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RE: Part 8 Planning Report for the UEA Infrastructure, Carrigtwohill

To whom it concerns.

The proposed development consists of

- A. Western (A1) and Eastern (A2) Services Corridor Link Roads connecting Wise's Road (L3616-0) on the western side of the UEA with Carrigane Road (L3617-25) on the eastern side of the UEA. The roads will also provide connectivity to Station Road (L3603-0), Leamlara Road (L3607-37) and the Ballyadam Road (L7640-0) and includes the realignment of the Carrigane Road near Ballyadam Bridge;
- B. Northern Services Corridor Link Road connecting the Western Services Corridor Link Road with the new Northern Schools Link Road via an existing vehicular underpass below the Cork to Midleton railway line;
- C. Upgrade/ re-alignment of Wisers Road (C1) from north of its crossing of the Cork to Midleton Railway Line to the L3615-0 to the north of the UEA. The upgrade will also include a pedestrian/ cycle bridge (C2) across the railway line providing connectivity to Wisers Road south of the railway;
- D. Upgrade/ re-alignment of Station Road (D1) from south of its crossing of the Cork to Midleton Railway Line to the L3615-0 to the north of the UEA. The upgrade will also include a pedestrian/ cycle bridge (D2) across the railway line providing connectivity to Station Road south of the railway line;
- E. Upgrade/ re-alignment of Leamlara Road from its junction with Station Road to its new western junction with the Eastern Services Corridor Link Road and from north of the UEA to its new eastern junction with the Eastern Services Corridor Link Road;
- F. Upgrade/ re-alignment of Ballyadam Road from its new junction with the Eastern Services Corridor Link Road to the L7639-0 north of the UEA including the permanent closure of the existing Ballyadam Road between the Eastern Services Corridor Link Road and Carrigane Road to vehicular traffic including the junction of the existing Ballyadam Road and Carrigane Road;
- G. Community and Open Space development in the western (G1) and eastern (G2) UEA comprising of shared cycling/pedestrian paths connecting the new road network with the planned Carrigtwohill to Midleton Inter-urban Cycle Route, active and passive green open space.

The infrastructure will also include underground services including surface water drainage networks including detention ponds and attenuation, foul water networks, electrical and fibre optic/ telecoms ducting and water and gas supply. Services will be connected to existing services/ infrastructure in Carrigtwohill as required.

The proposed development will be located 1.9 km northeast of the closest section of the SPA (Monkstown Creek) and 2.1 km via the marine pathway. The proposed development will be located 3.8 km south of the SAC and 6.1 km via the marine pathway.

The proposal is made up of the following:

Part 8 Planning Application Report; Ecological Impact Assessment; Flood Risk Assessment; Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report; Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report Determination, Report on Screening for Appropriate Assessment; Appropriate Assessment Report on Screening Determination, Archaeological, Architectural and Built Heritage Impact Assessment; Part 8 Drawings.

Policy Context

County Development Plan 2022

Chapter 2. Core Strategy

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to articulate a medium to longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the County and in so doing to demonstrate that the Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The central focus of the Core Strategy is on residential development and in ensuring that there is an acceptable equilibrium between the supply of zoned, serviced land for the projected demand for new housing, over the lifetime of the Plan. (Section 2.2.1)

The Core Strategy considers all aspects of what is needed to deliver sustainable communities having regard also to the availability of infrastructure, the carrying capacity of the environment and the need to support economic development.(Section 2.2.4)

One of the key areas of consideration is

Transport and Infrastructure – The need to combine the emerging spatial patterns for the Cork Region, arising from Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) and the implementation of Government Policy, with the key requirements of the other infrastructure providers (including Irish Water, National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland) to create a plan that is capable of delivering sustainable growth (Section 2.2.4)

Future population projections for County Cork are a primary input to the Core Strategy. The adoption of the NPF and the RSES now means that there are statutory national and regional growth strategies which include detailed population targets based on 2016 Census data. The NPF prescribes population growth targets for each Region and City within the State and the RSES further analyses and sets out, in turn, the future population target for each County and City.(section 2.4.4)

The Core Strategy sets target growth for County Cork at 59,170 persons by 2028; of which 27,514 is within Metropolitan Cork. Carrigtwohill's target population for 2028 is 9,749 which is an increase of 4,669 people over the 2016 population. Lands have been zoned (res and mixed use) with a capacity to adequate to exceed the required 1,784 housing units during this period, of which 1,376 is on residential zoned land.

