

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination
Project: Crosshaven Coastguard Housing Scheme**



Cork County Council
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

**Completed by Joy Barry
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This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of the Crosshaven Coastguard Housing Scheme which is proposed within Crosshaven Village, Co Cork. The determination is based on information provided in the Habitats Directive Screening Assessment Report which has been prepared by Atkins on behalf of Cork County Council and which will be placed on display with the Part 8 documentation also. This screening determination should be read in conjunction with that report.

<p>Name of the project</p> <p>Crosshaven Coastguard Housing Scheme</p>
<p>Description of the project</p> <p>The proposed development comprises of a social housing scheme within the old Coastguard site which is largely a greenfield site with some existing dilapidated terraced residential units located within the northern portion of the site. The overall proposal will facilitate thirty three residential units on site, including the refurbishment of seven of the existing Coastguard cottages.</p> <p>The overall site area is 0.9 hectares. This includes both access roads, foot paths and the Garda car park. The proposed project includes the following elements: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of 26 no. new residential units comprising of 14 no. 1 bed units and 12 no. 3 bed units. • The refurbishment of 7 no. existing residential cottages comprising of 7 no. 2 bed units. • New access roads and junctions to connect the north and south of the site to the existing road network. • Modifications to 'Lower Road' access road junction and Coastguard Station access road. • Hard landscaping including parking areas, turning bays, footpaths, boundary walls, access steps and street lighting. • Soft landscaping including green spaces, planting, and trees. • Connection to public utilities. • All associated site works. <p>A detailed Conservation Report accompanies this application – JCA (2021). 7 no. Coastguard Cottages at Lower Road, Crosshaven, Co. Cork (NIAH Reg. Nos. 20848035-6, 20848038-42) Conservation Report. This reports on the current Structure of the terrace houses and includes recommendations as to their reconstruction. All other construction works are to the rear of this terrace on the upper part of the site. In this respect they represent infill within the urban fabric of outskirts of Crosshaven village.</p> <p>Surface water from the proposed development will discharge to the public sewer on the Lower Road. The surface water system includes a sump for collection of sediments and a hydrocarbon inceptor before attenuation of surface waters within the on site attenuation tank. Surface water will discharge to the sewer at greenfield rates of run off by means of a hydrobrake. Surface water from the terraced houses within the northern portion of the site will discharge directly to the public sewer (which is also the current situation).</p> <p>Waste Water will discharge to the public foul sewer and Irish Water have confirmed feasibility of connection to same.</p> <p>It is anticipated that construction works will take 20 months in duration to complete.</p>

Site Context

The development site forms part of the overall coastguard site which is located to the west of Crosshaven Village and fronts onto Crosshaven Lower Road (R612). The site is accessed via the new Coastguard site from Crosshaven Lower Road to the north west of the site and a separate access via Prospect Villas to the south east of the site via the Upper Crosshaven Road.

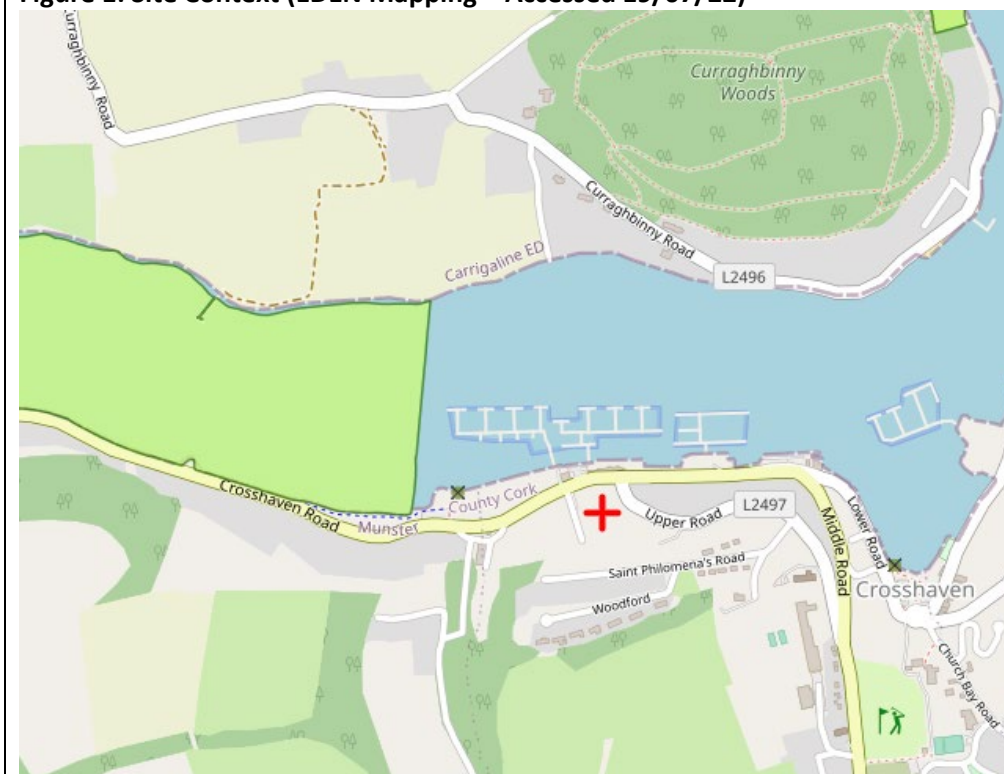
The site comprises of a long site which slopes from south to north towards the Owenboy Estuary. The site is separated from the estuary by a busy regional road and the Royal Cork Yacht Club which includes buildings, boat storage, car parking and moorings per figure 1 below

