular window openings to north elevation outshoots. Elliptical window openings to octagonal chapel having yellow brick surrounds and lead-lined stained glass windows. Square-headed door opening to porch having glazed timber door. Pointed arch door openings to south elevation and sacristy having yellow brick surrounds with timber battened and glazed timber doors. Recessed pointed arch-headed door opening behind carved ogee-headed limestone surround with timber battened door to octagonal chapel. Scissor beam timber ceiling to interior. Decorative mosaics to chancel. Carved timber gallery to rear (west) of church. Outbuilding to rear with pitched slate roof, roughly dressed rubble stone walls and redbrick quoins. Pointed arch window and door openings with yellow brick surrounds. Rubble stone boundary wall having square-profile red brick piers to front of site.

Appraisal

An eye-catching church offering a variety of size, form, texture, materials and style to the streetscape. It occupies a prominent elevated site and is visible from the main square. It retains much of its original form as well as fine crafting displayed in the window and door surrounds. The outshots with oculus windows which were purposely constructed to house the confession boxes are of note. The ornate interior, particularly the chancel and carved timber gallery, represents a considerable artistic achievement.

White Oaks, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845005
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural
Original Use	House
In Use As	House
Date	1900 - 1940
Coordinates	161304, 75935
Date Recorded	23/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached two-bay two-storey with dormer attic house, built c.1920, having porch to side (north) and flat roof extension to rear (west). Pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks, cast-iron rainwater goods and timber bargeboards with finial. Rendered walls. Square-headed window openings with render sills and two-over-two pane timber sliding sash windows. Round-headed window opening to porch, having one-over-one pane timber sliding sash window. Square-headed door opening to porch with timber panelled door and single-pane overlight.

Appraisal

Occupying a prominent position on an elevated site, this house adds diversity to a streetscape which has largely been modernized in recent years. Well maintained, the house retains its timber sliding sash and dormer windows.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845008
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Worker's house
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	161250, 75827
Date Recorded	25/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Terrace of two-storey former workers houses, built c.1880, fourteen-bays to front (south-east) elevation. Western units now in use as workshops, other units disused. Pitched slate roof with red brick chimneystacks and remains of cast-iron rainwater goods. Rubble sandstone walls with red brick quoins having chamfered edges to western end. Square-headed window openings with red brick voussoirs, sills and timber casement windows. Two-over-two pane timber sliding sash windows to central unit. Square-headed door openings having red brick block-and-start surrounds, some blocked, others having steel doors. Segmental-arched carriageway openings with red brick voussoirs and block-and-start surrounds, having double-leaf timber battened doors. Located within larger mill complex.

Appraisal

Although no longer in use, this terrace appears to have been constructed as mill workers' houses. It is an important part of the former Mahoney's Mill complex which began production in 1823. Lewis, in his 'Topographical Directory' notes 'a spinning-mill belonging to M. Mahony, Esq., in which about 120 persons are employed in spinning and dyeing woollen yarn for the extensive camlet manufactory in Cork'. The mill provided much needed employment in the town and other workers' houses are to be found throughout the town. The mill ceased operating in the 1970s when it was purchased and converted into its present use. It retains many notable features and adds colour and textural variations to the surrounding area. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, SHEAN LOWER, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845013
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Store/warehouse
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	161282, 75771
Date Recorded	25/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description

Detached five-pile eleven-bay single-storey warehouse, built c.1880, having gable-fronted projecting end-bay to north of front (south-west) elevation and square-profile red brick chimney to rear (north-east). Pitched slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods and timber bargeboards to gabled end-bay. Rubble sandstone walls. Segmental-headed window openings having red brick sills, voussoirs and block-and-start surrounds throughout, having replacement timber casement windows. Double-height round-headed former carriageway opening to gabled end-bay having painted brick voussoirs and block-and-start surrounds. Recent timber framed windows surmounting timber-glazed doors. Various window openings altered to accommodate recent square-headed door openings. Located within larger mill complex having rubble stone enclosing wall.

Appraisal

An integral part of the former woollen mill complex, established by the Mahoney family in the 1820s. It provided an important source of employment for local people, and expanded and developed throughout the subsequent one hundred and fifty years, until its closure in the 1970s. It retains many notable features and adds colour and textural variations to the surrounding area, while the tapered chimneystack is a particularly notable feature. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845012
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Mill (water)
In Use As	Hotel
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	161211, 75759
Date Recorded	25/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached double-pile fourteen-bay three-storey former mill, built c.1880, with recent porch to front (south-west) elevation. Now in use as hotel. Pitched slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods. Rubble sandstone walls with brick quoins. Elliptical-headed window openings having brick sills, voussoirs and block-and-start surrounds with timber casement windows. Set within mill complex.

