

1. EUROPEAN SITE DATA

Great Island Channel Special Area Of Conservation (SAC) (site code 001058)	
Conservation objective	To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.
Qualifying interests	Annex I listed habitats: mudflats, sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, estuaries, spartina swards, Atlantic salt meadows.
References and further information	<i>Conservation Objectives for Great Island Channel SAC [001058]</i> (NPWS), <i>Natura 2000 Standard Data Form</i> (NPWS), <i>Site Synopsis Great Island Channel Site Code 001058</i> (NPWS) (see www.npws.ie for further details)

Blackwater River Special Area Of Conservation (SAC) (site code 002170)	
Conservation objective	To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.
Qualifying interests	Annex I/II listed habitats: Habitats: Estuaries, Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, Perennial vegetation of stony banks, Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>), Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>), Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation, Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles, Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) Species: <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel), <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish), <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey), <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey), <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey), <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaite Shad), <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon), <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter), <i>Vandenboschia speciosa</i> (Killarney Fern)
References and further information	<i>Conservation Objectives for Blackwater River SAC [002170]</i> (NPWS), <i>Natura 2000 Standard Data Form</i> (NPWS), <i>Site Synopsis Blackwater River Site Code 002170</i> (NPWS) (see www.npws.ie for further details)

Cork Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004030)	
Conservation objective	To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as special conservation interests for this SPA.
Qualifying interests	Annex I-listed bird species: bar-tailed godwit, common tern (breeding), golden plover, ruff, whooper swan. Other birds of special conservation interest include black-headed gull, black-tailed godwit, common gull, curlew, dunlin, great crested grebe, grey heron, grey plover, lapwing, lesser black-backed gull, little grebe, oystercatcher, pintail, red-breasted merganser, redshank, shelduck, shoveler, teal, and widgeon. This site is an internationally important wetland site supporting > 20,000 wintering waterfowl.
References and further information	<i>Conservation Objectives for Cork Harbour SPA [004030]</i> (NPWS), <i>Natura 2000 Standard Data Form</i> (NPWS), <i>Site Synopsis Cork Harbour SPA Site Code 004030</i> (NPWS) (see www.npws.ie for further details)

2. DETAILS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Reference no.	P8.HCP.26.12 – GERALD GRIFFIN STREET
Development consent type	Part 8
Development location	Gerald Griffin Street, Blackpool Cork City,
Description of development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction an apartment block with 67 no. homes, consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ 1 no. community facility ~ 31 no. 1 bed apartments ~ 30 no. 2 bed apartments ~ 6 no. 3 bed apartments. • The demolition of the existing wall along the full length of Burke’s Avenue and along the lower end of Gerald Griffin Avenue. • All ancillary site works and signage as outlined on the plans and particulars.
Distance from SAC (Great Island Channel)	Approximately 9.0km
Distance from SAC (Blackwater River)	Approximately 14.6km
Distance from SPA	Approximately 3.8km
Relevant strategies or policies	Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
EIS submitted?	No

3. ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY DIRECT, INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Yes / No

1. Is the proposed development directly connected to or necessary for the conservation management of the SPA and/or SAC? (If yes, no further assessment required. If no, screening required.)	No
2. Is the proposed development located within or partly within the SPA?	No
3. Is the proposed development located within 100m of the SPA?	No
4. Does the proposed project involve the development, extension or upgrade of a cycleway or walkway within 200m of the SPA?	No
5. Does the proposed development involve development in the intertidal or coastal zone within the potential impact zone of the SPA?	No
6. Could the proposed project increase the level of recreational or other use of marine or intertidal areas within the potential impact zone of the SPA?	No
7. Does the proposed development involve the excavation of previously undeveloped land within an area that has been identified to be at risk of flooding within the potential impact zone of the SPA?	No
8. Does the proposed development involve the removal of significant amounts of topsoil within 100m of the SPA?	No
9. Does the existing wastewater treatment system have the capacity to treat any additional loading?	Yes
10. Would the proposed development result in direct surface water or other discharge to water bodies in or feeding into the SPA or SAC? Would it result in additional storm flows into a combined sewer and subsequently into a combined sewer overflow (CSO), resulting in increased frequency, quantity and/or duration of overflow from the CSO to watercourses feeding into the European sites?	No
11. Would the proposed development involve dredging or could it result in the mobilisation of marine sediments in the Harbour area?	No
12. Could the proposed development give rise to increased risk of oil or chemical spillage or leaks within the marine environment or watercourse within the potential impact zone for the SPA or SAC?	No
13. Are there relevant plans or projects which, in combination with the proposed development, are likely to give rise to any cumulative effects?	No

Comments or notes

The development site is partially located within the Blackpool Architectural Area (ACA). The development is not located within or directly adjacent to any European sites. Given the distance separating the development site from the Cork Harbour SAC, Great Island Channel SPA and Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC, the intervening lands separating the site from the Natura 2000 sites and the lack of impact pathways, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in adverse effects to these European sites and have therefore been screened out from further consideration.

4. SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT

In view of the above it is considered that (tick one box only):

- Appropriate Assessment is not required**
The proposed development is directly connected / necessary to the conservation management of a site.
- Appropriate Assessment is not required**
It can be excluded through screening that the proposed development will have significant effects on the sites.
- Further information is required**
Potential impacts have been identified through initial screening and/or there is insufficient information to enable the planning authority to screen out impacts, but on balance it is determined that the issues could be resolved through minor modifications to the proposed development or by appropriate conditions. The information required is specified below.
- Appropriate Assessment is required**
Significant issues have been identified and/or significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain, and the submission of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required, or the proposed development must be rejected.

Further information required / Comments or Notes

In accordance with the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been carried out on the project, in relation to any potential impacts upon the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area [Site No. 004030], Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation [Site No. 002170] and the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation [Site No. 001058]. The findings of the AA screening noted that no significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are likely and it was not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

Please refer to Appendix A for report titled; Appropriate Assessment Screening Report – Stage 1 Screening Report prepared by Malone O'Regan Environmental dated May 2026.

Name:	Martina Broder
Position:	A/Director of Services, Housing
Date:	3 July 2026

Appendix A

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report

Proposed Residential Development at Gerald Griffin Street

**On behalf of
MMD Construction**



MALONE O'REGAN



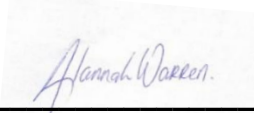


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Title: Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report, Proposed Residential Development, on behalf of MMD Construction, Gerald Griffin Street

Job Number: E2324

Prepared By: Alannah Warren

Signed:  _____

Checked By: Kathryn Broderick

Signed:  _____

Approved By: Dyfrig Hubble

Signed:  _____

Revision Record

Issue No.	Date	Description	Remark	Prepared	Checked	Approved
01	15/10/2024	AA Screening Report	Final	AW	HT	KB
02	09/09/2025	Updated Site History	Final	AW	HT	KB
03	15/05/2026	Updated Red Line	Final	AW	DH	DH
04	01/07/2026	Updated Report from Council Comments	Final	AW	DH	KOR

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Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report
Proposed Residential
MMD Construction
Gerald Griffin Street

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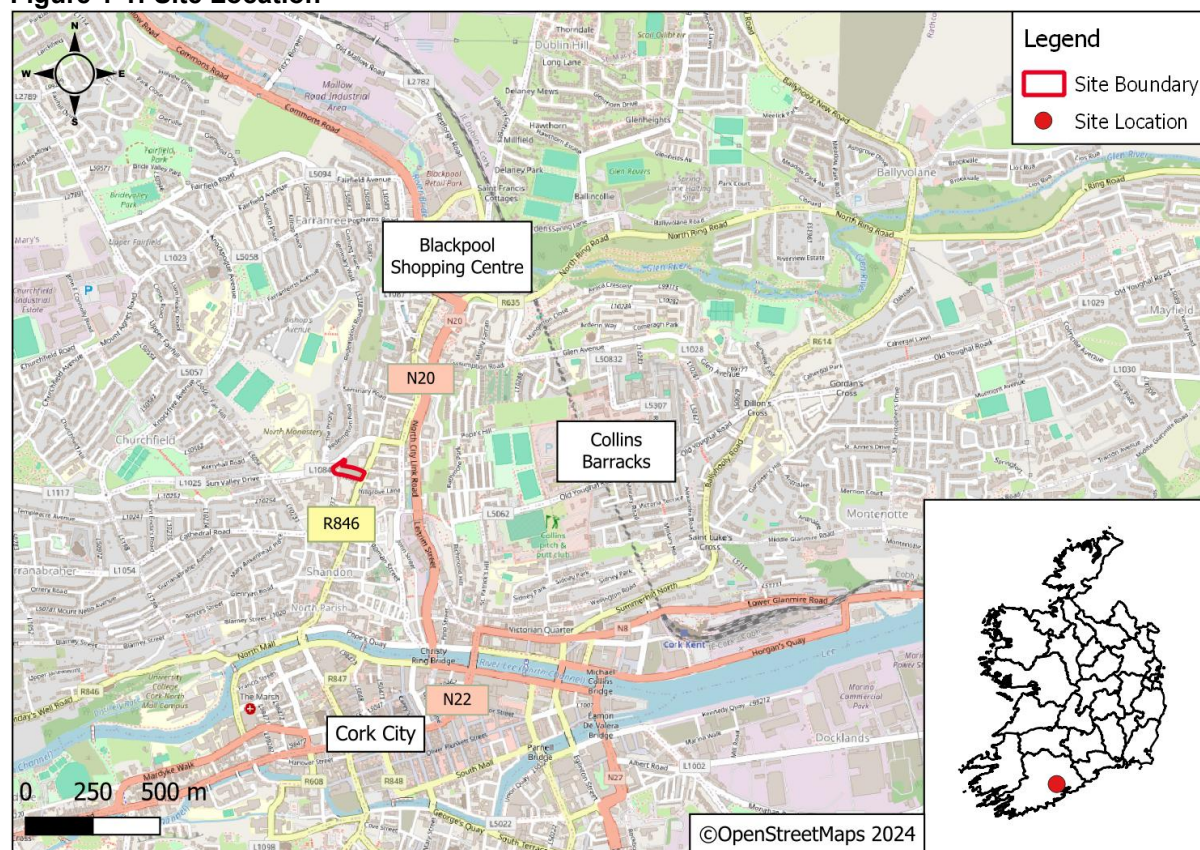
1 INTRODUCTION

Malone O'Regan Environmental ('MOR Environmental') was commissioned by MMD Construction ('the Applicant') to undertake an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report ('AA') to assess the potential adverse effects, if any, of the proposed residential development along with all ancillary works ('the Proposed Development') at Ger Griffin Street, Blackpool, County Cork (ITM OS Reference W 67211 72817) on nearby sites with European conservation designations (i.e., Natura 2000 sites).

