

EIA SCREENING REPORT

FOR A

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT LANDS IN BANESHANE, MIDLETON, Co. CORK

PREPARED BY

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ON BEHALF OF

ROCKSPRING PROPERTIES LIMITED

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Introduction

On behalf of the applicant, Rockspring (Newport) Properties Ltd, this EIAR screening report has been prepared by Ian Doyle Planning Consultant to assess the potential impacts on the environment of the proposed development *on lands at Baneshane, Midleton, Co. Cork*. The full development description is as follows:

The proposed development is described as follows:

Rockspring Properties (Newport) Limited are applying to Cork County Council for a **10 year permission for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD)** at **Baneshane, Midleton, Co. Cork**.

The proposed development is advertised as follows:

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

Notice of Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) Application

Rockspring Properties (Newport) Limited intend to apply to **Cork County Council** for **Ten Year Permission for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD)** at **Baneshane, Midleton, Co. Cork**.

The proposed development will consist of a **10-year permission for a residential development of 173 no. dwellings**, comprising **74 no. apartments and duplex units within apartment and duplex blocks and 99 no. houses (including 4-bed, 3-bed, 2-bed and 1-bed units)**. The development will also include a **creche (c.137.5 sq.m) with capacity for approximately 20 children**, a **pumping station**, **alterations to the junction at Abbey Wood Estate and Ballintubber Road**, and all associated **site development works including internal roads and services, car parking, bicycle parking, public open space, landscaping, drainage infrastructure, footpaths and cycleways, lighting, plant and ancillary works**.

A **Natura Impact Statement (NIS)** has been prepared in respect of the proposed development **in relation to potential impacts on European Sites** and accompanies this planning application.

The planning application and the **Natura Impact Statement** may be inspected online at the following website set up by the applicant:

www.rockspringpropertieslimited.com

The planning application and the **Natura Impact Statement** may also be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of **Cork County Council** during its public opening hours.

A **submission or observation** in relation to the application may be made in writing to the Planning Authority on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of **5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the Planning Authority of the application**, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the Planning Authority in making a decision on the application.

Purpose of EIAR screening

The purpose of this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report is to determine whether or not an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for the proposed development and to identify any environmental issues that might arise. An Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement has also been prepared as a separate document and should be read in conjunction with this screening report.

EIA Screening and Methodology

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared considering the following documents:

- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- Planning and Development (Amendment) (Large-scale Residential Development) Act 2021 (No. 40 of 2021),
- Planning and Development Regulations 2018 (as amended);
- *“Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Area Guidelines”*
- Directive 2011/92/EU; • Directive 2015/52/EU;
- Transposition of 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) in the Land Use Planning and EPA Licensing Systems – Key Issues Consultation Paper (2017; DoHPCLG);
- Preparation of guidance documents for the implementation of EIA directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) – Annex I to the Final Report (COWI, Millieu; April 2017);
- European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018;
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in environmental impact assessment reports, EPA, 2017 (Draft);
- Environmental Impact Assessment – Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018; DoHPLG);
- Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development (2003; DoEHLG).

The methodology employed in this screening exercise is in accordance with the EIA Guidelines published in August 2018 by the DoHPLG and the contents of Schedule 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations.

Legislative Basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU).. EIA legislation as it relates to the planning process has been largely brought together in Part X of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018. Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulation lists project types, included in Annex I of the Directive which automatically require EIA. Part 2 of the same Schedule lists projects types included in Annex II. Corresponding developments automatically require EIA

if no threshold is given or if they are exceeding a given threshold. Sub Threshold development are assessed against criteria set out in Schedule 7.

EIA Thresholds

Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2018 (as amended) sets the thresholds which automatically require Environmental Impact Assessment. Part 2 of Schedule 5 (10)(b)(i) identifies developments of more than 500 dwelling units and (iii) identifies urban development which would involve an area of 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.

