



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL06S.248994

Development	Modifications to permitted change of use of three storey building from leisure centre to residential.
Location	Liffey Valley Fitness, Coldcut Road, Dublin 22
Planning Authority	South Dublin County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	SD17A/0145
Applicant(s)	Cavvies Limited
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	To Refuse Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Cavvies Limited
Observer(s)	No Observers
Date of Site Inspection	8 th November 2017
Inspector	Erika Casey

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1. The proposed development site is located at Coldcut Road, Dublin 22 and has an area of 0.45ha. The site currently accommodates a vacant 3 storey leisure centre building known as Liffey Valley Fitness, 97 surface car parking spaces and ancillary lands. The site is located on the southern side of the R833 road, opposite the entrance to the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre. To the east, is the Dublin Bus Sports Club. To the west, is an area of open space and residential development. To the south, is greenfield undeveloped lands.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development comprises modifications to a previously permitted development on the site – Planning Authority Reference SD16A/0549. It is proposed to extend an existing mezzanine floor and amend the layout of each permitted floor to provide an increased number of residential units within the building.
- 2.2. The amended development provides for an overall increase of 21 units from that previously permitted. It is proposed to provide 48 no. units comprising 40 no. 2 bed apartments, 4 no. one bed apartments and 4 no. studios. The previously permitted development accommodated 27 units including 21 no. 2 bed units and 6 no. 1 bed units.
- 2.3. The development also proposes modifications to the elevations to provide balconies and terraces. Semi private open space in the order of 458 sq. metres is proposed. The development also includes a revised car parking layout to accommodate 52 surface spaces and ancillary facilities including a bicycle store of 37.2 sq. metres, bin store, boundary treatment and site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

To Refuse Permission for the following reasons:

1. *The proposed development, by reason of its poor quality design and configuration, would result in substandard accommodation and inadequate residential amenity for future occupants. In particular, having regard to:*

- *Inadequate floor to ceiling heights,*
- *The single aspect nature of all of the apartments,*
- *The inadequate daylight and sunlight to living areas,*
- *The poor internal layout,*
- *The substandard size and awkward configuration of some bedrooms,*
- *The inadequate private amenity space for some apartments,*
- *The proposed minimum size studio units in a suburban location,*

The proposed development would materially contravene the Housing policies and objectives as set out in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022, in particular policies H11 (Residential Design and Layout), H13 (Private and Semi Private Open Space) and H14 (Internal Residential Accommodation). The proposal would also fall significantly short of the quantitative and qualitative standards set out in Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2015) and Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007). As such, the proposal would not be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. *The proposed development of 48 residential units (12 on each floor) on a site of 0.4566 hectares would result in a residential density of 106 dwellings per hectare. Having regard to the substandard design and configuration of the proposed apartments, this density is considered to be excessive and would result in the overdevelopment of the site and building.*

3. *The proposed development would provide substandard living accommodation for future occupants of the building which would set an undesirable precedent for other similar development, which would in themselves and cumulatively be harmful to the residential amenities of the area and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

4. *Insufficient information has been submitted with regard to drainage issues. In particular, no report or drawings indicating calculations of surface water attenuation required or to be provided on site has been submitted for the proposed development. Furthermore, Irish Water state that the existing 150mm foul drain is too small and should be increased to 225mm as per Irish Water standards. Proposed drawings do not show the foul drain/sewer layout to the point of connection to the public sewer. The proposed development does not comply with Irish Water Standards.*

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Report (07.07.2017)

- The development would result in a density of 106 dph which is considered excessive having regard to the substandard design and configuration of the development. The development of 12 residential units on each floor over 4 floors is considered overdevelopment of the subject site.
- It is a specific policy requirement that the floor to ceiling height of the ground floor level shall be a minimum of 2.7 metres. The proposed development only achieves a 2.46 metre ground floor to ceiling height. This combined with the poor design of long galley kitchens with narrow recessed windows off terraces, would create dark ground floor apartments that would be substandard for future occupants.
- The proposed bedrooms in the 1 bedroom apartments do not comply with the minimum standards. In addition, the small L shaped design would create substandard accommodation.
- The Planning Authority accepted that the 50% dual aspect requirement was not met under the previous application on the basis that it was the refurbishment of an older building, that the floor area of the apartments exceeded minimum standards and that the units had a good open plan layout with large terraces. In contrast, the internal layout proposed provides seriously inadequate residential amenity for future occupants and this is not acceptable to the Planning Authority.