Objective CS 2-1 Core Strategy: Support the delivery of the Core Strategy in accordance with the Core Strategy Table and the Core Strategy Map

The most significant area to cater for population growth in Carrigtwohill is to be in the form of a new residential neighbourhood located to the north of the rail line in an area known as the **Carrigtwohill Urban Expansion Area, (UEA)**. (Section 2.4.16) The proposed infrastructure serves this expansion area on an east-west axis serving schools and community facilities and also connections southwards to the established town and employment areas.

The County Metropolitan Area (CMA) as set out in the RSES for the Southern Region and the Cork MASP (Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan) Area is the main engine of population and employment growth for the region. In conjunction with the relevant infrastructure providers, it is essential that the critical water services, roads and transport infrastructure is provided in a timely manner to ensure that sufficient lands are available to support the ambitious population growth targets. (Section 2.14.2)

Objective CS 2-3: County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area

(a) Recognise the importance of the role to be played by the Cork Metropolitan Area in the development of the Cork 'MASP' as identified in the RSES for the Southern Region, in tandem with the development of Cork City, to promote its development as an integrated planning unit to function as a single market area for homes and jobs where there is equality of access for all, through an integrated transport system, to the educational and cultural facilities worthy of a modern and vibrant European City;

(b) Recognise Cork Harbour as a unique and strategic asset both nationally and internationally and promote the development of the Cork Harbour Economy as a key driver of economic growth at a metropolitan, county, regional, national and international level, while simultaneously sustainably managing the future development of the Cork Harbour area, taking account of its environmental, ecological, heritage and landscape values.

(c) Maintain the principles of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt to protect the setting of the City and the Metropolitan Towns and to provide easy access to the countryside and facilities for sports and recreation.

(d) Within the Cork Metropolitan Area, and most notably along the existing rail corridor, plan for development to provide the homes and jobs that are necessary to serve the long term planned population prioritised in the following locations, Midleton, Carrigtwohill, Cobh and Little Island.

(e) Support the development of Passage Town Centre to provide for housing, employment, retail, office, community and recreational uses.

(f) Provide an enhanced public transport network linking the City, its environs, the Metropolitan Towns and the major centres of employment in line with the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (2020);

(g) Promote the development in the medium to longer term, of the designated Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) at Monard.

(h) Continue to assist in the redevelopment of industrial uses and major port facilities, primarily at Ringaskiddy, to where deep-water berths are viable and appropriate infrastructure is planned to facilitate freight transport.

(i) Support the existing Strategic Employment Locations as important economic assets, particularly in terms of public transport provision and linkages to local residential populations.

(j) Maximise new development, for both jobs and housing, in the Metropolitan Towns served by the North and East Cork Rail Corridor (including the proposed new settlement at Monard) and to enhance the capacity of these towns to provide services and facilities to meet the needs of their population;

(k) Facilitate the development of the villages so that the rate of future population growth compliments the strategy to achieve a critical mass of population in the towns and provide protection for those areas recognised as under pressure from urban development.

(l) Facilitate the development of renewable energy projects in support of national climate change objective

Objective CS2-7 Network of Settlements – Higher Order Settlements

Strategic Aim. Growth in population and employment so that the Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) can compete effectively for investment and jobs in line with the key enablers identified in the RSES for the Southern Region and the Cork MASP. Consolidate employment at existing employment locations with improved supporting infrastructure, and in particular public transport improvements including those identified in the CMATS (2020). Continue with the strategic rebalancing of the city and county through the development of the UEAs along the East Cork Corridor and the Monard SDZ. Critical population growth, service and employment centres within the Cork Metropolitan Area, providing high levels of community facilities and amenities with infrastructure capacity high quality and integrated public transport connections should be the location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus.