The number of housing units proposed is 173 which is below the 500 unit threshold. The subject site is defined as being an “outer suburban greenfield site” in accordance with the “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Area Guidelines” and as such does not constitute “Urban Development” or development in “a built-up Area”. In the context of the above, the applicable threshold is 20 ha (elsewhere). The site area at c. 6.20ha is below the 20ha threshold.

Subthreshold Development

Article 92 of the Planning & Development Regulations of 2001, as amended define: ‘sub-threshold development’ as:

“development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development.”

Annex III of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended) as transposed into Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations – establishes the criteria by which sub-threshold projects are reviewed to determine if they should be subject to EIA.

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations outlines the information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for Environmental Impact Assessment as follows:

1. **A description of the project**, including in particular:
 - A description of the physical characteristics of the whole project and, where relevant, of demolition works.
 - A description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. **A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.**

3. **A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment** resulting from:
 - The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
 - The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
4. **Compilation of the above information taking into account criteria in Schedule 7** as appropriate.

Schedule 7, as referenced in Item 4 of Schedule 7A provides a further list of criteria for determining whether development listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an environmental impact assessment and include

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development.
2. Location of the Proposed Development.
3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts

EIA Screening Statement

The following sections consist of the information required by Schedule 7A for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for Environment Impact Assessment.

A Description of the Proposed Development

- *Physical Characteristics of the Proposed Development*

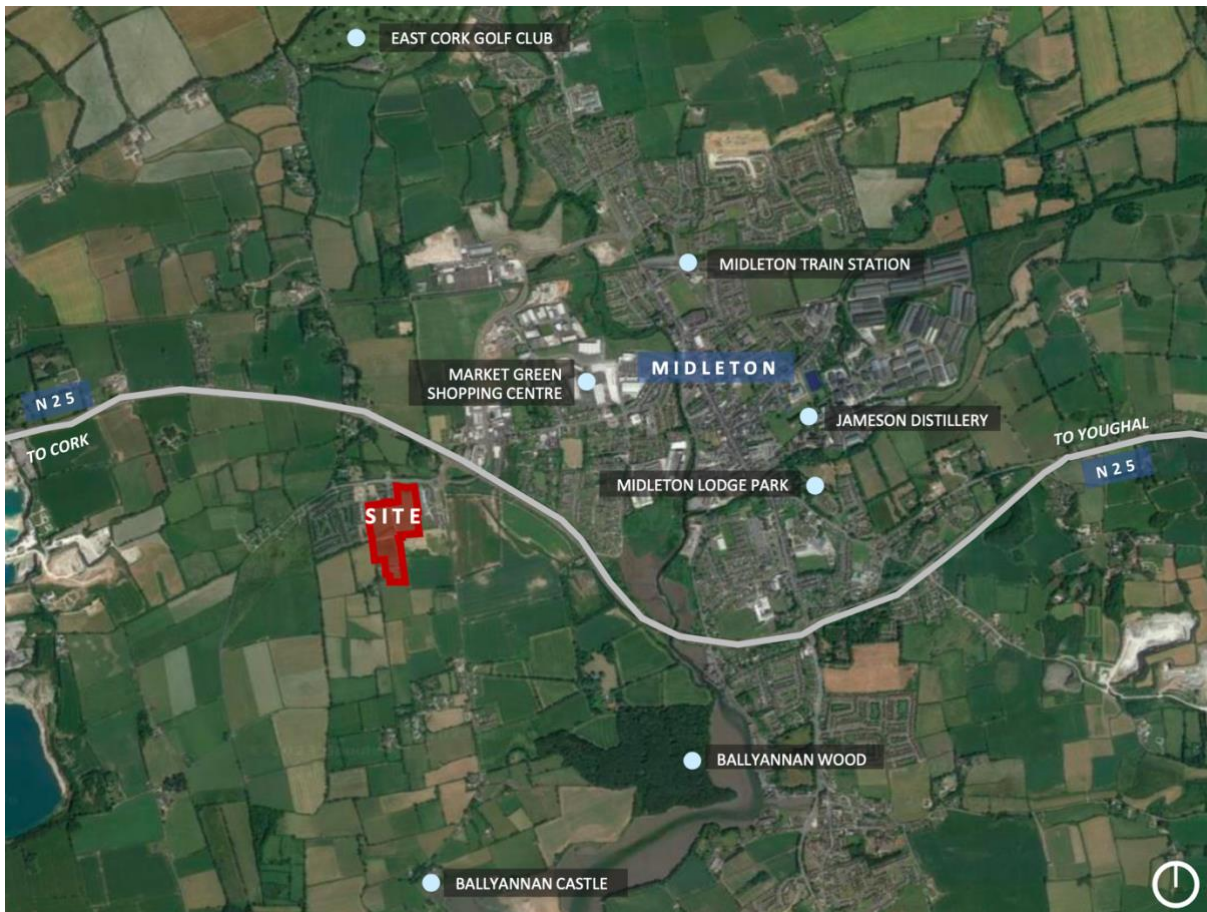
The proposed development will consist of:

