

The Secretary,
Planning Department
Cork County Council
County Hall
Cork

February 2024

Re: Section 179A (Part 8 exemption) proposal for the development of 35 residential units comprising on 4-bed house, four 3-bed townhouses, ten 2-bed townhouses, six 2-bed duplex apartments, four 2-bed apartments, and two 1-bed apartments and all other ancillary development and works including footpaths and cycle paths, communal bin and bike stores, car parking, drainage, landscaping and amenity areas at Tawnies lower, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We act on behalf of the applicant, Cork County Council, and wish to submit proposals under Section 179A (Part 8 exemption) for the development of 35 residential units comprising one 4-bed house, for 3-bed townhouses, ten 2-bed townhouses, six 2 bed duplex apartments, four 2-bed apartments, and ten 1-bed apartments and all other associated ancillary development and works including footpaths and cycle paths, communal bike and bike stores, car parking, drainage, landscaping and amenity areas at Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty, Co. Cork .

The proposed Part 8 exempted development, An Tamhnaigh, will provide 35 much needed new affordable and social residential dwellings to meet a mixture of housing solutions with regards to size, tenure and typology on an under-utilised infill site within the existing built footprint. Ten percent of the housing units will be allocated as social housing, which will be integrated and dispersed throughout the scheme to enhance an inclusive and diverse community. The scheme has been carefully designed by a multidisciplinary team to ensure a high-quality development that is in line with all the relevant national, regional and local policies. It will deliver a high-quality affordable and social residential scheme that is sympathetic to the existing urban environment and sensitive to the natural environment of the immediate surrounds, achieving a medium-high density housing that will help address the current housing shortages in a highly desirable key town in West Cork in an accessible location with all amenities, facilities and services within a short walking distance of the development.

A full list of documents and drawings that accompany this application can be found appended to this cover letter.

I trust the enclosed details are sufficient to enable the Council to proceed with a successful Section 179A application and we look forward to receiving a response in due course. Should you require any further details or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Payne", with a large, stylized flourish underneath.

Janet Payne

McCutcheon Halley

Appendix 1: Schedule of Documents and Drawings

In addition to the original press notice, a set of six identical packages have been lodged with this application. Each parcel, of which this is one, contains one of each of the following:

- **Cover Letter** by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants;
- Completed **Application Form**
- **Press Notice**
- **Site Notice**
- **Planning Statement** by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants
- **Design Statement** by Deady Gahan Architects
- **Housing Quality Assessment & Schedule of Accommodation** by Deady Gahan Architects
- **Site Location Maps** prepared by Deady Gahan Architects
- **Architectural Drawings** prepared by Deady Gahan Architects
 - Site Layout Plan at 1:500
 - Site Sections at 1:500
 - Floor Plans, Elevations and Sections at 1:100
 - Boundary Treatments @ 1:500
 - Boundary Details @ 1:50
- **Engineering Drawings** prepared by Walsh Design Group
- **Engineering Report** by Walsh Design Group
- **Planning Stage Construction Environmental Management Plan** by Walsh Design Group
- **Archaeological Testing Report** by Lane Purcell Archaeology
- **Archaeological Assessment** by Lane Purcell Archaeology
- **Landscape Development Package** by Forestbird Design
- **Green Infrastructure Statement** by Forestbird Design
- **Public Lighting Report and Drawings** by John Kelleher Associates
- **General Services Drawings** by John Kelleher Associates
- **EIA Screening Report** by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants
- **AA Screening Report** by Dixon Brosnan
- **Ecological Impact Assessment** by Dixon Brosnan
- **Traffic and Transport Assessment** by Martin Hanley Consulting Engineers

EIA Screening Report

For Development at

on behalf of Cork County Council

February 2024



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Document Control Sheet

Client	Cork County Council	
Project Title	An Tamhnaigh, Clonakilty	
Document Title	EIA Screening Report	
Document Comprises	Volumes	1
	Pages (Including Cover)	25
	Appendices	1
Prepared by	Matt Williamson	
Checked by	MH	
Office of Issue	Cork	
Document Information	Revision	2
	Status	Final
	Issue Date	February 2024

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1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley have been appointed by Cork County Council ('the Applicant') to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening for the proposed residential development and associated works on lands at, Tawnies Lower Clonakilty, Co. Cork.

The site of the proposed affordable and social residential development, named An Tamhnaigh, is approximately 0.99 Ha and is located off the Fernhill Road, approximately 1km west of Clonakilty Town Centre. The subject site is comprised of an agricultural field that has most recently been used for the storage of spoil from surrounding development. The area immediately surrounding the site is primarily residential in character. The recently developed Beechgrove social housing residential development abuts the western site boundary. The existing Beechmount cul-de-sac adjoins the site to the north whilst the existing Woodlands residential development is located to the south, generally comprising detached and semi-detached dwellings. The Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin adjoins the eastern site boundary.

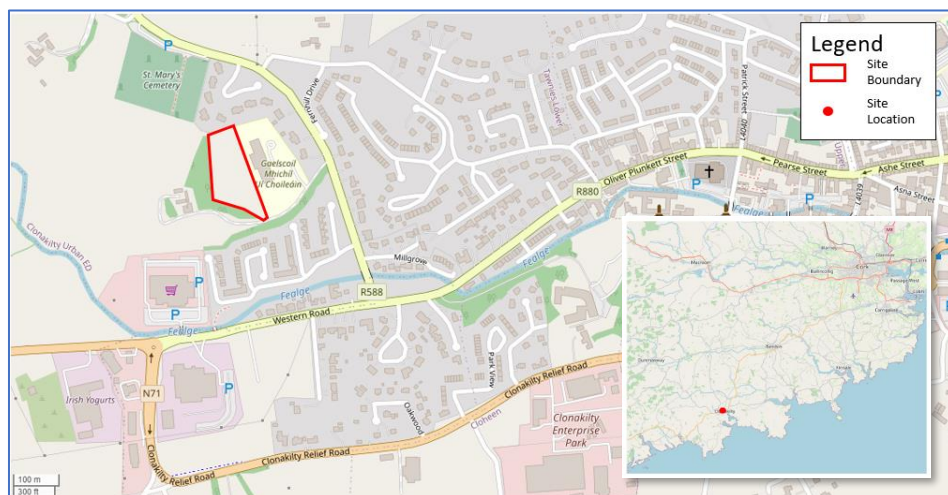


Figure 1.1: Approximate site location

This EIA Screening report has been prepared to consider the requirement, or otherwise, of carrying out an EIA in respect of the proposed development. This screening exercise was undertaken in two stages:

- Stage 1 considers the requirement for a mandatory EIA;
- Stage 2 considers the requirement for a sub-threshold EIA.

As part of the sub-threshold screening exercise, the potential impacts on environmental sensitivities were considered in addition to the interrelationship between those environmental sensitivities.

This EIA Screening Report will be submitted as part of the overall planning submission to Cork County Council.

1.1 Technical Competency & Experience

Janet Payne holds a Master's in Planning and Sustainability Development from University College Cork and a BSc Hons in Architectural Technology. She is a Corporate Member of the Irish Planning Institute. Janet has extensive experience in the preparation of EIA Screening and Scoping reports and works as part of multi-disciplinary teams providing input to Environmental Impact Assessment Reports.

Matt Williamson holds a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Sociology and a Master's in Planning and Sustainable Development from University College Cork. Matt has extensive experience in helping with the preparation of EIA Screening and Scoping reports and works as part of multi-disciplinary teams providing input to Environmental Impact Assessment Reports.

McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants have worked closely with an experienced multi-disciplinary design team, with inputs from Deady Gahan Architects, Walsh Design Group Consulting Engineers, DixonBrosnan Environmental Consultants, ForestBird Design Landscape and Environmental Specialists, John Kelleher & Associates Building Services Engineers and Lane Purcell Archaeologists that have contributed towards the development of this EIA screening.

1.2 Planning History

The site is located in the townland of Tawnies Lower, west of Clonakilty Town Centre, Co. Cork. There are no previous planning applications related to the site, as shown in Fig. 1.2, which was extracted from the Cork County Council Online Planning Register, with the approximate location of the proposed site in red.

An application for a residential development in the Townland of The Miles (Planning Ref. no. 23/20, by Cloncastle Developments Ltd.) is located approximately 0.9km to the southwest of the site, (Fig. 1.2, shown in purple). The application is for the construction of 93 two-storey dwelling units including two, three and four-bed houses and one. The development was granted by Cork County Council and is currently being appealed by a third party. A decision by the Board is due on 28th February 2024. An EIA Screening was not submitted as part of the planning application.

Other planning developments located near the subject site are individual property applications, applications pertaining to extensions works at the neighbouring Gaelscoil (Planning Ref. no. 21/488; near completion) and a recent permission granted for the extension of an existing ESB electrical substation compound at Tawnies Upper (Planning Ref. no. 22/454).

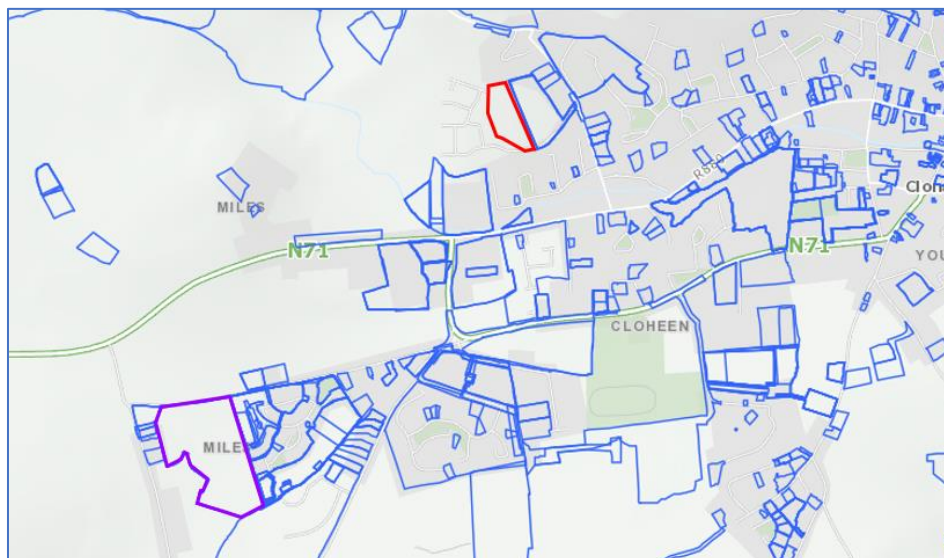


Figure 1.2: Extract from Cork County Council Planning Register.

1.2.2 Cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects

As shown above a search of the Cork County Planning Register indicates that the majority of recently permitted or proposed developments in Clonakilty consist of the construction of single one-off dwellings or extensions to existing dwellings.

