



Case Reference / Description	229 no. Build to Rent apartments and associated site works. The Former Hewitt's Mills site, North City Link Road, Blackpool, Co. Cork.		
Case Type	Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request		
Date:	24 th November 2020	Start Time	02.30 pm
Location	Via Microsoft Teams	End Time	04:15 pm
Chairperson	Tom Rabbette	Executive Officer	Hannah Cullen

Representing An Bord Pleanála:

Tom Rabbette, Assistant Director of Planning
Daire McDevitt, Planning Inspector
Hannah Cullen, Executive Officer

Representing Prospective Applicant:

Frank Sheahan, Eischfeld Limited
Ed Carey, Eischfeld Limited
Peter Heffernan, Wilson Architecture
Jim Kelly, Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Land Planning & Design
Jim Hughes, Fehily Timoney
David Moore, Fehily Timoney
Crystal Leiker, Fehily Timoney
Ronan Walshe, Fehily Timoney

Representing Planning Authority

Martina Foley, Executive Planner
Fiona Redmond, Senior Planner
Pat Ruane, Conservation Officer
Valerie Fenton, Senior Executive Engineer
Simon Lyons, Senior Executive Engineer

Introduction

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála (ABP) welcomed the prospective applicant and the planning authority (PA) via Microsoft Teams having regard to the Covid-19 virus and introductions were made.

The procedural matters relating to the meeting were as follows:

- The written record will be placed on the pre-application consultation file and will be made public, along with that file, should an application arise following the conclusion of this consultation process,
- ABP received a submission from the PA on **22nd September, 2020** providing the records of consultations held pursuant to section 247 and its written opinion of considerations related to proper planning and sustainable development that may have a bearing on ABP's decision,
- The consultation meeting will not involve a merits-based assessment of the proposed development,
- The meeting will focus on key site-specific issues at strategic overview level, and whether the documents submitted require further consideration and/or amendment in order to constitute a reasonable basis for an application.
- Key considerations will be examined in the context of the statutory development plan for the area and section 28 Ministerial Guidelines where relevant,
- A reminder that neither the holding of a consultation or the forming of an opinion shall prejudice ABP or the PA concerned in relation to any other of their respective functions under the Planning Acts or any other enactments and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

The ABP representatives acknowledged the letter dated **31st August, 2020** formally requesting pre-application consultations with ABP. Prospective applicant advised of the need to comply with definition of SHD as set out in the Act of 2016, in relation to thresholds of development. It was also noted that the Inspector dealing with the pre-application consultation request would be different to who would deal with the application when it was submitted. Recording of the meeting is prohibited.

Agenda

- 1. Development Strategy** to include inter alia site layouts and architectural approach, density, design, including heights, massing and materials, public realm, connectivity and permeability between the sites and the wider area, open space strategy and overall Masterplan for the 4 sites.
- 2. Architectural Conservation** in particular having regard to Site A (Furniture Store) and B (Hewitt Mill site) and issues raised by the Conservation Division.
- 3. Archaeological Heritage** in particular having regard to Site B (Hewitt Mill site) and other issues raised by the Archaeology Section.
- 4. Visual Impact Assessment** to include inter alia, Protected Views & Prospects, streetscape and cumulative impact.
- 5. Residential Amenities** to include inter alia impact of adjoining properties (site A Furniture Store), access to and distribution of communal facilities & Amenities, sunlight/daylight.

6. **CMATS** and issues raised by **Transportation Division** (contained in the Planning Authority Opinion received on 22nd September 2020).
7. Issues raised by **Drainage Division** (contained in the Planning Authority Opinion received on 22nd September 2020).
8. **Any Other Business.**

1. Development Strategy

ABP Comments:

- The interaction and integration of the four sites and their uses, in particular site A as the only site separated from the rest by the N20.
- Clarification of densities for each site, in particular Site C (Island Site).
- Clarification on site assembly and ownership.
- Clarification on red line boundary for the Pope's Hill site appears to include the road and open space serving an adjoining residential development
- Rationale for layouts and overall architectural approach.
- Design, including heights, massing and materials,
- Interface with public realm and adjoining sites/properties,
- Connectivity and permeability through the sites, between the sites and the wider area,
- Open Space Strategy.
- Overall Masterplan for the 4 sites and phasing.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- The proposed development lands are split into 4 parcels which consists of A - The Old Furniture Store, B – Hewitt Mills, C – Island Site and D – Pope's Hill.
- Historical part of previous industrial lands severed by the N20 Road.
- These lands are suitable for high density development.
- The land is also suited for multi-storey tall buildings which has been established by the existing Seana Mhuilleann development which defines the entrance to the N20 corridor.
- Density of 50+ to the hectare for all 4 sites, a tall building strategy has been adopted for the area.
- The lands are now in a single ownership and have been for some years.
- The area of open space within the red line boundary at Popes Hill will not be part of this development and is to stay as is, re-look at introducing blue line into the documentation at application stage for clarity.
- Throughout the development, all the proposed break out spaces high quality hard and soft landscaping will be included.
- The Mill has been surveyed and the developers has been advised the structural integrity of the Mill would be compromised if the retaining wall along the N20 was removed.
- The development seeks to achieve a balance between providing links and integrating all 4 sites and ensuring the structural integrity of sites and buildings.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Concerns remain of the interconnectivity between the sites.