It is considered that the proposed development aligns with the said Objectives.

CDP Volume 4 - Carrigtwohill Urban Expansion Area (UEA)

The Carrigtwohill Urban Expansion Area (UEA also known as Carrigtwohill North) is located to the north of Carrigtwohill and covers an area of c.100 hectares, most of which is north of an bounded by the rail-line, and is bounded by Wises Road to the west, Ballyadam Road to the east.

As per the CDP, the vision for the Carrigtwohill North UEA when fully developed is the delivery of 2747 homes, 3 schools, a mixed-use station quarter, a small park to the west and a large linear park to the east linked with a segregated inter-urban greenway and biodiverse green network, all integrated with the Main Town of Carrigtwohill via high quality sustainable transport linkages. (Section 2.4.83)

Development in this area is hoped to facilitate a significant modal shift to more sustainable transport modes due to the proximity of the railway line and existing/ planned cycling and walking infrastructure. The Plan identifies significant on and off-site infrastructure that is required to facilitate the delivery of housing in the UEA. Much of that infrastructure is included in the Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative – UEA Infrastructure described above.

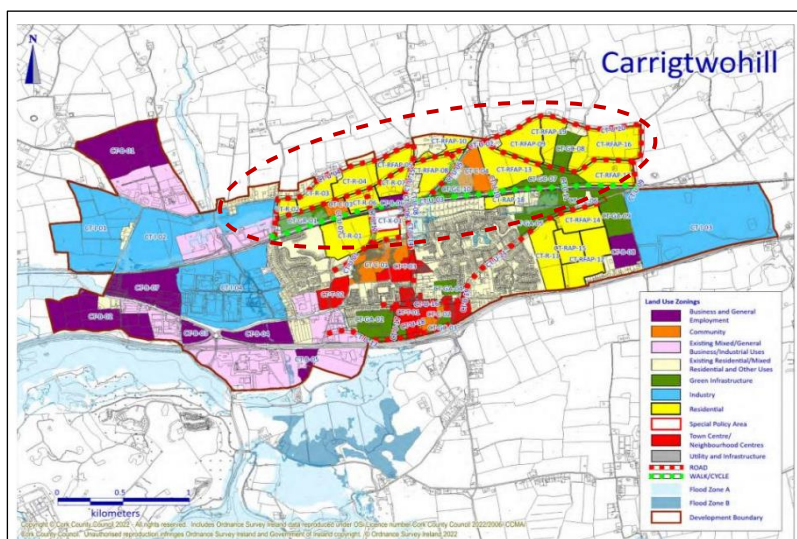


Figure 1. Land Use Zoning and Objectives Map, CDP 2022.

Cork County Council is proposing to deliver the key strategic infrastructure required for the activation of the UEA on a phased basis. (Section 2.4.92)

Two bundles of core, on-site infrastructure, including access roads, water services, and particular areas of open space, are proposed within the UEA that will enable individual parcels of zoned land to be developed independently of each other but in accordance with the LAP. The CDP 2022 states that it is intended for Bundle A infrastructure to be delivered first followed by Bundle B. Bundle A infrastructure, which is included in the Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative – UEA Infrastructure.

Table 1 – Carrigtwohill UEA Bundle A Infrastructure (CDP 2022)		
Zoning Ref (see Figure 2-2)	Infrastructure	Comments
CT-U-02	Western Spine Link Road (Wises Road to Leamlara Road) to access development lands in the UEA	Proposed initial infrastructure bundle. Delivery of Bundle 'A' will facilitate development on the following zones:
CT-U-12	Completion of the Northern Spine Link Road linking the Western Spine Link Road via the underpass to lands south of the railway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT-R-02 • CT-R-03 • CT-R-04
CT-U-15	Upgrade of Station Road North (within UEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT-RFAP-05
CT-U-05	Upgrade Leamlara Road to accommodate Pedestrian and Cycling facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT-R-06 • CT-R-07
-	Delivery of phase 1 of surface water management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT-RFAP-08 • CT-C-03
CT-GR-01	Open Space - Provision of a Small Park West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT-B-06

Bundle B infrastructure, which is included in the Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative – UEA Infrastructure is as per Table 2.