- The living spaces of the apartments will not receive adequate sunlight due to the proposed design of the long narrow galley kitchens and the location of the living areas on the internal side of the building i.e. off internal corridors.
- The design of the proposed 48 residential units combined with single aspect and minimum floor to ceiling heights would not represent sustainable development and would constitute substandard accommodation and would be unacceptable with regard to residential amenity.
- Some of the apartments do not comply with the relevant standards and the apartment floor area schedule submitted does not match the submitted floor plans.
- Studio units are not appropriate at this suburban location.
- Landscape plan has some weaknesses.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

Housing Department (30.06.2017): No objection subject to condition.

Environmental Services (Project C & D Waste Management Plan) (16.05.2017): No objection subject to conditions.

Roads Department (27.06.2017): No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Health (23.06.2017): No objection subject to conditions.

Water Services (19.06.2017): Recommends Further Information to show calculations for what surface water attenuation is required and what volume of surface water attenuation is provided for proposed development.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

Irish Water (21.06.2017): Further Information recommended with regard to the submission of a revised drawing indicating replacement of the existing 150mm foul drain to a new 225mm foul drain. The revised drawing should show the increased pipe size foul drain/sewer layout up to the point of connection to the public sewer.

3.4. Third Party Observations

- No observations.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1 There have been three previous applications pertaining to the site, of which the most recent SD16A/0249 is the most pertinent.

Planning Authority Reference SD16A/0249:

Change of use of the existing 3 storey building from leisure centre to residential and works to the building to provide 27 residential units comprising 24 no. 2 bed units and 3 studios; modifications to elevations incorporating fenestration alterations, new finishes and the provision of the balconies/terraces; an area of landscaped communal open space (c. 470 sq. metres) at ground floor level; 42 surface level car parking spaces, a bicycle store, bin store, new landscaping and boundary treatment and all associated site works. Vehicular access to the development will be via the 2 existing entrance/exit points onto Coldcut Road.

It is noted that in their consideration of this planning application, the Planning Authority considered the provision of studio units to be inappropriate at this suburban location. A condition was attached amalgamating the studios with the adjoining 2 bed apartments to create 1 bed apartments. The condition resulted in the provision of 6 no.1 bed apartments and 21 no. 2 bed apartments.

Planning Authority Reference S01A/0485:

Permission granted in April 2002 for the erection of a leisure facility to include 25 metre swimming pool, reception, changing rooms, gymnasium, recreational facilities, coffee shop and ancillary works.

Planning Authority Reference: SD03A/0184:

Retention Permission granted in October 2003 for alterations to approved leisure facility from 2 storey to 3 storey building to include alterations to elevations, additional floors, a 30 metre swimming pool, reception, changing rooms, gymnasium, recreational facilities, coffee shop and ancillary works.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1 The operative Development Plan is the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022. The site is zoned “OS: *To preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities*”. Residential development is open for consideration under this zoning objective. The following policies and objectives are of relevance:

Section 11.3.1: Sets out standards for residential development including mix of dwelling types, density, public open space, minimum standards, privacy, dual aspect, access cores etc.

Policy H7 Urban Design in Residential Development

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all new residential development within the County is of high quality design and complies with Government guidance on the design of sustainable residential development and residential streets including that prepared by the Minister under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Policy H8 Residential Densities

It is the policy of the Council to promote higher residential densities at appropriate locations and to ensure that the density of new residential development is appropriate to its location and surrounding context.

Policy H11 Residential Design and Layout

It is the policy of the Council to promote a high quality of design and layout in the new residential development and to ensure a high quality living environment for residents, in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units and the overall layout and appearance of the development.

Policy H12 Public Open Space

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all residential development is served by a clear hierarchy and network of high quality public open spaces that provides for active and passive recreation and enhances the visual character, identity and amenity of the area.

Policy H13 Private and Semi Private Open Space

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all dwellings have access to high quality private open space (incl. semi-private open space for duplex and apartment units) and that private open space is carefully integrated into the design of new residential developments.

