

Shangan Road, Ballymun, Dublin 9

**EIA Preliminary Examination Report
to accompany a Part 8 Application for
residential development**

**Social Housing Bundle 3 – Dublin City
Council**

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1 Introduction

This EIA Preliminary Examination Report has been prepared for Dublin City Council. The Council intends to provide a development of new 93 new social homes, at a site c. 1.77 ha at Shangan Road, Ballymun, Dublin 9. A Part 8 process pursuant to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended (the Regulations 2001) is being carried out.

1.1 Legislative background

Pursuant to Article 81(ca) of the Regulations 2001, a Planning Authority must indicate its conclusion under article 120(1)(b)(i) (a preliminary examination) or screening determination under article 120(1B)(b)(i) in the public notices that form part of a Part 8 process.

Where a local authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—

- (i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,
- (ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or
- (iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall— (I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

2 The site

2.1 Site and Environs

Ballymun is located c. 5km north of Dublin City Centre on the border between Dublin City and Fingal County Council. The site is located immediately east of the Axis Ballymun (Arts centre and theatre) which is located on Main Street. A significant number of public and community services are co-located with the Axis, including the Department of Social Protection, the Ballymun Garda Station and Intreo.

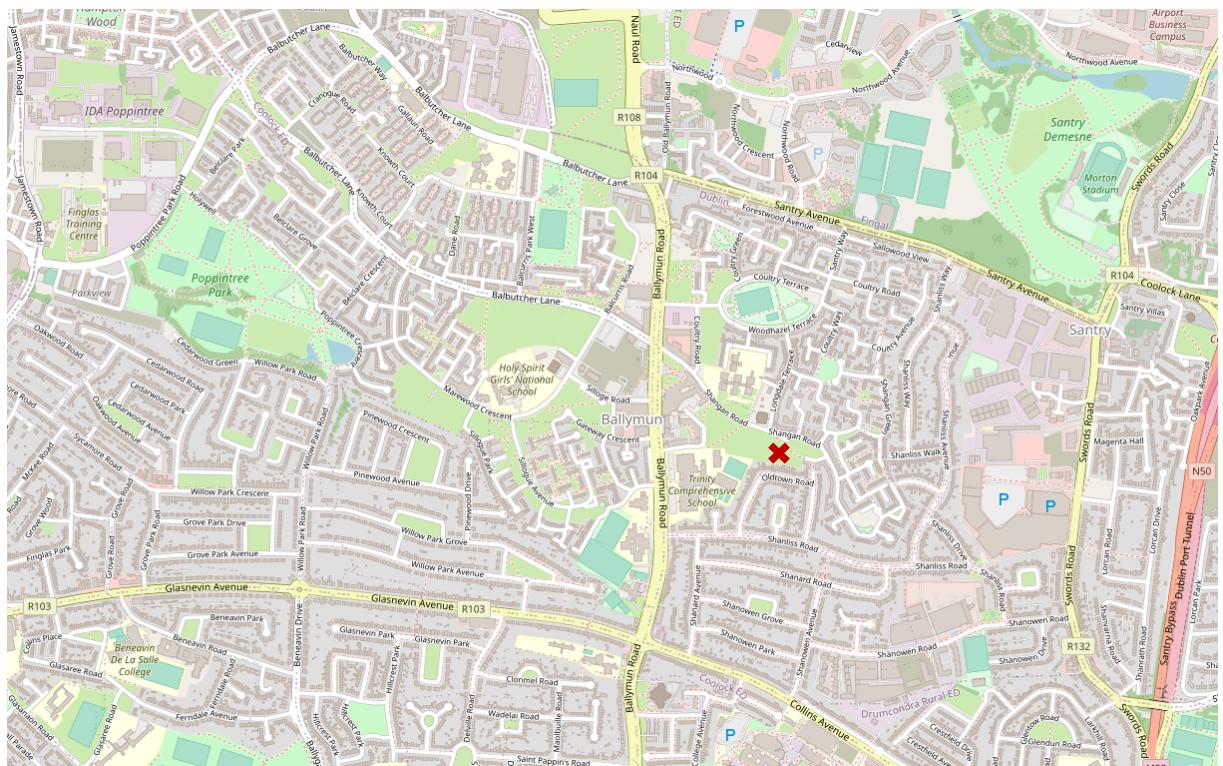
The site is bound to the north by the Shangan Road, with the Virgin Mary Church and National School located directly across. Three-storey residential units are also located north of the Shangan Road, these are of modern build. The rear gardens of Oldtown Avenue and the Trinity astro turf pitches bound the site to the south. The Gateway Student complex is located immediately west of the site. The complex ranges in height from 4 to 6 storey on its north, east