Table 2 – Carrigtwohill UEA Bundle B Infrastructure (CDP 2022)		
Zoning Ref (see Figure 2-2)	Infrastructure	Comments
CT-U-02	Eastern Spine Link Road B (Leamlara Road to Ballyadam Road) to access development lands in the UEA	Delivery of this infrastructure bundle is not proposed to commence until after the delivery of Bundle 'A'.
-	Delivery of phase 2 of surface water management system.	Delivery of Bundle 'B' will facilitate development on the following zones:
CT-GC-07	Open Space. This site forms part of a significant ecological green infrastructure corridor - forming part of Linear Park East.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT-RFAP-09 • CT-RFAP-10 • CT-RFAP-13 • CT-RFAP-16 • CT-RFAP-17 • CT-C-04 • CT-RFAP-19

Figure 2. Carrigtwohill UEA Infrastructure Bundles.

The CDP outlines a number of general objectives which specifically apply to the Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative - UEA Infrastructure, including the following:

CT-GO-03: The green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape assets of Carrigtwohill include its hedgerows, mature trees, woodlands, wetlands (adjoining Cork Harbour Special Protection Area and Great Island Chanel Special Area of Conservation), and other habitats. New development should be sensitively designed and planned to provide for the protection of these features and will only be permitted where it is shown that it is compatible with the requirements of nature conservation directives and with environmental, biodiversity and landscape protection policies

CT-GO-05: Support the implementation of the Carrigtwohill North Urban Expansion Area.

CT-GO-09: Ensure that provision is made in proposals for new development, particularly for housing, employment, retail, and educational uses to provide safe, convenient and pleasant routes for walkers and cyclists linking the development to the railway station, town centre and the other

principal areas of the town for walkers and cyclists. Any such provision must have regard to the existing deficiencies in infrastructure and the requirement to ensure the delivery of adequate infrastructure ahead of or in tandem with the new development. In achieving this objective, special attention will be paid to the layout of the development, to latest DMURS standards, to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to establish a walking and cycling friendly environment.

CT-GO-12: Provide direct high quality segregated links for pedestrians and cyclists from Inter-Urban Cycle route / Greenway IU-1 (see CMATS) to Carrigtwohill Town centre, the IDA Business and Technology Park, the permitted Carrigtwohill Schools' Campus, and existing and future residential areas.

CT-GO-16: All new development will need to make provision for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and provide adequate storm water infrastructure. Surface water management and disposal should be planned in an integrated way in consideration with land use, water quality, amenity and habitat enhancements as appropriate.

It is considered that the proposal accords with the said Objectives.

The proposed multi modal route (motor vehicles, walking and cycling) and associated surface water management infrastructure, ducts and services is represented primarily as Utilities Objectives (Mapped) of the Development Plan, (namely, **Objective CT-U-02** Provision of a new East West Spine Link Rods to access development lands in the UEA), **Objective CT-U-12** Completion of the Northern Spine Link Road linking the Western Spine Link Road via the underpass to lands south of the railway and **Objective CT-U-15** Upgrade of Station Road North within UEA . The proposed scheme accords with the said objectives.

The majority of the contiguous lands to the proposed route are zoned **Residential; Residential Additional Provision; and Residential Further Additional Provision**, (all promoting the development of housing and associated open spaces, community uses including childcare within a tiered approach to zoning); **Green Infrastructure** (public open space and recreational amenities) and **Community** (Promoting the provision of educational, community related and healthcare facilities) for a primary school and a primary and secondary school multi-campus. *(Full objectives and appropriate uses are set out in Chapter 18 of the CDP- Zoning and Land-Use).*

It is considered that the proposal aligns with the said zoning objectives and mapped objectives.

