

# **26 no Housing Units**

## **Coachford, Co. Cork**

### **Planning Report**



**Cork  
County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

## Proposed Development

This report relates to a Cork County Council application to seek approval for Part 8 Planning Exemption under 'Planning and Development (Section 179A) Regulations 2023' for the construction of 26 no. housing units at Coachford, County Cork.

The subject site is 1.4 Hectares and consists of a total of 26 no. units comprising of:

- ten 2-bed 2 storey houses,
- six 2-bed townhouses
- ten 1 bed apartments,
- the construction of a new footpath running from the development entrance to the village centre along R619,
- all other associated ancillary development and works including footpaths, communal bin and bike stores, car parking including spaces designated for reduced mobility access, drainage, landscaping and amenity areas

The site of the proposed development is approximately 125 metres north of Coachford village centre and is located off the R619. The proposed development is located on a greenfield site. Although Coachford village is located to the immediate south of the site, the area is largely rural in nature and is dominated by agricultural land uses.

There is no footpath linking the site to the village centre. The proposed development seeks to enhance the connectivity of the development with the services and amenities, through the provision of a new footpath and public lighting linking the internal pedestrian infrastructure of the proposed scheme to the village centre.

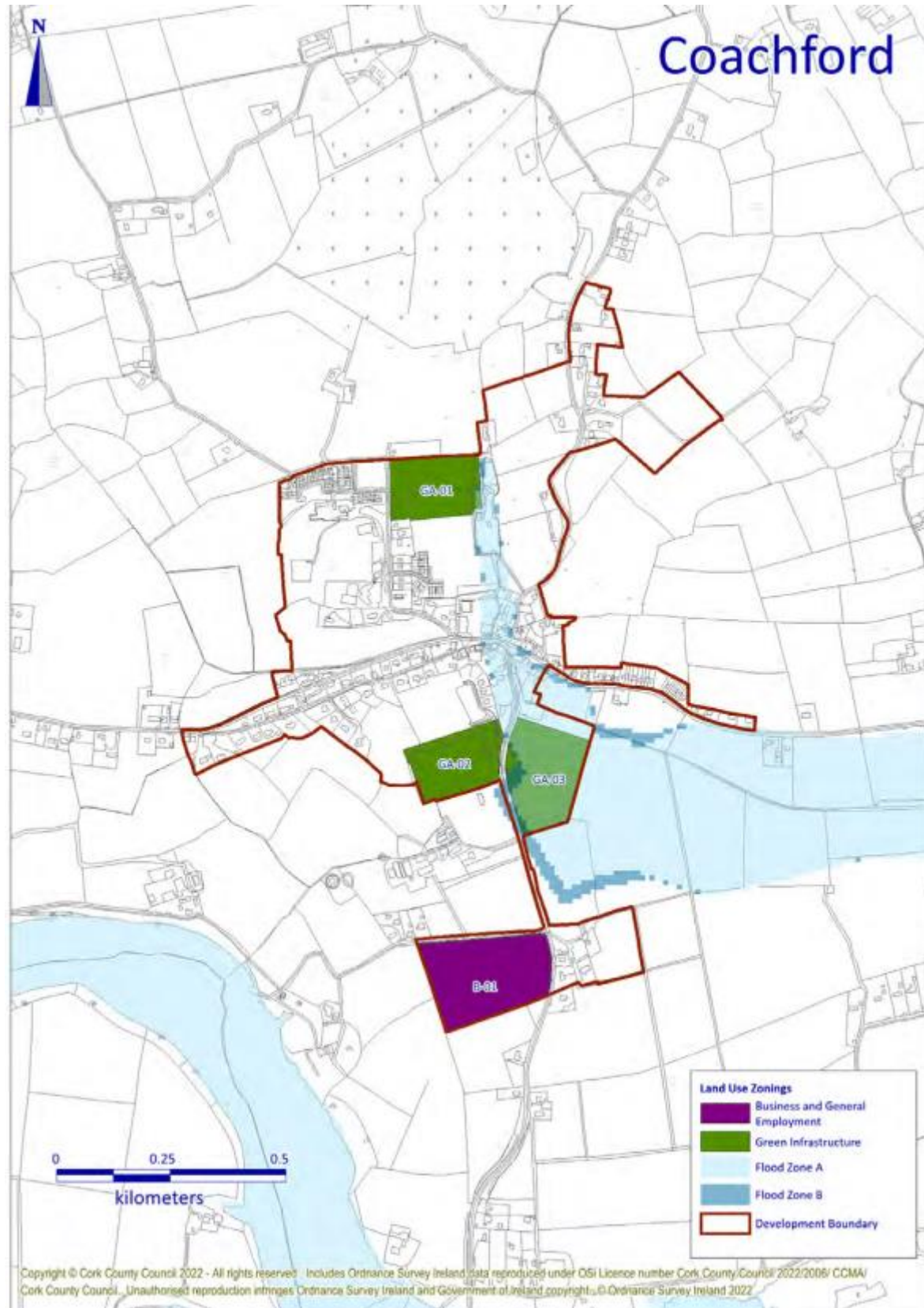
## Policy Context

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-28 (CDP) identifies Coachford as a Key Village. The site is located within the development boundary of Coachford. DB-01 encourages 95 houses during the Development Plan Period:

County Development Plan Objectives: Macroom MD Development Boundary Objectives for Coachford	
Objective No.	
DB-01	Within the development boundary encourage the development of up to 95 additional dwelling units during the plan period.
DB-02	New development should be sensitively designed and planned to provide for the protection of green infrastructure assets of the village 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 as set out in <b>Volume One Main Policy Material and Volume Two Heritage and Amenity</b> .

