

13 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

13	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.....	1
13.1	Introduction.....	2
13.2	Study Methodology	2
13.3	The Existing Receiving Environment (Baseline)	9
13.4	Characteristics of the Proposed Development	26
13.5	Potential Impact of the Proposed Development – Visual Effects.....	32
13.6	Potential Impact of the Proposed Development – Landscape Effects.....	64
13.7	Potential Cumulative Impacts	67
13.8	Do Nothing Scenario	68
13.9	Mitigation Measures	69
13.10	Residual Impacts	70
13.11	Monitoring.....	70
13.12	Reinstatement	70
13.13	Interactions.....	70
13.14	Difficulties Encountered	71
13.15	References	72

13.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on the landscape character and visual amenity in the receiving environment. It should be read in conjunction with the verified photomontages contained in Appendix 13.1 of the EIAR.

13.1.1 Quality Assurance and Competency of Experts

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) chapter was prepared by Richard Butler of Model Works Ltd. Richard has degrees in Landscape Architecture and Town Planning, is a member of the Irish Landscape Institute and the Irish Planning Institute, and has over 25 years' experience in development and environmental planning, specialising in LVIA. In the last number of years, Richard has prepared LVIA (in the form of EIAR chapters or stand-alone reports) for the following projects among others:

- Newtown Park SHD, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock;
- Project Montrose (former RTÉ lands) LRD, Donnybrook, Dublin;
- Pembroke Quarter (Irish Glass Bottle and Fabrizia sites) Phases 1, 1B, 2, A, Poolbeg West Strategic Development Zone, Dublin;
- St Vincent's Hospital and Residential Development, Fairview, Dublin;
- Guinness Quarter, James's Street, the Liberties, Dublin;
- Independent House LRD, Abbey Street, Dublin;
- Rotunda Hospital Critical Care Wing, Parnell Square, Dublin;
- Sandford Road LRD, Dublin;
- Parkside 4, 5B and 6 SHDs, Clongriffin-Belmayne;
- O'Devaney Gardens SHD, Dublin;
- Dublin Arch (Connolly Quarter).

13.2 Study Methodology

The assessment was carried out with reference to:

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd edition, 2013 (GLVIA), published by the Landscape Institute;
- *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, 2022, published by the EPA;
- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, 2018, published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The EPA guidelines provide a general methodology and impact ratings for all environmental topics covered in an EIAR; the GLVIA provides specific guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment. Therefore, a combination of the EPA guidelines and the GLVIA has informed the methodology for this assessment.

The GLVIA requires that effects on views and visual amenity be assessed separately from the effects on landscape, although the two topics are inherently linked.

- 'Landscape' results from the interplay between the physical, natural and cultural components of our environment. Different combinations and spatial distribution of these elements create variations in landscape character. Landscape impact assessment identifies the changes to this character which would result from the proposed development and assesses the significance of those effects on the landscape as a resource.

- Visual impact assessment is concerned with changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity - with particular focus on public views and public visual amenity.

13.2.1 Methodology for Assessment of Landscape Effects

Assessment of potential landscape effects involves (a) classifying the sensitivity of the landscape resource, (b) classifying the magnitude of landscape change which would result from the development, and (c) combining these factors to arrive at a classification of significance of the effects.

Landscape Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the landscape is a function of its land use, patterns and scale, visual enclosure and the distribution of visual receptors, and the value placed on the landscape. The nature and scale of the proposed development is also taken into account, as are any trends of change, and relevant policy. Five categories are used to classify sensitivity¹ (Table 13.1).

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the landscape exhibits very strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. The landscape character is such that its capacity to accommodate change is very low. These attributes are recognised in policy or designations as being of national or international value and the principal management objective for the area is protection of the existing character from change.
High	Areas where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics. The character is such that it has limited/low capacity to accommodate change. These attributes are recognised in policy or designations as being of national, regional or county value and the principal management objective for the area is conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong, or has evidence of alteration, degradation or erosion of elements and characteristics. The landscape character is such that

¹ Note on definitions used in this assessment

The definitions of the classifications in Table 13.1 (townscape sensitivity), 13.2 (magnitude of townscape change), 13.5 (viewpoint sensitivity) and 13.6 (magnitude of visual change) are not taken from either the GLVIA or the EPA Guidelines 2022. Both of these guidance documents require that classifications of sensitivity and magnitude of change (such as high, medium, low, etc.) be used in the assessment process (see EPA Guidelines 2022 Figure 3.4 and GLVIA Box 3.1, Paragraph 3.26 and Figure 3.5) but neither guidance document provides definitions for such classifications.