The Proposed Development will be located on a site that is circa ('ca.') 0.4 hectares ('ha') in size and is located in the Blackpool area, north of Cork City centre, as shown in Figure 1-1 ('the Site').

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

Figure 1-1: Site Location



1.1 Planning History and Background

The Site is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). To date, six developments have already been permitted on the Site. The Proposed Development is similar to the scope of the previously permitted developments and will supersede the previously permitted developments and current Part 8 approvals on the Site including a Part 8 grant of planning for 42 units (Cork City Council P8.HCP.16.08). Details on these previously permitted

developments are outlined below. Given that the zoning objective of the Site is Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods (ZO 01) [1], it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in principle.

Cork City Council Ref No. 9923594– Permitted

Permission to construct an entrance door to the backyard of an existing dwelling.

Cork City Council Ref No. 0226140– Permitted

Permission for the demolition of existing structures and construction of 21 residential units comprising 1-, 2- & 3-bedroom dwellings & full site development.

Cork City Council Ref No. 0327961– Permitted

Permission to carry out demolitions and site clearance.

Cork City Council Ref No. 0428841– Permitted

Permission to carry out demolition and site clearance and the construction of 16 apartments on four floors and three townhouses on three floors.

Cork City Council Ref No. 0630581– Permitted

Permission for demolition, site clearance, and the construction of 12 apartments on four storeys, three townhouses, and associated site works.

Cork City Council Ref No. P8.HCP.16.08 – Permitted

Permission for the development of 42 units consisting of 19 two-bedroom apartments, 20 three-bedroom apartments, two two-bedroom duplex houses, one community facility and associated site development works.

1.2 Statement of Authority

This report was reviewed by Mr. Henry Tennyson, Senior Environmental Consultant. Henry is a qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management ('CIEEM') with over four years' experience working in the environmental consultancy sector. As part of his role, Henry regularly conducts ornithological surveys and assessments for various projects across Ireland and has experience in conducting surveys in line with Best Practice Guidelines to inform Appropriate Assessments and Ecological Impact Statements.

This report was approved by Ms. Kathryn Broderick, Principal Consultant - Ecologist. Kathryn has over 7 years' experience working in the ecological consultancy sector. As part of her role, Kathryn is required to undertake habitat surveys and appraisals as well as specialist-protected species surveys in support of Ecological Impact Assessments and Appropriate Assessments. Kathryn has also completed a diploma in Environmental Law and Planning, which had a focus on EIA and AA assessment, which has provided her with a comprehensive understanding of the legal context and requirements of these types of assessments.

1.3 Regulatory Context

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

- OPR Practice Note PN01, *Appropriate Assessment for Screening for Development Management*, The Office of the Planning Regulator [2];
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission [3];
- *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management [4];

- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission [5];
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities*, DoEGLH [6]; and,
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10*, DoEGLH [7].

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

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna better known as “The Habitats Directive”. This provides the framework for the legal protection of habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive was transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. 477 / 2011) (as amended) [8].

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

- A candidate site of Community Importance;
- A site of Community Importance, F815 [(ba) a candidate Special Area of Conservation];
- A Special Area of Conservation (‘SAC’);
- A candidate Special Area of Conservation (‘cSAC’); or,
- A Special Protection Area (‘SPA’)

These are Special Areas of Conservation (‘SACs’) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (‘SPAs’) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC as amended 2009/149/EC) (better known as “The Birds Directive”). The Birds Directive was also transposed into Irish law through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and S.I 477 / 2011 [8].

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

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

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, and compensatory measures. First, the project should aim to avoid any negative impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the planning stage and designing the project in order to avoid such impacts. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point, where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the project is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, it must be

rejected unless it follows the process established under Article 6(4). If the project is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest ('IROPI test') under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effects.

1.4 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

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

Stage 1: Screening

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

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

Where potentially significant impacts are identified, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is required; this stage considers the appropriateness of those mitigation measures in the context of maintaining the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites. If potential significant impacts cannot be eliminated with appropriate mitigation measures, the assessment must proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternatives Solutions

This process examines alternative ways to achieve the objectives of the plan or project that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site if mitigation measures are deemed insufficient.

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

Assessment where no alternative solution exists for a plan or project and where adverse impacts remain. This includes an assessment of compensatory measures, which, in the case of projects or plans, can be considered necessary for IROPI.