Appraisal

An imposing building with a long front, which forms an integral part of the former woollen mill complex, established by the Mahoney family in the 1820s. It provided an important source of employment for local people, and expanded and developed throughout the subsequent one hundred and fifty years, until its closure in the 1970s. It retains many notable features and adds colour and textural variations to the surrounding area. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845011
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Mill (water)
In Use As	Restaurant
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	161172, 75773
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Attached triple-pile ten-bay two-storey former warehouse, built c.1880, having flat-roofed two-storey extension to south-east and recent extension to rear (north-east). Hipped slate roofs with cast-iron rainwater goods. Red brick walls with chamfer to eastern corner and cast-iron bracing plates. Square-headed window openings with red brick voussoirs and sills with timber casement windows. Windows to south and north ends of front elevation adapted to accommodate recent glazed timber doors. Waterwheel to interior. Set within mill complex with rubble limestone enclosing wall.

Appraisal

An imposing building with a long front and deep plan, which forms an integral part of the former woollen mill complex, established by the Mahoney family in the 1820s. It provided an important source of employment for local people, and expanded and developed throughout the subsequent one hundred and fifty years, until its closure in the 1970s. It retains many notable features and adds colour and textural variations to the surrounding area. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845010
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Mill (water)
In Use As	Shop/retail outlet
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	161147, 75777
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

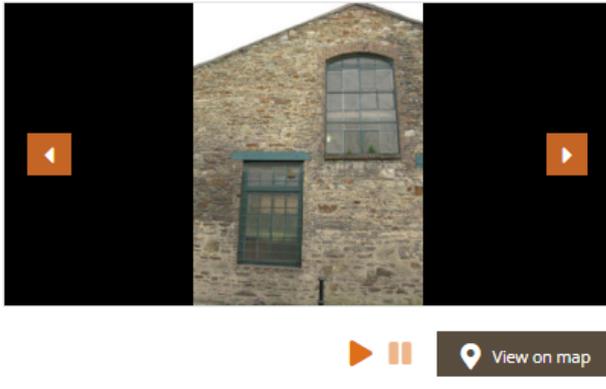
Description

Attached gable-fronted two-bay four-storey former mill, built c.1880, having lean-to single-bay two-storey extension to side (south-east). Abutting mill building to north-west. Now in use as a retail outlet. Pitched slate roof with cat-slide roof to lean-to and cast-iron rainwater goods. Rubble sandstone walls with roughly dressed quoins and cast-iron bracing plates to side (south-east) elevation. Red brick walls to lean-to extension. Square-headed window openings with red brick-block-and-start surrounds and sills, having timber casement windows. Located within larger mill complex with rubble stone enclosing walls.

Appraisal

Built as part of the former Mahoney's Mill complex, the mill provided much needed employment in the town and rows of workers' houses are found through out the town. The mill ceased operating in the 1970s when it was purchased and converted into its present use. It retains many notable features and adds colour and textural variations to the surrounding area. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845006
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Scientific, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Mill (water)
In Use As	Store/warehouse
Date	1860 - 1880
Coordinates	161143, 75810
Date Recorded	25/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description

Attached four-bay two-storey former mill, built c.1870, having single-bay two-storey block to side (south-west). Now in use as warehouse. Hipped and pitched slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods and rooflights. Red brick walls to first floor, rubble stone walls to ground floor and side (north-east) elevation, having red brick voussoirs throughout. Segmental-headed window openings with red brick sills, block-and-start surrounds and timber casement windows throughout. Square-headed window openings to ground floor of side (north-east) elevation, having replacement steel lintels and timber casement windows. Located within larger mill complex with rubble stone enclosing walls.

Appraisal

This building forms part of a large scale former mill complex once known as Mahoney's Mill, established in 1823 and expanded and altered for 150 years, until its closure in the 1970s. The mill provided the main source of employment for the town and surrounding area throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The variety of materials used in its construction adds colour and textural interest to the streetscape. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845007
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Mill (water)
In Use As	Shop/retail outlet
Date	1860 - 1880
Coordinates	161117, 75795
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Attached double-pile twelve-bay three-storey former mill, built c.1870, having attached buildings to north-west, north-east and south-east. Now in use as shop. Pitched slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods and red brick eaves course. Rubble sandstone walls with red brick quoins and cast-iron bracing plates. Segmental-headed window openings having red brick block-and-start surrounds and sills with timber casement windows. Pair of windows to ground floor of south-east elevation converted to door openings with recent glazed timber doors. Located within larger mill complex with rubble stone enclosing walls.

