



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting TC0020

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	Demolition of existing structures, construction of 255 no. student bed spaces, medical centre, commercial unit and all site development works. The former Crow's Nest site, Victoria Cross/Carrigrohane Road, Cork.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request		
<b>1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting		
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> October, 2017	<b>Start Time</b>	11.30
<b>Location</b>	Office of Cork City Council	<b>End Time</b>	13.20
<b>Chairperson</b>	Rachel Kenny	<b>Executive Officer</b>	Lianna Slowey

### Representing An Bord Pleanála:

Rachel Kenny, Director of Planning
Stephen Rhys Thomas, Planning Inspector
Lianna Slowey, Executive Officer

### Representing Prospective Applicant:

Mark Poland, University College Cork
Tim O'Riordan, University College Cork
Valerie Mulvin, McCullough Mulvin Architects
Ronan O'Connor, McCullough Mulvin Architects
Jim Keogan, McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants
Orla O'Sullivan, McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants
Ian Crehan, O'Connor Sutton Cronin Engineers
Finbar Wall, O'Connor Sutton Cronin Engineers

### Representing Planning Authority

Kevin Lynch, Senior Planner
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Brigh Ryan, Planner
Tony Duggan, City Architect
Niamh O'Brien, Transportation
Gillian O'Sullivan, Roads Division
John A. Murphy, Planning Policy

## Introduction

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála (ABP) welcomed the prospective applicant and Planning Authority (PA), 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 2nd October, 2017 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 they may 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 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 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. Car Parking and set down.
2. Compliance with DMURS.
3. Tall Buildings and City Development Plan Policy.
4. Student Accommodation Concentration Analysis.
5. Residential Amenity, proposed and existing.
6. Urban Design and public realm.
7. Any other matters.

## **1. Car Parking and set down.**

### **ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Set down arrangements for the proposed development.
- Footpath width along Carrigrohane Road. Note access arrangements, pedestrian priority along Carrigrohane Road.
- Have any amendments to the junction of Carrigrohane Road and Victoria Cross been considered? Pedestrian/Cycle demand etc.

### **Prospective Applicant's response:**

- Vehicle set down/service delivery proposed along the side of the site. Conscious of trauma route for emergency services along N22/Carrigrohane Road.
- Propose booking slots for students when moving in and moving out.
- Propose to lease car parking spaces for residents' use in adjacent car parks.
- Propose to carry out widening of existing footpaths adjacent to the site.
- Mobility Management Plan – target for 0% travel by car, approx. 80-85% pedestrian travel, the rest will be made up of cyclists and travel by public transport.

### **Planning Authority's comments:**

- N22/Carrigrohane Road – main trauma route for emergency services. No on street parking or loading bays along N22. Concerns re. potential vehicle set down/u-turns at proposed development site, particularly when students are moving in and moving out. Propose any temporary parking and set down area to be located at the rear of site.
- Significant pedestrian movements at Victoria Cross, PA carried out a study approx. 3,000 pedestrian movements recorded over a 12-hour period.

## **2. Compliance with DMURS.**

### **ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Public realm gains – widening footpaths/cycle paths etc.
- Pedestrian movements/crossings.

### **Prospective Applicant's response:**

- Mobility Management Plan and Road Safety Audit carried out – propose to widen existing footpaths, pinch points along footpaths have been identified and revised. One such pinch point identified at a proposed pedestrian egress route at left side of proposed development, not intended as a pedestrian entrance.
- Proposed development is creating an active street front, design had regard to city plan/policy more so than DMURS.

### **Planning Authority's comments:**

- Ensure footpath width complies with 1.8m minimum passing requirements.

### **3. Tall Buildings and City Development Plan Policy.**

#### **ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- City Development Plan policy, discuss relevant objectives for the site as designated in the CDP. Tall buildings, views, protected structures etc.

#### **Prospective Applicant's response:**

- The proposed development is located in an inner urban area at a significant gateway location to Cork City.
- City Development Plan policy is definitive re. location of tall buildings, the proposed development is in context with the prevailing building heights in the surrounding area.
- Project architect outlined historical context of the site and the varying skyline of Cork City, precedence of setting buildings of volume against smaller elements, particularly in industrial areas of the city.
- Carried out massing studies re. extant permission on site and existing structures.
- Proposed site arrangement has broken down the mass of buildings and allows for permeable views letting light through.
- Urban design – had regard to the views and setting of Cork County Hall (Protected Structure), the proposed development will not adversely affect this.