The site itself comprises of a number of terraced units which run along the northern part of the site which face the Lower Crosshaven Road known locally as the Coastguard Cottages. Many of these properties are in disrepair and are boarded up at present. A yard / storage area is located within the south eastern part of the site and is accessed via a roadway to the south of Prospect Villas. The remainder of the site comprises of a mixture of trees and treelines integrated with mature scrub. A number of invasive species also present on site including Butterfly bush, Himalayan honeysuckle, Traveller's joy, Winter Heliotrope, Cherry laurel and Three-cornered garlic (Third Schedule).

The site is not identified to be located within an area at risk of flooding according to flood mapping available in respect of the Cork County Development 20022 and draft PFRA Flood maps. The Owenboy Estuary was assigned Moderate status under the 2013-2018 Water Framework Directive cycle and is identified to be 'At Risk' of not achieving Good status.

The site is located c. 330m to the south west of the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code: 4030) (see green hatching in Figure 1) and the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site Code: 1058) is located 8.6km to the north of the site.

Figure 1: Site Context (EDEN Mapping – Accessed 19/07/22)



Name and location of Natura 2000 sites identified for screening

The Great Island Channel SAC is located 8.6km to the north of the site and the Cork Harbour SPA is located c.330m to the north west of the site at its closest point. These are the only two Natura 2000 sites which potentially could be affected by the proposed project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites listed above?

No.

Describe how the project (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 Sites

The submitted screening report considers potential impacts on the Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC as follows:

Great Island Channel SAC

The Great Island Channel SAC Qualifying Interests and Conservation Objectives are described below.

Qualifying Feature	Conservation Objective
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in Great Island Channel SAC.
Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) in Great Island Channel SAC.

Assessment of significance of potential effects to Great Island Channel SAC

Per the submitted Screening Report as prepared, the proposed project is identified as being located 8.6km, at the closest point to the Great Island Channel SAC. There will be no direct impact. There is no overlap or direct connectivity from the proposed project to the SAC. The SAC is situated within the inner area of Cork Harbour and thus, there are indirect, but remote, hydrological connectivity between the proposed project and the SAC. This link is, however, very remote and via a significant body of water and therefore potential for significant effects is ruled out.

Cork Harbour SPA Conservation Objectives

The Cork Harbour SPA Qualifying Interests and Conservation Objectives are described below.

Qualifying Feature	Conservation Objective
Little Grebe Great Crested Grebe Cormorant	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of these species in Cork Harbour SPA.

Grey Heron Shelduck Wigeon Teal Pintail Shoveler Red-breasted Merganser Oystercatcher Golden Plover Grey Plover Lapwing Dunlin Black-tailed Godwit Bar-tailed Godwit Curlew Redshank Black-headed Gull, Common Gull Lesser Black-backed Gull Common Tern	
Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of wetland habitats in Cork Harbour SPA, as a resource for the regularly – occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.

Assessment of significance of potential effects to Cork Harbour SPA

Per the AA screening Report, Cork Harbour SPA is designated for several wintering waterbirds. As noted, there is no overlap with the SPA. While several species for which the SPA has been designated do feed in fields outside of the SPA (e.g. Curlew, Oystercatcher, and Black-tailed Godwit) the proposed works area does not support suitable habitat for these species. Furthermore, there are no works proposed close to the estuary. The terrace on Lower Road effectively screens all works to the rear from the estuary, while the terrace is separated by the R612 and Royal Cork Yacht Club (buildings, carpark and marina).