and south perimetres and includes a ten-storey landmark building on its frontage with the Ballymun Road. A five storey residential block is located to the rear of the Axis and overlooks onto the west of the application site. The prevailing architecture in the area is modern, dating from the 2000s and 2010s, with the exception of the Oldtown Avenue, where the housing stock dates back from the 1950-1960s and consists of typical two-storey suburban housing.

The North Bull Island Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (SPA Site Code 004006 and SAC 000206) is located c.6.8km east of the site and 6.4km of the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code 004024).

The subject site is adjacent to a district centre located on the Ballymun Road to the west. There are two supermarkets located on the Ballymun Road.

Figure 1: Site Location (identified in red). Source EPA mapping



2.2 Environmental sensitivities of the site

2.2.1 Soils

The site is underlain by dark limestone and shale which is locally important aquifer. The sub-soils are categorised as man-made.

2.2.2 Hydrology

There is no rivers, streams or drainage ditch in the vicinity of the site.



The closest water feature in the area is the Santry River located just over 1.2 km northeast of the site. The EPA GIS platform shows a tributary flowing in a north direction connecting to the Santry River. This stream is located c. 700m of the site at Santry Avenue. The Ecological Impact Assessment notes the stream appears to be culverted under the Gulliver Business Park and is no longer considered an active watercourse.

The River Santry flows towards the east where it meets Dublin Bay. Under the Water Framework Directive, the Santry River is of Poor Status while Dublin Bay is of Good Status.

2.2.3 Aquifer

The GSI Spatial Resources mapping platform classifies groundwater vulnerability as ‘low’ and subsoil permeability as low.

2.2.4 Air quality

Air Quality Index Regions indicate that Air Quality Index is 3 – Good (updated Tue 25-May-2021).

2.2.5 Designated sites

The proposed development is not located on adjacent to a designated site. The closest designated sites are:

- North Bull Island Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004006)
- North Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000206).

These are located over 6km south-east of the site. The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA (004024) is located 4.2 km south-east of the site.

2.2.6 Proposed National Heritage Areas

Santry Demesne proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) (Site Code 000178) is located around 730m north of the site.

The Royal Canal pNHA (Site Code: 002103) is located 3.3 km south of the site.

2.2.7 Archaeology

There are no archaeological remains on the site. The site has been heavily disturbed in the past as it was previously developed, and subsequent demolition took place.

2.2.8 Development Plan specific objectives

No trees are protected on site and no views or prospects relate to the site. There are no Protected Structures on the site or in the immediate environs.

A planning report accompanies the Part 8 process which sets out in detail the applicable planning policies.

2.2.9 Ecology

The site consists of amenity grassland. There are semi-mature sycamore within the grassland. The ecological impact assessment (EcIA) considers the habitats to be of negligible ecological importance.

No rare or protected plants were identified during field surveys.

No invasive species were identified during field surveys.

A number of common urban and garden birds were identified during the field survey undertaken by the ecologist: blue tit, goldfinch, jackdaw and hooded crow. The EclA noted that on inspection it was '*highly unlikely that any birds would nest in the semi-mature sycamore trees, as they are small in size and quite isolated.*' It concludes that the site is considered to be of negligible importance for common bird species.

The EclA does not consider that the site would be suitable for Brent Geese, a protected species and that it is of negligible importance for any of bird species associated with the SPAs in Dublin Bay.

No terrestrial mammals or characteristic field signs of protected species were noted on site. The site also does not provide suitable habitats for badgers, hedgehogs or other common protected species and is therefore considered to be of negligible value for terrestrial mammals.

The EclA has not identified potential bat roosts within or near the site. It considers the site to be of negligible importance for the roosting, foraging or commuting bats.

Similar observations were made in relation to reptiles, amphibians and terrestrial invertebrates.

3 Proposed development

The proposed development is fully described in the public notices and consists of residential, and ancillary works.