2 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Screening determines whether Appropriate Assessment is necessary by examining the following:

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

Screening involves the following:

- Description of a plan or project;
- Identification of relevant European sites, and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives;
- Assessment of likely effects – direct, indirect, and cumulative – undertaken on the basis of available information as a desk study or field survey or primary research as necessary; and,
- Screening Statement with conclusions.

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Determining Zone of Influence

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

Guidance in Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects in Ireland notes that a distance of 15km is recommended for the identification of relevant European sites. [6]. However, guidance from the The National Parks and Wildlife Service ('NPWS') recommends that the distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in-combination effects (cumulative) [7]. For some projects the distance could be greater than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m.

Definition of the zone of influence for the proposed works includes evaluating the following:

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

2.1.2 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

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

The likely effects of the Proposed Development on any European site have been assessed using a source-pathway-receptor model. A source-pathway-receptor model is a standard tool used in environmental assessment [9, 10]. The model comprises:

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

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

2.1.3 Desk-Based Studies

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

- Review of aerial maps of the Site and surrounding area;
- The National Parks and Wildlife Service ('NPWS') website was consulted with regard to the most up-to-date details on conservation objectives for the European sites relevant to this assessment [11]
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre ('NBDC') website was consulted with regard to species distributions [12];
- The Environmental Protection Agency ('EPA') Maps website was consulted to obtain details about watercourses in the vicinity of the Site [13];
- The Cork County Council Planning Portal to obtain details about existing/proposed developments in the vicinity of the Site [14]; and,
- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's planning portal – the National Planning Application Database was reviewed to obtain details about existing/proposed developments in the vicinity of the Site [15].

2.1.4 Field Survey

A Site walkover was undertaken on the 23rd September 2024 by a suitably qualified and experienced MOR Environmental Ecologist to assess the extent and the quality of habitats present on the Site and to identify any potential ecological receptors associated with the European sites.

The habitat survey was undertaken for the Proposed Development utilising the Heritage Council's – '*A Guide to Habitats in Ireland*' [16]. This is the standard habitat classification system used in Ireland and includes both a desk-based and field-based assessment.

The assessments were extended to also identify the potential for these habitats to support other features of nature conservation importance, such as species afforded legal protection under either Irish or European legislation.

2.1.4.1 Survey Limitations

No survey limitations were encountered.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Site Context and Description

The Site is located within the Blackpool area, north of Cork City centre, within an urban landscape. The Site is accessed via the regional road R846. The Site is 0.4ha in size and is predominantly made up of an area of recolonising bare ground. The Site is currently zoned for sustainable residential neighbourhoods. [1].

The Site is bound to the south, east and west by residential buildings and to the north by Neptune Stadium. The surrounding area is a mix of private residential dwellings as well as restaurants, retailers, and other amenities. Refer to Figure 3-1 below for context.

Figure 3-1: Site Context



3.2 Watercourses within the Vicinity of the Site

The Site is situated within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay Water Framework Directive ('WFD') Catchment [Catchment_ID: 19] and the Kiln_SC_010 subcatchment [Subcatchment_ID: 19_1] [13].

As per EPA maps, there are two watercourses, the Bride (Cork City)_020 river and the Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper, of note within close proximity to the Site.

- Bride (Cork City)_020 river.

The Bride (Cork City)_020 river (commonly known as the River Bride) is located ca.180m to the east of the Site, at its closest point. This river drains in a southerly direction into the transitional waterbody of the *Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper* as outlined below. No direct hydrological link to this watercourse was identified during the Site walkover.

Under the Water Framework Directive ('WFD') 2000/60/EC, the EPA classifies the status and the risk of not achieving good water quality status for all waterbodies in Ireland. According to the river waterbody WFD 2016-2021, the water quality within the Bride (Cork City)_020 river is considered to be 'poor', and the status is considered at risk' [13].