Section 4.9.6 of Volume 4, CDP 2022 states that here are two substantial outstanding planning permissions which if developed would add 95 dwellings to the existing housing stock in the village. Section 4.9.7 states that the CDP 2022 makes provision for the development of **an additional 95 dwelling units** within the village. I therefore consider that the proposed number of units is within the additional 95 dwellings allocation.

The proposal is for 26 residential units within a developable area 1.08 ha, resulting in a density of 22 units per ha. This is consistent with the Medium Density B category as provided for in objective HOU 4-7 (Housing Density on Residentially Zoned Land).



## Car Parking/Bike Parking

The maximum car parking stands are contained in Table 12.6 of the CDP 2022 and provides a maximum of 2 no. car parking spaces per dwelling house. The calculations for car parking have not been provided. I have calculated the maximum allowable as per the CDP 2022 as follows:

Type of units	Maximum as per CDP 2022
ten 2-bed 2 storey houses	2 per dwelling (20)
six 2-bed townhouses	2 per dwelling (12)
ten 1 bed apartments	1.25 per apartment (16)
<b>Total maximum allowable</b>	<b>48</b>

46 car parking spaces are shown on the site layout map thus the proposal has not exceeded the maximum.

The current minimum cycling parking standards are contained Table 12.9 of the CDP 2022. The calculations for cycle parking have not been provided. As per previous advice from the Planning and Development Departments, the following should be provided:

- 15 spaces for apartments (1 per apartment = 10 + 5no. guest spaces)
- 7 spaces for houses without rear access
- 4 guest spaces for the houses (1 for every 5 houses – 16 houses)

## Public Open Space

In total, 0.21ha of public open space is provided within the development, equating to 20% useable open space. This complies with the 12-18% requirements of Cork County Council's *Interim Policy on Recreation & Amenity*. A natural play area is proposed.

## Private Open Space

The private open space proposed meets the minimum requirements of *SPPR 2 - Minimum Private Open Space Standards for Houses* as per the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities*.

All apartments have a private outdoor amenity space of either a garden or balcony space, the provision of which is satisfactory.

## **Flooding**

A Flood Risk Assessment has been provided. This stated that the residential section of the proposed development is not directly impacted by the flood zones indicated on the map but it is proposed to construct a new footpath along the western verge of the R619 from the development southwards towards the village and this footpath is shown to pass through the projected flood zones A and B.