Appraisal

This building is an important part of the former Mahoney's Mill complex which began production in 1823. Lewis, in his 'Topographical Directory' notes 'a spinning-mill belonging to M. Mahony, Esq., in which about 120 persons are employed in spinning and dyeing woollen yarn for the extensive camlet manufactory in Cork'. The mill provided much needed employment in the town and rows of workers' houses are found throughout the town. The mill ceased operating in the 1970s when it was purchased and converted into its present use. It retains many notable features and adds colour and textural variations to the surrounding area. This fine complex is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney Woollen Mills, MONACNAPA, Blarney, CORK



 [View on map](#)

Survey Data

Reg No	20845009
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social
Previous Name	Mahoney's Mill
Original Use	Miller's house
In Use As	Shop/retail outlet
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	161110, 75780
Date Recorded	25/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description

Attached irregular-plan eight-bay two-storey with dormer attic former miller's house, built c.1880, having central three-bay projecting block with central breakfront having two-storey canted bay. Single-storey canted bay with parapet and two-bay gable-fronted extension with canopy to south-east. Abutting mill building to rear (north-east). Now in use as a commercial outlet and public house. Hipped slate roof with rendered chimneystacks and cast-iron rainwater goods. Flat-roofed to dormer. Square-headed window openings having limestone lintels and sills with replacement timber casement windows. Pointed arch-headed window to addition having rendered sill and replacement timber casement window. Recessed round-headed door opening with chamfered rendered surround double-leaf timber panelled door surmounted by lead-lined stained glass fanlight having tooled limestone threshold. Polychrome tiled floor to interior porch with glazed timber doors. Located within larger mill complex within rubble stone enclosing walls.

Appraisal

An integral part of the former mill complex, this house, known as "Saint Helen's", is a reminder of the close proximity many millers favoured to their source of prosperity in the nineteenth century. It is surprising to contemporary eyes, to see fine domestic dwellings such as this one, set at the heart of an industrial complex, at the express wishes of its wealthy owner. The mill ceased operating in the 1970s when it was purchased and converted into its present use. This fine building retains much of its historic form and fabric intact, and forms part of an significant group which is an important reminder of Blarney's industrial heritage.

Blarney House, SHEAN LOWER, Blarney, CORK



Survey Data

Reg No	20845019
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic
Previous Name	Blarney Castle
Original Use	Gate lodge
In Use As	Gate lodge
Date	1870 - 1875
Coordinates	161083, 75594
Date Recorded	25/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

Description

Detached two-bay two-storey gate lodge, built 1874, with gabled break-front end-bay and veranda to front (north-west). Flat-roofed extension to side (north). Pitched slate roofs with terracotta ridge cresting having terracotta griffins to gables, red brick chimneystack, and carved timber bargeboards. Snecked limestone walls with quoins. Square-headed window openings with limestone sills, surrounds and lintels. Bipartite windows to rear elevation and first floor of front elevation with tripartite window to ground floor of front elevation with tooled limestone mullions. Replacement uPVC windows throughout. Square-headed door opening to side (south-west) elevation breakfront, having cut limestone block-and-start surround with timber panelled door. Former square-headed door opening to front (north-west) elevation now converted into window having rubble limestone wall with uPVC casement window. Carved timber veranda to front supported on timber posts supporting with rail panelling. Rubble stone boundary walls with double-leaf cast-iron gates to north of site, flanked by square-profile rubble stone piers with round-headed pedestrian arch.

Appraisal

The finely executed masonry of this gate lodge is testament to the skilled craftsmen who were involved in its construction. Details such as the griffins which adorn the gable ends, the terracotta ridge cresting, timber bargeboards and handsome timber verandah add to its character and charm. The high quality of the lodge and gates is indicative of the wealth and grandeur of the main house which they serve.