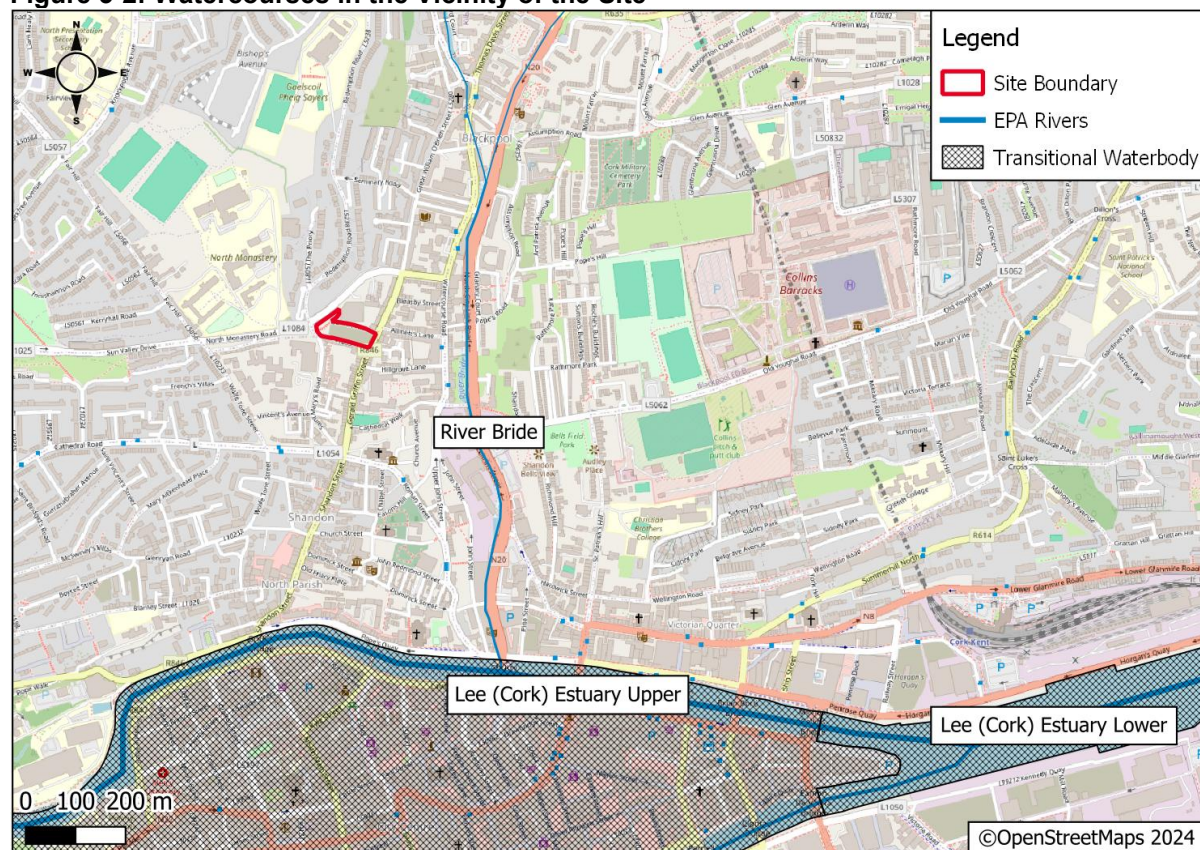
- Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper.

The Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper is located ca.570m south of the Site, at its closest point. This waterbody drains into the Lee (Cork) Estuary Lower before draining into Lough Mahon and, subsequently, Cork Harbour, which forms part of the Cork Harbour SPA. No direct hydrological link to this watercourse was identified during the Site walkover.

According to the transitional waterbody WFD 2013-2018, the water quality within the Lee Estuary Upper is considered to be 'moderate,' and the status of this estuary is considered at risk' [13].

The location of the key surface water features in the vicinity of the Site are illustrated in Figure 3-2 below.

Figure 3-2: Watercourses in the Vicinity of the Site



3.2.1 Drainage Ditches

The Site walkover did not identify any drainage ditches or any other surface water features on-site. No natural or existing hydrological link to the Bride (Cork)_020 or any other watercourse in the surrounding area was identified.

As per the OPW Flood Maps, the Site does not benefit from any arterial drainage scheme or drainage district. [17]

3.3 Proposed Development

The Applicant intends to apply for permission for development at Gerald Griffin Street, Blackpool, County Cork. The Proposed Development will consist of

- 67 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments and Duplex homes:
 - 31 one-bedroom apartments, including 2 Duplex units;
 - 30 two-bedroom apartments; and,
 - Six three-bedroom apartments, including three Duplex units.

The Proposed Development also comprises:

- One community facility;
- Hard and soft landscaping;
- Boundary treatments;
- Public realm works;
- Internal bike stores and external bike hoops;
- Bin stores;
- Lighting;
- Plant rooms, and;
- All ancillary development works above and below ground.

3.3.1 Drainage

The Site currently has existing connections to the Uisce Éireann water and wastewater assets on Gerald Griffin Street. As stated in the Pre-Connection Feasibility enquiry completed by Uisce Éireann, it may be necessary to provide additional network capacity regarding the wastewater connection. Drainage at the Site will incorporate principles discussed in the Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP').

Surface Water Drainage

The Site is currently covered by areas of hardstanding with no areas of soft landscaping currently present. The existing Gerald Griffin Avenue road carriageways include drainage gulleys at both ends. Burke's Avenue is currently paved, and hence surface water runoff from this area will not increase as a result of the Proposed Development.

It is proposed to provide drainage channels and road gullies at regular centres to intercept the surface water flow from the paved areas in the Site. It is also proposed that an attenuation tank be incorporated on the proposed storm sewer network to attenuate flows to the equivalent Greenfield runoff rates.

Foul Water Drainage

In accordance with Cork City Council drainage record drawings, the existing drainage infrastructure in the vicinity of the Site consists of combined sewers. There is a mainline sewer flowing from North Monastery Road to Gerald Griffin Street via Burke's Avenue. This is a 1050mm diameter sewer along Burke's Avenue. The sewer changes direction at the junction of Burke's Avenue and Gerald Griffin Street and flows in a north-easterly direction along Gerald Griffin Street. There is an existing 225mm diameter combined sewer, which commences at the upper end of Gerald Griffin Avenue and flows in a south-easterly direction, intersecting with the combined sewer on Gerald Griffin Street.

The proposed foul drainage infrastructure involves the connection of each block of apartments to a new 225mm foul sewer. Full details of the proposed foul drainage are presented on the drawing of GGS-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-5001, which was prepared by MWP consulting engineers in support of this planning application. Please refer to Appendix A.