The Cloncastle Developments Ltd application for a proposed residential development to extend the existing Miles housing estate in Cloheen, Clonakilty comprises the construction of 93 two-storey dwelling units including two, three and four-bed houses and a creche, approximately 0.9km southwest of the subject site. The proposed development at the Miles was validated by Cork County Council on 7th February 2023 and therefore the construction process has the potential to coincide with the proposed development at An Tamhnaigh.

In-combination/ cumulative effects of this development with regards to the proposed development have been considered as part of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening report prepared by Dixon Brosnan as part of this application. It is considered in the AA screening that the only notable development granted in the past 36 months is for an extension to the adjoining Gaelscoil. Works on this development are near completion and would not run concurrently with the proposed development and will not result in in-combination effects.

In addition to the AA Screening, an Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) has also been prepared as part of this application. The AA screening report concludes that the proposed development will not have a significant in-combination effect on habitats or species designated as conservation interests for any Natura 2000 sites.

It is not considered likely therefore that the construction and operation phases of the proposed development will result in significant cumulative/in-combination impacts.

1.3 Site Zoning

The town of Clonakilty has been classified as a Key Town under the RSES and as the largest town in the West Cork Municipal District, it is recognised in Volume 5 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CDP) as a major focus of employment and population growth.

The site is zoned as **“Existing Residential/Mixed Residential Built-up Areas”** in Volume 1 of the CDP (see Fig. 4). The objective for this zoning is to conserve and enhance the quality and character of established residential communities and protect their amenities. The zoning provides for infill developments and generally supports increased densities to optimise the development of lands within the built envelope of a settlement.

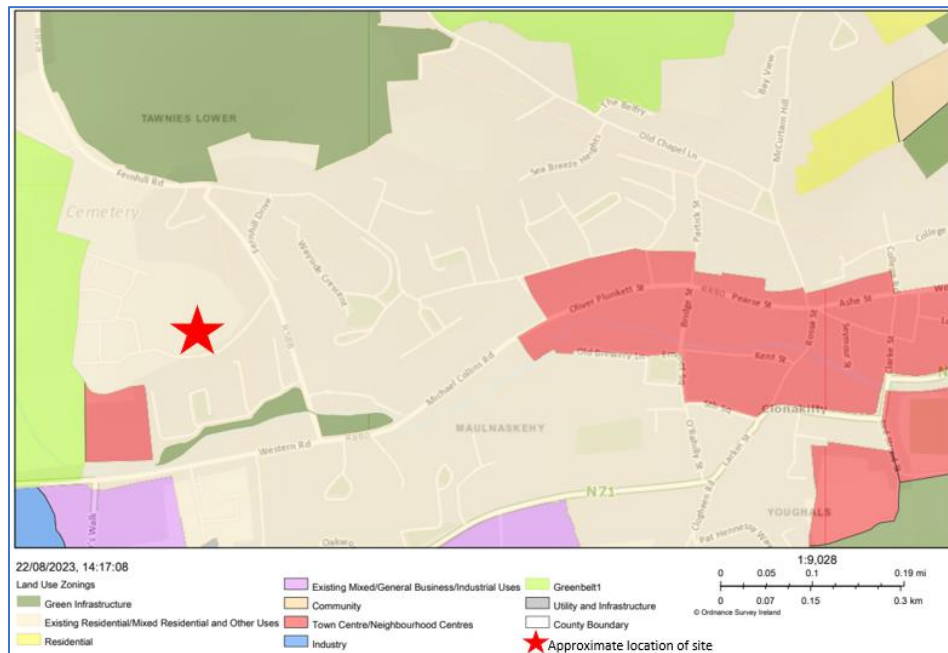


Figure 1.3: Extract of Land Use Zoning with approximate site location

1.4 Need for the Proposed Development

According to the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, the current property market in Cork has been characterised by an under-supply of houses and a growing population with the construction of new-build homes in Cork comprising 10.7% of nationally built homes.

A review of the CPD identified the following targets and objectives relating to housing:

General Objective for Clonakilty **CK-GO-01** outlines the need to develop to *“enable Clonakilty to achieve its target population of 6,162”*.

Objective HOU 4-6: Housing Mix:

a) *Secure the development of a mix of house types and sizes throughout the County as a whole to meet the needs of the likely future population across all age groups in accordance with the guidance set out in the Joint Housing Strategy and the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas.*

b) Require the submission of a Statement of Housing Mix with all applications for multi-unit residential development in order to facilitate the proper evaluation of the proposal relative to this objective. The Statement of Housing Mix should include proposals for the provision of suitable housing for older people and the disabled in the area.

Policy Objective HOU 4-7 sets out a minimum density of 30 units per ha for Medium Density A category, applicable to suburban lands of the larger settlements with a population of >5000 and those planned to grow >5000 population. The policy objective of Medium Density A does not provide guidance for the quantum open space provision. High density development sets out the requirement for a minimum of 10% of the developable area be provided as open space.

Objective HOU 4-8: Building Height and Amenity:

Support the provision of increased building height and densities in appropriate locations within the County, subject to the avoidance of undue impacts on the existing residential amenities. In mixed use schemes, proposals will include details of the sequencing of uses to enable the activation of supporting services. New development greater than 4 storeys will be required to address the development management criteria, as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines (2018).

It can be concluded that the Proposed Development is in-line with the objectives outlined above and is required to meet the housing demands of a growing population at a county and town level.

2. Proposed Development

2.1 Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed development is for an affordable and social residential scheme, comprising:

- The construction of 35 dwelling units on a 0.99 Ha site, comprising:
 - 1 four-bed house,
 - 4 three-bed houses,
 - 10 two-bed houses,
 - 6 two-bed duplex apartments,
 - 4 two-bed ground-floor apartments,
 - 4 one-bed first floor apartments, and
 - 6 one-bed ground floor apartments
- 49 car parking spaces, including 3 designated for reduced mobility access and futureproofed for EV charging;
- A range of units include universal design;
- All other associated ancillary development and works including footpaths, communal bin stores, bike storage, drainage, landscaping and amenity areas.

2.2 Drainage

This section sets out a description of the proposed surface water drainage. It is proposed to connect to the existing public infrastructure adjacent to the site.

Further details can be found in the Services Infrastructure Report by Walsh Design Group.

2.3 Surface Water

The proposed surface water network will include a storm drainage pipe network, attenuation storage structures and several SuDS features, including nature-based features, which will aid the reduction of runoff volumes by slowing surface water flows, providing the opportunity for evapotranspiration and providing the opportunity for infiltration to ground. The SuDS features that have been identified for the proposed development are as follows:

- Swales;
- Bioretention Areas;
- Dry Basins and Wetlands; and,
- StormTech Attenuation Tanks

The combination of the above measures will provide for minimum (ca. 5mm) amount of interception storage. Further to these measures it is proposed that a hydrocarbon interceptor is installed upstream of the StormTech attenuation tank. Additionally, grit sumps will be provided upstream of hydrocarbon interceptors and grit chambers will be provided in all road gullies to capture grit high up in the treatment train.

2.4 Foul Drainage

Irish Water drainage records show that there are existing foul sewers located to the west and northwest of the site and it is proposed to connect the foul water drainage from the proposed development to this existing sewer.

The wastewater collection system is designed to ensure self-cleansing velocities will be achieved on all pipe runs. Manholes will be constructed on all pipe-runs at changes in sewer direction, changes in gradients, at significant sewer connections and at a maximum spacing of 90m for 226mm diameter pipes and above 75m for 150mm diameter pipes.

2.5 External Lighting

External lighting has been included as part of the proposed development, refer to the Outdoor Lighting report prepared by John Kelleher & Associates for more information. The site lighting has been designed to provide a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and moving vehicles, to deter anti-social behaviour and to limit the environmental impact of artificial lighting on existing flora and fauna in the area.

2.6 Site Access

The subject site is accessed from the Fernhill Road via the existing access road to the Gaelscoil and existing Beechgrove development. There is a pedestrian crossing located at this junction and continuous pedestrian infrastructure between the subject site and Clonakilty town centre.

2.7 Landscaping

A comprehensive Landscaping Plan has been prepared by Forestbird Design and is submitted with the overall application.

In line with objectives outlined in the CDP to promote green landscapes in the area, a green infrastructure assessment was carried out by Forestbird Design and accompanies this report.

2.8 Construction

During the construction phases of the proposed development potential environmental effects will be short-term and localised. Nonetheless, all works will comply with the relevant legislation, construction industry guidelines and best practice in order to reduce potential environmental impacts associated with the works.

An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) is submitted as part of this application. The oCEMP outlines the measures that are expected to be implemented follows current legislative requirements and best practice guidelines to control the environmental risks that may occur during works. A CEMP will be prepared by the appointed contactor upon engagement and prior to commencement of construction works. The implementation of environmental management measures outlined in the CEMP will ensure that the construction programme will be completed without significant adverse effects on the surrounding environment. Working hours will be 8:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday inclusive, and Saturday mornings, subject to any conditions set down by Local Authority. Construction works outside these hours will be limited to works necessary for health and safety reasons, to protect the environment or with prior agreement with the relevant Local Authority.

For waste management please refer to assessment undertaken by Walsh Design Group, submitted as part of this planning package.

2.9 Monitoring

An ecological clerk of works (ECoW) will inspect the site in advance of construction works commencing, as outlined within the prepared EclA, AA Screening and oCEMP. The role of ECoW will include the undertaking of environmental site inspections as required during the works, to ensure that they will be completed in line with the mitigation measures detailed within the EclA, and CEMP.

In addition, the ECoW will either deliver or provide the resident engineer with sufficient environmental information to deliver a site induction to all personnel working onsite.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk-based Studies

In undertaking this EIA Screening Assessment, a detailed desk-based study was completed, which included a review of the following information:

- Relevant legislation and guidance;
- The Cork County Council planning portal;
- The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, Volumes 1 and 5;
- Environmental reports produced by DixonBrosnan in support of this application including an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) and an Appropriate Assessment Screening;
- The EPA Envision website was consulted to obtain details about the site and environmental receptors in the surrounding area.

3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Legislative and Regulatory Context

EIA screening requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). The amended Directive came into force on 16th May 2017 and regulations transposing it into national legislation were signed into law on 19th July 2018 as the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 [12]. There are no changes to the prescribed project types or EIA thresholds under the amended EIA Directive 2014/52/EU.

To determine whether it is required to undertake an EIA for the proposed development, the following legislation was consulted:

- The Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended);
- EU Directive 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ('2014 EIA Directive');

In addition, the following guidance documents were reviewed:

- European Commission (June 2017), Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects. Guidance on Screening;
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (August 2003), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports;
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) Transposing Regulations (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on Carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, and;

- Office of the Planning Regulator, OPR Practice Note PN02: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening.

3.3 Field-based Studies

An initial baseline survey was undertaken on 20th September 2022 by Sorcha Sheehy (ecologist). Updated habitat surveys were carried out on the 6th April 2023 by Carl Dixon MSc (ecologist).

The habitat surveys undertaken utilised Fossitt's Guide to Habitats in Ireland. The surveys aimed to identify the extent and quality of habitats present on the site. 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.