Blarney House, BLARNEY, Blarney, CORK



View on map

Survey Data

Reg No	20845020
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social
Previous Name	Blarney Castle
Original Use	Country house
In Use As	Country house
Date	1870 - 1875
Coordinates	160710, 75065
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description

Detached multiple-bay three-storey over basement Scottish Baronial style country house, dated 1874, having porch to front (north), single-storey wing to side (west) terminating in corner turret and full-height corner turret to north-east. Stepped crenellated gables to front elevation, full-height canted bay surmounted by gable front and full-height external chimneybreast with fake machicolation opening to west elevation. Corner-sited bartizans with conical roofs to front and south-west corner. Pitched slate roof having stepped crenellated parapets with carved ball finials to gables. Limestone chimneystacks with sandstone quoins. Concealed and cast-iron rainwater goods having carved sandstone gargoyles to eaves. Wrought-iron finials to turrets and bartizans. Snecked dressed limestone walls with sandstone quoins and carved sandstone stringcourses. Carved stringcourse to turret with floral motive and engraved date reading 1874. Carved sandstone and limestone plaques to front elevation. Single and paired square-headed window openings having sandstone block-and-start surrounds and sills with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows. Tripartite window openings to bay windows having sandstone surrounds and sills with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows, strap work cresting to roof. Round-headed window to front elevation having sandstone surround comprising Corinthian pilasters surmounted by architrave, frieze and dentilated cornice surmounted by cresting. Square-headed door opening with double-leaf timber panelled door opening to flight of sandstone steps and set within sandstone diastyle portico comprising Composite columns, architrave, frieze and dentilated cornice.

Appraisal

Built in 1874 for the St. John Jeffereyes family, whose earlier house had been attached to the medieval castle, this house was erected on a new site probably to afford more privacy from tourists due to the increasing popularity of the castle's Blarney Stone. The house is built in the Scottish Baronial style to a design by architect John Lanyon and displays a great deal of attention to detail. The house remains the centrepiece of an extensive demesne with outbuildings, walled garden, icehouse and gate lodges in landscaped grounds and wooded parkland.

Blarney House, BLARNEY, Blarney, CORK



 View on map

Survey Data

Reg No	20845022
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural
Previous Name	Blarney Castle
Original Use	Outbuilding
In Use As	Outbuilding
Date	1840 - 1850
Coordinates	160880, 75251
Date Recorded	24/03/2009
Date Updated	--/--

