

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination**

**Conversion of Goleen Garda Station into Social Housing Units, Goleen, 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 conversion of Goleen Garda Station into social housing units in Goleen, Co. Cork. The assessment is based on project drawings and details prepared by the Architects Department and O'Donnell 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

Conversion of Goleen Garda Station into Social Housing Units

Description of the project

The proposed project involves the development of two apartments within an existing structure, previously occupied as Goleen Garda Station, located on the outskirts of Goleen village in west Co. Cork. The proposal includes for the complete renovation of the internal layout within the existing building, the demolition of an existing outbuilding and existing patio which wraps around the footprint of the building, the construction of a new car parking area, landscaping and all associated works. The works will proceed for an approximate 12 month duration.

Specifically, the project will involve the following elements:

- Demolition of existing entry steps at two locations on the northern boundary of the site and the blockage of these existing entrances to the site.
- Demolition and removal of existing manholes and inspection chambers.
- Demolition and removal of existing 1m high concrete block wall with steel gate and railing at the southwest corner of the existing building.
- Demolition of an existing stone wall located northeast of the existing site boundary and the reduction of this area to formation level.
- Removal of existing gullies.
- Decommissioning and removal of an existing oil tank and associated pipe work.
- Removal and repositioning of an existing lamppost located at the northwest corner of the site. The repositioning of the existing pole and over-head ESB wire will be carried out as per M&E specifications.
- Construction of an access ramp at the northwest corner of the site.
- Construction of a new car parking area which will be level with the new adjoining footpath and will allow for the installation of a new road gully. The parking bay will be in accordance with 'RRM013' of 'TSM-Chapter'.
- Installation of a new hop top fence.
- Installation of two new ESB meter boxes on the external insulation of the building.
- Construction of a new footpath around the perimeter of the building and installation of a 100mm land drain adjoining the east, south and west of the perimeter footpath.
- Construction of a new 600mm high blockwork wall with 1.1m high railing located at the northeast corner of the site.
- Construction of a stone-faced retaining wall to tie into the existing wall located at the northwest corner of the site.
- Recapping and plastering of the existing block boundary walls which will be retained.
- Landscaping works to include the cutback and removal of the existing hedge along the northern boundary of the site and the removal of existing trees and shrubs to include the grubbing up of roots (all to be carried out by a licenced tree surgeon).
- Grading of the entire existing green area to meet the level of the new footpath and the reseeded of the area upon the completion of the works.
- Works will be carried out under a road opening license.
- No 'off-site' works such as temporary storage, welfare services or other ancillary works are required to facilitate the development project.

Site Context

The proposed development is located along the L4401, at the former Garda Station, in the south of Goleen village. The site comprises the main garda station building, a shed to the rear, and amenity grassland (lawn), with the eastern and southern boundaries delineated by concrete wall. A wall lines a section of the roadside, northern, boundary with hedgerow lining the rest of the northern and western boundaries. There are no direct hydrological connections to any waterbody.

It is proposed to dispose of surface water on site by means of discharging to the existing storm network on the public road. Proposed SuDS features will include permeable paving, water butts, oil separator and low water usage appliances. As there is currently not enough capacity with the Goleen wastewater agglomeration, it is proposed treated wastewater onsite but connecting to public infrastructure.

Figure 1 Site location

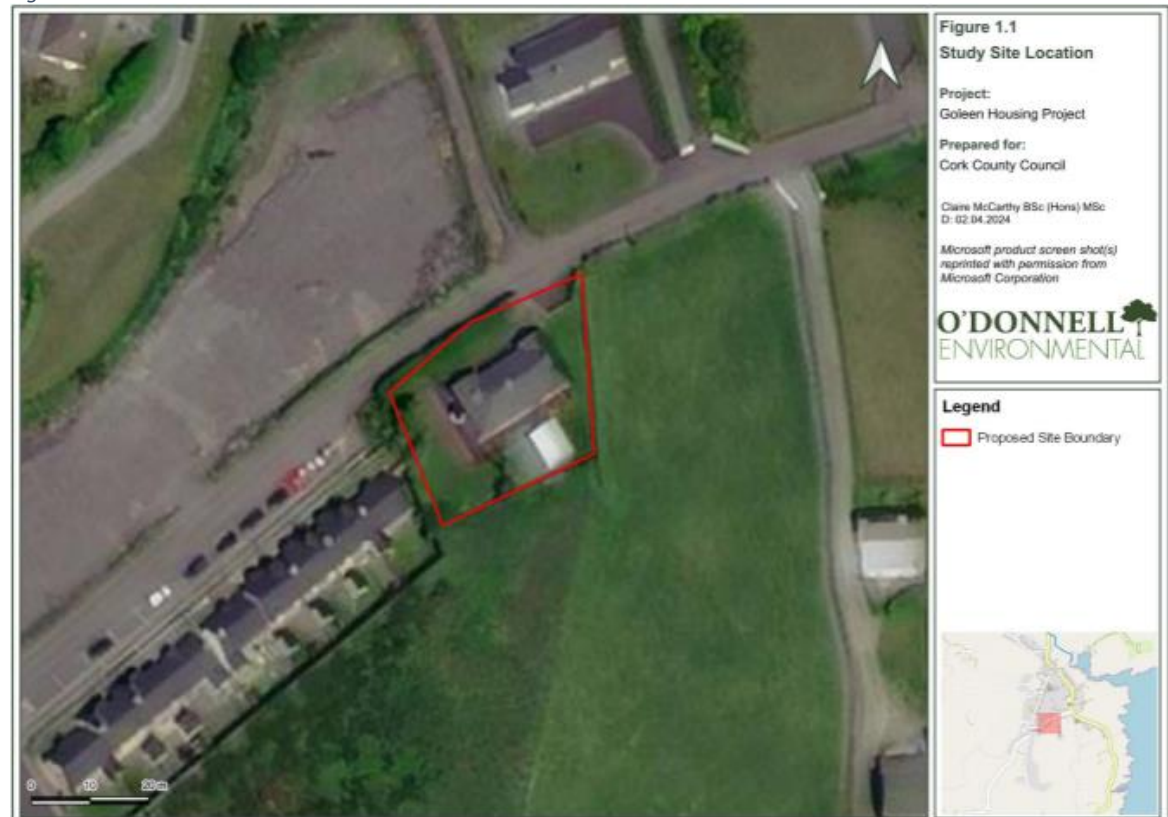


Figure 2 Site location relative to Barley Cove to Ballyrisode Point SAC (red hatch)