Following the initial baseline survey and consultation with Cork County Council, it was deemed necessary to undertake additional specialist surveys including bat surveys, badger surveys, otter survey, and breeding bird survey / habitat suitability assessment. Bat surveys were undertaken on 20th September 2022, a badger survey was undertaken on 20th September and 6th April 2023, and a breeding bird survey and habitat suitability assessment was undertaken on the 20th September 2022 and 6th April 2023.

4. Receiving Environment

This section describes the existing conditions at the site.

The site of the proposed residential development is located off the Fernhill Road, Clonakilty, Co. Cork. The 0.99 Ha site is situated approximately 1km west of Clonakilty Town Centre and is zoned 'Existing Residential/Mixed Residential and Other Uses' in the Cork County Development Plan 2022. The subject site is within walking distance of Clonakilty town centre and is connected by continuous footpaths and public lighting.

The area immediately surrounding the site is primarily residential in character. The recently developed Beechgrove social housing residential development abuts the western site boundary. The existing Beechmount cul-de-sac adjoins the site to the north whilst the existing Woodlands residential development is located to the south, generally comprising detached and semi-detached dwellings. The Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin adjoins the eastern site boundary.

The site for the proposed development is a greenfield site and Table 4 of the EclA notes that it is of low ecological value in terms of habitat, comprising improved agricultural grassland which in the absence of active management has become slightly more diverse. Fig. 4.1 illustrates the areas of ecological value as the existing tree line that is to be retained.



Figure 4.1: Habitats map extracted from EIA Report

4.1.3 Flooding

Floodinfo.ie was reviewed on the 15/06/2023 and confirms that there are no flood events likely to occur on the site. Fig. 4.1 outlines all rivers with high, medium and low risk of flooding and their extents local to the site.

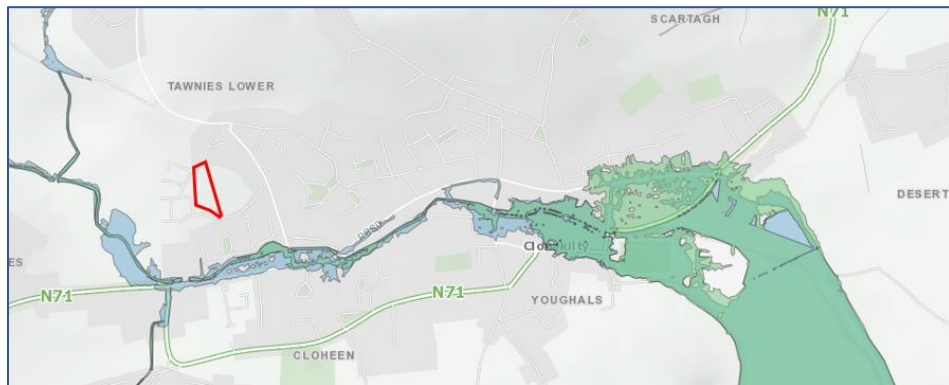


Figure 4.2: Extracted from Flood Maps (Floodinfo.ie).

4.1.4 Natura Sites

There are no Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protected Areas (SPA) or National Parks adjoining the site, refer to Fig. 4.3. The nearest Natura 2000 sites are laid out in Fig. 4.2.

Site Name	Site Code	Distance
Clonakilty Bay SPA	004081	1.3km
Clonakilty Bay SAC	000091	1.3km
Galley Head to Duneen Point SPA	004190	5.16km
Kilkeran Lake and Castlefreke Dunes SAC	001061	7km
Seven Heads SPA	004191	8.8km
Courtmacsherry Bay SPA	004219	9.33km
Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC	001230	9.33km

Figure 4.2: Locations and distances of nearest Nature sites



Figure 4.3: Extract from Heritagemaps.ie shows proximity of Natura sites, with the site shown in red.

4.1.5 Noise

The site does not fall into a strategically noise mapped area for road noise, refer to Fig. 4.4. There are no major rail or airports within 35km of the site which warrant noise mapping under the Environmental Noise Directive.

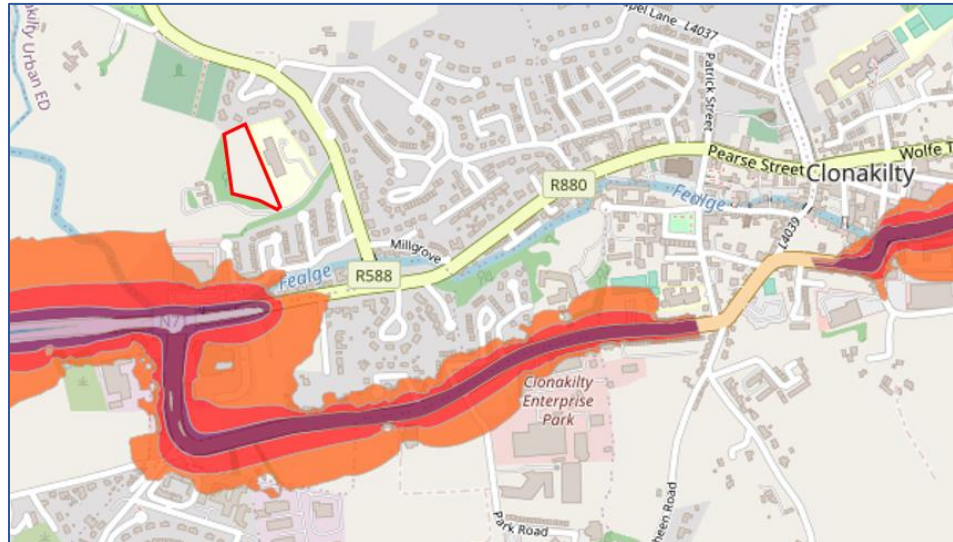


Figure 4.4: Extract from EPA Maps Lden Noise Major Roads

4.1.6 Built Heritage

There is one recorded site located approximately 20m to the west of the site. The Protected Structure (RPS Code: 1659, Lower Tawnies Cottage) appears on the Record of Protected Structures. Lower Tawnies Cottage was the subject of a Part 8 conversion into 6 houses in the Beechgrove development. Fig.4.4 displays the location of nearby archaeological sites and sites that appear on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

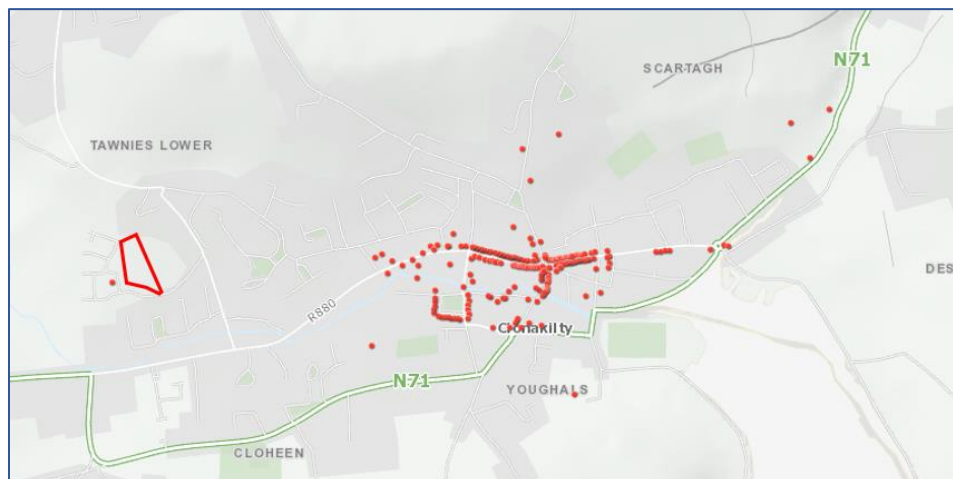


Figure 4.5: Extract from CDP Map Viewer showing Protected Structures as red dots.

5. EIA Screening

From an EIA perspective, all proposed developments can be placed in one of the following two groups:

- Those that exceed the regulatory thresholds and require a mandatory EIA; and,
- Those that are sub-threshold and must be assessed on a case-by case basis to determine if they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Proposed developments not meeting the above criteria do not require EIA.

5.1 Mandatory EIAR Screening

There are no activities listed within Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations (as amended) which relate to the proposed development. The proposed development subject to this EIA Screening Report, therefore, does not fall within the scope of activities listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 and a mandatory EIA, as classified under Annex I, is not required.

The relevant class of development within Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) which relate to the proposed development fall under section 10 'Infrastructure projects', as presented in Table 5.1 of which subsection 10(b)(i) and 10(b)(iv) are relevant.

Table 5.1: Screening for Part 2 of Schedule 5

Class		Applicability	Screening
Part 2 10(b)(i)	Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.	The proposed development involves the construction of residential development comprising 35 residential units. This does not meet the threshold for an EIA and therefore a mandatory EIA, as classified under Part 2 of Schedule 5 is not required.	EIA Not Required
Part 2 10(b)(iv)	Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere. (In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)	The proposed development will cover a site area of c.0.99 Ha, which is below the threshold of 10ha in the case of developments occurring in part of a built-up area. This does not meet the threshold for an EIA and therefore a mandatory EIA, as classified under Part 2 of Schedule 5, is not required	EIA Not Required

In summary the proposed development does not meet any relevant threshold under Section 10, Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). A mandatory EIA is therefore not required.

5.2 Sub-threshold Requirements for EIA

Developments which correspond to Schedule 5, Part 2 project types but are below the given threshold must be screened to determine whether they require an EIAR. This is done by consideration of criteria set out in Schedule 7 and Schedule 7a of the Planning and Development Regulations.

While the mandatory requirements for developments are relatively straightforward, being based on readily observable and definable quantum's of type and scale, the discretionary (or sub-threshold) requirements are based on an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Project and will naturally vary on a case-by-case basis and require greater investigation and diligence in appraisal and precise determination depending on the complexity of the development and the proposed receiving environment.

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) sets out the criteria for assessing whether or not a project will have "likely" and "significant" effects on the environment, in which case an EIA is required. These criteria include the following:

- Characteristics of proposed development;
- Location of proposed development; and,
- Characteristics of potential impacts.

These criteria, listed in Table 5.2, were considered for the proposed development under the topics recommended in EIAR guidance documents.

Table 5.2: EIAR Screening Criteria as per Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)

1. Characteristics of Proposed Development
<p>The characteristics of proposed development, in particular –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development, b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172 (1A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, c) the nature of any associated demolition works, d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity e) the production of waste, f) pollution and nuisances, g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location of proposed development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with regard to –

- a) the existing and approved land use,
- b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
- c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - I. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - II. coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - III. mountain and forest areas;
 - IV. nature reserves and parks;
 - V. areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;
 - VI. areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;
 - VII. densely populated areas; VIII. landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

3.Types and characteristics of potential impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 (above), with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(l) to (v) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account—

- a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- b) the nature of the impact,
- c) the transboundary nature of the impact,
- d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,
- e) the probability of the impact,
- f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,
- g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and
- h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

5.3 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Table 5.3 below details the development characteristics criteria, as set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), considered and provides an assessment relating to the same.

