Planning Report

For Development at the Former Ford Distribution Site, fronting onto Centre Park Road, Ballintemple, Cork

on behalf of Marina Quarter Ltd.

November 2024

McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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Contents

1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants were appointed by Marina Quarter Ltd., to prepare a planning report to accompany an application to Cork City Council for a Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) for the construction of 176 no. residential units, a creche, a gym, a retail/café unit and all associated site development works including drainage, landscaping, and boundary treatments. A full description is included in the statutory notices and in Chapter 2 of the EIAR.

A design team with extensive experience in residential applications has been appointed by the applicant including McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants, JFA Architects, BDFL Consulting Engineers (DBFL), Áit Urbanism + Landscape and Enviroguide. Additional expertise was secured in relation to archaeology, heritage, and visual assessments to ensure a high-quality design and a robust and comprehensive LRD application submission is made to Cork City Council.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report and a Natura Impact Statement has been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompanies this application.

The proposed development will see the completion of the development granted permission under An Bord Pleanála Ref. 309059, in line with dwelling targets set out in the Cork City Development Plan. The design and development of the proposed scheme has been informed by detailed pre-planning discussions with Cork City Council's Planning, Architectural and Engineering Departments, as well as feedback from their subsequent Notice of Pre-Application Consultation Opinion. Key design aspects have been shaped directly by feedback and comments received from both parties, with the design and in particular the layout having been amended and altered throughout the design process.

The Planning and Design Statement report amalgamates the planning statement and the design statement into a single cohesive document which has been structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Site Context & Proposed Development
3. Planning History
4. Planning Policy Context
5. Assessment of Proposed Development
6. Design Approach
7. Conclusion

2. Site Context & Development Description

2.1 Site Context

The proposed site, known as the Former Ford Distribution Site, is situated approximately 2km from Cork City Centre. It is situated on the south bank of the River Lee in the South Docks of Cork City. The proposed development falls within the Polder Quarter character area of the City Docks as defined in the Cork City Development Plan (CCDP) 2022-2028. The site is not bordered by any substantial existing residential developments. To the west, the site is bordered by the Centre Park Road which links to the city centre and Marina Promenade. To the north, is the River Lee which provides a serene backdrop to this post-industrial setting. To the east, the site is bordered by Pairc Ui Chaoimh GAA Stadium and the adjoining amenities of Marina Park. The total gross area of the site is 0.84ha, and it has extensive road frontage on to Centre Park Road (Figure 1). Permission for the development of these lands was previously granted under Ref. 08/32919 on July 15th, 2009. This permission was extended and now expires on October 12th, 2024.

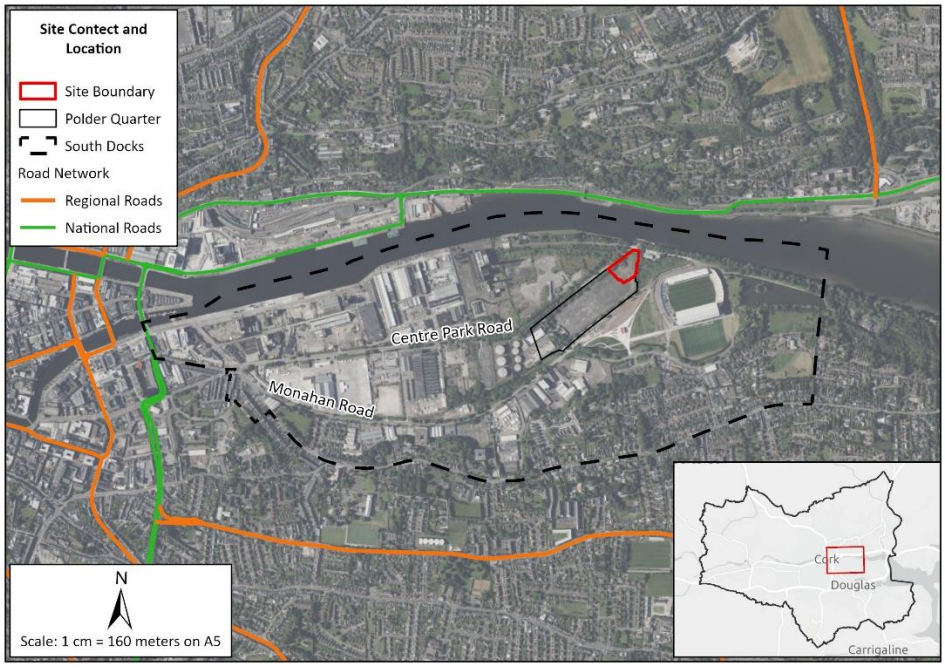


Figure 1: Ford LRD Site - Site Context and Overview (Sources: Cork City Council, 2024; Transport Infrastructure Ireland, 2024)

The primary access point to the site will be via a proposed street approved under the SHD scheme which adjoin to Centre Park Road (L1002) which connects to the site along the southwest. The Marina Promenade connects to the northeast corner of the site and provides a non-motorised link to the Mahon peninsula. Whilst the stops on the 202-, 202A-, and 212-bus routes,

the cycle lanes, and sidewalks close to the proposed development provide ample alternatives to private car travel.

The site is within easy walking distance of Cork City Centre and Blackrock/Mahon which provide several commercial and community facilities, including local shops, churches, and schools. The major employment hubs of Cork City Centre and Mahon are close, and both are well connected by public transport. The area is served by the 202-,202A-, and 212-bus routes which have numerous stops located within 300m and 650m of the site, respectively (Figure 2). The 212-bus route runs every 60 minutes Monday to Sunday. Whilst the 202- and 202A-bus routes runs every 20 minutes during peak hours and every 30 minutes during off-peak hours. The site will benefit from several pending improvements to transport services and infrastructure. This is due to the re-development of the South Docks area and the implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area-Based Transport Strategy (CMATS). Within metropolitan transport strategy the local road network surrounding the site was identified as strategic transport corridors to incorporate high-frequency bus services along Monahan's Road to the southwest and Marquee Road to the west, and the implementation of a mass transit system along Centre Park Road to the north. With a Bus Rapid Transit system proposed in the medium term and to be eventually upgraded to a Light Rail Transit (LRT) in the long term (Figure 2). It is thus evident that the site will have good access to existing bus services and will gain access to future mass transit system investments. The area is well serviced with several large amenity sites located within walking distance of the site with the closest being Pairc Ui Chaoimh, Kennedy Park and the Marina Park all within 1km of the site.

Figure 2: Existing and Proposed Public Transport Connections (Source: Cork City Council, 2024; Transport for Ireland, 2024)

2.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development will serve as a catalyst for the development of the Polder Quarter character area and will complement the strategic housing development currently underway to the southwest of the site.

Permission will be sought for the following development:

- the construction of 176 no. 1, 2 and 3 bed apartment units in 2 no. blocks,
- 1 no. creche,
- 1 no. gym, a retail/café space and all associated ancillary development works.

The proposed development will promote compact growth through linking with the existing public, private, and non-motorised transport infrastructure in the area. The design of the proposed scheme has been informed by the relevant national, county, and local planning policy documents. The proposed 176 no. units will provide a density of 210 units per hectare which is in line with national policy for increased residential densities.