The documents also states that JB Barry consulting Engineers have established that the 1400 x 1400 Culvert under the main street has adequate capacity to cater for exceptional storm events but that there is some debris within the culverts that should be removed. In addition, it has been established that the stone culvert to the west of the Dairygold site should be replaced and funding is in place for these works.

Table 3.1 of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines classifies the vulnerability of land uses and types of development. The closest land use description to the public footpath in the table would be 'Local Transport Infrastructure' which is in the Less Vulnerable class.

The Justification Test concludes that it has been established that the localised flooding within the village and identified in the CDP 2022 is primarily the result of debris partially blocking the existing 1400mm x 1400mm concrete culvert within the village and the poor condition of the stone culvert to the west of the Dairygold yard.

The Flood Risk Assessment states that the proposed new storm collection system incorporating SUDs measures and the new sewer to be constructed under the R619 will alleviate the risk of runoff from the development lands causing flooding to the houses on the western side of the R619.

The Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the residential section of the proposed development, including all housing, gardens, roads, greens etc. are outside of flood zones and only short sections of the proposed footpath to the village pass through the mapped flood zones.

## **Services**

Pre-connection enquiries were submitted to Uisce Éireann (UE) to assess the feasibility of providing water supply and wastewater connections to the site. UE have issued a confirmation of feasibility for both.

A Drainage Impact Assessment has been provided. SuDS measures are proposed for the development in both public and private areas in accordance with the guidance from the County Development Plan 2022 Advice Note 1 on Surface Water management and the CIRIA SuDS Manual C753.

## **AA Screening and Ecology**

A 'Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination' report has been provided as part of submitted documents. Based on the Appropriate Assessment Screening process, it has been determined that no likely significant effects will arise on any European sites.

The site is bound by existing mature hedgerows and treelines, with scrub developing within the site. A stream runs north-south alongside the western boundary. The proposed development will require

some removal of scrub species that have taken over the site. However, the proposal seeks the retention of mature trees, existing boundary hedgerows and communal open green spaces included as part of the overall proposal that support habitats, local biodiversity and the existing ecological corridors.

While the approach to biodiversity is positive and the majority of hedgerows are to be retained, the proposal would benefit from presenting hedgerow removal/retention figures. The retention of the existing mature hedgerow and tree line with additional areas to the eastern edge of the site will result in minimal impact on the existing ecology, whilst the inclusion of nature-based solutions to urban drainage such as bio-swales will deliver an overall biodiversity net gain.

### **EIAR Screening**

An EIA determination has been carried out – see Appendix A – and this concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact report is not therefore required.

### **Exemption Status**

In considering whether or not the proposed development constitutes exempt development under Section 179(A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the proposed development is considered against the requirements and criteria set out in this section of the Act.

The proposed development is classified as ‘Housing Development’ on Council owned lands which are within the Development Boundary for Coachford as per the CDP 2022. The lands are serviceable. An EIAR is not required. As AA has been screened out by the relevant competent expert within Cork County Council, it is considered that the proposed development meets the provisions of Section 179(A) of the Planning and development Act and would therefore be classed as exempt from the Part 8 process.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed redevelopment of the subject site is considered to be in accordance with the core strategy and objectives of the County Development Plan 2022 having regard to its location within the development boundary and as such represents the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## Appendix A: EIS Assessment

Establishing if the proposal is a ' <i>sub-threshold development</i> ':	
Planning Register Reference:	None provided.
Development Summary:	To construct 26 no. dwellings
Was a Screening Determination carried out under Section 176A-C?	No, Proceed to <b>Part A</b>
<b>A. Schedule 5 Part 1</b> - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, <b>Part 1</b> , of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)? (Tick as appropriate)	
No	Proceed to <b>Part B</b>
<b>B. Schedule 5 Part 2</b> - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, <b>Part 2</b> , of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) <b>and</b> does it meet/exceed the thresholds? (Tick as appropriate)	
Yes, the project is of a type listed <b>but</b> is <i>sub-threshold</i> :  Class 10 'Infrastructure projects'. The threshold is the construction of more than 500 dwelling units. The proposed development is for 26 housing units which is substantially below this threshold.  The proposed project is considered to be an urban development within other parts of a built-up area. The proposed development is 1.08 hectares (ha) which is below the 10 hectares threshold in other parts of a built up area, therefore an EIAR is not required to be produced in accordance with Schedule 5 Part 2 (10) (b) (iv).	<b>Proceed to Part C</b>
<b>C. If Yes</b> , has Schedule 7A information/screening report been submitted?	
Yes, Schedule 7A information/screening report has been submitted	<b>Screening Determination required</b>