The construction of 93 residential dwellings at a site c.1.77 ha at Shangan Road, Ballymun, Dublin 9, which will consist of the following:

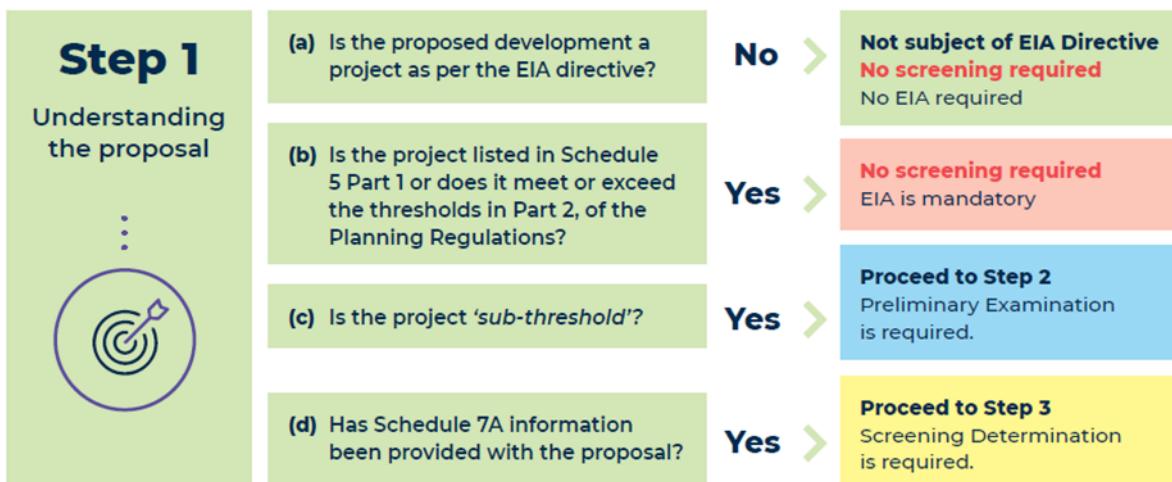
- 73 no. elderly persons apartments (67 no. 1-bed units and 6 no. 2-bed-units) in a 3 and 4 storey high building, with community room (51.66 sqm) and an office (14.42 sqm)
- 4 no. 2 bed duplex apartments in a 2-storey high building.
- 16 no. 2 storey terraced houses (6 no. 2-bed; 8 no. 3-bed and 2 no. 4-bed units).
- 55 no. new surface car parking, the redistribution of 12no. existing surface car parking spaces,
- communal and public open space, boundary treatments, public lighting, site drainage works, internal road surfacing and footpath, ESB switchroom, bin and bicycle storage, landscaping, play area and all ancillary site services and development works above and below ground.
- Construction of a link road from Shangan Road to the Ballymun Road.

4 Preliminary Examination in context of proposed development

4.1 Guidance on Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The Office of the Planning Regulator has issued guidance in the form of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note, May 2021 which aids Planning Authorities as the Competent Authority (CA) in this area.

Figure 2: Extract from Guidance Note



This report has had regard to the OPR guidance and methodology.

4.1.1 Project

The proposed application is a project for the purpose of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Stage 1 stage (a) of the OPR guidance.

4.2 Mandatory Threshold Assessment

A list of the types or classes of development that require EIA or screening for EIA is provided in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, (Regulations) as amended. ‘Sub-threshold development’ comprises development of a type that is included in Part 2 of Schedule 5, but which does not equal or exceed a quantity, area or other limit (the threshold).

The specific nature of the proposed development is not stated in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Regulations. In Part 2 of schedule 5, the following is the relevant to assessment of sub threshold development.