The proposed development has been designed to provide high-quality apartments that will set the standard for sustainable urban development in the South Docks. The area surrounding the Polder Quarter falls within a designated rent pressure zone which infers a sustained demand for housing[1]. Therefore, the proposed development will meet this demand for housing by providing a mix of apartment typologies. The proposed site layout focuses on the creation of a new distinct residential neighbourhood that will enhance and integrate with the wider Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Planning area (Figure 3). To ensure the visual integration of the site, the proposed development will seek to introduce new areas and the enhancement of existing areas of biodiversity, such as grass lawns, garden bedding, a calisthenic gym, a play area, a belvedere, and several trees strategically located throughout the site.

The key statistics of the proposed development are shown in the table below:

Gross Site Area	0.84 ha
Number of Units	176 no. apartment units - 62 no. 1 bed units - 82 no. 3 bed units - 32 no. 3 bed units
Density	210 uph

Table 1: Key Site Statistics.

[1] Housing Agency, Rent Pressure Zones - November 2023

The design of the proposed scheme has been informed by detailed pre-planning discussions with Cork City Councils Planning, Architectural, Engineering and Environmental Departments and the relevant planning policy documents at national and local levels, including in particular The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a national level, and the 2022 Cork City Development Plan at a Local Planning Policy level. The proposed site layout designed JFA Architects proposes a density of 210 no. units per hectare, which is considered suitable for the subject site and consistent with national policy which seeks higher densities on residential sites. The proposed density is also compliant with the objectives outlined for the site in the 2022 Cork City Development Plan.

Figure 3: Proposed layout by JFA Architects

3. Planning History

There has been 1 no. planning application/permission relevant to the subject site. This is outlined below.

Cork City Council Ref. 08/32919

On the 15th July, 2009 Cork City Council granted a ten year permission to Alleyquay Investments Ltd. for the demolition of the existing structures and site clearance on the site of the old Ford Distribution site at Centre Park Road, Cork. The site is bounded by Centre Park Road to the north, link road to the west and Monahan's Road to the south. Permission is sought for redevelopment of the 4.984 ha site and all site development works to incorporate the construction of a mixed-use development of 12 no. buildings arranged in 11 no. parcels ranging from 1 to 27 no. floors plus mezzanine. The development includes: 564 no. residential units consisting of 112 no. 1 bed apartments, 295 no. 2 bed apartments, 28 no 2 bed and studio apartments, 71 no. three bedroom apartments, 12 no. 2 bed duplex, and 46 no. 3 bed duplex apartments; 11 no. retail units with total GFA of 1,986 sq.m which includes a 768 sq.m anchor store, 48,033 sq.m Gross Office space, 205 bed hotel with conference facilities, leisure centre and bar/lounge; 10,927 sq.m GFA Events Arena with a maximum capacity of approximately 5,000 people including associated bars, artist space in the main foyer area and outdoor display area; 2 no. bar/restaurants with a total GFA of 1,984 sq.m with an outdoor seating area; 490 sq.m GFA creche; 2 no. cafes with a total GFA of 232 sq.m; a 115 sq.m GFA bookmakers; 115 sq.m GFA pharmacy and a 200 sq.m GFA glazed community/civic building; 94 sq.m GFA medical unit. The development also consists of solar panels to the roof levels of parcels 7, 9, 10 & 11; wind turbines to roof top of parcel 7 and a public viewing gallery to the roof of building 1. All ancillary site and landscaping development works including a district heating system at sub grade level, switch buildings, ESB substations, public and private open space, lift shafts, vents at grade level and access onto Centre park Road and Monahan's Road. The development also includes raising of ground levels to +4mOD and 2207 car parking spaces at sub grade level -1 and -2. The development requires a waste license for the disposal of excavated soil off site. Permission is sought to extend the appropriate period from 5 to 10 years. An Environmental Impact Statement accompanies this application.

Permission has been extended and expired on October 12th, 2024.

There has been 1 no. planning application/permission adjacent to the subject site which are relevant. This is outlined below

An Bord Pleanála Ref. 309059

An Bord Pleanála granted a ten year permission for the demolition of existing structures and the construction of 1,002 no. apartments, childcare facilities and associated site works at The Old Ford Distribution Site, Centre Park Road, Cork.

4. Planning Policy Context

The following sub-sections outline the relevant national and local planning policy contexts for the proposed development. For a comprehensive analysis of the development compliance/accordance with the relevant policy documents, at a national/regional/local scale, please see the submitted Statement of Consistency by McCutcheon Halley Planning. The proposed development is subject to the following policy documents, as set out by Cork City Council.

4.1 National Planning Framework 2040

The Department of Housing Planning and Local Government, on behalf of the Government, prepared and published the finalised National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040 under Project Ireland 2040, the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic, and cultural development of our country.

The NPF 2040 makes provision for population growth of an additional 340,000 - 380,000 people in the Southern Region. 50% of the region's growth has been allocated to the existing footprints of Cork, Limerick and Waterford Cities and Suburbs which equates to an additional 105,000 to 125,000 people by 2040.

The NPF 2040 places a focus on achieving compact growth and sustainable mobility and targets a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing 'footprint' of built-up areas.

4.2 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024

The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) emphasise the importance of encouraging higher densities in the most central and accessible urban locations. The Guidelines state that for areas characterised as 'City – Centre', the residential densities should be in the range of 100-300 dwellings/ha:

> *"The city centres of Dublin and Cork, comprising the city core and immediately surrounding neighbourhoods, are the most central and accessible urban locations nationally with the greatest intensity of land uses, including higher order employment, recreation, cultural, education, commercial and retail uses. It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that*

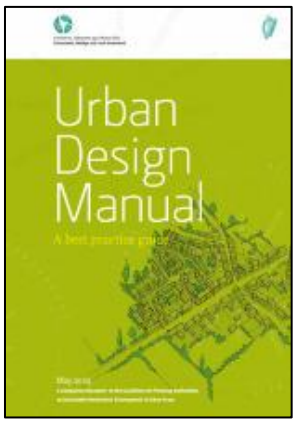
residential densities in the range 100 dph to 300 dph (net) shall generally be applied in the centres of Dublin and Cork."

4.3 Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2022

The Guidelines for 'Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments' issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in 2022, provides guidance in relation to the provision of new apartments. The Guidelines state that Planning Authorities must prioritise the objective of more effective usage of existing underutilised accommodation. The Guidelines note that Local Authorities determine suitable locations for the provision of apartments, having regards to a broad description of proximity and accessibility considerations.

The Guidelines outline Specific Planning Policy Requirements to guide the development of apartments. SPPR 4 requires a minimum of 33% dual aspect units in central and accessible locations. Section 4.21 notes that in high density developments in central locations the default policy is for car parking provision to be minimised, substantially reduced, or wholly eliminated. Appendix 1 sets out minimum floor areas and standards for apartment development.

4.4 Urban Design Manual – Best Practice Guide, 2009



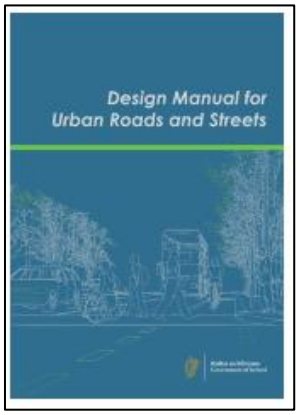
The Urban Design Manual is a key document of the guidelines published under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act and has informed the design of the proposed scheme.