#### **Planning Authority's comments:**

- Desire to see a good quality building that works for the city at this location.
- City Development Plan policy confines development of tall buildings to South Mahon and Docklands areas.
- The setting of County Hall (Protected Structure) is a key factor in determining height in the area.
- City Architect acknowledged the quality of the proposed development being sympathetic to the site and its context.
- Senior Planner acknowledged the considered proposal but expressed concerns re. tall building policy.

### **4. Student Accommodation Concentration Analysis.**

#### **ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Analysis of when oversupply becomes an issue. Assessment of demand and current situation in Cork City.

#### **Prospective Applicant's response:**

- No restrictive policy in City Development Plan regarding provision of student accommodation.
- The site is located within a campus setting – availability of student housing is a critical determination of where to study.

- UCC has a student population of 20,000, expected to grow to 23,000 within 5 years. 10,000 students are living away from home, less than half reside in purpose built accommodation.
- Proposed development is compliant with Rebuilding Ireland objective to free up conventional housing stock.
- Positive feedback from adjoining residents and businesses validates the strong management of student accommodation by UCC.

**Planning Authority's comments:**

- No particular issue re. student accommodation concentration in this area, if properly managed, given the proximity to UCC.
- Elected members are pushing for policy re. student accommodation in the city, acknowledge managed facilities are better.
- 6 applications for student accommodation units with Cork City Council at present, fewer applications for residential apartments as a result.

**5. Residential Amenity, proposed and existing.**

**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Specifically, The Village to the west and houses to the south, in terms of separation distances.
- Future occupants, discuss the relevant aspects of ensuring that students have an acceptable level of residential amenity.
- More information may be necessary in relation to 'operational measures' in the Student Facility Operational Management Plan.
- Overlooking from podium level southwards, discuss.
- Impact on adjacent property in relation to overbearing appearance – podium, new boundary wall?

**Prospective Applicant's response:**

- Daylight studies undertaken, required daylight standards are met re. bedrooms.
- The orientation of the site allows for the provision of east and south facing landscaped garden areas which will have light through most of the day.
- Adjacent houses to the south are in use as student accommodation, little or no impact from overshadowing. Screening proposed to mitigate overlooking of private gardens, no direct views of the houses.
- Minor impacts on amenity space to the north of the site and on existing student accommodation at The Village, depending on time of year.
- Wind micro climate assessment carried out – some localised impacts, planting proposed as a mitigation measure.
- Blocks are turned 90 degrees when adjacent to each other, common rooms are located at alternative ends to each other to avoid overlooking, separation distances are not at 22m as is standard.
- Considers the site as an urban centre and campus location, part of a city wide campus, with the proposed development essentially replacing the footprint of older industrial buildings.

**Planning Authority's comments:**

- Concerns re. height, proximity to residential amenity, overbearing and overshadowing, set down area and protected structure.
- Site is in a city centre location, not part of campus.
- Previously permitted application on site was granted against recommendation.

**6. Urban Design and public realm.****ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Explain building abutting existing Victoria Cross, Wilton Road.
- Public realm around the site, how does the building fit in?

**Prospective Applicant's response:**

- Proposed development will provide an active street edge improving the immediate area.
- Safety barrier proposed at service entrance, as per UCC safety policy. Will review footpath at this location.
- Will demonstrate Cork City Council's cycle lanes on road network drawings at application stage.
- Podium level – planting proposed along the edge, courtyard elements are dropped down in podium level to let natural light in.

**Planning Authority's comments:**

- Overall improvement in public realm by means of the proposed development, high quality finishes proposed.
- Improvement works have been carried out to adjacent pedestrian crossing.

**7. Any other matters.****ABP invited parties to raise any outstanding matters.****Prospective Applicant's comments:**

- Funding secured through EU Investment Bank, committed to building out proposed development as soon as possible, if permitted.

**Planning Authority's comments:**

- No outstanding matters.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:spatialplanning@water.ie)

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Rachel Kenny  
Director of Planning  
November, 2017