

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment  
Screening Determination**

**Proposed Residential Development at Ceann Scribe, Clontead Beg,  
Coachford, Co. Cork.**



**Cork County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

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**Cork County Council.**

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This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of a proposed residential development at Ceann Scribe, Clontead Beg, Coachford, Co. Cork. The assessment is based on project drawings and details prepared by the Architects Department and Dixon Brosnan Environmental Consultants.

In accordance with Regulation 250 of the Planning and Development Regulations, Local Authorities are required to carry out screening for appropriate assessment of proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on one or more European<sup>1</sup> sites. The Local Authority is required to determine that appropriate assessment of the proposed development is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on one or more European sites.

These requirements derive from Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive which states that

*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 implications for 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 provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

EU and National Guidance sets out two main stages to the assessment process which are as follows:

### **Stage One: Screening**

The process which identifies what might be likely impacts arising from a plan or project on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. No further assessment is required where the risk of significant impacts on European sites can be objectively ruled out during the screening stage.

### **Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment**

Where the possibility of significant impacts has not been discounted by the screening process, a more detailed assessment is required. This is called an Appropriate Assessment and requires the compilation of a **Natura Impact Statement** by the project proponent, which is a report of scientific evidence and data relating to European sites for which significant negative impacts have not been previously screened out. This is used to identify and classify any implications of the plan or project for these sites in view of their Conservation Objectives. The Appropriate Assessment must include a determination as to whether or not the project would adversely affect the integrity of any European site or sites. The plan or project may only be consented if adverse effects on the integrity of European sites can be objectively ruled out during the Appropriate Assessment process. The plan or project may not be consented on foot of an Appropriate Assessment, if it is found that it will give rise to adverse impacts on one or more European sites, or if uncertainty remains in relation to potential impacts on one or more European sites.

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<sup>1</sup>“European Site” means— (a) a candidate site of Community importance; (b) a site of Community importance; (c) a candidate special area of conservation; (d) a special area of conservation; (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area.

**Name of the project**

Proposed social housing development at Clonstead, Coachford, Co. Cork.

**Description of the project**

The proposed development consists of a mix of residential units for 26 units which includes 6no. three bed houses, 10no. two bed houses and 10no. one bed apartments and all associated ancillary works. The access to the development is proposed to the site via the local road L-96192 to the west of the site just off the R619 regional road.

Drinking water will be supplied from the public system.

The development is proposed to connect to the Coachford WWTP.

**Site Context**

The proposed development is located on an overgrown greenfield site within the development boundary of Coachford and just north of the village main street. The subject site measures approximately 2.11 ha. Coachford is a key village within the Macroom Municipal District. The site is located on the outskirts of the village and is bound to the east and south by the R619 regional road. To the west of the site is the abandoned Coachford Railway Terminus and to the north of the site is an existing private dwelling.

The site is located within the Lee, Cork harbour WFD catchment. The Knockaneowen Stream is located along the western boundary of proposed site which connects to the River Dripsey, a tributary of the River Lee. The River Lee has been assigned good water quality status.

Wastewater from the proposed development is proposed to be conveyed to the Coachford WWTP. Uisce Eireann has completed works on a new wastewater treatment plant in Coachford and indicated it has available capacity.