Policy H14 Internal Residential Accommodation

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all new housing provides a high standard of accommodation that is flexible and adaptable, to meet the long term needs of a variety of households types and sizes.

5.2 National Guidance

5.2.1 Other relevant guidance is set out in:

Sustainable Urban Housing, Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2015: This sets out guidance regarding quantitative and qualitative standards for apartment development.

Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide 2008: Sets out urban design criteria to be considered in residential development.

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities: This notes that increased densities should be promoted within 500 metres walking distance of a bus stop, or within 1km of a light rail stop or a rail station. In general, minimum net densities of 50 dwellings per hectare, subject to appropriate design and amenity standards, should be applied within public transport corridors, with the highest densities being located at rail stations / bus stops, and decreasing with distance away from such nodes.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

- None applicable.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

- Initial investigations on site following receipt of permission under SD16A/0249 indicated that there is an existing mezzanine floor which could be extended to provide a further level of residential accommodation and increase the yield of units on the site. It is considered that the additional floor can be accommodated without any significant impact on the external appearance of the building.
- The Planning Authority's concerns regarding residential amenity are noted. The appeal submission is accompanied by revised architectural drawings which propose a number of amendments to the submitted plans to overcome the reasons for refusal by South Dublin County Council. The revised scheme omits the studio and 1 bed units and provides 8 no. 3 bed apartments and 32 no. 2 bed apartments.
- The revised 3 bed units will range in size from 124 sq. metres to 149 sq. metres. The 2 bed units will be between 85 and 89 sq. metres. The ground floor units will be served by generous terraced spaces, whilst the upper floors will have recessed balconies. All private open space is in accordance with the minimum standards, as is internal storage. The development will be served by a landscaped open space with an area of 458 sq. metres.
- The revised density of the scheme will be 88 dph. This is an increase from 60 dph permitted under SD16A/0249. It is considered that the density proposed makes efficient use of this brownfield land that is well served by public transport. The revised proposal provides for 10 apartments on each floor which is one more than that previously permitted. In the context of the current residential housing supply shortage, increased densities should be accommodated where appropriate design and residential amenity can be provided.
- Reference made to various guidance and policy documents which refer to the need to increase residential density. Notes that the provision of 40 units of much needed housing stock on a suitably located site close to Liffey Valley and

Dublin City Centre and well served by public transport and surrounding amenities is in accordance with such policy.

- With regard to the ground floor to ceiling height of 2.46, it is considered that this is not a significant departure from the 2.7 minimum standard. Reference made to section 5.8 of the Guidelines which states that it is not always possible to apply the relevant standards and planning authorities will need to weigh up compliance with new build intended standards in favour of the strong desirability from a planning perspective of securing effective usage of underutilised accommodation, including upper floors.
- It is stated that given the shortage of housing and accommodation, that consideration should be given to providing the additional units of housing, notwithstanding the reduced floor to ceiling height at ground floor. It notes that each unit is still afforded a good level of residential amenity, with the existing block set in an open landscaped setting. Additional windows have been added to the apartments with a south facing elevation to improve access to light. Furthermore, additional glazing has been added to the apartment terraces to allow further light into the living spaces, mitigating the reduced floor to ceiling height.
- With regard to deficiencies in the design of the one bed and studio apartments in the original proposal, it notes that these units have now been amalgamated into the two bed units to make additional 3 bed units with improved layout and internal amenity. The accommodation now meets the minimum standards set out in the Guidelines.
- It is noted in the appeal that guidance is set out regarding dual aspect apartments and that the guidelines state that these requirements may be relaxed where it is proposed to refurbish an older building in a constrained urban context. The principle of single aspect units was accepted under SD16A/0249 and whilst a larger number of single aspect units are now proposed, it is considered that the quality of the units and pleasant views ensure that the additional units are in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Additional windows have been provided to the southern elevation which allows a total of 8 apartments to be dual aspect. Aspect is not

the sole indicator of housing quality nor should it be used as a reason to prevent the successful refurbishment of this brownfield site to deliver quality infill housing.