- The construction of **173 no. residential units** comprising a mix of apartments, duplex units, semi-detached houses, terraced houses and bungalows as follows:
 - **Apartments and Duplexes (74 no.):**
 - Block E1: 11 × 2-bed and 6 × 1-bed
 - Block E2: 3 × 3-bed, 6 × 2-bed and 3 × 1-bed
 - Block E3: 9 × 2-bed and 6 × 1-bed
 - Duplex D1: 4 × 2-bed and 4 × 1-bed
 - Duplex D2: 5 × 2-bed and 5 × 1-bed
 - Duplex D3: 9 × 2-bed and 3 × 1-bed
 - **Houses (99 no.):**
 - 11 × 4-bed semi-detached
 - 76 × 3-bed (33 semi-detached, 27 end-of-terrace, 16 mid-terrace)
 - 10 × 2-bed (3 end-of-terrace, 1 terraced, 6 bungalows)
 - 2 × 1-bed bungalows
- A **crèche of c.137.5 sq.m** gross floor area (59.22 sq.m dedicated childcare space and 78.28 sq.m ancillary/circulation), with capacity for c.20 children.
- The provision of a **pumping station** to serve the development.

- Alterations and improvements to the **junction at Abbey Wood Estate and Ballintubber Road,**
- All associated **car parking (273 spaces), bicycle parking (161 spaces), public open space, landscaping, and ancillary site development works.**

Location of the Proposed Development

The site is located south of the N25 dual carriageway, on the Carrigtwohill side of Midleton in the townland of Baneshane. The site previously formed part of a larger development site to accommodate 403 residential units. Aspects of that site including the subject lands, underwent site clearance works for development. Only 10 dwellings were completed. Access to the subject site is proposed via the previously partially constructed development now known as Abbey Wood.



The subject lands are bound to the east by Gaelscoil Mhainistir Na Corann and to the west by Rock Brook housing development. There is a farmyard and scattered one-off housing to the rear of the site.

The site does not contain any permanent structures.

Description of the Aspects of the Environment Likely to be Significantly Affected by the Proposed Development

This section examines the possible effects on the environment under the topics prescribed by Directive 2014/52/EU. This approach provides a comprehensive description of the aspects likely to be affected by the proposed development.

Population & Human Health

The subject site is an outer suburban green field site zoned for development under the County Development Plan which states:

“The planning strategy for Midleton as set out in the Core Strategy in Volume One of this plan, provides for the population of the town to grow to 19,423 persons up to 2028. This represents a growth of 6,927 persons on the Census 2016 population of 12,496. In order to accommodate this level of population growth, an additional 2,647 units need to be provided in Midleton up to 2028 with 2,347 housing units delivered on residential zoned land and the balance of 300 units delivered within the built footprint of the town”.