Chapter 11. Water Management

Surface Water

Objective WM 11-10: Surface Water, SuDS and Water Sensitive Urban Design

- a) Require that all new developments incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Efforts should be taken to limit the extent of hard surfacing and impermeable paving.
- b) Encourage the application of a Water Sensitive Urban Design approach in the design of new development or other urban interventions. Opportunities to contribute to, protect or re-enforce existing green infrastructure corridors or assets should be maximised.
- c) Optimise and maximise the application of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to mitigate flood risk, enhance biodiversity, protect and enhance visual and recreational amenity; all in the most innovative and creative manner appropriate and in accordance with best practices. Proposals should demonstrate that due consideration has been given to nature based solutions in the first instance in arriving at the preferred SuDS solution for any development.

- d) Provide adequate storm water infrastructure in order to accommodate the planned levels of growth expected for the County.
- e) Where surface water from a development is discharging to a waterbody, appropriate pollution control measures (e.g, hydrocarbon interceptors, silt traps) should be implemented.
- f) The capacity and efficiency of the national road network drainage regimes will be safeguarded for national road drainage purposes

Objective WM 11-11: River Channel Protection

- a) Ensure adequate protection measures along watercourses, keeping them free from development by ensuring development is kept 10m or other appropriate distance from stream and river banks in line with best practice for riparian corridors. Development altering the hydromorphology of a watercourse will not normally be permitted, where it may result in the deterioration in the status of a water body through for example, impacts on water quality, quantity or flow rate, riparian habitat or protected species.
- b) There will be a presumption against the use of culverts and opportunities to actively remove existing culverts and re-naturalise/ daylighting watercourses will be encouraged in development proposals.
- c) Where river crossings are considered necessary, clear span river crossing structures shall be used on fisheries waters where possible. The Council will consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland in relation to any such proposals.

Objective WM 11-12: Surface Water Management

Manage surface water catchments and the use and development of lands adjoining streams, watercourses and rivers in such a way as to minimise damage to property by instances of flooding and with regard to any conservation objectives of European sites within the relevant catchments and floodplains.

It is considered that the proposal accords with the said zoning objectives and mapped objectives. Preparation of a CEMP and WMP and inbuilt mitigations and methods ensure water quality is not unduly affected. Note that AA and EIAR has been screened out.

Flood Risk Management

Objective WM 11-17: Development in Flood Risk Areas

When considering proposals for development, which may be vulnerable to flooding, and that would generally be inappropriate as set out in Table 3.2 of the Guidelines, the following criteria must be satisfied:

1. The subject lands have been zoned or otherwise designated for the particular use or form of development in an operative development plan, which has been adopted or varied taking account of these Guidelines.
2. The proposal has been subject to an appropriate flood risk assessment that demonstrates:
 - a. The development proposed will not increase flood risk elsewhere and, if practicable, will reduce overall flood risk;
 - b. The development proposal includes measures to minimise flood risk to people, property, the economy and the environment as far as reasonably possible;
 - c. The development proposed includes measures to ensure that residual risks to the area and/or development can be managed to an acceptable level as regards the adequacy of existing flood protection measures or the design, implementation and funding of any future flood risk management measures and provisions for emergency services access; and
 - d. The development proposed addresses the above in a manner that is also compatible with the achievement of wider planning objectives in relation to development of good urban design and vibrant and active streetscapes.

The acceptability or otherwise of levels of residual risk should be made with consideration of the type and predicted future use of the development and the local development context. The development is assessed not to have the potential to give rise to negative or adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites or Natural Heritage Areas or proposed Natural Heritage Areas

A flood risk assessment (FRA) for the Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative – UEA Infrastructure has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines.. The objectives of the FRA were to: Identify potential sources of flood risk; Confirm the level of flood risk at and adjacent to the proposed development and identify key hydraulic features; Assess the impact the proposed development has on flood risk; Develop appropriate flood risk mitigation and management measures which will reduce the flood risk and allow for safe and sustainable development of the proposed infrastructure.

A hydraulic model was developed to assess the fluvial flood risk to the proposed development, The model results showed overland flows during the 1% and 0.1% AEP events along the Woodstock Stream, which pass through the UEA lands.

Mitigation measures, including a proposed open channel, culverts, and a flow storage, have been incorporated into the model to address these risks as well as risk from pluvial flooding.