- In terms of sunlight and daylight access, an assessment of daylight access to living rooms at ground and 3rd floor level is provided. The report concludes that the daylight factor to the combined living/kitchen area exceeds the minimum recommendations set out in the Guidelines.
- With regard to landscaping, the applicant is happy to accept a condition requiring the detail of the landscaping to be agreed prior to the commencement of development.
- Appeal documentation includes calculations that illustrate the attenuation volume provided for the scheme under the parent permission is adequate for the proposed change of use. The drainage drawings indicated that the foul sewer drain is 225mm in accordance with Irish Water standards.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

- The Planning Authority confirms its decision. The issues raised in the appeal have been covered in the planner's report.

6.3. **Observations**

- No observations received.

7.0 **Assessment**

7.1. The main issues in this appeal are those raised in the grounds of the appeal and it is considered that no other substantive issues arise. Appropriate Assessment also needs to be addressed. The issues can be dealt with under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Quality of Residential Design and Standard of Accommodation
- Drainage
- Appropriate Assessment

7.2 Principle of Development

- 7.2.1 The proposed development comprises amendments to a previously permitted residential development on the subject site. Under Planning Authority SD16A/0249 permission was granted by South Dublin County Council for a development comprising the change of use of the existing leisure centre to residential accommodation comprising 27 residential units including 21 no. 2 bed units and 6 no. 1 bed units. The principle of such a change of use has therefore been established under this parent permission.
- 7.2.2 The current application seeks to intensify the number of residential units within the development. It is noted in the application document that under a historic permission SD03A/0184, permission was approved for a mezzanine floor between ground and first floor. It is now proposed to extend the floor plate of this mezzanine level to create an additional floor within the building and provide for a further 12 units. It is also proposed to reconfigure the internal layout of the permitted development to accommodate additional units. The scheme permitted under SD16A/0249 proposed 9 residential units per floor. As originally submitted, the applicant proposed an additional 3 units on each floor, thus providing 48 units overall. As part of the appeal submission, it is proposed to reduce the number of apartments per floor to 10 units.
- 7.2.3 The applicants are now proposing a total of 40 residential units comprising 8 no. 3 bed apartments and 32 no. 2 bed apartments. The density of the revised scheme is 88 dwellings per hectare as opposed to 106 units per hectare as originally proposed. The Planning Authority's concerns regarding the excessive density of the scheme as submitted are noted. It was considered that the development would result in the overdevelopment of the site.
- 7.2.4 It is detailed by the applicant, that the density proposed is appropriate having regard to the strategic location of the site and its excellent public transport connections. The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas note that in general minimum net densities of 50 units per ha should be applied within public transport corridors. They also note however, that the first emphasis must be placed by planning authorities on the importance of qualitative standards in relation to design and layout in order to ensure that the highest quality of residential environment is achieved.

7.2.5 Having regard to the location of the site, located in very close proximity to Liffey Valley Shopping Centre and its accessibility by public transport, it is considered that a higher density of development is appropriate at this location. However, it is clear that this density must be counterbalanced by ensuring that the development has a high standard of design and that a high quality residential environment is achieved. It is necessary, therefore, to consider the development in this context.

7.3 **Quality of Residential Design and Standard of Accommodation**

7.3.1 The principal reasons for refusal by the Planning Authority relate to the standard of residential design and the inadequate residential amenity for future occupants. A number of concerns were raised in relation to the internal standard of accommodation and the failure to comply with the guidance set out in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2015.

7.3.2 To address the reasons for refusal, the applicant has submitted revised drawings with their appeal response. Amendments have been made to the floor plans to reduce the number of apartments per floor to 10 units. The 1 bed and studio units have been omitted. The revised plans are considered under each of the principal quantitative and qualitative criteria set out in the guidelines below.

Apartment Mix

7.3.3 The guidelines note that Planning Authorities may set out guidance on the mix of unit types and sizes that would be appropriate in a particular development area. The current County Development Plan 2016-2022 notes that the overall dwelling mix in residential schemes should provide for a balanced range of dwelling types and sizes to support a variety of household types. The development as currently proposed provides 32 no. 2 bed units and 8 no. 3 bed units. It is considered, having regard to the planning history of the site and the fact that it is a conversion of an existing building, that the proposed mix of units is appropriate in this instance.