The GLVIA specifically avoids being prescriptive in this regard (GLVIA paragraph 1.20): *"The guidance concentrates on principles... It is not intended to be prescriptive, in that it does not provide a detailed 'recipe' that can be followed in every situation. It is always the primary responsibility of any landscape professional carrying out an assessment to ensure that the approach and methodology adopted are appropriate to the particular circumstances."* (emphasis added)

The EPA Guidelines 2022 states (Section 3, p.49): *"While guidelines and standards help ensure consistency, the professional judgement of competent experts plays a role in the determination of significance. These experts may place different emphases on the factors involved. As this can lead to differences of opinion, the EIAR sets out the basis of these judgements so that the varying degrees of significance attributed to different factors can be understood."* (emphasis added)

The GLVIA and EPA Guidelines 2022 thus require that the factors used in arriving at significance conclusions (i.e. classifications/definitions of sensitivity and magnitude) should be explained in the EIAR, but the guidelines do not provide the explanations themselves. It is for this reason that the definitions in Tables 13.1, 13.2, 13.5 and 13.6 are provided. These definitions have been developed and refined by LVIA practitioners in Ireland and the UK, including the chapter author, over decades of practice. They are not standard, i.e. the classifications/definitions used in this assessment may differ from those used by other practitioners. However, the author considers these definitions to be reasonable and appropriate for the purpose of classifying the significance of landscape/townscape and visual effects. The same definitions have been used in many previous LVIA reports/chapters prepared by the author and accepted by the planning authorities.

	there is some capacity for change. These areas may be recognised in policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.
Low	Areas where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character is such that it has capacity for change; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy and the principal management objective may be to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration or enhancement.
Negligible	Areas where the landscape exhibits negative character, with no valued elements, features or characteristics. The character is such that its capacity to accommodate change is high; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes include derelict industrial lands, as well as sites or areas that are designated for a particular type of development. The principal management objective for the area is to facilitate change in the landscape through development, repair or restoration.

Table 13-1 Categories of Landscape Sensitivity

Magnitude of Landscape Change

Magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape by a development, with reference to its key elements, features, characteristics and any affected surrounding character areas (collectively known as 'landscape receptors'). Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change (Table 13.2 – please refer to footnote number 1 above regarding the definitions used in this assessment).

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Change that is large in extent, resulting in the loss of or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of large elements considered totally uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in fundamental change in the character of the landscape.
High	Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Medium	Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Low	Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape.
Negligible	Change that is limited in scale, resulting in no alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic of the context. Such development results in no change to the landscape character.

Table 13-2 Categories of Landscape Change

Significance of Effects

To classify the significance of effects the magnitude of change is measured against the sensitivity of the landscape using the guide in Table 13.3 below. This matrix is derived from the guidance provided in Figure 3.5 (p.53) of the EPA *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, 2017. The matrix is only a guide. The assessor also uses professional judgement informed by their expertise, experience and common sense to arrive at a classification of significance that is reasonable and justifiable.

	Sensitivity of the Landscape/View
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		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Landscape/Visual Change	Very High	Profound	Profound to Very Significant	Very Significant to Significant	Moderate	Slight
	High	Profound to Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate to Slight	Slight to Not Significant
	Medium	Very Significant to Significant	Significant	Moderate	Slight	Not Significant
	Low	Moderate	Moderate to Slight	Slight	Not significant	Imperceptible
	Negligible	Slight	Slight to Not Significant	Not significant	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

Table 13-3 Guide to Classification of Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

This matrix is derived from the EPA Guidelines 2022 (Figure 3.4 of the Guidelines – see below).