The flood risk assessment shows that the proposed development, along with the mitigation measures, will not result in increased flood extents or flood levels.

The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that the development is in agreement with the core principles contained within the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines

The Flood maps indicate some localised areas at risk along the rail-line and within Green Infrastructure lands and is not a significant issue for the proposed route (spine roads). It is considered that the proposed development adheres with Objective WM 11-17 and accords with the Flood Guidelines.

Chapter 12. Transportation

Transport is a key enabler of all economic and social activities and it is closely linked to quality of life, health and wellbeing. Our transport policy needs to facilitate efficient development of the economy, enhance quality of life and social inclusion, reduce both demand for travel and dependence on the private car for transport, and support high frequency public transport services. (Section 12.1.1)

The National Planning Framework and its compact growth objectives, and the increased urgency for action in addressing climate change, as highlighted in the Government’s Climate Action Plan, provide the substantive context for sustainable transport policy. (Section 12.1.4)

This plan emphasises sustainable, and particularly, active travel. However, providing for the sustainable movement of goods, services and people will necessarily include some travel by road. Maintaining, improving and protecting the strategic function of the road network is therefore critical to the County’s economic and social health. Additionally, strategic road infrastructure investment projects are necessary to unlock certain development opportunities. This plan therefore facilitates improvements in road infrastructure and safeguards efficiency in the network. (Section 12.1.5)

The vision for transport in the County is to support the delivery of an efficient transport system supporting connectivity and competitiveness, and to make sustainable travel modes an attractive

and convenient choice for as many people as possible in order to deliver economic, social, health, wellbeing, environmental and climate action benefits. (Section 12.2.1)

In alignment with National policy and the goal of achieving sustainable development and compact growth, and in the interest of a vibrant economy, a healthy environment and enhanced wellbeing, transport policy in the County will seek to achieve the following: (Section 12.2.2)

Compact growth and the transition to a low carbon society - support the transformational change required to implement the National Planning Framework and the Southern Region Spatial and Economic Strategy particularly relating to compact growth and the transition to a low carbon society;

Transport oriented development - influence transport demand and reduce the need to travel; promote land use patterns that support sustainable transport investment;

Sustainable travel choices – need to provide for and prioritise sustainable modes of transport, acknowledging the wider benefits to society and minimising the environmental impacts of travel;

Enhanced connectivity and permeability – need to promote walking/cycling between homes and areas of employment, schools, public transport, retail and other services;

Clear transport investment priorities – need to set out investment priorities that will be progressed during the plan period; (12.2.2)

Key concepts that underpin these objectives are:

An integrated approach to land use and transport planning in the form of a core strategy, settlement hierarchy, housing densities, location of employment and zoning of objectives based on sustainable settlement patterns and maximising sustainable transport opportunities. (12.2.3)

Objective TM 12-1: Integration of Land Use and Transport

Support and facilitate the integration of land use with transportation infrastructure, through the development of diverse, sustainable, compact settlements, to achieve sustainable transport outcomes, with the pattern, location and design of new development in the County to support existing and planned well-functioning, integrated public transport, walking and cycling transport modes.

a) The Council will support delivery of transport programmes and policies that have been committed to in Project 2040 and the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan as they apply to County Cork.

b) Residential development will, where possible, be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are within or contiguous with the existing urban areas, and which are, or will be, most accessible by walking cycling or public transport - including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised.

c) Future developments will be planned and designed to maximise their accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling and in particular, larger scale, trip intensive developments, such as offices and retail, will generally be focused into central locations highly accessible by sustainable transport modes;

d) New employment and residential development will be consolidated and intensified in a manner which renders it serviceable by public transport and ensures that it is highly accessible, by walking, cycling and public transport. Within Metropolitan Cork, trip intensive developments or significant levels of development will occur in locations which are well served by existing or proposed high capacity public transport;

Objective TM 12-2: Active Travel

TM12-2-1: Deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking and cycling to promote accessible, attractive, liveable, vibrant and safe settlements to work, live, shop and engage in community life, within a ten minute walk of one's home. Prioritise development in our settlements that is well located and designed to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport trips. Promote

equal access for all through the adherence to universal design in the external built environment to facilitate greater use of public transport, walking and cycling.

