

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination**

**7 no Unit Residential Development
Park, Knocknagree, Co. Cork.**



Cork County Council
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

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This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of a proposed development of seven residential units in the townland of Park, Knocknagree, Co. Cork. The assessment is based on project drawings and details prepared by the Housing Department and DixonBrosnan 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 European¹ 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.

¹“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

6 to 12 Cearnog Chluain Each, Park, Knocknagree

Description of the project

The project includes 7no. houses and associated site works at Park, Knocknagree. The site is part of a larger site in council ownership which was serviced in 2005. The proposed development site is approximately 0.316ha of the overall 1.675ha in CCC ownership.

SuDS measures proposed include rainwater butts, soakaways and trees. The surface water on the site will discharge to a soakaway via an oil interceptor. The soakaway will have a storage volume suitable for the infiltration test results.

The development will be connected to the existing foul water infrastructure.

Site Context

The proposed development site is located to the northeast of Knocknagree in the townland of Park. The site is situated off L1108 along an existing tramway. There are a number of single dwellings along the L1108 as well as the farmhouses and yards to the south of the site. The landscape around the site is rural in nature. The site is comprised of improved agricultural grassland with poorly drained areas, indicated by rush, and is bound by hedgerow along the north and east and a conifer plantation along the west.

Figure 1 Site location

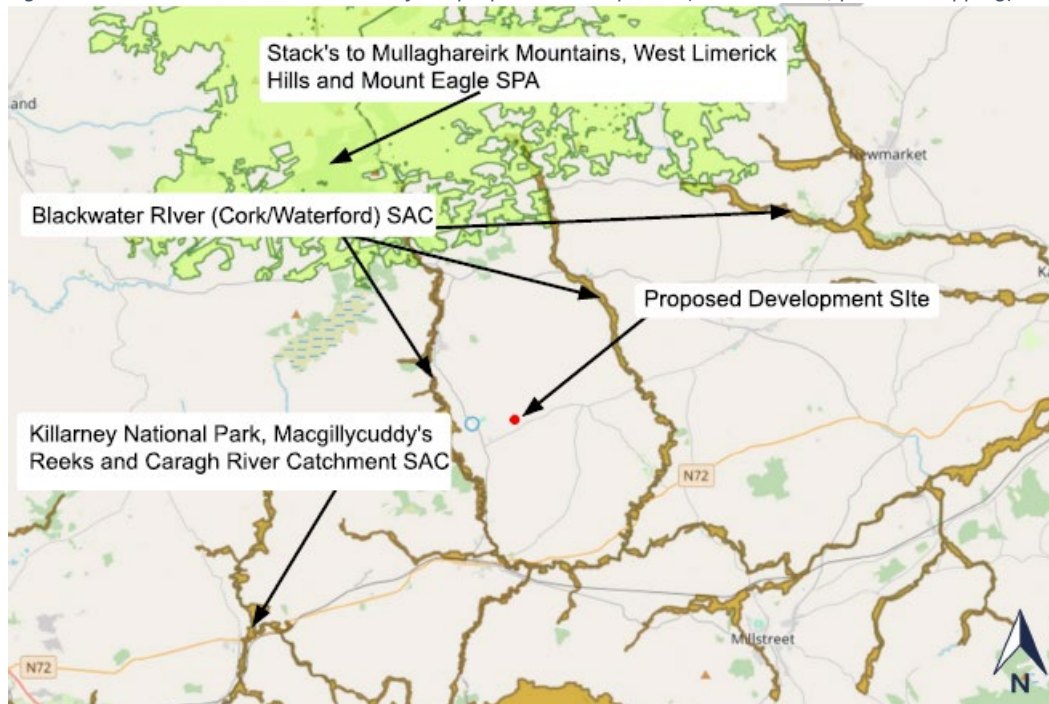


Name and location of EU sites subject to screening

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

1. Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (site code: 2170) located approximately 1.1km west of the proposed development.
2. Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC (site code: 0365) located approximately 7.1km south of the proposed development.
3. Lower River Shannon SAC (site code: 2165) located approximately 13.3km north of the proposed development.
4. Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (site code: 4161) located approximately 6.7km north.

Figure 2 Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development (DixonBrosnan, per EPA mapping)



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

There are no source-receptor pathways between the proposed site and Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC or Lower River Shannon SAC, as they are in different catchments. Therefore, likely significant effects to these EU site are screened out.

The proposed development will be indirectly hydrologically connected to the Blackwater River SAC via the existing wastewater infrastructure. I note that the WWTP is currently complaint and has been for the past three years. I also note, per UE's Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register, that there is sufficient capacity.

Given that the proposed site is located in an area of negligible value to otter or hen harrier, it is considered highly unlikely that the proposed development will result in any ex-situ impacts on such species and therefore no effects on the qualifying interest species of the Blackwater River SAC or SCI species of Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA.

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.
- There is sufficient capacity in the WWTP

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