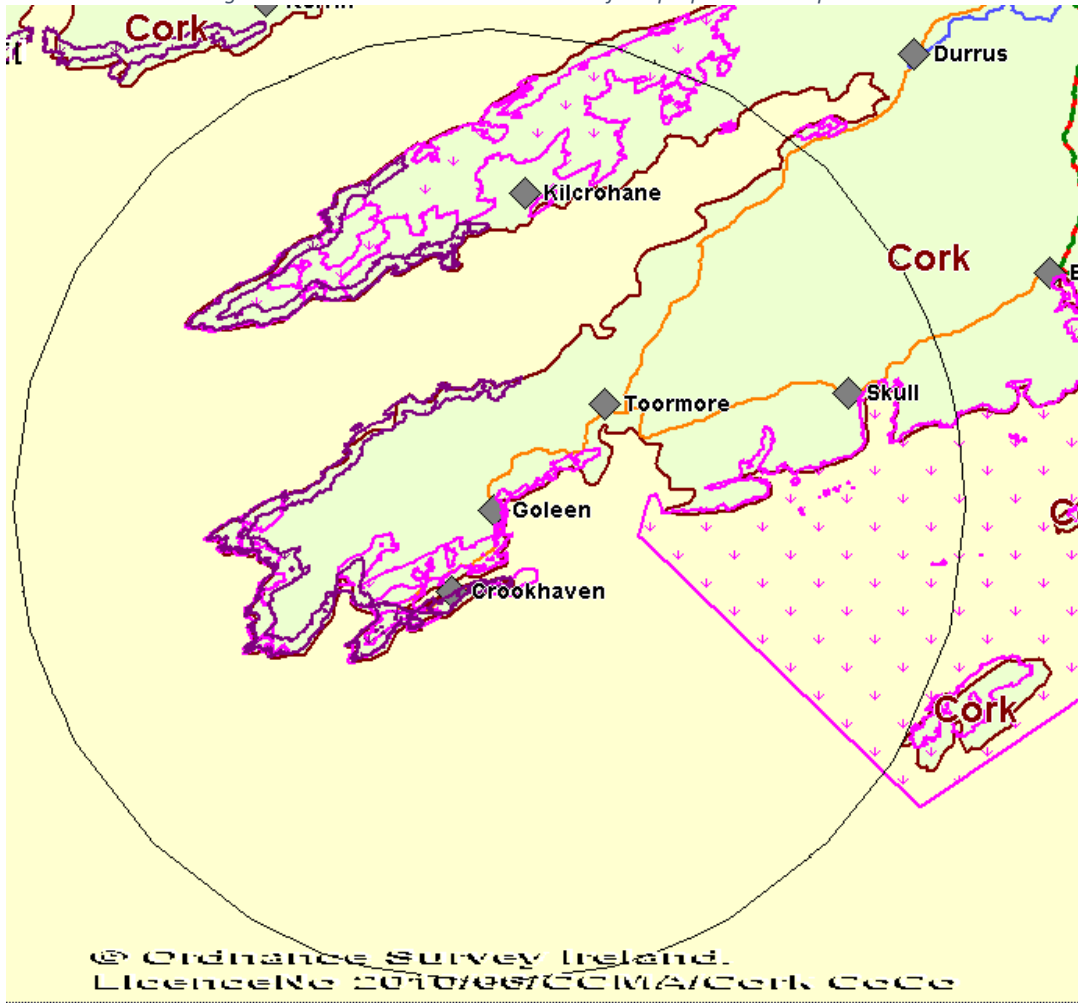


Name and location of EU sites subject to screening

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

1. Barley Cove to Ballyrisode Point SAC (site code: 1040) located approximately 380m east of the proposed development.
2. Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA (site code: 4156) located approximately 2.2km south of the proposed development.
3. Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC (site code: 0103) located approximately 4.75km west of the proposed development.
4. Three Castle Head to Mizen Head SAC (site code: 0109) located approximately 6.4km west.
5. Sheep's Head SAC (site code: 0102) located approximately 7.95km north.
6. Farranamanagh Lough SAC (site code: 2189) approximately 9.3km north.
7. Reen Point Shingle SAC (site code: 2281) approximately 13.8km northeast.

Figure 3 Natura 2000 sites within 15km 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

There are no source-receptor pathways between the proposed site and Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC, Three Castle Head to Mizen Head SAC, Sheep's Head SAC, Farranamanagh Lough SAC, Reen Point Shingle SAC. Therefore, likely significant effects to these EU site are screened out.

The proposed development will be indirectly hydrologically connected to Barley Cove to Ballyrisode Point SAC via the local wastewater and an onsite septic tank (pre-treatment). 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.

Given that the proposed site is located in a in area of negligible value to relevant bird species, 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 interests of Sheep's Head to Toe 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.
- Wastewater is to be pre-treated onsite in a septic tank before connecting to the public infrastructure.

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