It is considered that the proposed development accords with the said objective, as it improves local permeability and connectivity to the town centre, rail services and the strategic Greenways by way of walking cycling infrastructure.

TM12-2-2: Promote and facilitate an active travel culture in the County where active travel is a viable choice.

Objective TM12-3: Rail Transport

Support and prioritise the following key Rail Transport initiatives:

- a) Encourage the enhancement of service provision in tandem with planned population and employment growth;
- b) Secure the delivery of new stations to support planned population growth in: Carrigtwohill (Carrigtwohill West), Midleton (Waterrock), Cobh (Ballynoe), and Monard;

Chapter 15 Biodiversity and Environment.

Loss or damage to sites and places of biodiversity value caused by changes in landuse practices and pressure for development, disturbance of places inhabited by wild plants and animals, pollution of watercourses and the spread of invasive alien species all affect the extent and quality of our natural environment. (Section 15.1.3)

Objective BE 15-1: Support and comply with national biodiversity protection policies

- a) Support and comply with the objectives of the National Biodiversity Plan 2017-2021 (and any future National Biodiversity Plan which may be adopted during the period of this Plan) as appropriate, b) Implement the current County Biodiversity Action Plan and any future updated Plan;
- c) Support and comply with biodiversity policy set out in other national and regional policy documents as appropriate.

The Habitats Directive provides for the protection of biodiversity across Europe through the designation of Special Areas of Conservation. These sites are proposed or designated for protection because they support habitats and/ or populations of plant and animal species that have been identified to be rare or threatened at a European level.(Section 15.3.1)

The Birds Directive provides for the protection of sites used (for breeding or feeding) by species of birds that are rare, or vulnerable or in danger of extinction. It also provides for the protection of areas that are particularly important for migratory birds, where they congregate in significant numbers. Sites designated under the Birds Directive are called Special Protection Areas (SPAs). (Section 15.3.2)

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report has been prepared. The report aims to identify, quantify and evaluate potential effects of the proposed infrastructure project on habitats species and ecosystems in the surrounding environment. The report considers impacts to ecological receptors and proposes mitigation measures to offset or reduce the identified impacts. This EclA has examined the biodiversity and baseline ecological conditions of the receiving environment within the site of the proposed Carrigtwohill URDF Infrastructure Project and its Zone of Influence, assessed the likely effects of the proposed development, individually and in combination with other plans and projects, on the sites, habitats, species and other ecological features of Local Importance (Higher Value) or above which were identified within the footprint of the proposed development and its Zone of Influence. This report has also proposed suitable measures to avoid or reduce the likely

effects on those features and evaluated any residual effects. These measures, as well as further ecological enhancements of the proposed development, were developed in line with Cork County Council's policy in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain. On the basis of that assessment, it is concluded that the Carrigtwohill URDF Infrastructure Project, provided that it is implemented in accordance with the measures proposed in this EclA, will not give rise to any significant negative effects on the biodiversity or ecology of the receiving environment and will be aligned with the principle of Biodiversity Net Gain.

It is considered that circa 0.5 hectares of the 5.5 hectares of open space and recreation areas within the scheme be planted as a native woodland (in a single or across two landholdings) to compensate the 1,960 metres of hedgerow loss, in addition to proposed planting. This is considered appropriate given the value of the mature nature of the existing hedgerows, when compared to new planting.