The proposed development consists of 173 residential units and associated recreational open space provision (11.7%). The proposed development has a density of 42 units per ha. A Creche is also proposed to accommodate 20 child spaces. Building heights are generally two storey with a additional 3 storey apartment blocks. The subject proposal will provide much needed housing in the area including social affordable housing units in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act. In terms of targeted population growth, the proposed development will provide for 7% of the total number of units required in Midleton between now and 2028.

The proposed receiving environment, in terms of employment and access to employment via planned public transport infrastructure can accommodate the proposed design population. The development proposal will provide for significant employment opportunities during construction. As a result, it is anticipated that the proposed development will contribute positively to this aspect of the environment. **No significant negative effects are envisaged.**

Biodiversity

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken with respect to the proposed development and accompanies the subject LRD application.

Soil/ Geology

There are no known geophysical issues associated with the subject lands and /or surrounding lands. No issues arose in this regards over the course of the previous permission granted including the subject lands and similarly no issues arose during construction of the adjacent school east of the site.

Given the nature and extent of the proposed development and specifically the low-rise nature of the proposed buildings, it is envisaged that further exploration of the geophysical aspects of the site and any potential impacts on the proposed development can be facilitated at construction stage.

While limited “cut and fill” will be required, it is not envisaged that importation/exportation of a significant volume of soil or rock will not be necessary. **No significant negative effects are envisaged in this regard.**

Hydrogeology

A Hydrogeological Assessment prepared by ENVA Ireland as part of the Part 8 application associated with Water Rock identifies the groundwater vulnerability rating of the subject site to be “moderate”. According to available Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) mapping identified by the report, the subject site is outside any lands deemed vulnerable to 100 year fluvial and coastal extreme flood events. A Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment accompanies the subject LRD application. **No significant negative effects are envisaged in this regard.**

Water

The proposed development will connect to the public water/wastewater facilities serving the area and the necessary discussions with Irish Water have been achieved to date to facilitate same. (A valid Confirmation Of Feasibility and A Statement of Compliance with Irish Water’s Standard Details and Codes of Practice for water and/or wastewater infrastructure proposals accompanies the subject application). With regards to surface water, the scheme has been designed to accommodate onsite attenuation prior to discharge. Full design details and calculations accompany the LRD application and have been designed in accordance with SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems). Nature based SuDS have been included where appropriate.

Further detail and information are included in the accompanying report prepared by CroCon Engineers Ltd. **No significant negative effects are envisaged in this regard.**

Air/Dust/ Climate

In the long term once development is complete, fugitive emissions of dust from the site will be insignificant and pose no nuisance at nearby receptors. Construction related impacts are potentially significant and as a result require standard proactive mitigation. As is consistent with best practice mitigation measures, a number of layers of protocol will be utilised, therefore if one fails in the short-term it should be eliminated by the next. Construction dust monitoring will be put in place to ensure that, should mitigation measures fail and construction dust impacts occur, they will be short term in nature. Mitigation measures include:

- Sweeping and watering of roads to remove mud and aggregate materials from their surface and keep dust down during dry periods.
- A wheel wash facility will be in operation prior to entering onto public roads.
- Vehicles using site roads will have their speed restricted, and this speed restriction will be enforced rigidly.

- Vehicles delivering material with dust potential (soil, aggregates) will be enclosed or covered at all times to restrict the escape of dust.
- Public roads outside the site will be regularly inspected for cleanliness, and cleaned as necessary.

The above have been fully integrated into the Construction Environment Management Plan. **No significant negative effects are envisaged with regards to dust emissions.**

Noise/Vibration

The subject site is located a sufficient distance from the existing railway line to justify an inward noise assessment. Associated problematic noise generation will be limited to noise generated during construction. Construction noise will be contained within recognized standards subject to the following standard mitigation measures:

- Limiting the hours during which site activities likely to create high levels of noise are permitted.
- Establishing channels of communication between the contractor, local authority and residents.
- Appointing a site representative responsible for matters relating to noise.
- Monitoring typical levels of noise during critical periods and at sensitive locations.
- Furthermore, it is envisaged that a variety of practicable noise control measures will be employed in addition to the maintenance of acoustic screens as required, including:
 - Selection of plant with low inherent potential for generation of noise; and
 - Siting of noisy plant as far away from sensitive properties as permitted by site constraints.