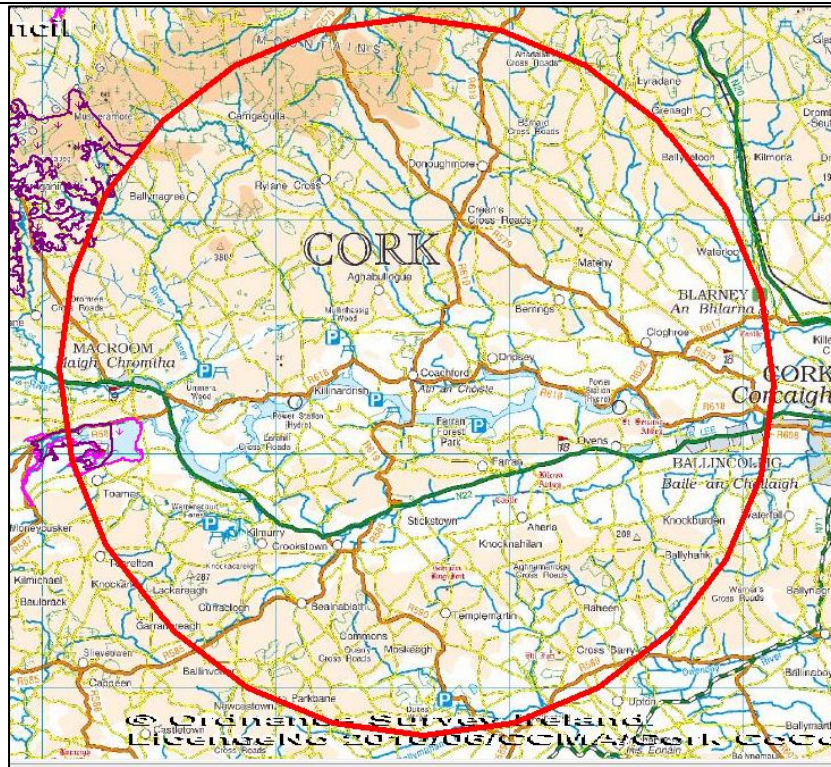
The western perimeter of the site is located in Flood Zone A and B according to the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028.

**Name and location of EU sites subject to screening**

There are three Natura 2000 (European) sites located within a 15km radius of the site, these include:

1. The Gearagh SAC (Site Code: 108) located approximately 11.8km west of the proposed development.
2. The Gearagh SPA (Site Code: 4109) located approximately 13.2km west of the proposed development.
3. Mullaghanish to Musheramore SPA (Site Code: 4162) located approximately 14.7km north west of the proposed development.

Additionally, the proposed development has a distant hydrological connection to one Natura 2000 sites with Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 4030). The proposed site is located approximately 31kms upstream from the Natura 2000 site via the River Lee.



**Figure 1: Red buffer indicates all European sites within 15kms of the proposed development.**

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

No.

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

**The Gearagh SAC and The Gearagh SPA**

These two EU sites are located upstream from the development site and therefore there is no pathway for impact on these Natura 2000 sites. The Coachford WWTP has capacity to cater for the proposed development. The site is located sufficiently distant from designated sites to be satisfied that there is no risk of activities associated with the project causing disturbance to species which are qualifying interests of the listed SAC and SPA.

**Mullaghanish to Musheramore SPA**

There are no direct hydrological or other ecological connections linking Mullaghanish to Musheramore SPA to the proposed development. The SPA is located at a significant distance from the proposed development sites to be satisfied that there is no risk of activities associated with the project causing disturbance to species which are qualifying interests of the listed SPA. Accordingly, it is determined that there is no potential pathway for impact on the SPA.

**Cork Harbour SPA**

This SPA has a distant hydrological connection to the proposed development via the River Lee. Given the significant distance from the site (31kms upstream) and sufficient capacity available in the WWTP, there is no likely impact to the SPA as a result of this development.

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

No potential for impacts identified, therefore the proposed project does not pose a threat of contributing to effects which could be significant when considered in combination with other impact sources.

**Cork County Council evaluation and overall conclusion that there are no significant effects on European Sites foreseen as a result of the proposal.**

In accordance with Section 177S of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant negative any EU site for the following reasons:

- No works are proposed within any of the listed European sites.
- No direct loss, alteration or fragmentation of habitats will occur within any EU sites;
- The site is located sufficiently distant from any EU site to be satisfied that there is no risk of activities associated with the project causing disturbance to qualifying habitats or species.
- Wastewater is to be directed to the Coachford WWTP which has capacity to take the loading which will be generated from this development.

It is therefore determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 is not required.