The core of the documents are the 12 criteria which have been both a helpful guidance and checklist since their publication, its structure leading from the wider context referring to the neighbourhood, towards site specific matters and detailed design represent master planning principles.

Therefore, this document has adopted the structure and refers to the 12 criteria in detail.

Figure 4: Criteria as per the Urban Design Manual – Best Practice Guide, 2009

4.5 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2013



The holistic approach of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) to understand and design the streets as part of the open space network was applied to the proposed development with the intention to promote sustainable transport and encourage social activities and active neighbourhoods.

The four design principles of DMURS are (Figure 5):

- Connected Networks
- Multi-Functional Streets
- Pedestrian Focus
- Multidisciplinary Approach

These design principles have been used as the pillars of the design of the proposed scheme.

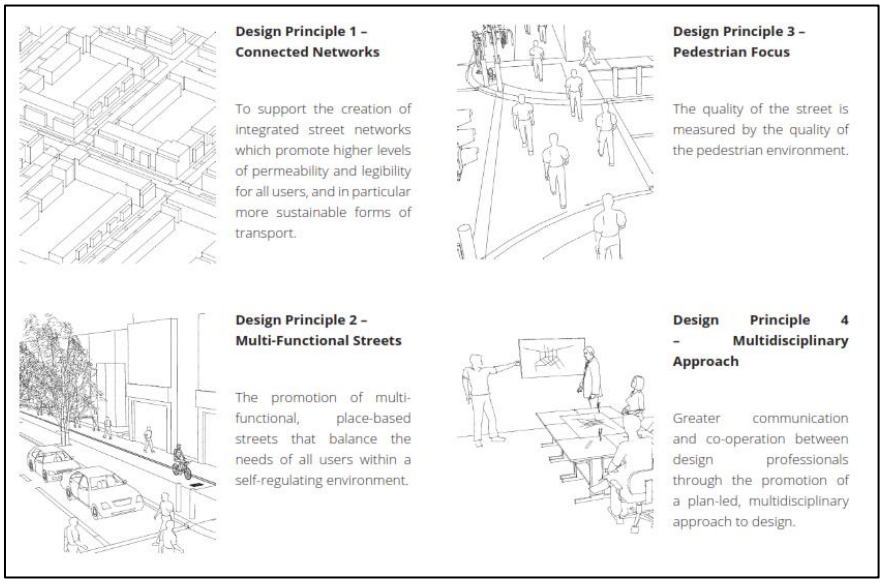


Figure 5: DMURS Design Principles

4.6 Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan

The Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Regional Assembly includes the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). The Cork MASP contains the aims and objectives for spatial development within the area demarcated as the MASP. The overarching goal of the MASP is to map the growth targets as per the NPF 2040 which will transform the Cork metropolitan area into a catalyst for economic and population growth within the Southern Region.

The CMATS was issued in 2019 and is a significant investment package allocated for Cork to include commuter rail, bus corridors, light rail, park, and rides, walking and cycling infrastructure and road networks. The provision of a LRT system is one of the components CMATS and will be a focal point to enable the growth of population, employment, health, and education uses as envisaged by the NPF 2040. The indicative route of the LRT system runs along the Centre Park Road which is adjacent to the subject site (Figure 6). One of the objectives of the LRT is to maximise the development potential of sites and densities within a 15-minute-walk time along this corridor.

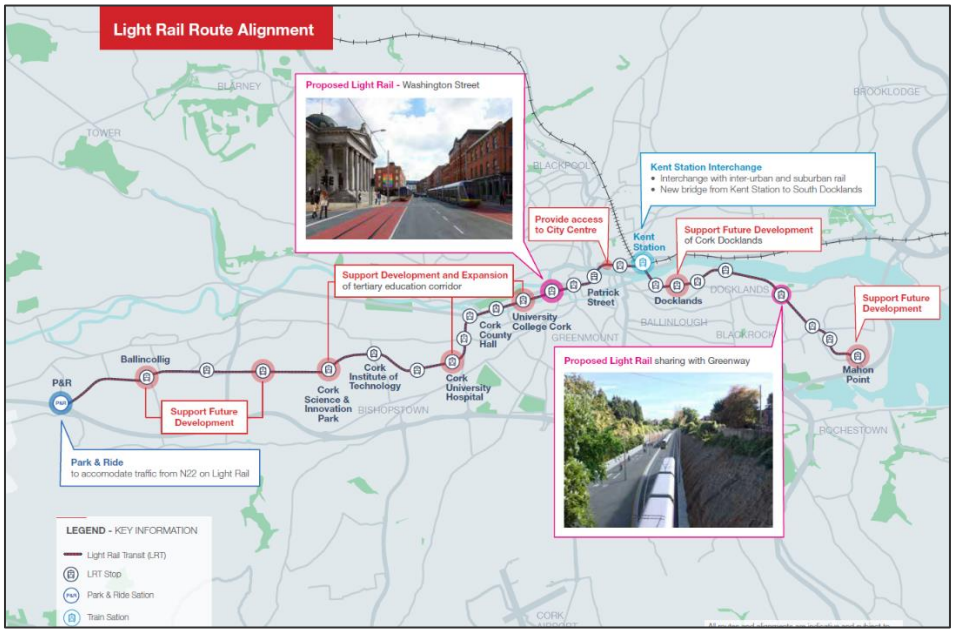


Figure 6: Excerpt of Figure 4.7 - Indicative LRT Route in the CCDP 2022-2028 (Source: Cork City Council, 2022)

4.7 Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

The CCDP sets out Cork City Council's policies for the development of Cork City between 2022 and 2028. It establishes the following vision for Cork City:

> *"The vision for Cork City over the period of this Development Plan and beyond is to be a successfully, sustainable regional capital and to achieve a high quality of life for its citizens and a robust local economy, by balancing the relationship between community, economic development and environmental quality. It will have a diverse innovative economy, will maintain its distinctive character and culture, will have a network of attractive neighbourhoods serviced by good quality transport and amenities and will be a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest in."*

Chapter 2 of the CCDP is the core strategy for Cork City Council. It has nine strategic objectives to encourage growth. The proposed development speaks to all nine of the strategic objectives. As can be seen from what is stated under strategic objective 1:

> *'SO 1: Deliver compact growth that achieves a sustainable 15-minute city of scale providing integrated communities and walkable neighbourhoods, dockland and brownfield regeneration, infill development and strategic greenfield expansion adjacent to existing city.'*

In the CCDP the area described as The Cork Docklands is identified as one of the four 'Strategic Consolidation and Regeneration Areas'. The Role of the

Strategic Consolidation and Regeneration Areas in the Core Strategy is as follows:

> *"Phased regeneration of the City Docks and Tivoli Docks as high quality, higher density, mixed use sustainable waterfront areas with new urban quarters and transformational projects acting as catalyst for further investment and regeneration of the City."*