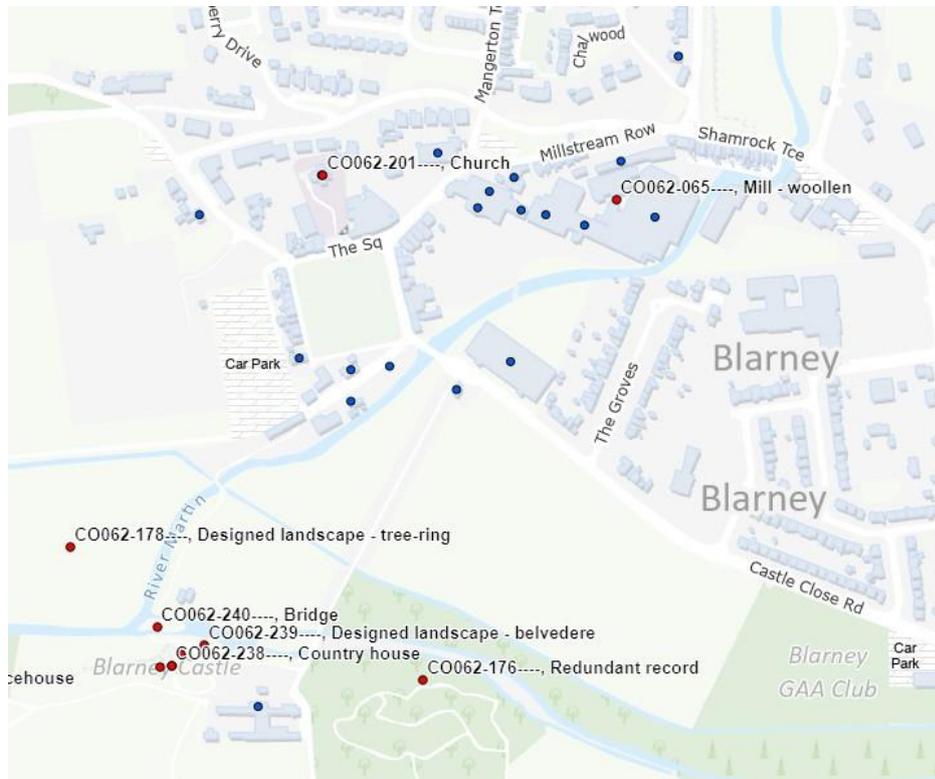
Description

Detached H-plan farmyard complex, built c.1845, comprising single-storey multiple-bay ranges to north and east and two-storey range to south. Ranges to east block not accessible. Hipped and pitched slate roofs, red brick chimneystacks, eaves course and cast-iron rainwater goods. Timber cupola to eastern range, with clock, pitched slate roof and wrought-iron weather vane. Rubble stone walls with sections of roughcast render. Camber-headed window openings with red brick block-and-start surrounds, voussoirs and stone sills having six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows. Camber-headed door openings with red brick block-and-start surrounds, voussoirs and timber battened doors with overlights. Square-headed carriage arch openings to northern range having red brick block-and-start surrounds and replacement timber battened doors. Courtyard areas to south of eastern range having recent gravel surface. Cobblestone drainage gullies to base of walls. Rubble stone enclosing walls to site with segmental-arch-headed carriageway opening to north-east having rough dressed sandstone piers and red brick voussoirs with dated keystone 1843.

Appraisal

A fine farmyard complex which is an integral part of the Blarney Castle demesne. The survival of historic features and materials, such as slate roofs, timber sash windows, and sandstone entrance arch add much to its character. Together with the lodges, ice house, lime kiln and landscaped grounds, it forms part of fine demesne group which is a significant addition to the architectural heritage.

Appendix B: RMP Records



CO062-178---- : Designed landscape - tree-ring

Currently the information for this record has not been uploaded.

CO062-240---- : Bridge : BLARNEY

Description: Remains of bridge over River Blarney to NE of Blarney Castle (9465, 9642) and immediately to E of tower (CO062-239---). Depicted by Beranger between 1750 and 1765 (Harbison 1991b, 44-5) as ruinous with single semicircular arch with crumbling parapet surviving in the river. S abutment very ruinous but appears to be integral part of lower levels of tower.

CO062-239---- : Designed landscape - belvedere : BLARNEY

Description: Roofless circular 3-storey 18th-century tower built atop earlier structure c. 30m NE of country house (9642). Ground floor of earlier structure remains, built into E-facing slope; roughly circular in plan with flattened NE side, jagged E end of which continues beyond circumference of tower and forms N side of segmental-arched doorway. Photograph (Hinde 1994) shows S side of doorway also protruding; protrusion subsequently removed; depicted by Beranger (Harbison 1991b, 44-5) as integral part of bridge structure. Internally short flight of stone steps up to 1st floor door in SW wall which leads out to higher ground level. From this level up, later 3-storey circular tower (int. diam. 3.1m) contained wooden stairs to top. Late 18th-century print (ibid.) shows conical roof topped by louvred cap. Beranger's depiction of bridge (c. 1750-1765) shows it as ruinous; earliest phases of tower must therefore pre-date 1750. Named 'Tower' on 1842 OS 6-inch map.

CO062-177002- : Cave : BLARNEY

Description: 'The 'Dungeon' consists of a natural cave that penetrates the northern side of the knoll on which Blarney Castle is located. The cave comprises a long, low and very narrow passage (17.5m long) that was integrated into a gun turret of the 17th century MacCarthy manor-house. The outer 3.5m length of the cave passage was artificially cut through enlarging the height and width of the passage. A drystone section of walling (3.5m long) was constructed against the artificially enlarged cave entrance.' (pers. comm. Marion Dowd 2013)

CO062-177001- : Bawn : BLARNEY

Description: Bawn wall of Blarney Castle (CO062-177----): Section of bawn wall (total L 64.2m) survives atop rock-face to W of tower 1, in line with N face of tower. Nearest section to tower (L 14.2m) has fallen and been replaced by modern wall. Bawn wall (int. H 2.2m) has wall-walk with parapet (H 1.3m; Wth 0.3m) surmounted by 12 wide stepped battlements (H 0.7m), each with gun loop in merlon. At W end is 2-storey corner tower, oval in plan (int.: 3.6m E-W; 2.1m N-S); entered at ground-floor level through inserted brick-arched passageway; entered at 1st-floor level by lintelled door on E side, from wall-walk of bawn wall. At each level are five splayed and lintelled gun loops. Roughly inserted into internal wall face are five tiers of pigeon nesting boxes. Short section of bawn wall (L c. 4m) returns S from corner tower; this points in direction of circular tower, now standing in isolation, c. 70m to SSE. Interior of circular tower roughly pear-shaped in plan (1.75m NW-SE; 2.15m SW-NE), built directly on limestone outcrop; entered by much-altered doorway on NE side; corbelled roof. Projecting stones on either side of doorway indicate former presence of walls extending to E and to NNW. A third tower lies c. 210m ENE of latter tower, at E end of 19th-century stable block. E gable of stable block protrudes