Apartment Floor Area

7.3.4 It is a specific policy requirement that 2 bed units must have a minimum floor area of 73 sq. metres and 3 bed units an area of 90 sq. metres. The proposed 2 bed apartments range in size from 85 to 89 sq. metres and the 3 bed units range from

124 to 149 sq. metres. They, therefore, exceed the minimum floor area requirements.

Dual Aspect Ratios

- 7.3.5 The guidelines note that the amount of sunlight reaching an apartment significantly affects the amenity of the occupants. It is stated that, in urban areas, the minimum number of dual aspect apartments shall be 50%, but that in certain circumstances usually on inner urban sites, near city or town centres, including SDZ areas, where it is necessary to ensure good street frontage and subject to high quality design, this may be reduced to an absolute minimum of 33%.
- 7.3.6 The proposed development is significantly deficient in terms of dual aspect units. Just 8 of the units (20%) are dual aspect. It is noted that the previously permitted scheme also did not meet the standard for dual aspect units. The Planning Authority Planner's Report in respect of this application noted that it was not possible to achieve the standard as the development comprised the conversion of an existing building. It stated, however, in mitigation, that the proposed units exceeded the minimum space standards and that all units had access to a generously sized courtyard or balcony/terrace.
- 7.3.7 I would concur with the applicant that in certain instances it may be appropriate to relax standards such as dual aspect where it is proposed to convert an existing building. Such a relaxation, however, must be coupled with exemplar design and a high quality living environment for future residents. It is noted that the council considered a derogation on the standard previously on the basis that the apartments proposed were well in excess of the minimum size standards and that the floor to ceiling height, particularly at ground floor level was very generous. Under the current application, however, the applicant is seeking to intensify the overall number of units on each floor of the development. This has resulted in an overall reduction in the size of the individual apartments, which although exceeding the minimum size standards, is not as generous as that permitted under SD16A/0249.
- 7.3.8 I have concerns in particular regarding the narrow configuration of the living areas for the 2 bed units which taper to a width of just 2.6 metres and the consequent impacts on quality and amenity compared to the development previously approved. The Appendix to the Guidelines state that the minimum width of the living/dining room of

a 2 bedroom unit should be 3.6 metres, and the proposed development does not comply with this. The guidance also states that the minimum width of a 3 bed unit should be 3.8 metres and it is noted that the living rooms of one of the 3 bed units at 1st and 3rd floor is 3.65 metres and thus non-compliant.

7.3.9 It is also noted that in the revised scheme it is proposed to provide external balconies as opposed to recessed balconies and terraces as per the previously permitted scheme. Notwithstanding the results of the daylight analysis submitted, this configuration of private open space provision coupled with the narrow linear layout of the living areas will have impacts on the daylight access and levels of residential amenity experienced in these units. Having regard to the overall reduction in the proportion and size of the residential units, it is not considered that such a significant departure from the standards regarding dual aspect is warranted in this instance.

Floor to Ceiling Height

7.3.10 The guidelines note that floor to ceiling height affects the internal amenities of apartments in terms of sunlight/daylight, storage and ventilation. It stated that it is a specific planning policy requirement that ground level apartment floor to ceiling heights shall be a minimum of 2.7 metres. It is detailed that these are absolute minimum requirements.

7.3.11 The guidelines go on to state that when combined with aspect, floor to ceiling height can significantly affect the amenities of the individual apartment units. It is stated that where an apartment block includes less than 50% dual aspect units, it is a specific policy requirement that the floor to ceiling height of each floor shall be a minimum of 2.7 metres generally and 3.0 metres at ground floor.

7.3.12 The proposed development, due to the extension of the mezzanine floor, provides for a significantly reduced floor to ceiling height at ground floor level of 2.46 metres. The floor to ceiling height on the remaining floors is 2.48, 3 and 2.7 metres respectively. It is considered that the proposed floor to ceiling heights at ground and first floor level are deficient and in clear breach of the policy guidance. Given the low level of dual aspect units proposed in the development, the issue of floor to ceiling height is particularly pertinent. The guidance notes that where there is less than 50% dual aspect units, that the floor to ceiling height at ground floor level should be

a minimum of 3 metres. The proposed floor to ceiling height of 2.46 is clearly deficient in this regard. The guidance also notes that on other floors it should generally be 2.7 metres, and this is not achieved at first floor level.