- Satisfied in principal with the density given the location of the sites proximate to many services providing there is sufficient access and permeability.
- Parcel A and parcel D constrained in their contexts.
- Lack of passive surveillance at Hewitt Mills needs to be addressed to discourage potential antisocial activity.
- Open space needs to comply with the requirements set out in the guidelines for BTR.
- More information is to be provided of the boundary treatments and access levels within the scheme.
- Scope to break through the retaining wall along the N20 at Hewitt's Mill.
- Important to demonstrate overall permeability and accessibility with this site as well as the desire lines and through routes.
- Consideration for a slip road to be introduced from the south of the proposed site up to Seana Mhuilleann.

Further ABP Comments:

- At application stage an overall masterplan should be provided demonstrating how the four parcels of land relate and come together to form one overall development.
- Cross sections would assist to demonstrate relationship of the scheme and public realm, what is existing and what is proposed.
- Details on how the final design strategy was reached and alternatives that were explored.
- Justification/rationale for density

2. Architectural Conservation

ABP Comments:

- Interested in site A and B in particular the treatments of the west elevation.
- Clarity on the status of the Mill Building and the extent of the protection to the Monument (Mill building) under legislation.
- Ensure correct language and terminology is used to describe the building within the reports as there appears to be discrepancies as to which category the Mill falls under.
- Treatment of window opes and western elevation

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Lands of site A and B previously formed part of a large distillery site.
- It is not a protected structure, it is a recorded monument.
- 2 months' notice of intention must issue to the Development Applications Unit (DAU) if the proposal is to do works around the monument.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Will liaise further with the applicant to discuss technical details and come up with a solution.

3. Archaeological Heritage

ABP Comments:

- Prospective applicant advised to liaise with PA on any outstanding archaeological heritage issues.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- The applicant will ensure to expand further on the documentation supplied at application stage and provide more records in relation to archaeology onsite.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Would be of the view that anything that can be reused/ retained should be done within the proposed development.
- Further discussions will be held with the applicant.

4. Visual Impact Assessment

ABP Comments:

- Issues in relation to the proposal impinging on protected views and prospects identified in the Development Plan.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Additional views requested will be included at application stage.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Scope to include visual impact assessment focusing on views across the valley to the Bellsfield area, inclusion of views from Cathedral and Shandon Street level view from site A.

5. Residential Amenities

ABP Comments:

- Further detail required for shared amenity spaces within the 4 sites of the development.
- Implications for the development potential of adjoining developments due to window positioning (site A).
- Accessibility for residents of site A to the shared facilities.
- Lower floor levels of sites B and C should be included in a full sun/daylight analysis.
- Noise/vibrations impact

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- A detailed sun/daylight assessment has been carried out and will be included within the application documentation.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Noise levels should be considered further for the apartments fronting on the road.

- Roof gardens proposed should provide usable facilities, full consideration to be given to the nature of these spaces.

6. CMATS & other

ABP Comments:

- Car Parking Strategy.
- Impact on parking serving the existing business that use the surface car park at site A.
- Implications of CMAT for the site and development proposed.
- Issues raised by the Transportation Division.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Happy to look at upgrades required and minor works to the pedestrian crossings up to a certain point.
- Potential to look at the pedestrian crossings further alongside the PA to enhance the area as much possible.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- N20 Road identified on the bus connects route map.
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland(TII) and National Transport Authority(NTA) should be contacted by the application in regard to their proposals.
- A meeting can be facilitated to discuss roads and cyclist infrastructure further with the applicant.
- Connectivity to Blackpool and City Centre from this scheme would be seen as vital.
- Scope for financial contribution or area to be taken in charge within the red line upon agreement and consent.
- Documentation to be provided further detailing wayfinding throughout the site.

Further ABP Comments:

- If a financial contribution is sought the PA should be fully transparent in relation to the proposed costing details, the applicant must ensure full details are agreed and presented to the board when an application is lodged if this is the avenue agreed between the two parties.

7. Issues raised by Drainage Division

ABP Comments:

- Noted limited details submitted with the Pre Application request.
- Any items raised by Irish Water to be taken into consideration.
- Issues raised by the Drainage Division.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- A flood risk assessment can be carried out in the area.

- Further information will be sought from the drainage department and any technical details will be bottomed out.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Would be appropriate that a flood risk assessment is carried out at the portion of site A.
- Consideration to be given to the Office of Public Works (OPW) guidelines.
- Further details to be provided with the application as currently drainage details are limited.
- Support any opportunity for sustainable drainage.

8. Any Other Business

ABP Comments:

- At application stage ensure that a full suite of drawings and documentation is submitted and that all technical reports and documentation correlate.
- If Material Contravention arises, ensure this is addressed in the documentation and notices.
- Address all outstanding technical matters as no recourse for further information under SHD.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Statement of consistency has been prepared.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- No objection in principal with the proposed development however a lot of further justification and rationale should be put forward at application stage.

- **Conclusion**

The representatives of ABP emphasised the following:

- There should be no delay in making the planning application once the public notice has been published
- Sample notices, application form and procedures are available on the ABP website
- Irish Water would like prospective applicants to contact Irish Water at cdsdesignqa@water.ie **between the Pre-Application Consultation and Application stages**, to confirm details of their proposed development and their proposed design.
- The email address to which applicants should send their **applications** to Irish Water as a prescribed body is spatialplanning@water.ie

Tom Rabbette
Assistant Director of Planning
December, 2020