Water Supply

There are existing public mains and fire hydrants on roads bounding the Site. There is no evidence of any existing watermain within the Site boundary or any existing connections serving the site.

Based on this, it is proposed that a watermain along Burke's Avenue will be provided to serve the Proposed Development. It is also proposed to construct one additional hydrant located outside the northwest corner of the Site. This is shown in drawing GGS-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-5003.

3.3.2 Site Access

Operational and Construction Phases access will be via Gerald Griffin Avenue. Temporary construction access to the Site will be provided on Gerald Griffin Street with a temporary traffic system. All construction vehicles will travel to and from the Site via the N20 National Road and via R846 Gerald Griffin Street.

3.4 Demolition and Construction Procedures

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

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

- C532 – Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites. Guidance for Consultants and Contractors [18]; and,
- C811 - Environmental Good Practice on Site (5th edition) [19];

Working hours during site clearance and construction shall be restricted to 0800-1800 hours on Mondays to Fridays. Activities outside these hours shall require the prior approval of the CCC Housing Directorate.

3.4.1 Construction Methodology

As per the Mobility Management Plan and Construction Traffic Management Plan prepared by MWP and submitted as part of the overall planning application, prior to the commencement of construction, a temporary crane would be located within the Site, outside the proposed building footprint and relocated on a phased construction bases and a temporary construction site hoarding would enclose the full extent of the Site with a construction access gate.

Excavation

The proposed construction excavation phase is scheduled for a total of ca. 11 weeks. Excavated volumes would be removed to a licensed landfill using standard trucks via the N22 National Road.

Construction (Demolition)

As the existing site is a brownfield site, demolition works would be minimal and mainly relate to the walled boundaries. Demolition material would be removed to a licenced recycling facility by a licenced haulier.

4 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES

In accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance [20] a list of European sites that can be potentially affected by the Proposed Development has been compiled. Guidance for Planning Authorities prepared by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. [6] States that defining the likely zone of impact for the screening and the approach used will depend on the nature, size, location and the likely significant effects of the project. The key variables determining whether or not a particular European site is likely to be negatively affected by a project are:

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

All SPAs and SACs within 15km have been considered to assess their ecological pathways and functional links. As acknowledged in the Office of Public Relations ('OPR') guidelines [2], few projects have a zone of influence this large; however, the identification of European sites within 15km has become widely accepted as the starting point for the screening process. For this reason, all SPAs and SACs within 15km have been identified for consideration as part of the screening.

There are three European sites located within 15km of the Site - these are identified in Figure 4-1 and Table 4-1.