## Screening Determination:

### A. Case Details:

Planning Register Reference:	None provided.	
Development Summary:		
	<b>Yes / No / N/A:</b>	<b>Comment (if relevant):</b>
Does the application include information specified in Schedule 7A?	Yes	
Other relevant information submitted:		
Does the application include a NIS and/or other reports to enable AA screening?	Yes	A 'Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination' report has been provided as part of submitted documents. Based on the Appropriate Assessment Screening process, it has been determined that no likely significant effects will arise on any European sites.
Is an IED/IPC/Waste Licence or Waste Water Discharge Authorisation (or review of licence/ authorisation) required from the EPA for the subject development?	No	
If YES has the EPA been consulted?		
Have any other relevant <sup>1</sup> assessments of the effects on the environment been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives –for example SEA or AA?	Yes	A 'Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination' report has been provided as part of submitted documents.

### B. Examination:

#### 1. Characteristics of proposed development (including demolition, construction, operation, or decommissioning):

	<b>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development</b> (i.e. the nature and extent):
(a) <b>The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (including any demolition works):</b>	The size of the proposed development area is approx. 1.4ha. The proposed development involves the construction of residential development comprising 26 residential units.
(b) <b>Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects:</b>	The proposed development will be similar to the existing newly constructed and under construction housing developments which are to the west of the site. The proposed development is approximately 0.03km from the proposed residential developments at Glebe (Planning Ref. no's 22/4349) comprising 45 residential units and 0.35km from the proposed

<sup>1</sup> Relevant assessments are those which have a significant bearing on the project.



	<p>development (Planning Ref. no. 22/5397) comprising 9 residential units in Knockanowen.</p> <p>A cumulative total of 80 residential units would be developed, which remains small scale and below the threshold of 500 units required to undertake a mandatory EIA.</p>
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<p><b>(c) Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity:</b></p> <p><i>Will construction or the operation of the proposal use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?</i></p>	<p>Although the majority of the land proposed for this development is underutilised, hedgerows are present on site. Detailed site assessments in relation to biodiversity have been undertaken on the subject site and the findings of these studies accompany this planning application.</p> <p>Water will be required for the homes. This has been agreed with Uisce Éireann, and a preliminary agreement is included with this application.</p>
<p><b>(d) Production of waste:</b></p> <p><i>Will the proposal produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?</i></p>	<p>The operational phase of the proposed development will generally result in domestic waste which will be under a variety of responsibility.</p> <p>It is not envisaged that emissions from heating systems and air conditioning units within the residential units onsite will exceed regulated standards for modern residential developments.</p> <p>The construction phase of the proposed development will likely generate waste such as plastic wrappings, strips, containers, polystyrene and wooden pallets etc.</p>
<p><b>(e) Pollution and nuisances:</b></p> <p><i>Will the proposal release pollutants to ground or surface water, or air (including noise and vibrations) or water, or lead to exceeding environmental standards set out in other Directives?</i></p>	<p>The proposed development includes for the management of storm and foul waters from the subject site and landscaping to improve the aesthetic locally.</p> <p>Construction works will be subject to the standard environmental and health and safety controls.</p>
<p><b>(f) Major accidents and disasters:</b></p> <p><i>In accordance with scientific knowledge, is there a risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?</i></p>	<p>Potential risks associated with the proposed development include uncontrolled release of pollutants to the surrounding environment via uncontrolled construction works. A CEMP has been prepared to mitigate.</p> <p>The Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the residential section of the proposed development, including all housing, gardens, roads, greens etc. are outside of flood zones and only short sections of the proposed footpath to the village pass through the mapped flood zones.</p>
<p><b>(g) Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution:</b></p>	<p>Potential risks to human health could occur during the Construction Phase. This would largely be limited to those associated with traffic, noise and dust. A CEMP has been prepared to mitigate.</p>
<p><b>2. Location of proposed development:</b></p>	
<p><b>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development:</b></p>	<p><b>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location</b> (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):</p>
<p><b>(a) Generally describe the location of the site and its surroundings:</b></p>	<p>The site of the proposed development is approximately 125 metres north of Coachford village centre and is located off the R619. The proposed development is located on a greenfield site. Although Coachford village is located to the immediate south of the site, the area is largely rural in nature and is dominated by agricultural land uses.</p>