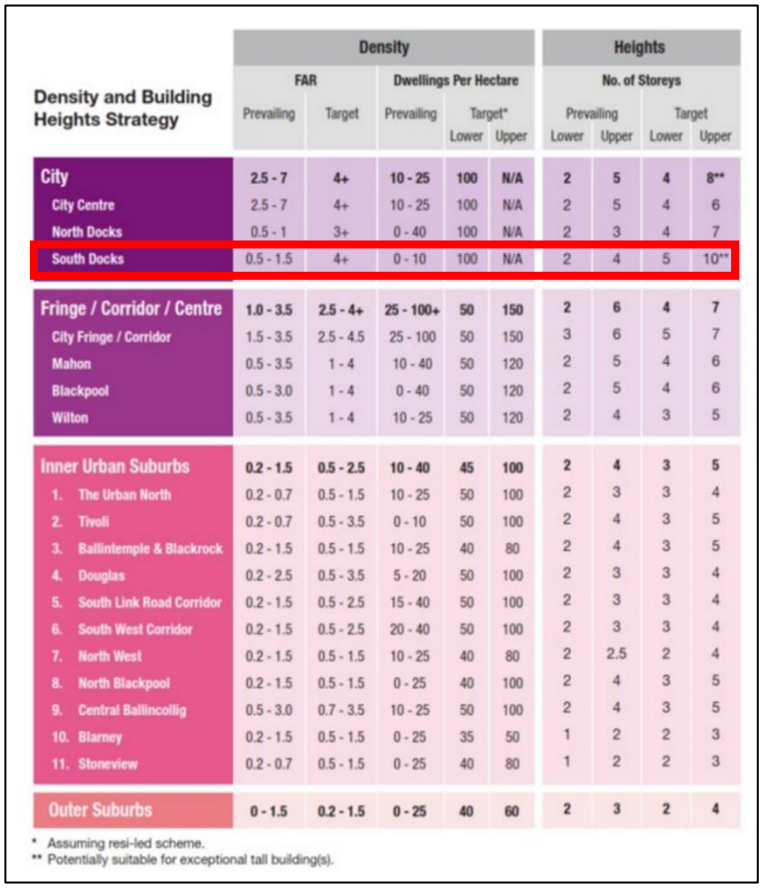
Figure 7 shows that the subject site lies within the development boundary of the South Docks and is zoned ZO 02 New Residential Neighbourhood where the following objective applies:

> *"To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure."*

Figure 7: Land Use Zoning on and surrounding the Subject Site (Source: Cork City Council, 2024)

The Cork Docklands are earmarked as a major mixed-use centre with a substantial component dedicated to the provision of employment land-uses. The proposed development would therefore provide the accommodation to for prospective employees taking up employment within the Cork Docklands.

The CCDP also recognises the need to increase residential density within Cork City to cater for population projections, with Project Ireland 2040 aiming to increase the population of Cork City by 50% by 2040. The Plan sets out density standards for new developments in Cork City. This includes the South Docks, which has specific height and density targets for the area. These targets have scope to increase and as shown in Figure 8 below.



Density and Building Heights Strategy	Density					Heights			
	FAR		Dwellings Per Hectare			No. of Storeys			
	Prevailing	Target	Prevailing	Target* Lower	Target* Upper	Prevailing Lower	Prevailing Upper	Target Lower	Target Upper
City	**2.5 - 7**	**4+**	**10 - 25**	**100**	**N/A**	**2**	**5**	**4**	**8****
City Centre	2.5 - 7	4+	10 - 25	100	N/A	2	5	4	6
North Docks	0.5 - 1	3+	0 - 40	100	N/A	2	3	4	7
South Docks	0.5 - 1.5	4+	0 - 10	100	N/A	2	4	5	10**
Fringe / Corridor / Centre	**1.0 - 3.5**	**2.5 - 4+**	**25 - 100+**	**50**	**150**	**2**	**6**	**4**	**7**
City Fringe / Corridor	1.5 - 3.5	2.5 - 4.5	25 - 100	50	150	3	6	5	7
Mahon	0.5 - 3.5	1 - 4	10 - 40	50	120	2	5	4	6
Blackpool	0.5 - 3.0	1 - 4	0 - 40	50	120	2	5	4	6
Wilton	0.5 - 3.5	1 - 4	10 - 25	50	120	2	4	3	5
Inner Urban Suburbs	**0.2 - 1.5**	**0.5 - 2.5**	**10 - 40**	**45**	**100**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**5**
1. The Urban North	0.2 - 0.7	0.5 - 1.5	10 - 25	50	100	2	3	3	4
2. Tivoli	0.2 - 0.7	0.5 - 3.5	0 - 10	50	100	2	4	3	5
3. Ballintemple & Blackrock	0.2 - 1.5	0.5 - 1.5	10 - 25	40	80	2	4	3	5
4. Douglas	0.2 - 2.5	0.5 - 3.5	5 - 20	50	100	2	3	3	4
5. South Link Road Corridor	0.2 - 1.5	0.5 - 2.5	15 - 40	50	100	2	3	3	4
6. South West Corridor	0.2 - 1.5	0.5 - 2.5	20 - 40	50	100	2	3	3	4
7. North West	0.2 - 1.5	0.5 - 1.5	10 - 25	40	80	2	2.5	2	4
8. North Blackpool	0.2 - 1.5	0.5 - 1.5	0 - 25	40	100	2	4	3	5
9. Central Ballincollig	0.5 - 3.0	0.7 - 3.5	10 - 25	50	100	2	4	3	5
10. Blarney	0.2 - 1.5	0.5 - 1.5	0 - 25	35	50	1	2	2	3
11. Stoneview	0.2 - 0.7	0.5 - 1.5	0 - 25	40	80	1	2	2	3
Outer Suburbs	**0 - 1.5**	**0.2 - 1.5**	**0 - 25**	**40**	**60**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**4**

* Assuming resi-led scheme.
** Potentially suitable for exceptional tall building(s).

Figure 8: Excerpt of Table 11.2 - Cork City Density and Building Height Standards (Source: Cork City Council, 2022)

The CCDP recognises the need to ensure that a mix of housing types are provided in the city to provide a range of accommodation for residents. Objective 3.6 of the CCDP states the following with regards to housing mix:

> *'Encourage the development of an appropriate mix of dwelling types to meet target residential densities, utilising a range of dwelling types and density typologies informed by best practice (as illustrated in "Density Done Well" in the Cork City Density Strategy, Building Height and Tall Building Strategy) with combinations of houses, stacked units and apartments.'*

According to the CCDP, both the '15-minute city' and 'walkable neighbourhoods' are two key approaches which have influenced the Core Strategy. Objective 2.10 of the CCDP states the following with regards to the 15-minute city:

> *'To support the delivery of a 15-Minute City that supports Compact Liveable Growth by creating vibrant local communities that can access all necessary amenities within a 10-minute walk/cycle and access workplaces and other neighbourhoods with a 15-minute public transport journey.'*

With regards to walkable neighbourhoods, the CCDP outlines that new developments shall be designed to make a positive contribution to their neighbourhoods. This can be done through a range of measures, including the delivery of the right mix of uses at a suitable scale, creating attractive and safe places and avoiding the creation of 'dead' spaces, being well connected to public transport and active travel, and facilitating direct access to high quality parks and public spaces.

5. Assessment of the Proposed Development

The proposed development involves the construction of 176 no. apartments, a creche, a gym, a retail/café unit, play/amenity areas and all associated ancillary development works at the Former Ford Distribution Site, fronting onto Centre Park Road, Ballintemple, Cork.