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

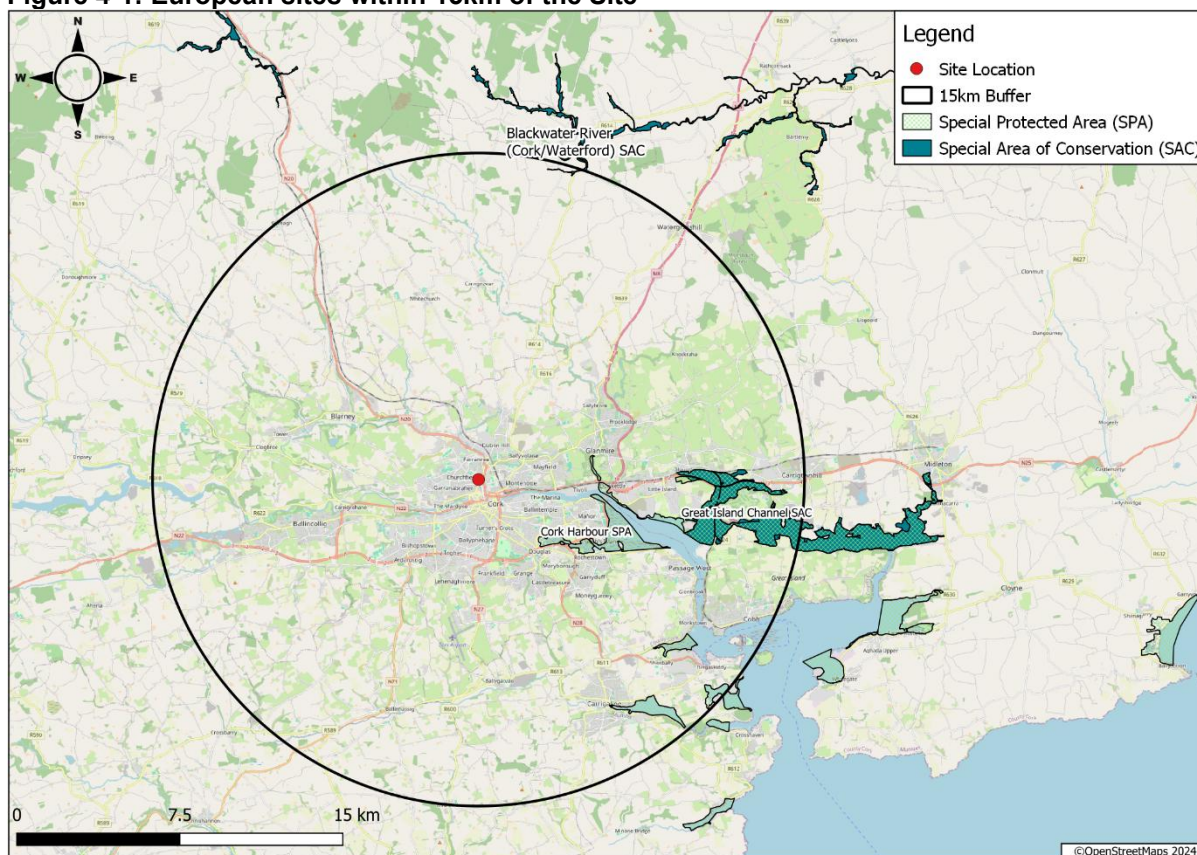


Table 4-1: European Designated Sites within 15km of the Site

Site Name	Code	Distance (km)	Direction from the Site
Special Areas of Conservation ('SAC')			
Great Island Channel SAC	001058	Ca. 9.0km	E
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	002170	Ca. 14.6km	N
Special Protection Area ('SPA')			
Cork Harbour SPA	004030	Ca. 3.8km	SE

4.1 Identification of European Sites within Zol

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

Habitat Loss / Degradation

The Site is not located in or directly adjacent to any European Sites. The Site is located within an urban area only. No designated habitats were identified within the Site.

The Site is comprised of recolonising bare ground with other areas of disturbed ground. At the time of the survey, common ruderals and weeds, such as common ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), were noted growing within the recolonising bare ground and along the perimeter of the Site.

Therefore, it is concluded that no direct impacts associated with designated habitat loss/degradation as a result of the Proposed Development will occur, given the distance separating the Site from the European sites.

Water Quality Impairment

Potential water quality impacts would typically be associated with the release of sediment and other pollutants to surface water during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. Therefore, the Zol would be considered to include the receiving waterbodies adjacent to and downstream of the Site during the construction phase and operational phases.

As outlined in Section 3.2, there are no direct hydrological connections between the Proposed Development and any European sites, or any EPA watercourses.

Additionally, all drainage works associated with the Proposed Development will take place within a built-up area and, as outlined in Section 3.3.1, with all storm and foul water directed through existing infrastructure.

Therefore, it can be objectively concluded that there will be no impacts associated with water quality impairment as a result of the Proposed Development on these European sites, given the lack of impact pathways. Air Quality Impairment

According to the Institute of Air Quality Management ('IAQM') Guidelines, potential adverse effects from dust arising from construction to ecological receptors occur within 50m of a construction Site. [21]. This is a temporary nuisance impact only.

All European Sites are located >2km from the Site and therefore does not require a detailed dust assessment. It is not considered that the Proposed Development will result in any significant effects on any other European Site as a result of construction dust.

Noise / Disturbance

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

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

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (formally the National Roads Authority) has produced a series of best practice planning and construction guidelines for the treatment of certain protected mammal species (i.e. otter), which indicate that disturbance to terrestrial mammals would not extend beyond 150m [22]; and,
- Studies have noted that different types of disturbance stimuli are characterised by different avifaunal reactions; however, in general, a distance of 300m can be used to represent the maximum likely disturbance distance for waterfowl [23].

The Zol for noise / disturbance is therefore established as the Site with a 300m buffer. All identified European Sites are located outside of this buffer zone.

Additionally, there are no habitats onsite that are suitable for designated species of any of the Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the Site. It can, therefore, be stated that no impacts associated with noise or disturbance will occur as a result of the Proposed Development, and all European sites have been scoped out for further consideration in relation to potential noise impacts.

Invasive Species

No high-impact invasive or plant species listed on the Third Schedule of the 2011 European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (i.e., species of which it is an offense to disperse, spread or otherwise cause to grow in any place) were noted on the Site during the field survey.

However, the butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*) was identified within the Site. There were multiple large plants along the entire boundary of the Site and growing within a large stone wall on the southern boundary of the Site. This species is a medium-impact species and is not regulated under Regulations 49 and 50 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) [8].

Therefore, no impacts associated with the spread of invasive species as a result of the Proposed Development are anticipated.

Identification of European Sites

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

Given the distance separating the Site from the Cork Harbour SAC, Great Island Channel SPA and Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC, the intervening lands separating the Site from the Natura 2000 sites and the lack of impact pathways, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in adverse effects to these European sites and have therefore been screened out from further consideration.

4.2 Conservation Objectives

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain a favourable conservation status at candidate and designated Natura 2000 Sites.

The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

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

- Its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and,
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable, as defined below.

The favourable conservation status of a species achieved when:

- Population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and,
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Conservation objectives for all identified Natura 2000 SAC sites are as follows:

‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.’

Conservation objectives for all identified Natura 2000 SPA sites are as follows:

‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.’

The full report for all conservation objectives for all identified Natura 200 sites can be found on the NPWS website [11].

5 SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

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

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

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

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

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

On the basis of the Source-Pathway-Receptor ('SPR') risk assessment principle there is no ecological or functional link between the Site and any European sites.