slightly into SW side of otherwise circular tower (H c. 5m); ground-floor door in SE corner appears to be insertion with wooden frame and door, now blocked. Unroofed interior (diam. 7.75m; wall thickness 0.7m) partially filled with rubble. Neither of latter two towers retain any recognisable defensive features and their exact relationship to the bawn is unclear. The above description is derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume 3: Mid Cork' (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1997). In certain instances the entries have been revised and updated in the light of recent research.

**CO062-177---- : Castle - tower house :
BLARNEY**

Description: Just S of Blarney village; atop limestone outcrop, overlooking junction of rivers Martin and Blarney. Complex composed chiefly of tower house and part of bawn, with fragmentary remains of country house (CO062-238----) immediately E of tower house. The tower house is of two distinct phases: the primary 4-storey tower (tower 1) is rectangular in plan (6.5m N-S; 6.8m E-W); later, a larger and slightly taller 5-storey extension (tower 2) butted against E wall, and E end of S wall, of tower 1, giving the complete plan an L-shape (see plan Woods 1896, 338); tower 2 extends 8.5m to E and 14m to S of tower 1. North wall of tower 2 incorporates part of earlier wall at ground-floor level, which is extension of N wall of tower 1; this wall may have been part of bawn wall contemporary with tower 1. At foot of S wall of tower 2 part of earlier wall protrudes; this could be associated with same bawn wall. Tower 1: Original entrance probably in E wall at ground-floor level, but now obscured by inserted passage, which joins SE corner of ground-floor chamber to base of spiral stairs in NE corner of tower; just above ground-floor level, quarried passage leads from stairs into tower 2. Stairs accommodated by protrusion of 0.4m on external E face of tower 1. First,

second and 3rd floors all entered from spiral stairs by door with pointed arch in NE corner; corners bulge inwards to accommodate stairwell. Each floor has window in centre of all four walls, except W wall which only has window at 2nd and 3rd floors, and N wall of 2nd floor which is blank; all these windows have splayed and lintelled embrasures; when tower 2 added, windows in E wall of tower 1 were blocked up. Both ground and 1st floors have quarried doorways at E end of S wall, giving access respectively to 1st and 2nd floors of tower 2. Ground-floor: chamber (3.9m E-W; 2.9m N-S) covered by pointed wicker-centred vault (axis E-W). Window in W wall is much altered but base of original light visible outside; S window has flat-headed light, lower part of which is blocked; at W end of S wall is inserted embrasure with two openings for gun loops facing S; N window is large 5-light oriel window, inserted into earlier window embrasure. First floor: lights are square-headed, ogee-headed and round-headed, to N, W and S respectively; large window embrasure inserted into SW corner, with single square-headed light set directly on corner of tower. Between 1st-and 2nd-floor levels is small mural chamber in N wall, entered directly from stairwell, with blocked garderobe at W end. Second floor: covered by pointed wicker-centred vault (axis E-W); W window has round-headed light, S window has ogee-headed light. Third floor: modern concrete floor. N window has double ogee-headed light with hood moulding; W and S windows have single lights: W is flat-headed, S ogee-headed. Dominating this chamber are two inserted fireplaces: occupying W third of room is a large fireplace with flat joggled arch supported by curving jambs; butting against this is smaller fireplace, along S wall, with flat lintel supported by two rounded corbels; both feed into wide squat chimney stack, which occupies W third of tower 1 at roof level. Conversion of 3rd floor to kitchen (by insertion of fireplaces) probably happened when tower 2 added; passage links this floor to 4th floor of tower 2. Top of spiral stairs