	<p>There is no footpath linking the site to the village centre. The proposed development seeks to enhance the connectivity of the development with the services and amenities, through the provision of a new footpath and public lighting linking the internal pedestrian infrastructure of the proposed scheme to the village centre.</p>
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<p><b>(b) Is the project located within, close to or has it the potential to impact on any site specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- European site</li> <li>- NHA/pNHA</li> <li>- Designated Nature Reserve</li> <li>- Designated refuge for flora or fauna</li> <li>- Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation, protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ local area plan/ draft plan or variation of a plan.</li> </ul>	<p>The Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination states that on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant negative affect to any EU site.</p> <p>It was determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 is not required.</p>
<p><b>(c) Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies (including riparian areas and river mouths), the coastal zone and the marine environment, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the project?</b></p>	<p>An EclA has been prepared for the proposed development to identify the extent and quality of the habitats present on the site. The EclA concludes that following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, there will be no adverse effect on surface water quality within and surrounding the subject site and therefore, it can be stated that no wetlands, riparian areas or river mouths will be affected by the proposed development.</p>
<p><b>(d) Is the proposal likely to be highly visible to many people? Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location, or are there any routes or facilities that are used by the public for recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the proposal?</b></p>	<p>As with all development, and particularly the development of greenfield sites, visual impacts are inevitable. However, considering all submitted information and the subject site's location in an urban area zoned for residential, it is considered that the proposed development will not have any significant or profound residual landscape or visual impacts except on the individual property dwellings at close proximity accustomed to a rural outlook.</p>
<p><b>(e) Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the project?</b></p>	<p>There are no Recorded Monuments or Protected Structures within the site boundary. There is one Recorded Monument (SMR) located approximately 0.8km to the north of the site. The SMR (CO10311) comprising a standing stone in field. There are no proposed works in the area of the Recorded Monument.</p>
<p><b>(f) Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, or occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the proposal?</b></p>	<p>The subject site is located at the edge of the village and is not located in a position that may have an impact on sensitive land uses.</p>

<p>(g) Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the proposal?</p>	<p>An EclA has been prepared for the proposed development to identify the extent and quality of the habitats present on the site. The EclA concludes that following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures there will be no impacts on local biodiversity features.</p>	
<p>(h) Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, and where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal e.g. the status of water bodies under the Water Framework Directive?</p>	<p>Waterbodies in the vicinity of the proposed development site i.e. Lee (Cork)_080 (Knockaneowen Stream) and the Iniscarra area of the River Lee were classified as 'At Risk' during the 2nd Cycle of the WFD, during the 3rd cycle these have been upgraded to 'Not at risk' with a 'Good' water quality status.</p> <p>The EclA states that although unlikely given the distance involved, surface water run-off during the construction or operational phases as well as wastewater discharges from the proposed development could potentially impact on Cork Harbour SPA via the Knockaneowen Stream and River Lee. The EclA states that given the distance from Cork Harbour SPA, the proposed development site will not provide significant ex-situ habitats for SCI birds of Cork Harbour SPA or any other European site.</p>	
<p>(i) Is the site located in an area susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, or flooding which could cause the proposal to present environmental problems?</p>	<p>No.</p>	
<p>(j) Are there any additional considerations that are specific to this location?</p>	<p>No.</p>	
<p><b>3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts:</b></p>		
<p><b>If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below.</b></p> <p><b>(including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):</b></p>	<p><b>If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.</b></p>	<p><b>Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?</b></p>
<p><b>Population and human health:</b></p>		
<p>Potential risks to human health could occur during the Construction Phase. This would largely be limited to those associated with traffic, noise and dust. This would be limited to construction phase.</p> <p>Potential risks to human health could occur from foul water and water supply issues.</p>	<p>A CEMP, prepared by the contractor upon engagement and prior to the commencement of construction works and a Traffic and Transportation Assessment that accompanies this</p>	<p>No.</p>