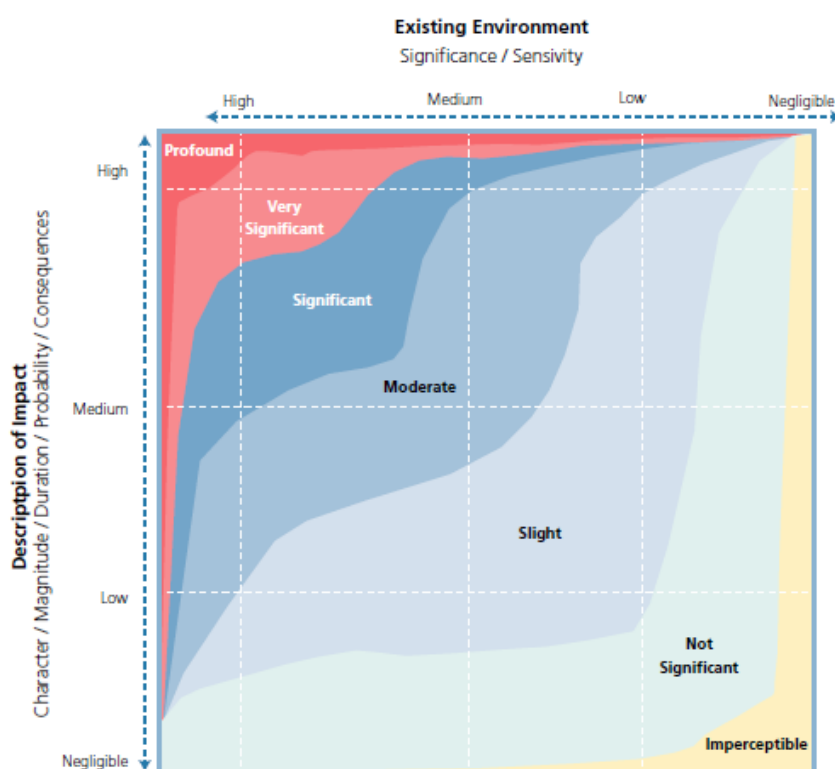


Figure 13.1 – ‘Chart showing typical classifications of the significance of impacts’ (Source: Figure 3.4 of the EPA Guidelines 2022)

The matrix (Table 13.3) and the EPA’s chart (Figure 13.1) are only a guide to the classification of impact significance. The assessor also uses professional judgement informed by their expertise, experience and common sense to arrive at a classification of significance that is reasonable and justifiable. In the EPA Guidelines 2022 the chart above is accompanied by a footnote that states: “The depiction of significance classifications *is indicative* and should not be relied on as being definitive. It is provided for general guidance purposes” (EPA Guidelines 2022, Section 3, page 53).

Having classified the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change (using the definitions in Tables 13.1, 13.2, 13.5 and 13.6), the matrix and chart above are thus used as a starting point for impact significance classification – using the assessor’s judgement to arrive at a classification that is reasonable and sensible. For example, according to the EPA chart a change of high magnitude

affecting a receptor of medium sensitivity may be classified as either 'significant' or 'moderate'. That judgement is made by the assessor.

The impact significance classifications are taken from the EPA Guidelines 2022, which defines the classifications as follows (Table 13.4):

Significance	Description
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
Not significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
Slight	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Very Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

Table 13-4 Impact Significance Classifications (Source: Table 3.4 of the EPA Guidelines 2022)

13.2.2 Methodology for Assessment of Visual Effects

Assessment of visual effects involves identifying a number of key/representative viewpoints in the receiving environment, and for each of these: (a) classifying the viewpoint sensitivity, (b) classifying the magnitude of change which would result in the view (informed by verified photomontages), and (c) combining these factors to arrive at a classification of significance of the effects on the view.

Sensitivity of the Viewpoint/Visual Receptor

Viewpoint sensitivity (see categories in Table 13.5 - please refer to the footnote number 1 above regarding the definitions used in this assessment) is a function of two main considerations:

- Susceptibility of the visual receptor to change. This depends on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention is focussed on the views or visual amenity they experience at that location. Visual receptors most susceptible to change include residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation focused on the landscape (e.g. trail users), and visitors to heritage attractions and places of congregation where the setting contributes to the experience. Visual receptors less sensitive to change include travellers on road, rail and other transport routes (unless on recognised scenic routes), people engaged in outdoor recreation where the surrounding landscape does not influence the experience, and people in their place of work or shopping.
- Value attached to the view. This depends to a large extent on the subjective opinion of the visual receptor but also on factors such as policy and designations (e.g. scenic routes, protected views), or the view or setting being associated with a heritage asset, visitor attraction or having some other cultural status (e.g. by appearing in arts).