10. Infrastructure projects

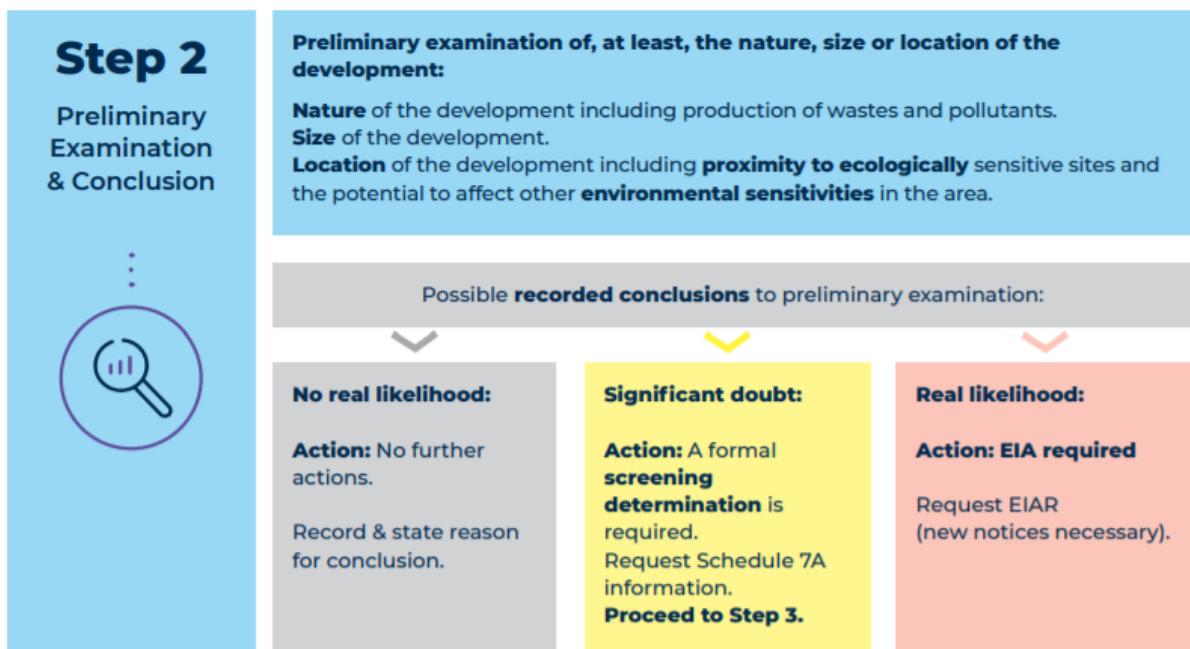
(b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.

- (ii) Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.
 - (iii) Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres.
 - (iv) Urban development which would involve an area 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.
- (“business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

In relation to proposed development none of the thresholds above are exceeded.

Accordingly, the project is **sub threshold development** and under Step 1(b) of the OPR guidance a preliminary examination is required under Step 2.

Figure 3: Extract from Guidance Note



4.3 Preliminary Examination considerations

Preliminary examinations must consider at least the following:

The nature of the development including the production of wastes and pollutants;

The size of the development; or

The location of the development including the potential to impact on certain ecologically sensitive sites and the potential to affect other environmentally sensitive sites in the area.

This overlaps with submitted Appropriate Assessment (AA) and consideration to hydrological and other connections to European sites.



The OPR guidance states a number of questions to assist the preliminary examination.

4.4 Nature of the development:

4.4.1 Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?

The nature of the development (93 residential units and a community room) is not exceptional in any way in the existing environment of residential use on lands zoned residential (currently a brownfield site) where residential use has been developed opposite and low-density residential uses are located to the south of the site boundary. The proposed development is c 64 units per ha (net). The proposed development as described in section 3 above is below the threshold for mandatory EIA as stated in section 4.2 above.

Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?

The nature of the proposed use is primarily residential. The proposed residential development by its nature will not cause any significant emissions or pollutants during construction or when operational. During the construction stage, the proposed 64 per ha density residential development will not cause any significant emissions or pollutants owing to the nature of the proposal. Standard construction methods will be applied for the development with standards construction waste (type and quantum) expected. When operational, the homes will avail of the waste disposal provision in the area.

4.5 Size of the development

4.5.1 Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?

The size of the development is not exceptional in any way in the existing environment. It consists of 93 residential units, a community unit and a link road. The existing environment is that of brownfield site beside residential and community uses. New watermain, storm water and foul water networks will be delivered for the site. While the proposed development will transform the existing brownfield site into a built environment, this has been planned in the Local Area Plan and the City Development Plan in the applicable zoning.

4.5.2 Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?

There is no planning history of relevance in the vicinity of the site. The Planning Register shows a proposed Part 8 at Ballymun Plaza for works to the public realm.

There are no other significant developments permitted in the vicinity which would bring this development cumulatively with others above the mandatory EIA threshold. There are a number of minor modifications granted planning permission in the general area.

The storm water and foul water network will outfall to the Local Authority and Irish Water system within the site. These existing systems will be diverted to allow for the works to be undertaken.