The proposal will form a sustainable residential extension to the Strategic Housing Development currently under construction to the southwest, seeking to consolidate development in the area and will promote compact growth in a location where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling. It will provide residential development which is appropriate to its setting and of high-quality architectural value and quality, which is viable in development terms and will be attractive to buyers seeking quality family homes in the area.

The proposal will serve as an example of compact sustainable residential development for the South Docks. The format and design of the subject proposal has been developed in line with the relevant policies and guidelines pertaining to the site and wider area. The following are the key issues we consider relevant in the assessment of this proposal.

- Compliance with Current Planning Policy
- Appropriate Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Part V Proposal
- Childcare Provision
- Recreation, Amenity and Open Space
- Traffic Impact, Access & Connectivity
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Ecological Report

5.1 Compliance with Planning Policy

The proposed development is aligned with national policies as it is a compact sustainable development that will deliver residential densities of 210 dwellings/ha. This is well above the 100 dwellings/ha minimum density threshold for residential developments within a city-centre area of Cork City as stated in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024. Further, the proposed development adheres to SPPR 4 of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2022 as apartments have dual orientation. In this context, it is important to point out that the subject site covers a portion of the Polder Quarter character area and borders an already approved strategic housing development consisting of 1,002 residential units. A good range of community/commercial services are close to the site including shops, public transport stops, and healthcare services (Figure 1).

The proposed development is consistent with the strategic objectives of the CCDP as it aligns with objectives as outlined in Section 4.7 of this report. The proposed development at the subject site addresses the need for housing with sustainable design principles at its core and a focus on placemaking that is people centred. At a strategic level, the proposed 176 no. units will contribute to almost 18% of the Tier 1 units yield for the City Docks (see Table 2.3 of the CCDP), while also delivering much needed high-quality dwellings to meet existing market demand in the short to medium term.

The proposed development is on lands zoned for residential use and it is considered that the proposed development complies with the zoning objective for the site.

Proposed Housing Mix and Density

The proposed development consists of 176 no. units at a density of 210 dwellings/ha comprising of:

- 62 no. 1-bedroom apartment units
- 82 no. 2-bedroom apartment units
- 32 no. 3-bedroom apartment units

The proposed mix of apartment types consists of 35% 1-bedroom, 47% 2-bedroom, and 18% 3-bedroom units which will add to the existing and permitted housing types within the area. This composition of unit types is aligned to the maximum threshold percentages for 1- and 2-bedroom units and the minimum threshold percentage for 3-bedroom units as per Table 11.6 of the CCDP.

We submit that this proposal for 176 no. residential units will assist in fulfilling the Council's objective of delivering more housing and contribute to alleviating the current housing crisis. The scheme proposes a mix of 3-bed, 2-bed, and 1-bed units to provide housing across all age groups. The housing mix supports future population growth for both small and larger families, as well as couples and single occupants.

The density of the proposed development is in line with that identified for a site in an accessible location as per the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines. However, at present, the site remains undeveloped. The proposed residential density of the subject site is 210 no. units per hectare. This can be achieved without compromising the residential amenity of the area.

At a strategic level, the proposal will contribute to the realisation of housing targets in Cork City and the Docklands area by delivering much needed high-quality residential units to meet existing market demand in the short to medium term. The proposal will also help to achieve the objectives of the National Planning Framework which promote compact growth and seek to deliver at least 40% of all new homes within the built-up footprint of existing settlements (NPO 3a).

We submit that this proposal for 176 no. residential units will assist in fulfilling the Council's objective of delivering more housing and contribute to alleviating the current housing crisis. The proposed development presents a better and more sustainable use of the land than the alternative of no dwellings and the site remaining undeveloped.

A Statement of Consistency (SoC) by McCutcheon Halley Planning is submitted in support of the subject planning application. The SoC provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed developments' consistency with the relevant planning policy documents at national, regional and local levels. The main body of the SoC provides both a narrative outlining how the proposed development is in compliance with the relevant planning policies, while section 2 and 3 of the SoC provides a breakdown of each of the relevant planning policies/objectives and guidance. The following are covered in the report:

- Context and Principle of the Development
- Density and Housing Mix
- Layout
- Landscape and Amenity
- Sustainability

The SoC concludes that the proposed development is consistent with the general and specific objectives of the CDP for Cork City and the docklands area. The density of the proposed development is in line with that identified in the Compact Settlement Guidelines. The scheme is also in full accordance with the other policies of the CDP 2022.

5.2 Appropriate Assessment

Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC requires that an Appropriate Assessment (AA) should be carried out where plans or projects may have a significant effect on the conservation objectives that would ultimately affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

Enviroguide conducted a Stage 1 AA Screening Report, the findings of this screening advised that a Stage 2 AA was required. To this end, Enviroguide have prepared a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) which considers the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed development. Both the AA Screening and NIS are submitted in support of this application.

An AA Screening Report for the proposed development has been prepared for the subject development by Enviroguide. This report concluded that the possibility cannot be excluded that the proposed development will have a significant effect on the Special Protection Area labelled as Cork Harbour (004030).

The NIS concludes beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the proposed development will have no significant adverse effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interests, and on the integrity and extent of Cork Harbour SPA (004030). Therefore, the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of any relevant European Site.

5.3 Environmental Impact Assessment

In accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and current government and European Union guidance, the planning authority must screen the proposed development for Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and decide whether the planning application for the proposed development does or does not require an EIAR.

Directive 2011/92/EU was enacted as a means to assess the effects of projects on the environment, and to properly ensure that any potential significant effects are assessed before a project proceeds. Annex I of Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU defines mandatory projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) (formerly EIS) and Annex II lists projects which do not necessarily have significant effects but can be subject to case-by-case analysis or thresholds to be determined by member states. Section 172 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the legislative basis for mandatory EIA. It states the following:

> *"An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by a planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for:*
>
> *(a) Proposed development of a class specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 which exceeds a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule, and*
>
> *(b) Proposed development of a class specified in Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specific in that Schedule but which the planning authority or the Board determines would be likely to have significant effects on the environment."*

Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2021 outlines the legislative requirements deeming whether a project is in need of a mandatory EIA. Projects that automatically require an EIA included in Annex 1 are listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations.

Schedule 5, Part 2 (10)(b)(i) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2021 includes the "*construction of more than 500 dwelling units*" while Part 2 (10)(b)(iv) includes "*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.*"

The proposed project comprises the construction of 176 no. residential units, on a site with a gross area of 0.84 ha. Given the development comprises a continuation to the Strategic Housing Development under construction to the southwest it is considered to trigger the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment. Accordingly, an EIAR for the proposed development has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants for the subject development and is submitted in support of the LRD application.

5.4 Part V

Under the amended Planning and Development Regulations (2015), pursuant to Part V. s.96 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), 10% of all new residential developments are required to be made available for social housing. The site was purchased by the applicant on 18 June 2018 which is within the timeframe where a 10% Part V obligation continues to apply.

The applicant proposes to meet the site-specific Part V obligation through the transfer of 18 no. apartments on site consisting of:

- 11 no. 1-bedroom units.
- 7 no. 2 bed units

These units are dispersed throughout the proposed development. A detailed Part V Layout and an assessment of the 'Part V Costs Methodology' is submitted as part of the LRD application documents.