Table 5.3: Characteristics of the proposed development

Characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	Screening Assessment Summary / Conclusion	EIA Screened In / Out
a) The size and design of the whole of the proposed development	<p>The size of the proposed development area is approx. 0.99Ha, principally designed for residential dwellings in the form of houses and apartments. Access roads and landscaping have also been included in the design of the proposed development.</p> <p>The design of the development is similar to that of an existing housing development and well below the mandatory threshold. No significant effect is likely as a consequence of its size and design.</p>	Screened out
b) The cumulation with other existing development and / or development the subject of consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1)(A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purpose of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment.	<p>The proposed development will be similar to the existing nearby housing developments which are to the south and west of the site. The proposed development is approximately 900m from the proposed Miles development (Planning Ref. no 23/20) comprising 93 residential units and a crèche.</p> <p>There is potential that the construction period of the proposed development will overlap with the Miles development.</p> <p>A cumulative total of 128 residential units would be developed, which remains small scale and below the threshold of 500 units required to undertake a mandatory EIA.</p> <p>A CEMP is to be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. Given the short-term nature of the construction works, their small-scale nature and mitigation measure to be provided in the CEMP no significant cumulative effects are likely during the construction phase.</p> <p>There are established housing estates to the south, west and north of the site, including Beechgrove, Woodlands and Beechmount.</p> <p>Volume 5 of the CDP notes a housing requirement of an additional 600 new units and has planned services and local infrastructure to accommodate this level of development. The operational phase of the proposed development will be within in</p>	Screened out

Characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	Screening Assessment Summary / Conclusion	EIA Screened In / Out
	planned targets for Clonakilty to achieve sustainable population growth. No significant cumulative effects are likely during the operational phase.	
c) The nature of any associated demolition works	<p>There are no demolition works associated with the proposed development.</p> <p>For waste management please refer to assessment undertaken by WDG, submitted as part of this planning package.</p>	Screened out
d) The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	<p>The proposed development will result in a land take of approximately 0.99 Ha. This land is under the ownership of the County Council, currently unutilised, is within the urban area and is zoned for residential purposes.</p> <p>The applicant has committed to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a Construction Waste Management Plan which will ensure these soils are managed accordingly.</p> <p>During the operation of the facility water will be required for the homes. This has been agreed with the competent authority, Irish water, and a preliminary agreement is included with this application.</p> <p>Although the majority of the land proposed for this development is underutilised, treelines are present on site and mature trees overhang the 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>No significant effect is likely in respect of the use of natural resources.</p>	Screened out
e) The production of waste	<p>The construction phase of the proposed development will likely generate waste such as plastic wrappings, strips, containers, polystyrene and wooden pallets etc. A CEMP will be prepared for the proposed development to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are implemented onsite to reduce / manage waste throughout the construction phase.</p> <p>The operational phase of the proposed development will generally result in domestic waste which will be under a variety of responsibility. A Taking-in-Charge report provided by WDG submitted with this report</p>	Screened out

Characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	Screening Assessment Summary / Conclusion	EIA Screened In / Out
	<p>sets out responsible parties. Turning circles wide enough to allow refuse trucks onsite and bin storage areas have been included to ensure appropriate services for waste are available onsite.</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>No significant effect is likely in respect of the production of waste.</p>	
f) Pollution and Nuisances	<p>Construction works will be subject to the standard environmental and health and safety controls. A CEMP will be followed during construction works, and standard planning conditions for the control of construction stage nuisance for the proposed development will adequately control such works on this Site.</p> <p>The proposed development will be a residential estate and will form a notable receptor for pollution and nuisance.</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>No significant effect is likely in respect of pollution and nuisances.</p>	Screened out
g) The risk of major accidents, and/ or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.	<p>None foreseen.</p> <p>A CEMP will be followed during construction works, and standard planning conditions for the control of construction stage pollutants for the proposed development will adequately control such works on this site.</p> <p>The national flood hazard mapping was consulted. The site is not shown to be in a flood zone.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the Services Infrastructure Report submitted with this application.</p> <p>No significant effect is likely in respect of the risk of major accidents and / or disasters.</p>	Screened out
h) The risks to human health (for example, due to water	<p>The subject site is located in the townland of Tawnies Lower, zoned as 'Existing Residential /Mixed Residential Built-Up Area', to the west of the Key Town of Clonakilty. Potential risks to human health</p>	Screened out

Characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	Screening Assessment Summary / Conclusion	EIA Screened In / Out
contamination or air pollution).	<p>could occur during the construction phase. This would largely be limited to those associated with traffic, noise and dust. A CEMP and a Traffic and Transportation Assessment are submitted as part of this application and include the mitigation measures where necessary to ensure that the proposed development will not pose a risk to human health.</p> <p>It should be noted that the re-use of bulk material onsite will significantly reduce construction traffic onsite and therefore, minimise the potential impact on the surrounding road network users.</p> <p>No significant effect is likely in respect of the risks to human health.</p>	

5.4 Location of the Proposed Development

A description of the location of the proposed development, as set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), with regard to the environmental sensitivity of the geographical area likely to be affected is required. Table 5.4 details the criteria considered and provides an assessment relating to same.

Table 5.4: Location of proposed development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:	Screening Assessment	EIA Screened In / Out
a) the existing and approved land use	<p>The site is located on lands zoned as 'Existing Residential/Mixed Residential Built-Up Area'. The proposed development is in keeping with this land use designation.</p> <p>Further assessment on potential impacts in the context of an EIA is not warranted.</p>	Screened out
b) the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water, biodiversity) in the area and its underground	<p>The proposed development will not have a significant impact on the quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area.</p> <p>No significant impacts related to the proposed development are predicted with the implementation of best practice and</p>	Screened out

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:	Screening Assessment	EIA Screened In / Out
	mitigation measures outlined in the EclA and AA screening (in the absence of mitigation) and therefore, an EIA is not warranted in this regard.	
c) The cumulation with other existing development and / or development the subject of consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1)(A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purpose of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment.	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. For further information refer to the AA screening and EclA submitted with this application.	
d) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; ii. coastal zones and the marine environment; iii. mountain and forest areas, iv. nature reserves and parks, v. areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and; vi. areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the 	The proposed development does not contain or is not likely to affect any of the following criteria / areas: (ii), (iii), (iv), (vi) and (vii). An examination of the potential effects on the remaining criteria is undertaken below. <p>(i) 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>(v) An AA screening has been undertaken to determine the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the proposed development in the context of the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites. The AA Screening concludes that there are no adverse effects expected at any Natura 2000 site as a result of the proposed development in the absence of mitigation.</p>	Screened out

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:	Screening Assessment	EIA Screened In / Out
project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; vii. densely populated areas; viii. landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	(viii) There is one protected structure located ca. 30m to the west of the proposed development. The site is a residential house that is currently in use as a multi-unit residential property. As there is expected to be no associated works in the area of the protected structure an EIA is not required to ensure careful design, assessment and mitigation. Further assessment on potential impacts in the context of an EIA is not warranted.	

5.5 Types & Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The matrix provided in Appendix A describes the characteristics with reference to the EPA (2022) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports. The potential impacts are considered having regard to the criteria set out in Section 3 of Schedule 7 and the OPR Practice Note 02 on EIA Screenings.

The project is fully within Cork County and therefore there will be no transboundary impacts associated with the proposed development. Accordingly, transboundary impacts, and intensity and complexity of impacts are not included within the matrix.

The types and characteristics of possible effects are set out in the Matrix in Appendix A. A summary of the possible effects are as follows:

- Loss of open space character in the landscape as a result of the development of a greenfield site.
- Surface water drainage during the construction and operation phases will be attenuated onsite via a hydrocarbon interceptor to allow for silt or sediment settlement prior to controlled release via attenuation tanks and soakaways.
- There may be short term impacts associated from noise, dust and traffic associated with the construction phase of the development.
- The stripping of topsoil and removal of small amounts of Construction waste will be managed in accordance with the submitted Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- There may be short term traffic impacts associated with the construction phase of the development.

- There may be short term material asset impacts relating to construction waste associated with the construction phase of the development.
- There may be short term impacts relating to population and human health resulting from noise, dust and traffic associated with the construction phase of the development.
- Potential for impact to existing ecology/habitats present on site due to the stripping of topsoil and noise / vibration during construction phase as well as increases in lighting during operation.
- Damage to unrecorded subsurface archaeological features that may exist within the site due to below ground construction works.

6. Summary & Conclusion

Development of the site for residential use is appropriate in the context of the site's zoning objective and national policy. Likely positive effects are forecast as the land will provide much needed sustainable residential development consistent with the zoning objective for the site. The energy efficient measures incorporated into the design will have a positive effect on climate change.

The change to the landscape as a result of the development is not significant as it is consistent with existing urban development.

A Construction Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared for the development. It will describe the environmental measures and procedures to be followed for the duration of the construction phase. It will refer to mitigation measures for inter alia, managing noise, dust, suspended solids, accidental spillages, traffic and waste. The detailed CEMP will be implemented for the construction phase and likely impacts and nuisances that arise during all development proposals of this nature will be managed using standard proven controls.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report that is included with the planning submission demonstrates that the proposed development will not impact on identified European designated sites within the zone of influence of the proposed development either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Based on the findings of this EIA screening assessment, the proposed development does not require a mandatory EIAR. Having regard to the nature, extent and characteristics of the likely impacts for the construction and operational phase of the proposed development, it is considered that it will not give rise to any likely significant environmental effects and accordingly a sub-threshold EIA is not required. Therefore, there is no requirement to submit an EIAR in support of the proposed development.