Foul water will be discharged to a local authority foul sewer and conveyed to the Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW). See drawing SHB3-BAL-CS-RPS-DR- DA002 for details.

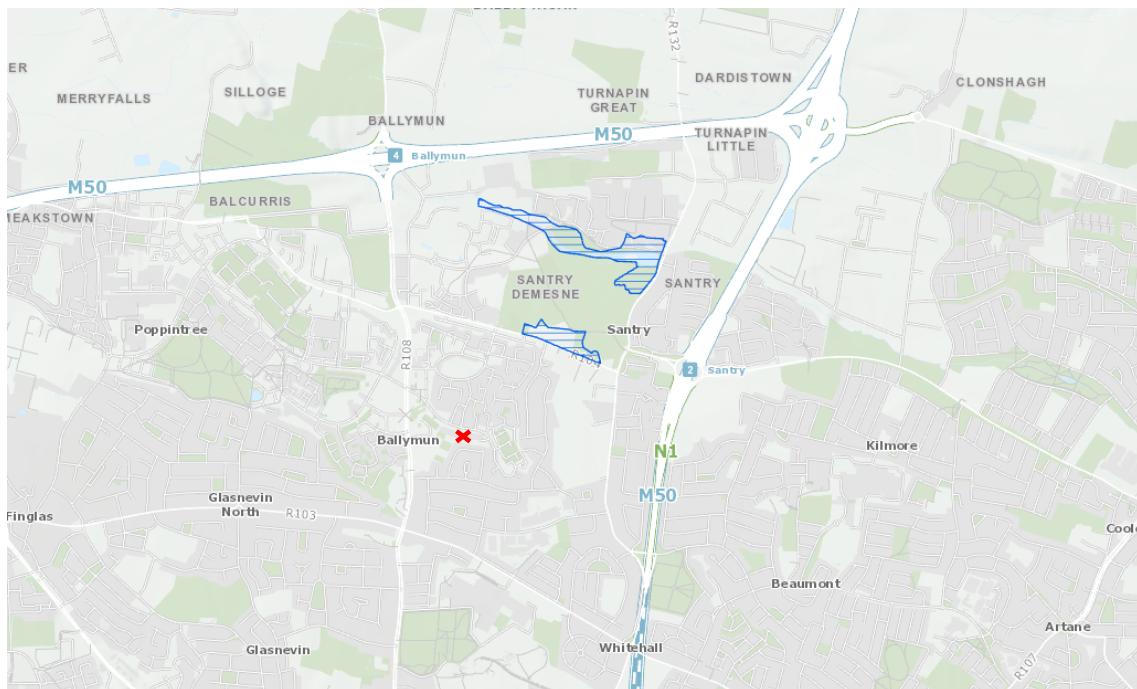
4.6 Location:

4.6.1 Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?

The proposed development is not located on, in, or an ecologically sensitive site or location.

The site is located c 0.7 km from the Santry Demesne pNHA.

Figure 4: Extract from myplan.ie, site marked with cross and Santry Demesne pNHA (000178) in blue.



4.6.2 Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?

The detailed sensitivities of the site are outlined in section 2.2 above.

There are no rivers, streams or drainage ditches linking the development site with the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA, North Bull Island Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004006) or the North Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000206). There are no linkage to the Santry Demesne pNHA.

Groundwater could theoretically provide a pathway due to the permeability of underlying soils and bedrock. The AA screening report has considered this and states '*The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA is located 4.2 km south-east of the Site. The SPA was designated to protect a range of over-wintering bird species that feed on invertebrates and / or algae in intertidal habitats, as well as some tern species that breed on pontoons in the River Liffey estuary. The Site is not part of the River Tolka catchment, so a pathway via surface water can be ruled out. Pathways via groundwater, land and air can be ruled out due to distance.*'



There are no archaeological remains on site.

The site is surrounded by build fabric comprising community and residential uses.

There are no protected structures on the site.

An ecological assessment has been carried out. There are no buildings or mature trees within the site that could be suitable for roosting bats. The ecological assessment concludes no significant ecological issues arise.

The proposed development is not considered to be development located on, in, or adjoining an ecologically sensitive site or location and does not have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location. There are no particular environmental sensitivities per the available information.

5 Preliminary Examination Conclusion

Following preliminary examination, the planning authority is recommended to conclude that an EIA is not required based on the preliminary examination that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development.