5.1 Analysis of 'In-Combination' Effects

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

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

A review of the Cork County Council Planning ePlan [14] website did not identify any current or previous granted plans or projects in the immediate vicinity that are considered likely in-combination with the Proposed Development to result in significant impacts on European sites.

Planning permission has been granted for various developments within the Proposed Site Boundary at Gerald Griffin Street, Blackpool, Cork City, including Planning Ref: 0226140.

However, given the urban nature of the Site, the review identified several developments in the area for residential and commercial development/alterations, change of use, etc., within the wider area. Table 5.1 below outlines adjacent developments identified as notable.

Table 5-1: Planning Applications within the vicinity of the Site

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment
P8.HCP.16.08	Granted – Part 8 Planning currently in place on the Site	<i>The proposed development comprises the construction of a new apartment development of 41 no. apartment units at Gerald Griffin Street and Burkes Avenue, Cork City. The 41 no. apartments include 2 no. two-storey two bedroom duplex houses fronting onto Gerald Griffin Street, 20 no. three-bedroom apartments and 19 no. two-bedroom apartments. Access to the proposed development will be via Geralf Griffin Street, Burkes Avenue and Gerald Griffin Avenue.</i>	No Environmental Reports Submitted
2241532	Granted: 27/07/2023	<i>Permission is sought for the following development: (I) Change of use of existing three-storey warehouse onto Gerald Griffin Street into three no. Residential apartments together with alterations to existing building, (II) Change of use of existing 2-storey out-building to rear into a bin store and cycle store at ground floor level with two no. Storerooms at first-floor level together with alterations to existing building, (III) Construction of 15 no. residential apartments in 2 no. blocks over four stories together with associated ancillary accommodation and all associated site works.</i>	It was concluded as part of the Planners report – “The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). With regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.”
2442998	Granted Conditional: 14/07/2025	<i>Permission is sought for alterations to previously permitted development 22/41532 for the change of use of the first floor of the existing 2-storey out building from 2 no. storerooms (as permitted under 22/41532) to 1 no. one bedroom apartment for residential use together with associated access from ground floor level and alterations to existing building (the above change of use will result in a total of 18 no. apartments on site).</i>	No Environmental Reports submitted – RFI issued.
2241153	Granted, conditional: 20/01/2023	<i>Permission is sought for (I) The construction of a partly 2-storey and partly 3-storey extension, including classrooms, science laboratories, specialist teaching rooms, offices, a general purpose room, a special education needs a base, stores, toilets, ancillary spaces, ESB substation, entrance canopy with</i>	An AA screening was undertaken of the development in accordance with a template as set out by the Office of the Planning Regulator. It was concluded as part of the Planners report that ‘the

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment
		<i>associated steps, (II) The demolition of 2 classrooms with associated corridor, removal of the fire-fighting water tank and shed; (III) Alterations to the existing school; (IV) A single-storey extension to the physical education hall including toilets, stores, offices and a link to the school building; (V) Roof-mounted photovoltaic panels; (VI) Ballcourts, bus set-down areas, surface car parking, bicycle parking, site lighting, alterations to existing boundary walls, fencing with gates, heat pumps, fire-fighting water storage tank, drainage and surface water attenuation works, landscaping, signage and all associated site works.</i>	<i>proposed development is unlikely to have any significant effect upon the conservation objectives of any European Site and an Appropriate Assessment is not required.'</i>
2342316	Granted, conditional: 27/05/2024	<i>Permission for alterations to existing three-storey public house and residential building, namely; demolition of rear two-storey annex and single-storey public house extension, and the construction of a new two-storey extension to the rear of existing building comprising of 6 no. One-bedroom apartments and the change of use of the remaining ground floor public house to 1 no. studio apartment. The application is also for changes to the front and rear elevations and all associated site works.</i>	Planners report states Appropriate Assessment was not necessary – “The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel SAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required”.

Due to the small scale and short timeframes of both the Proposed Development and the proposed projects listed in Table 5-1, it is considered unlikely to have any cumulative impacts on any European sites in the context of the existing infrastructure and associated activities taking place at the Site.

This statement is supported by:

- Location of the Site within an existing residential / urban area;
- The absence of any hydrological connection between the Site and any European Sites;
- The distances and intervening lands separating the Site from any European sites; and,
- The nature and small scale of the Proposed Development.

Taking the above into account, it is concluded that there will not be any significant in-combination contribution by the Proposed Development to possible adverse effects on any European sites.

6 SCREENING CONCLUSIONS AND STATEMENT

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

Three designated sites - the Great Island Channel SAC, Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC and Cork Harbour SPA - are located within a 15km radius of the Site.

However, given the scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development and the lack of impact pathways between the Site and European sites, as described in Section 4 and Section 5, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any significant impacts either directly or indirectly on the conservation objectives or status of the listed European sites and will not result in the direct loss or disturbance of any Annex I habitats and/or Annex II species for which the European sites are designated.

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

In accordance with the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment ('AA') Screening has been carried out on the project, in relation to any potential impacts upon the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area [Site No. 004030], the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation [Site No. 001058] and the Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation site code [002170]. The findings of the AA screening noted that no significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are likely and it was not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

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