With regard to potential impacts associated with surface water discharges, as outlined within the AA Screening report, there are no watercourses or known karst features on site connecting the development site to the harbour. Therefore, potential for run off to the harbour is likely to be minimal given separation distances. Storm water is proposed to undergo filtration through sumps and by-pass interceptor before attenuation and discharge to the storm sewer at greenfield rates limiting potential water quality or hydrological impacts within the Owenboy Estuary. Foul drainage will also discharge to the foul sewer which is deemed feasible by Irish Water. No water quality impacts are therefore anticipated during the construction or operational phase of the proposed project as this project will not significantly affect water quality or the hydrological regime of River Owenboy / Owenboy Estuary and ultimately to Cork Harbour.

Although a number of invasive species are present on site (Three-cornered garlic is the only species listed on Third Schedule) the distance to Great Island Channel SAC is such that no adverse effects are likely to occur on the Great Island Channel SAC as a result of the potential spread of invasive species. These species would also not be supported by the wetland habitats within Cork Harbour SPA. However, as is good practice strict biosecurity measures will be implemented on site per the Invasive Species Management Plan.

The site does not overlap with any areas of wetland associated with the SPA. Given the nature of the works, distance to wetland areas and dilution rates afforded within the Owenboy Estuary potential for significant effects to wetland habitats are ruled out during construction and operational phases of development.

Potential for cumulative and in-combination effects

Per the Screening Report, the potential for cumulative and in-combination effects assessment has regard to existing plans and projects in the area. With regard to the Cork County Development Plan 2022n it is noted that protective policies in respect of designated sites are included within this plan and therefore cumulative and in-combination effects are not considered likely.

The AA screening report has regard to the NIS prepared for the Cork County Development Plan which has ensured that potential impacts were avoided, reduced or offset and which concluded that the plan would not adversely affect the integrity of any EU sites. The in-combination impact assessment carried out as part of the AA Screening report therefore concludes that given the nature, extent and scale of the proposed project, it is not anticipated that it will act in-combination with the plans or projects, or other plans or projects, to give rise to cumulative impacts on a European site, including Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA.

The overall conclusion of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report is that, *'on the basis of objective information, the proposed project, individually or in-combination with other plans and projects, will not have likely significant effects on a European site, including Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA, in view of their conservation objectives. Thus, it is concluded that the proposed project does not need to proceed to Appropriate Assessment.'*

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

No potential for negative effects on any qualifying interest habitats or species has been identified.

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project being assessed that could affect these sites (provide details)?

No potential for significant effects identified. Consequently, the risk of this project contributing to cumulative negative impacts, when considered in combination with other projects, is screened out.

List of agencies consulted

The AA Screening Report and this determination will be circulated to Statutory Consultees, and will be available for review as part of the consultation documents.

Who carried out this assessment

Joy Barry of Cork County Council Ecology Office, Planning Department.

Sources of data

Scheme drawings and associated documentation including AA Screening, Invasive Species Management Plan; EPA ENvision mapping; NPWS Designated Sites Data; Irish Water Waste License

Information; Cork County Development Plan 2022 and Cork County Council Planning Enquiry System.
Level of assessment completed Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening and Determination.
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed? Part 8 Documents are available online.
Overall conclusion In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans/projects are not likely to have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of a European site (Natura 2000 site). It is therefore considered that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), is not required.
Explain how the overall conclusion that there are no significant effect on European sites was arrived at There are two European 2000 sites within the potential zone of influence of this project. These are the Great Island Channel SAC and the Cork Harbour SPA. No other European sites have been identified which have any physical, hydrological or other ecological connectivity to this project. No potential for impact on the Great Island Channel SAC or the Cork Harbour SPA has been identified for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be no direct intervention within the Great Island Channel SAC or the Cork Harbour SPA, and therefore no direct loss of habitat within the SAC or the SPA will arise as a result of this project; • As there will be no intervention within either site, there is no risk that the project will cause or exacerbate the spread of <i>Spartina anglica</i> within the SAC; • Having regard to the level of works as proposed, habitats on site and its location set back from Cork Harbour SPA with a busy road and yacht club in between, there will be no risk of activities associated with the project causing disturbance to species which are qualifying interests of the SPA; • Surface water run-off during the construction phase will discharge to the public surface water system and/or will percolate to ground with limited risk of direct run off to the SAC or SPA; • Storm water in the post construction phase will allow for interception and attenuation before discharge via the existing public surface water management system limiting any risk of water quality impacts to designated sites; and • Given the extent of works and having regard to existing plans and projects in the area, potential for cumulative and or in combination effects on European sites can be ruled out. It is therefore considered that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), is not required.