Appendix A

Matrix: Type and Characteristics of the Potential Impact

Characteristic	Possible Effect	Mitigation Measures to avoid or reduce a significant effect.	Extent	Nature	Significance	Probability	Duration	Cumulative
Landscape	Loss of open space character as a result of development of greenfield area	Landscaping plan retains mature trees and hedgerows where possible	Local	Imperceptible	Not Significant	Unlikely	Permanent	-
Water	Surface water drainage during construction and operation phases will be attenuated onsite via a hydrocarbon interceptor to allow for silt or sediment settlement prior to controlled release via attenuation tanks and soakaways.	A Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed in writing with Council prior to commencement of development.	Local	Neutral	Not Significant	Low	Permanent	-
Air and Climate	There may be short term impacts associated from noise, dust and traffic associated with	A Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed in writing with Council prior to	Local	Negative	Not Significant	Likely	Short Term	Imperceptible

Characteristic	Possible Effect	Mitigation Measures to avoid or reduce a significant effect.	Extent	Nature	Significance	Probability	Duration	Cumulative
	the construction phase of the development.	commencement of development.						
Land and Soils	The stripping of topsoil and removal of small amounts of Construction waste will be managed in accordance with the submitted Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.	A Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed in writing with Council prior to commencement of development.	Local	Neutral	Minor	Likely	Permanent	-
Traffic	There may be short term impacts associated with the construction phase of the development.	A Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed in writing with Council prior to commencement of development.	Local	Negative	Minor	Likely	Short Term (Construction Phase) Permanent (Operational Phase)	Imperceptible
Material Assets (Built)	There may be short term impacts associated with the construction	Under the CEMP, the contractor will appoint a	Local	Neutral	Minor	Likely	Short Term	-

Characteristic	Possible Effect	Mitigation Measures to avoid or reduce a significant effect.	Extent	Nature	Significance	Probability	Duration	Cumulative
Services / Waste)	phase of the development.	Construction Waste Co-Ordinator who will be responsible for implementing the construction waste management plan (CWMP)						
Population & Human Health	There may be short term impacts associated from noise, dust and traffic associated with the construction phase of the development. The site within an urban environment and no significant operations	Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed in writing with Council prior to commencement of development.	Local	Negative	Minor	Likely	Short Term	Potential minor cumulative impact with the Miles development.
Biodiversity	Potential for impact to existing ecology/habitats present on site due to the stripping of topsoil and noise / vibration	An ecological clerk of works (ECoW) will undertake environmental site inspections as required during the	Local	Negative	Not Significant	Likely	Short Term	Potential for lighting to have slight cumulative impact with

Characteristic	Possible Effect	Mitigation Measures to avoid or reduce a significant effect.	Extent	Nature	Significance	Probability	Duration	Cumulative
	during construction phase. Increased lighting is likely to have a slight impact on local bat populations, in line with emerging trends in this area of Clonakilty town.	works, to ensure that they will be completed in line with the mitigation measures detailed within the EclA, and CEMP. Lighting has taken bat conservation guidelines into account (in line with Cork County Council lighting requirements).						surrounding developments
Heritage	Damage to unrecorded subsurface archaeological features that may exist within the site	2 phases of Archaeological testing has been carried out ensuring a comprehensive assessment	Site	Neutral	Imperceptible	Unlikely	Permanent	-

Planning Statement

For Development at Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty
on behalf of Cork County Council

February 2024



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Document Control Sheet

Client	Cork County Council	
Project Title	An Tamhnaigh	
Document Title	Planning Statement	
Document Comprises	Volumes	1
	Pages (Including Cover)	25
	Appendices	0
Prepared by	MW	
Checked by	MH	
Office of Issue	Cork	
Document Information	Revision	1
	Status	Final
	Issue Date	December 2023

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Cork County Council to accompany the planning application under the Planning and Development (Section 179A) Regulations 2023 for the proposed residential development at Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty, County Cork.

The proposed development consists of:

Section 179A (Part 8 exemption) proposal for the development of 35 affordable and social residential units comprising one 4-bed house, four 3-bed townhouses, ten 2-bed townhouses, six 2 bed duplex apartments, four 2-bed apartments, and ten 1-bed apartments and all other associated ancillary development and works including footpaths and cycle paths, communal bike and bike stores, car parking, drainage, landscaping and amenity areas at Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.

The proposed Part 8 exempted development, An Tamhnaigh, will provide 35 much needed new homes to meet a mixture of housing solutions with regards to size, tenure and typology on an under-utilised infill site within the existing built footprint. It will deliver a high-quality affordable and social residential scheme that is sympathetic to the existing urban environment and sensitive to the natural environment of the immediate surrounds, that will help address the current housing shortages in a highly desirable key town in West Cork.

This report is submitted in support of the proposed scheme and is presented under the following headings:

- Site Context & Proposed Development
- Planning Policy Context
- Planning History
- Assessment of Proposed Development
- Appropriate Assessment
- Environmental Assessment
- Conclusion

The site is currently under-utilised, comprising an open field of agricultural land of low ecological value between three separate and distinct residential developments. The proposed development will not result in the removal or interference with habitats that support local biodiversity, with the retention of mature trees, existing boundary hedgerows and communal open green spaces included as part of the overall proposal. The application is accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment Screening (AA) and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) provided by Dixon Brosnan.



Figure 2: Extract of Proposed site layout

The overall approach of the proposed residential development at Tawnies Lower, to be named An Tamhnaigh, will secure the delivery of new homes in a central location in Clonakilty, contributing positively to creating liveable communities and reducing carbon footprint. The proposed infill residential development will benefit from excellent walking connectivity to the town centre (see Fig. 3) with links to public transport, employment areas, recreation, community facilities, and schools.

The building heights are sensitive to the immediate residential and educational environment and are comparable to the prevailing characteristics of the surrounding established

housing. Over-peeking of the adjacent school has been avoided through mitigation including appropriate set back distances of approximately 26m, minimal number of windows to the rear first floor, the use of opaque glass, and additional hedge screening.

The proposal is for 35 residential units within a developable area of 0.92ha, resulting in a density of 38 units per ha, falling in line with the Medium Density A category, which is consistent with the population thresholds set out in the CDP and the growth targets set for Clonakilty. Twelve percent of the developable area has been set aside as landscaped communal open space. Ten percent of the housing units will be allocated as social housing, which will be integrated and dispersed throughout the scheme to enhance an inclusive and diverse community.

The proposed site layout is developed along a single internal spine road, accessed from the existing road from Fernhill Road to the Beechgrove estate, and includes a turning circle to the northwest of the site. Footpaths throughout the development, including a separate access route and internal

shared-user roads, provide a pedestrian focused residential area. Sightlines of 45m to the east and west are achieved at the site entrance.

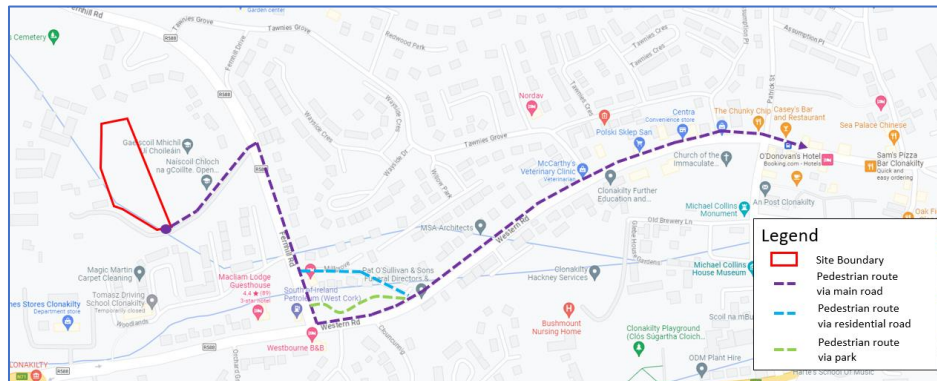


Figure 3: Pedestrian routes from site entrance to Clonakilty town centre

Parking is allocated in line with the maximum standards set out in table 12.6 of the CDP and the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines. A total of 49 parking spaces, including three spaces allocated for limited mobility, will be provided and will be capable of accommodating future charging points to future proof a transition to electric vehicles. The retention of the mature trees on 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.

3. Planning Policy Context

3.1 Cork County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

The town of Clonakilty has been classified as a Key Town under the RSES and as the largest town in the West Cork Municipal District, it is recognised in Volume 5 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CDP) as a major focus of employment and population growth. The CDP outlines target population for Clonakilty as 6,162 within the lifetime of the Plan, representing a growth of **1,570 people** on the 2016 census figure. **Table 5.2.3** of Volume 5 of the CDP sets out requirements for an additional 600 new housing units to accommodate the forecast growth.

General Objective CK-GO-01 for Clonakilty outlines the need to develop to “enable Clonakilty to achieve its target population of 6,162”.

The site is zoned as “**Existing Residential/Mixed Residential Built-up Areas**” in Volume 1 of the CDP (see Fig. 4). The objective for this zoning is to *conserve and enhance the quality and character of established residential communities and protect their amenities*. The zoning provides for infill developments and generally supports increased densities to optimise the development of lands within the built envelope of a settlement.

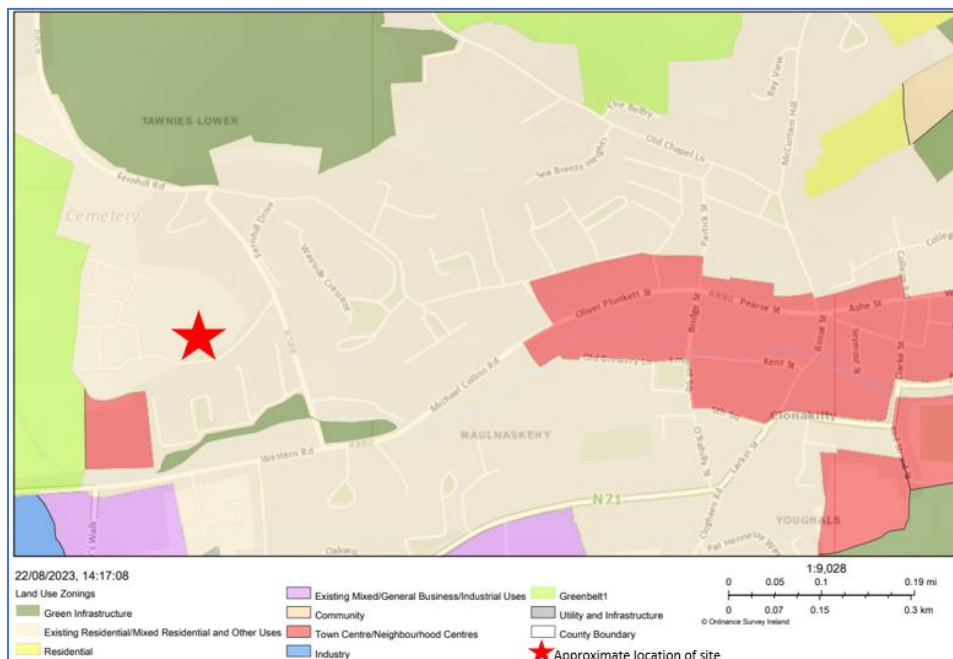


Figure 4: Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, Volume 6: Maps

A review of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-28 identifies a number of relevant Policy Objectives, which include the following:

Objective PL 3-1: Building Design, Movement and Quality of the Public Realm:

Support measures to improve building design quality, accessibility and movement including investment in quality public realm across the settlement network of the County

Objective PL 3-3: Delivering Quality and Inclusive Places:

In assessing future development proposals the Plan will implement and promote a series of aims outlined in the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and accompanying Urban Design Manual and the Design Standards for New Apartments, which seek to create high quality inclusive places.

Objective HOU 4-6: Housing Mix:

a) Secure the development of a mix of house types and sizes throughout the County as a whole to meet the needs of the likely future population across all age groups in accordance with the guidance set out in the Joint Housing Strategy and the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas.

b) Require the submission of a Statement of Housing Mix with all applications for multi-unit residential development in order to facilitate the proper evaluation of the proposal

relative to this objective. The Statement of Housing Mix should include proposals for the provision of suitable housing for older people and the disabled in the area.