gives access, through lintelled door, to N wall-walk; wall-walk, parapet wall and remains of battlements preserved atop N, W and S walls; inserted stairway on E wall leads from S wall-walk around chimney stack up to higher W wall-walk of tower 2. Atop SW corner is bartizan supported by four tapering corbels. Tower 2: Southern two-thirds of tower 2 occupied by five main floors; northern third occupied by series of mural chambers and passageways, and by spiral stairs in NE corner. Stairs give access to all main floors and to chambers and passageways in N wall. Tower 2 entered by ground-floor door near N end of E wall; surround in two plain orders with pointed arch, yett-hole through S jamb. Lobby (3m E-W; 1.6m N-S) covered by plank-centred segmental vault (axis E-W) with murder-hole (now blocked); from lobby, doors, each with pointed arch, give access straight through to main ground-floor chamber, N to base of spiral stairs, and S to mural chamber (5.8m N-S; 1.8m E-W) covered by pointed vault (axis N-S). Main 1st-, 2nd-, 3rd-, and 4th-floor chambers have central window in S wall; 1st and 2nd floors have two windows each in W wall whilst 3rd and 4th floors have one; 1st, 2nd and 4th floors have two windows each in E wall, 3rd has one. Many of windows at 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-floor levels have had their embrasures enlarged to take wide rectangular lights, divided by one or two mullions. At 4th-floor level windows in E, S and W walls have similar rectangular lights, but square-set embrasures with pointed arches on inside edge, appear to be unaltered; similar window embrasure in centre of N wall has double ogee-headed light. Ground-floor: main chamber (11.8m N-S; 4.5m E-W) is split level: northern two-thirds of floor recently covered by stone flags; southern third is low platform built around rock outcrop, with central flight of concrete steps. Near S end of E wall is much-altered embrasure with single round-headed light, now blocked, and angled gun loops set into S corner. North window has deep (D c. 4m) splayed and lintelled embrasure; outer section

of embrasure (D 0.9m) is part of wall contemporary with tower 1 (see above); original window had double-ogee-headed light (frame visible on external face) but when tower 2 built E light blocked up. First floor: main chamber covered by pointed wicker-centred vault (axis N-S). Entered via passage from stairway by door on N side of window embrasure near N end of E wall. Inserted fireplace in centre of E wall; stone surround with entablature-like mantle, very similar to mantelpiece, inscribed with date 1636, in Monkstown Castle (CO087-028----). Second-floor: main chamber (11.3m N-S; 5.9m E-W) has recent concrete floor. Window S of centre in W wall has square-set embrasure covered by segmental vault; on N side of embrasure, door with pointed arch accesses stairs descending into mural passage (5.6m N-S; 1.2m E-W), covered by pointed vault, leading to 1st floor of tower 1. Entire N wall of main chamber once contained large fireplace with flat joggled arch, only ends of which survive; slightly higher but much narrower fireplace later inserted here. Projecting slightly (c. 0.5m) into chamber, at NW corner, is SE corner of tower 1. Much-altered entrance passageway from spiral stairs at N end of E wall. Third-floor: chamber entered, via passage from spiral stairs, by lintelled door at N end of E wall. Blocked fireplace in centre of E wall has wooden lintel and cut-stone jambs. N wall set back (D c. 1m) under pointed wicker-centred arch. Deep ledge (D c. 0.6m) marks division between main 3rd- and 4th-floor chambers. Fourth-floor: At this level main chamber extends full length of tower. N end (c. 4m N-S) now has concrete floor over area occupied by mural chambers at lower levels (see below); on W side is door with pointed arch leading to passageway to 3rd-floor of tower 1; on E side is projection which contains top of main spiral stairs of tower 2. Window embrasure in N wall has door on E side giving access to spiral stairs in NE corner rising to wall-walk level. Wall-walk survives atop all four walls of tower 2. Continuous machicolation, supported by tapering corbels,

along W, S and southern two-thirds of E wall; lintel between corbels midway along S side is famed "Blarney Stone". Atop E wall is bellcote, N side of which was once chimney stack. Vaulted passages and chambers in N wall; at 1st-floor level mural passage (3.2m E-W; 1.1m N-S) links spiral stairs of tower 2 to spiral stairs of tower 1. Above this, between 1st and 2nd floors, and between 3rd and 4th floors, are two garderobe chambers (3.2m E-W; 1.8

CO062-201---- : Church :

Description: On rising ground, overlooking Blarney village to S. C of I parish church of Garrycloyne, moved to present location in 1766 (Mulcahy 1993, 46) from earlier site in Knocknalyre (9583); completed c. 1775 but repaired and enlarged in 1835 when chancel remodelled inside as apse (ibid., 48). Church is cruciform in plan: rectangular nave (long axis E-W) with transepts mid-way along N and S walls; porch at W end, chancel at E end (see plan: ibid.). Entrance porch, transepts and chancel all gable-ended with pediment atop shallow Doric pilasters at corners; heavy quoins on corners of nave; all these features are rendered. Nave lit by rectangular sash windows; blind round-headed niches with cut-stone surrounds, on side walls of projections. Bellcote atop porch. Interior has flat plastered ceiling; wooden galleries at W end and in N transept with neo-classical wooden details; latter gallery with separate entrance, was for Colthurst family (ibid., 49). Churchyard contains 19th- and 20th-century burials. The above description is derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume 3: Mid Cork' (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1997). In certain instances the entries have been revised and updated in the light of recent research.