The above have been fully integrated into the Construction Environment Management Plan. **No significant negative effects are envisaged with regards to Noise and Vibration.**

Material Assets

The land on which the site is situated is a material asset. The site has been zoned for development through the appropriate process and as a result the use of this material asset in a manner compatible with the designated zoning provisions is entirely appropriate.

Once constructed, the operational phase will provide an important material asset for the area in terms of residential units, the provision of open space and the achievement of critical mass to accommodate community, social and sustainable transport initiatives envisaged by the County Development Plan.

Other material assets in terms of water services (discussed above), electricity and other utilities are all available and the proposed development can readily connect to same. **No significant negative effects are envisaged regarding material assets.**

Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage

There are no registered monuments within or adjacent to the subject lands, there are no existing structures on site. The site is not located within an area of Archaeological interest and is therefore not expected to have any impacts on archaeology, architecture, or cultural heritage. An Archaeological Impact Assessment accompanies the subject LRD application. **No significant negative effects are envisaged regarding Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage.**

Landscape

The proposed development will have an extremely limited visual impact in terms of the surrounding landscape. Both hard and soft landscaping will be utilized to soften the visual impacts of aspects of the development and to “green” the proposed development in general. The proposed development will have **no significant negative effects on the surrounding landscape in terms of visual impact.**

Vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and/or disasters

Standard construction practices will be employed throughout the construction phase as detailed by the accompanying Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan. The subject lands are not proximate to any Seveso/COMAH designated sites and is not subject to flooding.

Inter-relationship Between the Above Factors

It is considered that any of the previously identified relatively minor impacts would not in themselves be considered significant nor would they cumulatively result in a likely significant effect on the environment.

A Description of Any Significant Effects to the Extent of the Information Available on Such Effects of the Proposed Development on the Environment

- (a) The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
- (b) The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

It is anticipated that there will be some normal residues/emissions during the construction stage associated with proposed development works including ground preparation works,

development of site infrastructure, construction of buildings and hardstanding areas and landscaping of the site. Standard mitigation measures will be employed and monitored as described by the Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan.

Residues and emissions are not considered likely to have potential to cause significant effects on the environment. Some waste materials will be produced during construction phase which will be disposed of using licensed waste disposal facilities and contractors.

The disposal of construction waste will not result in likely significant effects on the environment. The Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan details methodologies for the control, management, monitoring and disposal of waste from the site during construction.

There will be no large scale use of natural resources. The main use of natural resources will be land. The subject lands are currently vacant and are zoned for residential development. The extent and quantity of construction materials envisaged to facilitate the subject development will not be of a scale that would cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment. The use of natural resources in relation to the proposed development is not likely to cause significant effects on the environment.

Review Against Schedule 7 Criteria

Schedule 7 Criteria	Commentary
<p>1. Characteristics of Proposed Development The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:</p>	
<p>(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development</p>	<p>The proposal is for a Large-scale Residential Development on a gross application site of c. 5. ha, (net developable area of c. 4.11 ha) for 173 residential units and a creche. The proposal is sub-threshold for an EIA</p>
<p>(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</p>	<p>The Proposed Development will be similar to the existing nearby housing developments which are to the east and west of the site.</p> <p>In terms of the applicants landholding, lands to the north totalling 3.1ha are zoned for residential development with a potential yield of 108 to 155 units. Lands adjacent to the east are zoned community and amount to 2.1ha in size and are not designated for housing. Therefore the</p>