Objective HOU 4-7: Housing Density on Residentially Zoned Land (Fig. 5):

Sets out the new density categories in the Plan and Table 4.1 (Fig 6) sets out the new tiered density approach recommended to respond to the diverse settlement scales within the County's hierarchy:

County Development Plan Objective HOU 4-7: Housing Density on Residentially Zoned Land			
	Min Net Density	Max Net Density	Comment
Medium A	30	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicable to suburban/greenfield lands of the larger settlements with a population > 5,000 and those planned to grow >5,000 population; In towns with an existing/ planned high quality public transport service a minimum density of 35 units/ ha is recommended. On former Institutional lands which may require concentration of development in certain areas. A minimum of 20% public open space is required at these locations. This category would be the highest density category applicable to the smaller settlements (< 5,000 in population), and would generally apply to central sites within the core of such settlements, unless otherwise stated or where a higher density approach accords with the existing pattern of development; Must include a broad range of unit typologies and normally involves a combination of unit formats including a higher proportion of terraced units and/or apartment type units.

Figure 5: Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022-28

Table 4.1: Settlement Density Location Guide					
Settlement Type	Settlement	High (50 units/ha+)	Medium A (30-50 units/ha)	Medium B (20-35 units/ha)	Medium C (5-20 units/ ha)
Key Towns* and Large Towns (>5,000 population)	Mallow Clonakilty^		Generally applicable for future development	May be applicable in a limited number of sensitive locations.	
	Bandon Fermoy Kinsale Youghal Charleville^				

Figure 6: Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022-28

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.

Objective TM 12-9: Parking:

Secure the appropriate delivery of car parking and bicycle spaces and facilities in line with the Standards set out in Section 12.24 of this document:

Table 12.6 of the CDP (Fig. 7) outlines the maximum provision for car parking in residential developments as 2 spaces per dwelling unit and 1.25 spaces per apartment.

Table 12.6: Car Parking Requirements for New Developments (Maximum per sq. m.)	
Development Type	Parking Provision Requirement
Residential: Dwelling houses Residential: Apartments	2 spaces per dwelling unit 1.25 spaces per apartment unit

Figure 7: Extract from Cork County Development Plan

Table 12.8 of the CDP (Fig. 8) outlines the minimum cycle parking provision for residential development as 1 space per bedroom for apartments with an addition space per 2 units for short stay (visitor) parking and 1.2 spaces per house.

Table 12.8: Cycle parking for residential development (Minimum)		
Residential Development type	1 long stay parking space per:	1 short stay (visitor) parking space per:
Apartments	1 bedroom	2 units
Houses	1 unit	5 units

Figure 8: Extract from Cork County Development Plan

Objective TM 12-12: EV Charging:

All residential development should be constructed to be capable of accommodating future charging points as required within the curtilage of the dwelling where possible.

Objective GI 14-3: Green Infrastructure and Development:

a) Require new development and redevelopment proposals, to contribute to the protection, management and enhancement of the existing green and blue infrastructure of the local area in terms of the design, layout and landscaping of development proposals.

b) Require all development to submit a green infrastructure statement outlining how the proposal contributes to green and blue infrastructure both within its environs as well as within the wider settlement or rural area. Larger developments (multiple residential developments including Part 8 applications, retail, industrial, mineral extraction, etc) will be expected to prepare a Landscape/ Green (and Blue) Infrastructure Plan including a Landscape Design Rationale. This Plan should identify environmental assets and include proposals which protect, manage and develop green infrastructure resources in a sustainable manner.

Objective GI 14-6: Public/Private Open Space Provision:

a) Public Open Space within Residential Development shall be provided in accordance with the standards contained in Cork County Council's Interim Recreation & Amenity Policy (2019) and any successor policy, the "Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas" and "Making Places: a design guide for residential estate development. Cork County Council Planning Guidance and Standards Series Number 2".

b) Promote the provision of high quality, accessible and suitably proportioned areas of public open space and promote linking of new open spaces with existing spaces to form a green infrastructure network.

c) Apply the standards for private open space provision contained in the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the Urban Design Manual (DoEHLG 2009) and Cork County Council's Design Guidelines for Residential Estate Development. With regard to apartment developments, the guidelines on Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments will apply.

Objective BE 15-6: Biodiversity and New Development:

Provide for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the development management process and when licensing or permitting other activities by:

b) Encouraging the retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and other features of high natural value within new developments;

c) Requiring the incorporation of primarily native tree and other plant species, particularly pollinator friendly species in the landscaping of new developments;

d) Fulfilling Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment obligations and carrying out Ecological Impact Assessment in relation to development and activities, as appropriate;

3.2 Design Standards for New Apartments 2022

The Design Standards for New Apartments 2022 notes that apartments continue to be an increasingly common form of housing in Ireland's urban areas. The Guidelines note that the average national household size is decreasing and that apartments can provide appropriate housing for smaller households.

Section 2.4 identifies three different locations which are considered suitable for apartment development. Peripheral and/or Less Accessible Urban Locations, such as the subject site, are considered generally suitable for residential developments that will include a minority of apartments at low-medium densities.

The Guidelines outline Specific Planning Policy Requirements to guide the development of apartments. SPPR 3 sets out the minimum floor area for one-bed apartments as 45m² and 73m² for two-bed apartments. SPPR 4 requires a minimum of 50% dual aspect units in suburban or intermediate locations. SPPR 5 stipulates a minimum of 2.7m floor to ceiling heights in ground floor apartments.

Section 4 outlines guidance concerning communal facilities in apartments, with access, refuse storage, bike and car parking and communal amenity space having relevance to the subject proposal.

Appendix 1 of the Guidelines sets out minimum floor areas and standards for apartment development.

3.3 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

The holistic approach of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets to understand and design the streets as part of the open space network was applied to the proposed development with the intention to promote sustainable transport and encourage social activities and active neighbourhoods.

The four design principles of DMURS are:

- Connected Networks
- Multi-Functional Streets
- Pedestrian Focus

- Multidisciplinary Approach

These design principles have been integrated into the design of the proposed scheme.

3.4 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines

The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities were published in January 2024.

The Guidelines set out policy and guidance in relation to the planning and development of urban and rural settlements, with a focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements. They are accompanied by a companion non-statutory Design Manual that illustrates best practice examples of how the policies and objectives of the Guidelines can be applied.

The standards set out in the Guidelines have been incorporated into the design of the proposed scheme.

4. Planning History

There is no planning history for the site subject (Fig 9). Planning applications for the immediate surrounding area generally relate to residential development as well as minor applications for the extension and renovation of existing dwellings. There have been two recent applications relating to the adjoining national school:

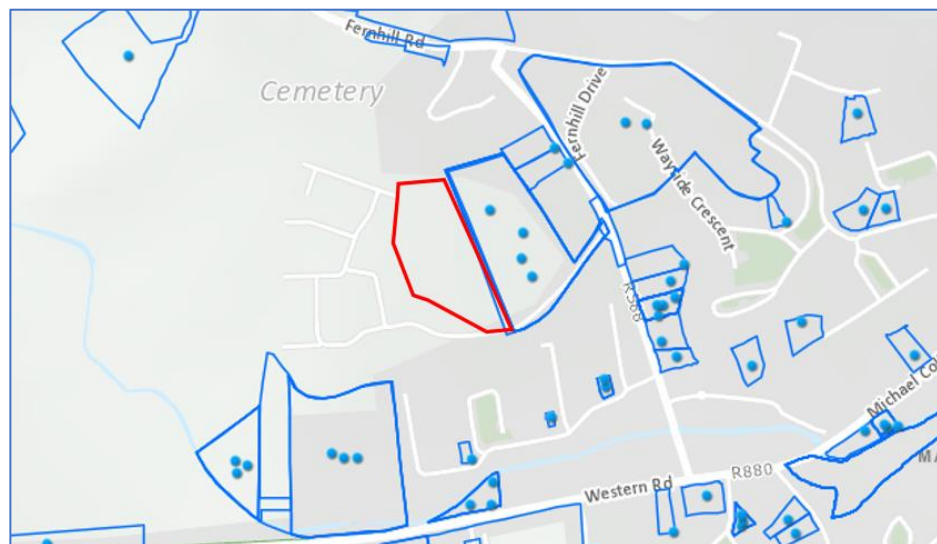


Figure 9: Extract from Cork County Council Online Planning Register, approximate site boundary in red

Planning Ref. No. 21/488 – Permissions was granted for a two-storey extension with link adjoining the north-facing elevation of the existing main school building to provide four new classrooms and ancillary accommodation.

Planning Ref. No. 19/579 – Permission was granted for a two-storey extension to the south-facing elevation of the existing main school building to provide an additional two classrooms and ancillary accommodation to form part of an existing ASD unit.

Beechgrove Part 8 – Beechgrove Estate completed in 2021, comprises 51 social houses and the conversion of Lower Tawnies Cottage and outhouses, which are protected structures, into 6 houses and includes foul and surface water drainage, storm water attenuation chamber, upgrading of existing pumping station.

5. Assessment of Proposal

The proposed development is considered in compliance with all relevant planning policies at national, regional and local levels.

5.1 Layout & Design

The overall approach of the proposed housing development at An Tamhnaigh will be an aesthetically pleasing and highly efficient new residential scheme that will provide homes in a central location in Clonakilty, contributing positively to creating liveable communities and reducing carbon footprint. The proposed infill development will benefit from excellent walking connectivity to the town centre (see Fig. 3) with links to public transport, employment areas, recreation, community facilities and schools.



Figure 10: Extract of Landscaping Plan

The proposed layout (Fig. 10) makes the most efficient use of the subject site, that is roughly rectangular in shape, sloping to the south with levels ranging from 23m OD in the centre east to 16m OD to the south. The layout is based on a central street that acts as the main route through the development and provides access from the entrance in the south. A range of densities have been incorporated into the scheme ranging from higher densities that overlook open spaces, medium-high densities that create feature corner elements and node points throughout the site and

medium densities that back onto the existing buildings to avoid overlooking. The built edge of the development fronts onto the central street, with higher density apartment buildings fronting onto the western and southern open spaces. The layout provides permeability throughout and with the existing Beechgrove development and green amenity spaces.

The 6m wide primary street provides an avenue-style spine with parallel cycle and footpaths, from which 4.8-5m wide shared surface branching off to provide direct access to the housing units. The shared surfaced areas incorporate on-curtilage parking areas, a roadside pedestrian path, lighting, bin storage and landscaping.

The proposed development will be set within landscaped public and private amenity space. This will include passive open space evenly distributed through the scheme and active spaces with a range of age-appropriate equipment. Nature-based sustainable urban drainage systems will be employed throughout the scheme, incorporated within the landscaped amenity areas that will help reduce the reliance on the surface water drainage systems and provide opportunity for biodiversity net gain. The Landscaping Plan is supported by a SUDs plan and a Green Infrastructure Statement, prepared by Forestbird Design.