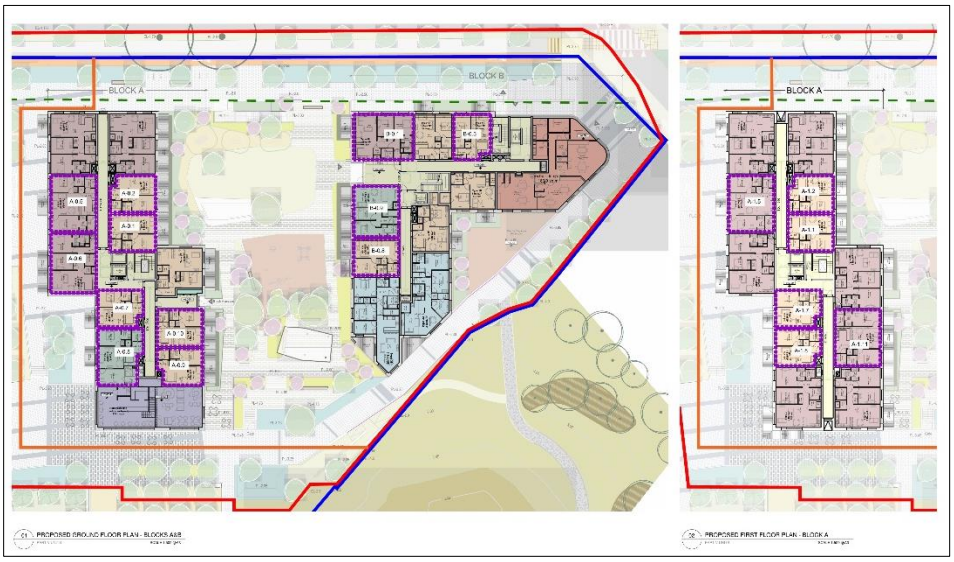


Figure 9: Part V Proposal prepared by JFA Architects

5.5 Childcare Provision

Appendix 2 of the 'Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities' establishes an indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas (Paragraphs 2.4 and 3.3.1 refer). One facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare places is a reasonable starting point in this regard. The guidance acknowledges that other case specific assumptions may lead to an increase or decrease in this requirement. However, the Apartment Guidelines of 2018 concedes that 1-bedroom apartments would not generate a demand for childcare spaces. Therefore, 1-bedroom units can be discounted from the rate of 20 childcare spaces for every 75 dwellings. The required childcare spaces for the proposed development were calculated using the 114 no. 2- and 3-bedroom and equalled 31 no. childcare space. To cater for this requirement the proposed development includes a childcare

facility that can accommodate up to 35 children. The development yield calculation found that the proposed development will generate a minimum of 8 childcare spaces. Thereby, the childcare facility within the proposed development can add 27 spaces to the childcare capacity of Cork City. In addition, based on the findings for the report received from the Cork City Childcare Committee the proposed childcare facility is designed to cater to children between the ages of 0-3-years-of-age. In doing so the proposed childcare facility will address a lack in childcare service provision for young children between the ages of 0-2-years of age.

5.6 Recreation, Amenity and Open Space

The scheme has been designed in a way which seeks to provide a high-quality environment for future residents. The layout responds to the topography and natural features that exist on site with existing flora on site to be retained and supplemental planting provided throughout to provide an overall net gain in the biodiversity on site. The strategy is developed through three design pillars: Ecology + Biodiversity, Connectivity, and Community. Through these, the scheme has been simplified to enhance the pedestrian connection throughout the entire project by creating both a 'physical' and a 'virtual' linkage, utilizing pathways, materials, and vegetation as resources to achieve this. Furthermore, the development and characterization of each space that shares the same identity and complements its various uses allows the project to function as a comprehensive system that links all green areas both in a centripetal and centrifugal manner.

The creation of a well-designed, high quality and coherent open spaces is essential for the delivery of a sustainable residential development. The scheme is designed to create a series of public and communal open spaces linked together with pedestrian and cycle friendly routes. Pedestrian/cycle connectivity between the public and communal space areas, and the smaller play areas are formalised with footpaths enhanced with pocket green areas, planting, trees, and seating. These open spaces collectively function as nodes of recreation to the development and will contribute positively to the quality of life of future residents. In terms of open space provision, the open space area comprises more than 20% of the total gross site area. Root protection zones have been identified and taken into account as part of the landscape design. Native plant material has also been considered for the scheme, in part, to improve the overall biodiversity of the site. The inclusion of pollinator plants as part of the species mix will be a focused element of the planting palette. A copy of all planting material is available in the documents provided by Ait Urbanism and Landscape.

The biodiversity potential of the site will be enhanced by providing significant specimen tree planting across the site including open space trees, street trees, garden trees and screen planting. Native hedge planting will be used to fill any gaps along the site boundaries.

Care was taken in relation to the proposed layout to ensure that each residential unit within the development will have a high standard of

residential amenity and privacy. This was achieved by carefully considering the location and orientation of each apartment block. Windows have all been sited to prevent overlooking into adjacent apartments. Both Block A and B are orientated to maximise the views overlooking the River Lee. Both blocks A and B will have green roofs, which could provide additional amenity and function. Amenity in the sense that green roofs provide for amenity options such as roof top gardens, solar panels, vertical wind turbines, or water harvesting infrastructure.

The provision of permeability and improved overall pedestrian movement is one of the core principles of the site layout design. This core principle is coupled with the design objective to provide designed landscape amenity areas which offer comfort, passive supervision, ease of access in terms of the varying age groups and levels of mobility and a safe amenity space for all end users.

Second to the core principle of design is the development of a palette of materials for both hard and soft landscaping to both the amenity lands and the streetscape.

Open Space Hierarchy

The following key elements have been considered as part of the open space detailed design and the protection and overall reinforcement of the sites "Green Infrastructure".

- Create a 'Greenway' pedestrian & cycle path network through the site which can be extended over time.
- Provide open space that is overlooked and framed by the residential units providing an attractive setting and passive surveillance.
- Incorporate the objectives of planning policies for the area.
- Public open spaces with high amenity and visual values, to facilitate both active & passive recreation.
- Promote ecology & biodiversity through the retention and enhancement of existing natural features.
- Respond to both the existing landscape and potential future development by retaining the existing landscape features where appropriate and facilitating linkages through the proposed development.

Amenity/Open Space Provision

As part of the overall amenity provision, it is proposed that a number of accessible and usable public open spaces with excellent passive surveillance will be provided within the proposed development. It is considered the quantum of open space being provided complies with the requirements of the CDP.

The open space is provided in a number of different spaces dispersed throughout the site. These spaces have been designed to be age-friendly and provide a variety of uses and spaces including active, formal and natural play areas, and seating areas.

Softscape Strategy

The softscape strategy for the scheme has aimed to provide a landscape structure of specimen trees, robust ornamental shrubs and hedge planting to soften and compliment the appearance of the built elements whilst also enhancing the setting of the residential units.

The proposed softscape strategy also includes specifying indigenous and pollinator friendly plant species where appropriate.

Each apartment unit will have a private amenity space in the form of a balcony/patio area.

Other landscape elements such as tree and shrub planting, together with robust seating and lighting have been incorporated throughout the development to ensure that the recreational infrastructure which forms an integral part of the proposals is aesthetically pleasing, functional and welcoming for children of all groups in a safe and stimulating environment.