Objective BE 15-2: Protect sites, habitats and species

- a) Protect all natural heritage sites which are designated or proposed for designation under European legislation, National legislation and International Agreements. Maintain and where possible enhance appropriate ecological linkages between these. This includes Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Marine Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna and Ramsar Sites. These sites are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.
- b) Provide protection to species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2015, to Annexes of the Habitats and Birds Directives, and to animal species protected under the Wildlife Acts in accordance with relevant legal requirements. These species are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.
- c) Protect and where possible enhance areas of local biodiversity value, ecological corridors and habitats that are features of the County's ecological network. This includes rivers, lakes, streams and ponds, peatland and other wetland habitats, woodlands, hedgerows, tree lines, veteran trees, natural and semi-natural grasslands as well as coastal and marine habitats. It particularly includes habitats of special conservation significance in Cork as listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.
- d) Recognise the value of protecting geological heritage sites of local and national interest, as they become notified to the local authority, and protect them from inappropriate development
- e) Encourage, pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the protection and enhancement of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species

Objective BE 15-3: Local Authority plan making

- a) Ensure that biodiversity issues are considered at the earliest possible stages of plan making;
- b) Ensure that plans and strategies comply with nature conservation legislation and policy as required (fulfil Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment requirements); and
- c) Carry out ecological impact assessment of plans and strategies as appropriate.

Objective BE 15-5: Biodiversity on Council owned and managed land and property

- a) Protect biodiversity and support the principle of biodiversity net gain on land and property owned and managed by Cork County Council.
- b) Support the implementation of positive conservation management on lands and property which are owned or managed by Cork County Council;
- c) Support and implement best practice in the management of roadside boundaries including tree lines and hedgerows managed by Council;
- d) Support national policy to create new woodlands on public land and participate in the Creation of Woodlands on Public Lands Scheme and any successor schemes;

- e) Where possible, develop and implement Pollinator Plans and/or Biodiversity Action Plans for lands managed by Cork County Council in accordance with the National Biodiversity Action Plan (and any future National Biodiversity Plan which may be adopted during the lifetime of this Plan) and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan;
- f) Support the use of natural approaches to flood management and control on lands owned or managed by or on behalf of Cork County Council.
- g) The Council will incorporate primarily native planting into new landscaping schemes within its own developments

A draft Appropriate Assessment Screening has been prepared to assist the competent authority. The report has examined the details of the proposed Carrigtwohill URDF UEA Infrastructure Project and the Natura 2000 sites in their Zone of Influence. It has analysed the potential impacts of the proposed development on the receiving natural environment and evaluated their effects, both individually and in combination with other plans and projects, in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 sites.

The draft AA Screening Report has concluded that the proposed development will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to impacts which would constitute significant effects on the Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA, in view of its/ their conservation objectives. The Council's Ecology team concurs with said report as follows: Cork County Council evaluation and overall conclusion that there are no significant effects on European Sites foreseen as a result of the proposal.

It is considered that the proposal accords with the Objectives of Chapter 15, set out above.

Chapter 16 Built and Cultural Heritage

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage consists of the material remains left behind by past societies from earliest times up to the post medieval period and includes all structures, places, caves, sites, features and portable objects, whether located on land, underwater or in the inter-tidal zone. In general, those parts of the archaeological heritage that are part of or attached to the landscape are referred to as monuments. Cork has a rich archaeological heritage, which has left its traces across its urban and rural landscape. The Council fully recognises its role in protecting this resource for future generations to enjoy. (Section 16.2.1)

Objectives HE 16-2: Protection of Archaeological Sites and Monuments

Secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional cases preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments and their setting included in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) (see www.archaeology.ie) and the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and of sites, features and objects of archaeological and historical interest generally. In securing such preservation, the planning authority will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as outlined in the Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage policy document or any changes to the policy within the lifetime of the Plan.

Objectives HE 16-5: Zones of Archaeological Potential

Protect the Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAPs) located within historic towns, urban areas and around archaeological monuments generally. Any development within the ZAPs will need to take

cognisance of the upstanding and potential for subsurface archaeology, through appropriate archaeological assessment.

The County Archaeologist has examined the **Archaeological and Built Heritage Assessment** (J Cronin & Ass) and is satisfied that the proposal is acceptable as set out.

Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the objectives of the County Development Plan, specifically, Objective CS 2-3: County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area (d) Within the Cork Metropolitan Area, and most notably along the existing rail corridor, plan for development to provide the homes and jobs that are necessary to serve the long term planned population prioritised in... Carrigtwohill.

EIAR and AA have been screened out and the proposal would not give rise to increased flood risk.

It is considered that the proposed development accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



Thomas Watt
Senior Planner