5.1.2 Housing Design

The proposed dwellings offer a broad range of accommodation choice, in terms of both unit size and configuration. Open spaces are designed to provide facilities for all age groups and support outdoor activities. The housing mix will comprise four-bed semi-detached houses, two and three-bed town houses and one and two-bed apartments and duplexes. Ten percent of the units will be allocated as social housing, and these will be dispersed to provide an integrated, inclusive and diverse community. It is proposed to introduce through this application a wider range of dwelling types, tenures and sizes to encourage a more varied population and permit a greater level of mobility within the local area and which encourage aging in place. A number of universal design units are also provided for mobility restricted residents. Residential units meet or exceed the standards set out the County Development Plan and in Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2022. Compliance with these standards is demonstrated in the Housing Quality Assessment that accompanies this application. Housing allocated as social housing will be built to the same quality design standards and specification as the affordable units.

Unit Type	Quantity	Description	Bed Spaces
A1	1	4-Bed Townhouse (Accessible Unit)	7
B1	2	3-Bed Townhouse	5

Unit Type	Quantity	Description	Bed Spaces
B2	2	3-Bed Semi-Detached	5
C1	3	2-Bed Townhouse	4
C2	7	2-Bed Townhouse	4
D1	2	2-Bed GF Apartment	4
D2	2	2-Bed FF Apartment	4
D3	3	2-Bed Duplex Unit	4
D4	1	2-Bed Duplex Unit	4
D5	2	2-Bed GF Apartment	4
E1	3	1-Bed GF Apartment	2
E2	1	1-Bed GF Apartment	2
E3	2	1-Bed GF Apartment	2
F1	2	1-Bed FF Apartment	2
F2	2	1-Bed FF Apartment	2

Figure 11: Proposed Housing Mix

Unit types D3/E1 and D4/E2 comprise three-storey two-bed duplexes over a one-bed ground-floor apartment, located to the west side of the development. These consist of twin aspect own-door entry with private amenity spaces, including planted buffers and terraces, to the east and west aspect. A ridge height of 11.5m is in contrast to the 8.75m of the two-storey units. A separation distance of 18.4m overlooking proposed open spaces and the existing mature treeline ensures that overlooking onto the Beechgrove development is avoided.

All duplex units will be provided with a patio and/or balcony space, with each unit having a private amenity space. First floor balconies will provide a porch area for the ground floor entrances. The design and layout of the proposed development will meet the requirements of all relevant documents, in particular Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents which deal with accessibility and inclusivity. In this regard, the design of the proposed development is also guided by the principles of universal design. The proposed dwellings have further been designed to be adaptable and to respond to the potential changing needs over their lifetime. The units are strategically designed to allow the owner to extend into the attic and/or to the rear if the so require.

A restrained palette and selection of material finishes have been selected to ensure a cohesive and coherent aesthetic. The majority of the proposed facades will consist of an off-white render finish, with grey render panels or

natural stone cladding (see Fig. 12) to be included on prominent buildings. Roofs will be finished with a grey composite tile. Doors and windows will be of uPVC. The semi-detached and mid- town houses will include a zinc clad canopy above the front door.



Figure 12: Front elevation and perspective view of unit type A1, prepared by Deady Gahan Architects.

All buildings are designed and sited to provide passive surveillance of the public realm, including streets, paths and open spaces. The residential units have been orientated to ensure sufficient daylight into the rooms whilst also minimising overlooking, particularly where the scheme borders other developments. Fig. 13 illustrates the separation distance between the housing units to the east of the development and the adjoining school, comprising 18.3m at the nearest point. The separation distances have been mitigated through the use of opaque windows on the upper floors, existing screening consisting of an established semi-mature treeline on the school side of the boundary and the proposed additional screening within the boundary of the housing scheme.

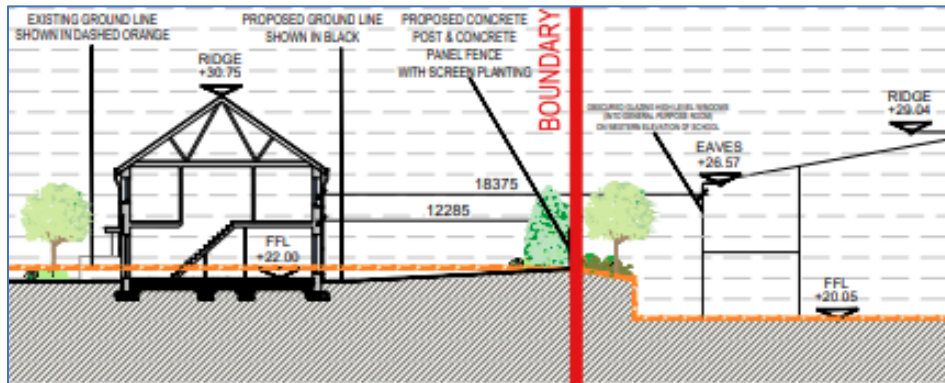


Figure 13: Extract from the Boundary Section Assessment, prepared by Deady Gahan Architects. – Section D-D

5.1.3 Boundary Treatments

A Boundary Treatment Plan, prepared by Deady Gahan Architects accompanies this application. The boundary treatment for the proposed development comprises a continuation of an existing 2m high rendered and capped block wall along the northern boundary with the Beechmount development. Along the southeastern boundary, the existing paladin fence is to be retained, and will be supplemented with additional planting. Where the

housing units back onto the school along the same eastern boundary, a 2m high concrete post and timber panel fence is proposed. A 1m high rendered and capped concrete wall is proposed at the entrance, that will continue as a low-level wall with a 1.1m high railing along the southwestern public facing boundary. A section of retaining wall is proposed at the southwest corner where site levels require it. A concrete post and concrete panel fence is proposed for the rear of the western housing units. The existing palisade site fence along the northwest boundary is to be retained for the duration of the construction phase, and then removed on completion to facilitate permeability of the open amenity space.

5.2 Bike and Bin Storage

Where direct access to rear gardens is provided, bike and bin storage can be provided to the rear of each housing unit. It is proposed that town houses that do not have direct access to back gardens will have allocated bike and bin storage units located at the front of each residential unit. Communal facilities shall be provided for apartment and duplex units. In accordance with standards set out in Table 12.8 of the CDP, including design guidance, the communal bike store will comprise 16 spaces on a two-tier rack system within a lockable and covered purpose-built unit in close proximity to the apartment units. A second bike shelter providing 6 parking spaces for short-term/visitor use is located to the north of the site.

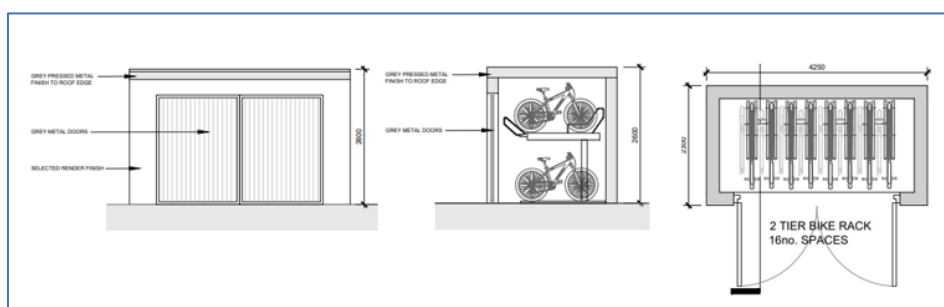


Figure 14: Extract from Bike Store Drawings, prepared by Deady Gahan Architects.

Three bin stores will also be suitably located in close proximity to the apartment units. Communal bin storage has been calculated to provide 1000l for the one-bed apartments and 1,700l for the two-bed apartments. The calculations are based on the British Standard (5906:2005). The bin and bike stores are located within the layout to benefit from passive surveillance, aesthetic considerations and to ensure that they do not impede on any traffic sightlines.

5.3 Recreation, Amenity, Open Space & Biodiversity

The site is currently in agricultural use with the boundary defined by mature hedgerows, trees and hedgerows. The landscape design has, where possible been guided and influenced by the topography, the Ecology and Arboricultural appraisal of the lands and surrounding environment.

Native plant material shall be considered for the scheme, in part, to improve the overall biodiversity of the site. the inclusion of pollinator plants as part of the species mix will be a focused element of the planting palette.

The provision of permeability and improved overall pedestrian movement is one of the core principles of the site layout design. This core principle is coupled with the design objective to provide designed landscape amenity areas which offer comfort, passive supervision, ease of access in terms of the varying age groups and levels of mobility and a safe amenity space for all end users. The central amenity space (Fig.15) includes two 2-seat benches framed in perennial pollinator planting, six apple trees as public orchard, fostering food education and social interaction, and a natural play area of level grass, including three boulders and a honed tree trunk for natural play, yet also suitable as hangout elements for teenagers.

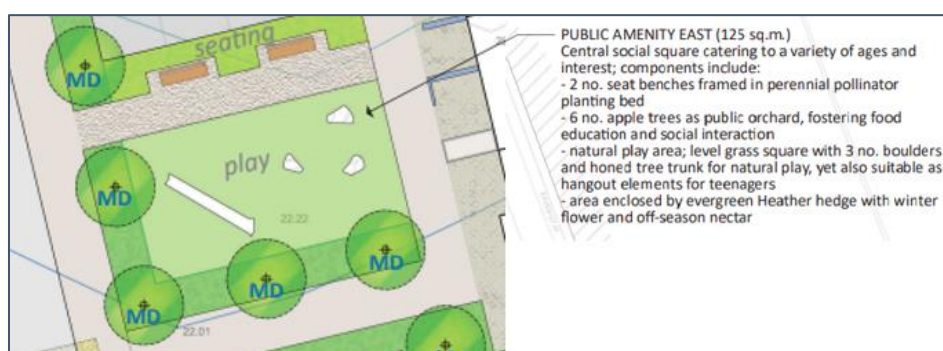


Figure 15: Extract from Landscaping Plan

Second to the core principle of design is the development of a palette of materials for both hard and soft landscaping to both the amenity lands and the streetscape.

5.3.4 Biodiversity, Recreation & Amenity Approach

Objective BE 15-6(b) and (c) of the County Development Plan relates to Biodiversity and New Development and encourages the retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and other features of high natural value within new developments and the use of native trees and particularly pollinator friendly species in the landscaping of new developments.

In accordance with this objective and as shown on the Landscape Plan Forestbird Design, the existing hedgerows and trees on-site and along the site boundaries will be retained and protected as far as possible. Where trees/hedgerows have been removed, new hedgerows will be replanted with new native trees so that there is a net gain and so that any existing biodiversity corridors are maintained. All trees that are being retained will be maintained and will be protected appropriately during the construction and operational phases of the development. Please refer to the Landscaping package for further details.

The Landscape Plan includes a number of biodiversity features to enhance the open space and which incorporate a number of Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions (SUDs). These include features such as a depressed "damp" meadow to the northwest of the site and an urban woodland area at

the site entrance (Fig 16). Planting beds will be provided to the front of dwelling units that will consist of high-pollinator shrubs. The beds will be planted in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan guidelines and will be modified depending on orientation and exposure.