5.7 Traffic Impact, Access & Connectivity

Vehicular access will be provided to the west off Centre Park Road. The access is shared between pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists offering direct access to Centre Park Road which leads to Cork City to the west by foot, bicycle, bus, and car. The proposal provides connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles with footpaths being provided throughout the site and connecting to the existing footpaths within the site environs. The main roadway entrance to the development will include dedicated cycle and pedestrian facilities which will join with the existing cycle and pedestrian paths in the wider area. Additional pedestrian permeability to the development will be on all boundaries of the site. An extensive network of pedestrian and cycle paths within the development will provide for both utility and leisure movement.

This infrastructure will promote permeability through the proposed development and within the wider area, encouraging walking and cycling in the locality and minimising the need to use private vehicles, particularly for shorter journeys.

A Traffic and Transportation Assessment (TTA) has been prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers and submitted with this LRD application. The scope of the TTA has been agreed with the Traffic & Transportation Section of Cork City Council. Pedestrian and cycle connectivity are presented as part of the report and the development seeks to encourage a reduction in car dependency and promote the use of sustainable and active travel. Pedestrian and cycle connections connecting the development to the existing facilities in the area links the site with local bus and train routes and to Cork City Centre and the wider area ensuring that these alternative methods of transport and travel are provided.

In terms of car parking, the proposed development will provide 56 no. spaces. In terms of cycle parking, a total of 427 no. spaces are provided. This parking provision is considered appropriate for the proposed development.

The proposal provides connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles with routes provided throughout the site and connecting to the existing transport routes along the boundaries of the site. Pedestrian connections are provided between the areas of the site which will ensure residents will have good access to all open space areas within the development. These internal connections are highly overlooked.

The internal transport network will promote non-motorised transport within the proposed development and encourage walking and cycling connections to Cork City Centre. The prioritisation of non-motorised transport is evident from the number of 427 no. bicycle parking spaces compared to the 56 no. car parking spaces. Thereby, minimising the need to use private vehicles, particularly for shorter journeys.

5.8 Visual Impact Assessment

The proposed development will create 2 no. building/s, measuring 8 (Block A) and 10 (Block B) storeys in height, respectively. Due to the proposed building heights, a landscape visual impact assessment has been commissioned in accordance with Section 11.16-18 of the CCDP. Thus, a landscape visual impact assessment was completed and forms part of the EIAR which accompanies this LRD application.

5.9 Ecological Report

The proposed development is located on the banks of the River Lee, which is a significant ecological feature within Cork City. Therefore, to ensure that the proposed development does not adversely affect the River Lee, various ecological assessments was conducted and are submitted as part of the planning application.

6. Design Approach

6.1 Connections

Connectivity is a core design principle for the proposed scheme. The proposed site layout focuses on the creation of distinctive streetscapes with different widths and formations that helps generate a highly efficient scheme and assists our vision of placemaking. The building type and use of materials contribute to creating distinct areas within the site. This will help to create a sense of place and a high level of legibility throughout the scheme.

Shared Surface Streets have been introduced to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists within the development. The comprehensive network of pedestrian/cycle routes running through the scheme emphasises pedestrian and cyclist access throughout the site. The permeability of the development has been carefully considered both within, by ensuring the internal footpaths link the different areas and make the site accessible to all, and externally by connecting to the wider area at several locations.

In the wider urban context, connectivity focuses on the accessibility to the wider Cork City area. The site also benefits from connections to public transport. The proposed development allows for pedestrian and cycle connection to the north, west, east and south of the subject site.

6.2 Inclusivity & Variety

The housing density and grain of the proposed development supplies a mix of apartment types and sizes for households of different needs. The generous design and layout of the dwellings enables easy access to all including individuals with special needs. There are generous areas of public open space within the development which are overlooked by units. The design of the development will provide a positive aspect for all.

Paved footpaths are planned throughout the proposed development and are fully accessible to all types of pedestrians. Access to the public open spaces has been provided by using the appropriate pedestrian infrastructure to ensure that the open spaces are accessible to all.

The proposed layout of 176 no. apartment units consists of a range of different apartment types and sizes, adapted to reflect the specific setting. Of note is that a large portion of the apartments will have a dual orientation, whilst several of the apartments will be oversized. The size of the apartments focusses on balancing affordability and high-quality design for dwellings in the area. The site layout is arranged to exploit views within the site and provide passive surveillance over open space and public areas. As can be seen from the site layout by JFA Architects, different dwelling sizes are proposed (1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units) to provide a range of household sizes and needs.

6.3 Design Approach

The proposed layout has been designed to function as a sustainable and successful residential neighbourhood drawing on the design guidelines within the CCDP. The proposal provides for 176 no. units that face towards the primary areas of open space and shared space zones. It also provides basement parking spaces for cars, motorcycles, and bicycles parking. Access to the site is proposed from Centre Park Road to the west. The scheme will provide a pleasant environment for individuals and families to live and will integrate with the wider area via Centre Park Road, the Marina Promenade, and the Greenway.

The public open space and communal space areas are situated in locations which are highly visible and benefits from passive surveillance from the surrounding dwellings. Thereby, promoting a sense of safety and minimising the potential for anti-social behaviour. The orientation of the apartments around the open space areas negates the opportunity for overlooking and privacy issues between apartments. Privacy was also considered in setting the setback distances from the key transport infrastructure such as Centre Park Road, and the Marina Promenade. The location of the open space and shared space areas also ensures accessibility will aid in fostering a sense of ownership and community for future residents. The open space and shared space areas will be accessible from all dwellings via the footpath network throughout the estate.

The internal transport layout is designed to prioritise non-motorised modes of transport. Vehicles are contained to the basement parking for residents and visitors. The prioritisation of non-motorised modes transport is underlined by the four proposed pedestrian/cyclist connection points to the sites. Whereas only one connection point is proposed for vehicles via Centre Park Road. These measures will restrict vehicular traffic by clearly demarcating areas for non-motorised and motorised traffic within the proposed development. In areas where cars will be permitted design elements will be incorporated which decrease a driver's perception of acceptable speeds and encourage the use of the roads as a shared space. The layout is designed to provide a safe and secure arrangement of movement for the future residents.

6.4 Proposed Social Infrastructure

As part of the planning application submission a Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) has been prepared which provides an overview of the social infrastructure provision in the area.

The SIA outlines numerous facilities in the surrounding area of the subject site and identifies shortages and opportunities to inform the concept of uses for the proposed development.

It is evident from the audit that there is a range of services, facilities and amenities located within the study area. These are accessible via foot, cycle and bus which have been considered within the design of the proposed

development. As noted, the proposed development incorporates further measures of connectivity to ensure residents can access Cork City centre via bike or walking.

A 35-no. child place creche facility has been proposed within the development. A childcare assessment was prepared to inform the proposed and outlined the future capacity within the area and/or likely to be generated by the proposed development. This assessment concluded that the 35-no. childcare facility would be sufficient to cater for the proposal, adding another facility to the area.

The LRD also includes a gym, a retail/café unit, significant amenity areas and a cycle and pedestrian access will also be provided connecting to the surrounding areas.

This SIA therefore concludes that there are ample social and community facilities (existing and proposed) within the study area and that the development of these lands is consistent with the objectives of the Cork City Development Plan.