CO062-065---- : Mill - woollen :

Description: In Blarney village, on N bank of Martin river. Complex consists mainly of late 19th-century buildings, varying in size, but with similar architectural details: chiefly random rubble sandstone construction, with brick quoins and brick window surrounds; large camber-headed windows with fixed frames; upper lights hinged to open outwards. The roofs are slated but the N-facing sides are glazed. The main body of buildings is aligned NW-SE. The interiors are mainly open plan, with wooden floors supported by iron columns. At NW end is a rectangular, 3-storey, 5-bay structure (long axis NE-SW); stone quoins; chimney stacks atop gables. Large spinning mill was added to SE side, using side-wall of above structure. Spinning mill (now shop and knitting unit) is a 3-storey, double-gable-ended structure; datestone on N elevation reads: "Rebuilt O'Mahony & Brothers 1870". Extended by 3 bays to SE, using identical architectural style; built over tail-race channel. The addition uses side-wall of earlier structure at SE end; this latter is L-shaped 3-storey structure (long axis NE-SW); stone quoins; brick addition to SE makes rectangular ground plan. To NE of spinning mill is rectangular 4-bay, 3-storey powerhouse (long axis N-S), built against high ground to N; ground and 1st floors stone-built, 2nd floor brick-built; gable-ended to N, hipped roof to S. Wheel-pit (now infilled) along E elevation; remains of brick lining of wheel-pit evident on E wall of powerhouse. Millrace (now dry) approached from E along high ground, behind terraces of millhouses, where it meets E wall of powerhouse and turns sharply to S, falling c. 7m into wheel-pit. To SE of above complex is carding mill (now a restaurant); 2-storey, rectangular structure with triple hipped roof; ground floor random rubble sandstone construction; 1st floor of brick. SW elevation of 10 bays; NW elevation shows signs of rebuilding. Carding room and hoisery section were on ground and 1st floor respectively. N part of SE wall used by later 3-storey, double-gable-ended structure (now a hotel); SW

elevation of 14 bays; yarns were wound and partially spun in the upper floors, ground floor accommodated the hosiery section started in 1926 (O'Mahony 1989, 44). Two-storey addition to rear, at W end. Short distance to N is long 2-storey rectangular structure (long axis NE-SW); formerly stables with oat loft overhead; also accommodated a canteen. Weaving sheds at SE end of complex attached to spinning mill at SW end; series of nine 1-storey, broad gable-ended buildings; chimney stacks on SE gables; river flows along SE wall. Part of interior modernized but much still open plan with iron columns. This housed mainly Dobcross looms; also accommodated the "invisible menders", tweed shop, steamer's and carpenter's workshop. To SW of spinning mill is late 19th-century 2-storey residential house, originally free-standing but recently attached to spinning mill. Original entrance to mill complex on NE side; entrance to house and grounds, with gate lodge, on NW side, this has now been converted into main entrance to "Blarney Woollen Mills". Across river, to N of mills, overgrown ruin with adjacent infilled cleaning ponds. Millpond located c. 1km to N on Martin River; sluice at S end fed millrace. Close to mills are terraces of 2-storey houses, with rounded tarred roofs, built between 1806 and 1892 (Meehan 1979, 19-20). Mills were purchased by Martin O'Mahony in 1824 (Morley 1991; O'Mahony 1989, 37; O'Mahony 1994, 84) who converted the old cotton and flax mill to woollen production. Woollen mills indicated on 1842 OS 6-inch map as irregular in plan, long axis NW-SE, on W end of present complex; mills burnt in 1869 but rebuilt shortly afterwards and again extended in 1880. In 1880s some 800 people were employed; the equipment included '113 power looms for weaving, 2,000 spindles for worsted spinning, 9,000 for woollen spinning and 2,300 for twisting' (O'Mahony 1994, 85). Closed 1975 and machinery and furnishings removed. Part of complex later reopened as a commercial outlet named "Blarney Woollen Mills". The above description is derived from

the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume 3: Mid Cork' (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1997). In certain instances the entries have been revised and updated in the light of recent research.