	<p>overall development potential of the applicants total landholding amounts to 328 units which is below the threshold of 500 units.</p> <p>Based on the nature of the cumulative activities identified, the potential for environmental effects is considered not likely and not significant. Further investigation in the context of an EIA is not warranted.</p>
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works	No demolition proposed
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	<p>No existing trees, hedgerows and/or mature vegetations exist on site. The site is a brownfield site.</p> <p>SuDS measures are incorporated to control surface water runoff to greenfield rates.</p> <p>Indigenous planting will reinforce existing boundaries and will be utilised throughout the scheme for all proposed areas of open space in accordance with the Councils Biodiversity policy's.</p>
(e) the production of waste,	<p>Construction waste shall be managed and disposed of in accordance with the recommendations of the Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>Operational waste will be in accordance with standard practice on a per household basis. Estate management will monitor public areas.</p>
(f) pollution and nuisances,	<p>Some short term impacts are anticipated during construction in terms of dust and noise. Both will be addressed by the Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>Appropriate construction mitigation is included in the Construction Environment Management Plan.</p>

(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	There are no significant risks associated with the proposal.

<p>2. Location of proposed development</p> <p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—</p>	
(a) the existing and approved land use	The subject site is currently scrublands previously cleared for development and is zoned for residential development. There is therefore a presumption in favour of development.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	The subject lands are “allocated” for development as part of a wider plan to accommodate sustainable housing based upon planned sustainable transport and community infrastructure provision.
(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	-
(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive	-
(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	Proposed density is in accordance with the zoning provisions for the site and have been considered in the context of

	Sustainable Settlements and Compact Growth Guidelines for Planning Authorities.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	Native landscaping is proposed. There are no significant features of cultural or archaeological significance present within the subject lands.

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, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) 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)	<p>The proposed development will not have any significant environmental impact beyond the site and immediate vicinity.</p> <p>Construction activities will be governed by The Construction Environment Management Plan, which will accompany the subject application.</p>
(b) the nature of the impact	<p>The nature of potential impacts for the operational phase are anticipated to be minor and typical of a residential development on lands zoned for such use.</p> <p>For construction phase some impacts are envisaged in terms of noise and dust emissions which will be minimal and short term.</p>
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact	<p>Any impacts will be contained within the site. The subject lands are not located on any geographical or other boundary of relevance to assessment of likely significant effects on the environment.</p>
d) the intensity and complexity of the impact	<p>The proposed development is that of a standard housing scheme on suitably zoned lands and involves no elements of intensity or complexity that will result in any effects on the environment.</p>

(e) the probability of the impact	Minor noise and dust impacts are probable in the short term during construction phase and will be managed and coordinated in accordance with best practice by the accompanying Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	Identified potential impacts (noise and dust) will be limited to construction phase only and will vary through the construction process in terms of duration and frequency. These impacts will be temporary and will not lead to residual impacts or are likely to cause significant effects on the environment.
(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	On the basis of their nature and scale and in the context of all surrounding lands being suitably zoned lands for similar development, and all future development of those lands being assessed independently on their own merits, potential in combination impacts are considered unlikely and negligible.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	Irrelevant as significant effects are considered unlikely to occur.

Based on the above review of Schedule 7 criteria, the environmental impacts of the proposal are considered “unlikely to be significant” within the meaning of the Directive.

Article 120 of the Regulations of 2001, as amended, require Schedule 7A information to be accompanied by:

(a) relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account’ and

(b) ‘a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.’

With reference to (a), an Appropriate Assessment screening report has been carried out and accompanies the subject application. It concludes that a stage two Appropriate Assessment is not required. There is no further relevant information arising from other assessments as described above needs to be taken into account.

With reference to (b) as no significant adverse effects are likely to occur on the environment, no measures are envisaged or proposed to avoid or prevent such effects.

(Revision required to accommodate Construction Environment and Waste Management Plan dealing with waterway along site boundary)

Conclusion

On behalf of the applicant it is respectfully submitted that the subject proposal is below the threshold for the mandatory provision of an EIAR. The above screening exercise and associated methodology has been carried out in accordance with best practice as determined by appropriate guidance, legislation and directives.

Furthermore, the subject development will not result in significant impacts on the local environment to the extent that warrant or justify the preparation of a sub-threshold EIAR.