7. Detailed Design

7.1 Materials Palette

The proposed apartments have all been positioned to take advantage of natural light and heat. The design of the apartments responds to the local vernacular and have simple details that are well proportioned and balanced. In particular, the design has incorporated elements of the strategic housing development to the south to ensure consistency with the future urban character of the area. To this end, the proposed design uses materials, proportions, and features that respect and enhance the local setting. The external finishes and materials of the buildings make a positive contribution to the locality. Generous open space with landscaping will enhance the overall design of the proposed development. The design of the buildings and public space will facilitate easy maintenance. Care will be taken to design the location of flues, bins, and vents to prevent impact on the public amenities. Materials have been selected with a view to longevity, durability and low maintenance in line with Building Regulations and include reference to BS 7543:2015 'Guide to Durability of Buildings and Buildings Elements, Products and Components'.

Figure 10: View of Northeast Elevation of Blocks B and A

Figure 11: View of West Elelvation of Block B

Figure 12: View of Southwest Elevation of Block A

7.2 Building Design Components

The external materials of the units were selected to have a positive contribution to the locality. A proposed mix of 35% 1-bedroom, 47% 2-bedroom, and 18% 3-bedroom units will provide for a contemporary development whilst respecting the existing buildings in the area. The buildings will be constructed of traditional construction methods, with

external materials selected for their durability. The placement of materials, elevational treatment and feature treatment will differ in various locations throughout the site to create distinct character areas. Generous open space with landscaping will enhance the overall design of the development. The design of the buildings and public space will facilitate easy maintenance.

There is a variation of elevation designs for this site to offer interesting elevation treatment and avoid a monotonous 'copy and paste' approach.

7.3 Compliance with DMURS

The access route to the development has been designed to calm traffic naturally and ensure low driving speeds minimising noise and air pollution. In addition, a range of measures including varying building lines, boundary treatments, street trees, frequent crossing points, horizontal deflections, tighter corner radii and shared surfaces have been adopted to ensure appropriate traffic speeds within the proposed development.

Changes of surface materials will inform drivers of a change in the hierarchy and notify motorists of the shared surface on the access route. Shared surfaces have been incorporated to promote more pedestrian/cyclist friendly and liveable streets. Reduced corner radii and carriage widths promote lower speeds in this area. The pedestrian / cycle paths provided offer the most direct routes through the proposed development.

8. Conclusion

The subject development proposes a scheme of 176 no. dwelling units on lands identified within the Polder Quarter of the South Docks on lands zoned for new residential development. The proposed site layout by JFA Architects proposes a net residential density of 210 no. dwellings/ha, which is consistent with national, county, and local policy directives. Access to the proposed development is from the southwestern boundary of the site. The development of these lands will provide an opportunity to supply new homes to assist in delivering the additional dwelling units required to meet the projected population growth in the region, county, and metropolitan area.

The proposed development will create a sustainable and attractive residential development providing quality apartments that are fit for modern households regardless of size or composition. The proposal will create a living environment that promotes the concept of 'neighbourhood' and promotes a sense of community within the character area of the Polder Quarter.

This Planning and Design Statement provides an assessment of the design approach of the proposed scheme having regard to the relevant planning policy documents at national and local levels, including in particular the Compact Growth Guidelines, the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a national level, and the 2022 Cork City Development Plan at a Local Planning Policy level. We assert that the proposed development at the Former Ford Distribution Site, fronting onto Centre Park Road, Ballintemple, Cork, is consistent with all national, regional, county, and local policy objectives that apply to new LRDs on brownfield sites within metropolitan planning areas and that the proposed LRD development will provide a positive and significant contribution to the housing supply in Cork City.

Exposed Balcony Mitigation Proposals

RWDI were asked to carry out wind and microclimate assessments for the proposed development at the former Ford Distribution Site in Cork. Following these assessments it became clear that some level of mitigation may be required to selected balconies in exposed locations in order to improve the comfort and usability throughout the year. As noted by RWDI, the prevailing wind conditions in Cork are comparatively high and the exact level of mitigation required will be dependent on final delivery of proposed developments adjacent to the site. Equally the report notes that the perception of comfort can be subjective and regional differences in wind climate and thermal conditions as well as variations in age, health, clothing, etc. can affect a person's perception of the wind climate. Therefore, comparisons of wind speeds for the existing and proposed building configurations are the most objective way in assessing local pedestrian wind conditions.

Taking both of these factors into account we propose a stepped approach to mitigation. It is proposed that the dominant form of balcony across all parts of the building will have the standard metal rail barrier, as shown on elevations and in the drawings below. In general we expect that all inset balconies, and balconies to lower levels will have these types of railings, which also provide a better sense of privacy to residents.

Where mitigation is needed, we propose that individual balconies will be provided with glass railings. Depending on the level of protection required these will measure either 1500mm or 1800mm over the finished level of the balcony. These will be simple and unobtrusive, and provide a greater sense of protection for residents while also allowing for generous views both from the balcony itself, and the rooms inside. The base of the balcony will match seamlessly with the metal balconies. The glass balconies will also be visually lighter than the metal railings. As mitigation will generally be provided at higher levels and corners a sense of visual balance will be maintained throughout the scheme.

RWDI note that microclimatic conditions such as this are subject to change and it is expected that as the surrounding proposals are developed and delivered a more accurate picture of the true microclimate conditions will be ascertained and details of locations where mitigation is required can be more clearly identified.

Figure 1- Typical 1100 mm Metal Balcony

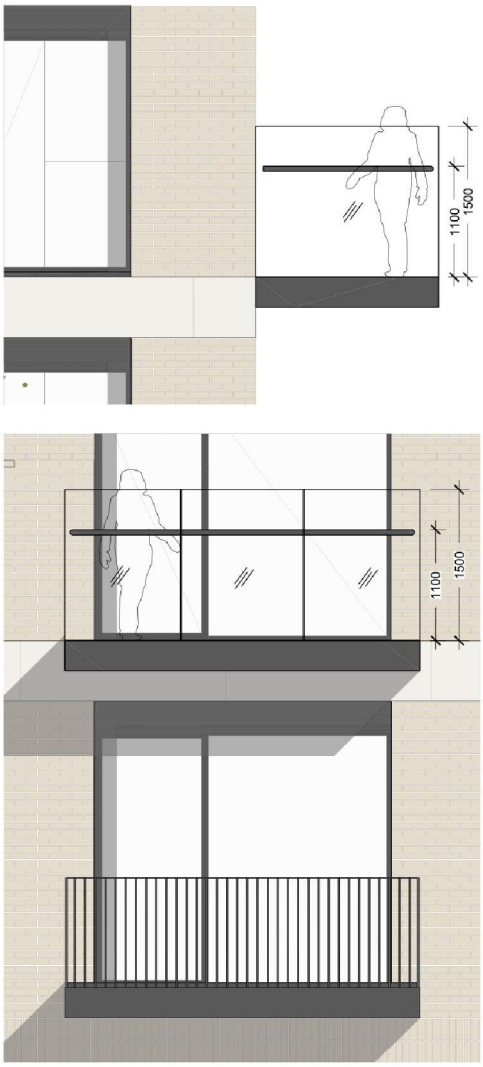


Figure 2- 1500mm Glass Balcony – for locations needing moderate mitigation

Figure 3- 1800mm Glass Balcony – for locations needing most mitigation