Figure 16: Proposed nature-based SUDs include urban woodland (left) and tree pits (right)

In addition to the biodiversity considerations, the Landscaping Plan also sets out the proposed strategy to the public amenity spaces that include picnic areas, outside seating, natural play areas, and a level grass area for more structured sports play. The open spaces are designed as inclusive spaces to cater for a range of activities and age groups. Open spaces are enhanced with the integration of parkland tree planting, flowering pollinator planting and a public orchard.

A Green Infrastructure Statement by Forestbird Design and an Appropriate Assessment and Ecological Impact Assessment has been prepared by Dixon Brosnan Environmental Services which assessed any existing habitats and includes the implementation of appropriate mitigation to ensure that there is an overall net biodiversity gain. These reports have been used to inform the landscape and amenity strategy for the development.

5.3.5 Open Space Hierarchy

The following key elements have been considered as part of the open space detailed design and the protection and overall reinforcement of the sites "Green Infrastructure".

- Create a pedestrian & cycle path network through the site which can be extended over time;
- Provide open space that is overlooked and framed by the residential units providing an attractive setting and passive surveillance;
- Incorporate the objectives of planning policies for the area, in particular, 'Cork County Council Recreation & Amenity Policy';
- Public open spaces with high amenity and visual values, to facilitate both active & passive recreation;
- Promote ecology & biodiversity through the retention and enhancement of existing natural features;

- Respond to both the existing landscape and potential future development by retaining the existing landscape features where appropriate and facilitating linkages through the proposed development.

5.3.6 Amenity/Open Space

In total, 0.118ha of public open space is provided within the development, equating to 12% useable open space. As part of the amenity provision, it is proposed to provide a series of open spaces, a 3m pedestrian and bicycle trail and a biodiversity reservation area.

5.3.7 Entrance Treatment

The arrival space of the housing scheme comprises an entrance road and separated footpath through an open green amenity space. The road is framed by a group of preexisting mature trees outside of the site boundary. It is proposed to enhance this with a planted avenue of native oaks. The footpath splits midway, providing a winding path that accommodates the natural slope of the site entrance and will facilitate mobility restricted access, and a more direct stepped path. The paths move through the open green space, that will incorporate an urban woodland feature of mixed native species (Fig 17). This will consist of higher canopy trees and low ground cover that will facilitate good visibility through the woodland area from the site entrance to the built environment and so will benefit from passive surveillance.

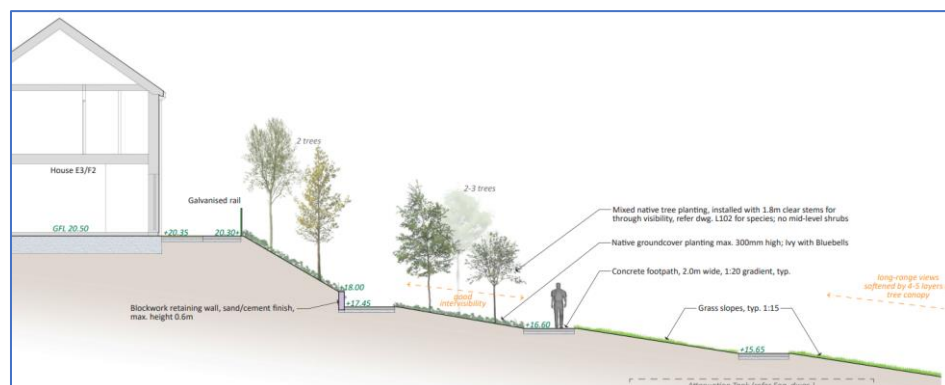


Figure 17: Extract from the Landscape Development Package showing through entry approach, prepared by Forestbird Design.

5.4 Traffic and Access

The proposed development is accessed via a single vehicular access point from the existing road from Fernhill Road to the Beechgrove estate and will include the provision of a footpath and cycleway.

Vehicular routes through the site will be calmed through various design measures including alignment, to reduce traffic speeds, with horizontal and vertical deflections introduced as required. A design speed limit of 30 km/hour has been applied throughout the development in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (function – local road, context – neighbourhood, pedestrian priority). The existing speed limit for

the access road between Fernhill Road and the Beechgrove development is 50km/h, with Stopping Sight Distances (SSD) standards for a 50km/h restricted area as 45m sightlines, as set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. The Engineers Report Provided by Walsh Design Group notes that sightlines of at least 45m can be achieved to the east and west of the entrance to the proposed scheme when exiting (Fig 18).

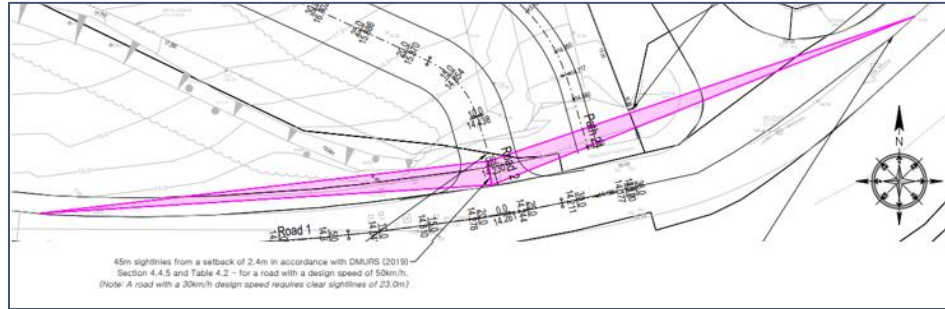


Figure 18: Extract from Civil Engineering Report

A Traffic and Transport Assessment has been prepared by Martin Hanley Consulting Engineers. The scope of the TTA has been agreed with Cork County Council’s Traffic and Transport Department. The site layout has been informed by the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport & Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013, and in accordance with DMURS, provides a network of streets, pedestrian priority areas and traffic calming.

In line with the standards set out in the CDP and revised within the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines, a total of 49 car parking spaces have been provided, including three designated for limited mobility use. All parking spaces will be capable of accommodating future charging points to future proof a transition to electric vehicles. As such, on-curtilage charging will facilitate affordable charging via private meters. The allocation of parking spaces for housing and apartment units are outlined in Fig. 19.

VEHICLE PARKING SPACES - HOUSING			
Unit Types	No. of Units	Parking x Units	Total Parking
3 bed semi-detached	2	2no. parking spaces per unit	4
4 bed end (accessible) townhouse	1	2no. parking spaces per unit	2
3 bed end townhouse	2	1no. parking spaces per unit	2
2 bed end townhouse	3	1no. parking spaces per unit	3
2 bed mid townhouse	7	1no. parking spaces per unit	7
TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE PARKING SPACES	15		18
TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITOR PARKING SPACES			3
<i>This equates to 1.4 spaces per house</i>			
VEHICLE PARKING SPACES - APARTMENTS			
Unit Types	No. of Units	Parking x Units	Total Parking
2 bed own-door access apartments	10	1no. parking spaces per unit	10
1 bed own-door access apartments	10	1no. parking spaces per unit	10
TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE PARKING SPACES	20		20
TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITOR PARKING SPACES			8
<i>This equates to 1.4 spaces per apartment</i>			

Figure 19: Extract from Proposed Parking Layout

5.5 Water & Wastewater

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, noting that the water supply connection can be facilitated without any upgrade after the third quarter of 2023. Confirmation of feasibility letters are included in Appendix C of the Engineering Report.

A number of SUDs have been incorporated into the design of the housing scheme to address surface water run-off. The SUDs measures comply with the guidance set out in the CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual Within the private realm of the development, measures include the installation of 300l water butts to the rear of each dwelling that has a rear garden. Water butts will collect run-off from the downpipes and will be fitted with a tap for domestic non-potable water uses. Rain garden planters are also proposed for rear gardens that will reduce the velocity of surface water run-off in rain events.

Further SUDs measures will be incorporated in the public realm of the development. These include the provision of permeable paving for all car parking spaces, allowing surface water to soak into the subsoil and ground water, rather than leaving the site via the sewer network.

In addition, it is proposed that bioretention tree pits be located in roadside green areas of the site where a proportion of the surface water for the impermeable road surface and footpaths. The bioretention tree pits offer run-off interception, filtration and water storage as well as other benefits including the promotion of biodiversity and evapotranspiration. Details of the SUDs measures can be found in the Engineering Report prepared by WDG. The overall strategy to green and blue infrastructure, including SUDs measures are outlined in the Green Infrastructure Statement and should be read in conjunction with the Landscape Plan, both prepared by Forestbird Design.

6. Appropriate Assessment

According to the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EC) and Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), member states are required to designate areas in order to protect priority habitats and species. These sites are known as Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) respectively. Collectively, these sites are known as Natura 2000 sites. An “Appropriate Assessment” (AA), means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge of the potential impacts of a plan, on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and the development where necessary of measures to preclude negative effects. The impact assessment must include indirect and cumulative impacts of approving the plan considered, with any current or proposed activities, development or policies impacting on the site. All plans and projects should aim to identify any possible impacts early in the plan making process and then either alter the plan to avoid them or introduce mitigation measures to the point where no adverse impacts remain.

An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon either individually or in combination with other plans or projects shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implication of the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provision 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.

Article 6(4) states;

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons or overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

The AA screening report prepared by Dixon Brosnan concludes that the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. The report further notes that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

7. Environmental Assessment

In accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and current government and EU guidance, the Planning Authority must screen the proposed development for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and decide whether the planning application for the proposed development does or does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Having regard to the nature, extent, and the characteristics of the likely impacts we consider that when screened in accordance with EU Screening Guidelines that the proposed development is not a project defined by Part 1 and Part 2 Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as

requiring an EIAR and would not warrant a sub threshold EIAR in accordance with Article 10 of the Regulations.

With regard to EIA requirements, the proposal is well below the mandatory EIAR threshold for residential developments of 500 units (which is the statutory test in this regard) and is also below the 10ha EIAR threshold for development within a built-up area. Any potential impact on the environment is likely to be confined to the immediate site area, is likely to be limited in magnitude and the site is not one of special environmental sensitivity.

A formal EIA screening has been carried out by McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants and is submitted as part of this application. Based on the findings of the EIA screening assessment, the proposed development does not require a mandatory EIA. With regards to the nature, extent and characteristics of the likely impacts for the construction and operational phase of the proposed development, the EIA screening considers that the proposed development will not give rise to any likely significant environmental effects and accordingly a sub-threshold EIA is not required.

8. Conclusion

The proposed Part 8 exempted development, An Tamhnaigh, at Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty, will provide 35 much needed new residential dwellings to meet a mixture of housing solutions with regards to size and typology on an under-utilised infill site within the existing built footprint. The scheme has been carefully designed by a multidisciplinary team to ensure a high-quality development that is in line with all the relevant national, regional and local policies. It will deliver a high-quality affordable and social residential scheme that is sympathetic to the existing urban environment and sensitive to the natural environment of the immediate surrounds, achieving a medium-high density housing that will help address the current housing shortages in a highly desirable key town in West Cork in an accessible location with all amenities, facilities and services within a short walking distance of the development.