	<p>application include the mitigation measures where necessary to ensure that the proposed development will not pose a risk to human health.</p> <p>Proposals are included for the management of storm and foul waters from the subject site.</p>	
<p><b>Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive.<sup>2</sup> *</b></p>		
<p>The proposed development site does not overlap with any European sites. The proposed development site is potentially hydrologically connected to one European site i.e. Cork Harbour SPA, which is located 24.2km southeast of the proposed development site. The Knockaneowen Stream, a 2nd order tributary of the River Lee is located along the western boundary of the proposed development site. The River Lee meets Cork Harbour SPA c.32.6km downstream of the proposed development site. Although unlikely given the distances involved, there is potential hydrological connection between the proposed development site and Cork Harbour SPA.</p> <p>Wastewater from the site will ultimately discharge into River Lee via the Coachford Wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) approximately 32.5km upstream of Cork Harbour SPA. This could potentially impact on water quality within the Cork Harbour SPA.</p> <p>Although unlikely given the distance involved, surface water run-off during the construction or operational phases as well as wastewater discharges from the proposed development could potentially impact on Cork Harbour SPA via the Knockaneowen Stream and River Lee.</p>	<p>The Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination states that on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant negative affect to any EU site.</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p><b>Land, soil, water, air and climate:</b></p>		
<p>Potential risks to air and climate could occur during the Construction Phase. This would largely be limited to those associated with traffic and dust. This would be limited to construction phase.</p>	<p>A CEMP, prepared by the contractor upon engagement and prior to the commencement of construction works</p>	<p>No.</p>

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

	and a Traffic and Transportation Assessment that accompanies this application include the mitigation measures.	
<b><i>Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape:*</i></b>		
There are no Recorded Monuments or Protected Structures within the site boundary. There is one Recorded Monument (SMR) located approximately 0.8km to the north of the site. The SMR (CO10311) comprising a standing stone in field.	There are no proposed works in the area of the Recorded Monument.	No.

<b>Cumulative effects:</b>		
There are no current or previous plans or projects in the immediate vicinity that are considered likely in-combination with the proposed development to result in significant impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.	AA screening and EclA have been prepared and submitted.	No.
<b>Transboundary effects:</b>		
Transboundary effects are not applicable to this proposed development.	No mitigation measures are required.	No.
<b>4. Additional Considerations:</b>		
<b>Further relevant information, if any, relating to how the results of any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment have been taken into account (e.g. SEA, AA screening, AA):</b>	A 'Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination' report has been provided as part of submitted documents. Based on the Appropriate Assessment Screening process, it has been determined that no likely significant effects will arise on any European sites.	
<b>Other relevant information/ considerations of note:</b>	-	
<b>C. Determination:</b>		
<b>No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.</b>	EIAR is not required	
<b>D. Main Reasons and Considerations:</b>		
<p>Having regard to the criteria in Schedule 7, the information provided in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The nature and scale of the proposed development,</li> <li>(b) The location of the site on lands within the development boundary of Coachford under the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan 2022,</li> <li>(c) The location of the site outside of any sensitive location specified in Article 103(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended),</li> <li>(d) The Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination report and EclA submitted.</li> <li>(e) The mitigation measures set out in the submitted planning application documentation including within the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)</li> </ul> <p>It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact report is not therefore required.</p>		