7.3.13 The applicants make reference to section 5.8 of the Guidelines which notes that the guidelines are intended to apply to new development and that while it is an objective to achieve these standards in refurbishment schemes, this will not always be possible, particularly in relation to historic buildings, some urban townscapes and over the shop type conversion projects. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed development relates to the conversion of an existing building, it is not considered that there are any particular impediments to providing a floor to ceiling height of 3 metres at ground floor level. It is evident that this can be achieved in the subject building, as a floor to ceiling height of 4 metres at ground floor level and 3 metres at first floor was proposed under application reference SD16A/0249. There are, therefore, no structural or other reasons as to why the required standards cannot be met.

7.3.14 It is acknowledged that flexibility can be applied to certain elements of the guidance in response to an acceptable design solution. However, in this instance the low floor to ceiling heights at ground and first floor level combined with the high level of single aspect units and narrow configuration of the proposed living areas of the 2 bed units within the development is not acceptable. It is considered likely that this will give rise to a poor level of residential amenity and result in substandard accommodation. Whilst the development will result in an intensification of the number of units in a well located site, this is not considered sufficient rationale to permit such a significant departure from the required minimum standards.

Lift and stair cores

7.3.15 The guidance states that subject to compliance with the dual aspect ratios, it is a specific policy requirement that up to 8 apartments per floor per individual stair/lift core may be provided in apartment schemes. The permitted scheme provided 9 units per floor to be served by 2 cores. Under the current application, it is proposed to increase the number of apartments per floor to 10 units. This is compliant with the relevant standard.

Internal Storage

7.3.16 The development is compliant with the storage standards of 6 sq. metres for a 2 bed unit and 9 sq. metres for a 3 bed unit.

Private Amenity Space

7.3.17 The development is compliant with the private open space standards of 7 sq. metres for 2 bed units and 9 sq. metres for 3 bed units.

Public Open Space

7.3.18 The development provides for an open space area of 458 sq. metres to the west of the site. A basic landscape plan is proposed. It is noted that notwithstanding the proposed increase in residential units, there has been a minor reduction in the level of public open space provided (470 sq. metres permitted under SD16A/0249). It is considered, however, to be adequate. No specific facilities for children's play have been provided.

Car Parking and Ancillary Facilities

7.3.19 50 car parking spaces are proposed to serve the 40 no. units which is considered adequate. Bicycle parking and a bin store are also provided.

Conclusion

7.3.20 In conclusion, the proposed development seeks to intensify the number of permitted units on the site. Whilst the principle of increased density is acceptable at this location, this must be coupled with exemplar design and a very high standard of accommodation. Notwithstanding the revised drawings submitted with the appeal documents, I am not satisfied that the development will achieve a satisfactory standard of design. It is considered that the development by reasons of the deficient floor to ceiling heights, high percentage of single aspect units and poor configuration and layout of the residential units, particularly the living rooms of the 2 bed units, would be contrary to the guidance and provide a poor level of residential amenity to future occupants.

7.4 Drainage

7.4.1 The applicant has submitted information regarding the drainage proposals for the site. It is noted that similar issues were raised in the Planner's Report with respect to the previous application on the site. Notwithstanding the deficiencies in information, it

was considered that these matters could be dealt with by way of condition. It is considered that having regard to the information submitted with the appeal, that this is a matter that could be addressed by condition, should the Board be minded to grant permission for the development.

7.5 Appropriate Assessment

7.5.1 Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development comprising amendments to a previously permitted development on serviced land within an established urban area, and the distance to the nearest European site, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

8.0 Recommendation

8.1. It is recommended that permission be refused permission for the reasons set out below.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. The proposed development by reason of its design and layout would result in substandard accommodation and inadequate residential amenity for future residents. In particular, having regard to:
 - the inadequate floor to ceiling heights at ground and first floor level;
 - the high percentage of single aspect units and
 - the poor internal layout and, in particular, the substandard widths of the living rooms serving the 2 bed units;

it is considered that the proposed development would be contrary to the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2015. The proposed development would thereby constitute a substandard form of development which would seriously

injure the amenities of the area and be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Erika Casey
Senior Planning Inspector

9th November 2017