



Your Ref: **ABP-313059-22**
Our Ref: **SHD-Coill Avon House-SDCC**
(Please quote in all related correspondence)

25 April 2022

The Secretary
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Via email to strategichousing@pleanala.ie

Re: Notification under the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016; Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017

Proposed Strategic Housing Development (SHD): SHD application by BCDK Holdings Ltd & Coill Avon Ltd. For 178 residential units and all associated works at Coill Avon House, Whitechurch Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16

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I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated headings co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit.

Archaeology

With regard to the above proposed development the Department has reviewed the archaeological desk based impact assessment report that was submitted with the planning application. The archaeological impact assessment was carried out by Deirdre Murphy & Magda Lyne, dated February 2022. The assessment recommends that further archaeological assessment is required (geophysical survey and test trenching) of the greenfield areas. It also recommended that the groundworks associated with road improvements in proximity of recorded monument Cross DU022-03 be subject to archaeological monitoring.

The Department concurs with the recommendations in the report. The geophysical survey and test trenching should be carried out as a condition of any grant of planning request prior to any construction or site works being carried out.

It is noted that the proposed development is large in scale and located within proximity to Recorded Monument DU022-031----Class: Cross, Townland: KILMASHOGUE, which is subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under



section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. Given the scale, extent and location of the proposed development it could impact on subsurface archaeological remains.

In line with national policy, see Section 3.6 of the Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage 1999, the Department recommends that an Archaeological Assessment, as outlined below, should be prepared to assess any impact on archaeological remains within the proposed development site. This assessment should be carried out as a condition of any grant of planning request prior to any construction or site works being carried out. We also recommended that the groundworks associated with road improvements in proximity of recorded monument Cross DU022-03 be subject to archaeological monitoring.

Archaeological Investigations

1. The applicant is required to engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to carry out an archaeological assessment of the development site. No sub-surface developmental work, including geotechnical test pits, should be undertaken until the archaeological assessment has been completed and commented on by this office.
2. The archaeologist shall carry out any relevant documentary research and inspect the development site. As part of the assessment a geophysical survey should be undertaken to be followed by a programme of test excavations that should be carried out at locations chosen by the archaeologist (licensed under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004), having consulted the site drawings and the National Monuments Service. The archaeologist should also monitor all groundworks associated with road improvements in proximity of recorded monument Cross DU022-03.
3. Having completed the work, the archaeologist shall submit a written report stating their recommendations to the Planning Authority and to the National Monuments Service. Where archaeological material/features are shown to be present, preservation in situ, preservation by record (excavation) or monitoring may be required.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.

Nature Conservation

This SHD application relates to lands of 6.77 ha just north of the M50 motorway at Kilmashogue, Rathfarnham, County Dublin, and is for the proposed development of 178 residential units comprising 72 no. houses, and 38 no. apartments and 68 no. duplex apartments in five blocks of 3-storey to 5-storey over basement blocks, on two separate sections of lands. One of these sections of lands lies immediately north of the M50 and consists of a farmhouse that has been allowed to become derelict and several pasture fields, while the second section consists of a derelict bungalow and a meadow about 200m further north. The Whitechurch Stream, a branch of the Owendoher and part of the Dodder River system, flows north through the eastern edge of both these sections of land which are bounded on that side by the Whitechurch Road running parallel to the river. The Whitechurch Stream is a salmonid water holding stocks of brown trout, and also frequented by dipper, kingfisher included in Annex I of the Birds Directive and otter, included in Annex IV of the

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Habitats Directive. Access to the new houses and apartments on both sections of lands will be from the Whitechurch Road on bridges across the Whitechurch Stream. On the stream side the two sections of the development site are separated by a residential property, while on their western side they are bounded by lands currently in agricultural use separating them from a golf course a short distance further west.

Bat surveys of the development site have identified no roosts on the site, but the reports of these surveys recommend that further surveys of the farm house and the bungalow, which are both proposed for demolition, should be carried out to check again for bat roosts before these buildings' removal. It is also proposed that artificial bat roosts will be installed in the attics of two out buildings which are to be retained and restored for community use. Foraging activity by four bat species over the development site, common and soprano pipistrelles, and Leisler's and Long-eared bats were recorded in activity surveys. It would also be expected that Daubenton's bat which are known from this area would at least occasionally forage over the Whitechurch Stream. In the supporting bat survey reports the installation of bat friendly lighting in the proposed development is recommended but is not clear from the lighting reports submitted in support of this application as to whether the presence of bats was taken into consideration of the design of the lighting schemes proposed for new developments. The external boundary hedgerows and tree lines bounding the site are largely to be retained as in general is the vegetation existing along the banks of the Whitechurch Stream, but some internal hedgerows and tree lines will be removed to facilitate the proposed development.

This Department supports the preservation of a riparian strip as a wildlife corridor along the Whitechurch Stream which is in line with the Green Infrastructure Network proposals for the South Dublin County Council included in the South County Dublin Development Plan. Various bird species which nest in trees and shrubs were recorded during the breeding season on the development site and there is therefore that any vegetation clearance carried out at that period of the year could result in the destruction of nests, eggs and nestlings. It is proposed to install swift bricks in the new apartment blocks as biodiversity enhancement measure.

Overall the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's principal concerns with regards to this proposed development from a nature conservation perspective would be that that the Whitechurch Stream be preserved from pollution, that a wildlife corridor be retained along this stream, and that usage of the development site by bats and birds is maintained in as far as this is possible.



Nature Conservation Recommendations

In the light of the above, the Department recommends that any planning permission granted in relation to the present SHD development proposal should be subject to the following conditions:

1. That all the measures to prevent the mobilisation of pollutants from the proposed development which might result in detrimental effects on water quality set out in the documentation supporting this application shall be included in a finalised CEMP to be agreed in writing by the planning authority before the commencement of works on site, and shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To avoid any deterioration in the water quality of the Whitechurch Stream and the downstream Dodder River system with potential detrimental effects on the biota of these water courses.

2. That, as proposed in the bat reports supporting this application, artificial bat roosts shall be installed in the stone outbuildings to be retained on the development site, and that a finalised lighting design scheme for the proposed development signed off on by a bat specialist shall be submitted to the planning authority for their written agreement before the commencement of development on site.

Reason: To conserve bat species which are afforded a regime of special protection under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

3. That, as proposed in the EclA supporting this application swift bricks shall be installed in the apartment blocks included in this development.

Reason: In order to conserve a bird species declining in numbers.

4. That any clearance of woody vegetation from the development site shall only be carried out in the period from September to February inclusive i.e. outside the main bird breeding season.

Reason: To avoid the destruction of the nests, eggs and nestlings of bird species.

You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at manager.dau@housing.gov.ie, or to the following address:

The Manager, Development Applications Unit (DAU)
Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage
Government Offices, Newtown Road, Wexford, Y35 AP90

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Michael Murphy,
Development Applications Unit