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Iconic viewpoints (views towards or from a landscape feature or area) that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of national value. The composition, character and quality of the view are such that its capacity for change is very low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change.

High	Viewpoints that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (e.g. views from houses or outdoor recreation amenities focused on the landscape). The composition, character and quality of the view may be such that its capacity to accommodate change may or may not be low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change that reduces visual amenity.
Medium	Views that may not have features or characteristics that are of particular value, but have no major detracting elements, and which thus provide some visual amenity. These views may have capacity for appropriate change and the principal management objective is to facilitate change to the composition that does not detract from visual amenity, or which enhances it.
Low	Views that have no valued feature or characteristic, and where the composition and character are such that there is capacity for change. This category also includes views experienced by people involved in activities with no particular focus on the landscape. For such views the principal management objective is to facilitate change that does not detract from visual amenity or enhances it.
Negligible	Views that have no valued feature or characteristic, or in which the composition may be unsightly (e.g. in derelict landscapes). For such views the principal management objective is to facilitate change that repairs, restores or enhances visual amenity.

Table 13-5 Categories of Viewpoint Sensitivity

Magnitude of Change to the View

Classification of the magnitude of change takes into account the size or scale of the intrusion of development into the view (relative to the other elements and features in the composition, i.e. its relative visual dominance), the degree to which it contrasts or integrates with the other elements and the general character of the view, and the way in which the change will be experienced (e.g. in full view, partial or peripheral view, or in glimpses). Five categories are used to classify magnitude of visual change to a view (Table 13.6 - please refer to footnote number 1 above regarding the definitions used in this assessment):

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features or characteristics, or introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes dominant in the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity.
High	Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.
Medium	Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.
Low	Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.
Negligible	Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

Table 13-6 Categories of Magnitude of Visual Change

Significance of Visual Effects

As for landscape effects, to classify the significance of visual effects the magnitude of change to the view is measured against the sensitivity of the viewpoint using the guide in Table 14.3 above.

13.2.3 Quality of Effects

In addition to predicting the significance of the effects, EIA requires that the quality of the effects be classified as positive, neutral, or negative.

For landscape to a degree, but particularly for visual effects, this is an inherently subjective exercise. This is because landscape and visual amenity are *perceived* by people and are therefore subject to variations in the attitude and values - including aesthetic preferences - of the receptor. One person's attitude to a development may differ from another person's, and thus their response to the effects of a development on a landscape or view may vary.

Additionally, in certain situations there might be policy encouraging a particular development in an area, in which case the policy is effectively prescribing landscape and visual change. If a development achieves the objective of the policy the resulting effect might be considered positive, even if the landscape character or views are profoundly changed. The classification of quality of landscape and visual effects should seek to take these variables into account and provide a reasonable and robust assessment.

13.2.4 Photomontage Methodology

The photomontages were produced by Model Works Ltd. The photomontage methodology is based on the Landscape Institute advice note 01/11 Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and 25 years' experience in photomontage production. The method has five main steps:

- Photography
- Survey
- 3D Modelling and Camera Matching
- Rendering and Finishing of Photomontages
- Presentation

Photography

- Date, Time and Conditions: The photography is timed so that the scene conditions, weather conditions and sun position allow - as far as possible - for a clear and representative baseline photograph to be captured. The objective is to ensure that all key elements of the view are clearly visible and unobscured by, for example, vehicular or pedestrian traffic in the foreground, precipitation, darkness/shade, sun glare, etc. The date and time of each photograph are recorded so that the sun position can be accurately portrayed in the 3D model montaged into the baseline photograph.
- Camera and Camera Set-up: The photographs are taken using a Canon EOS5D Mark II camera with a 21 mega pixel sensor and image resolution of 5616 x 3744 pixels. At each viewpoint the camera is positioned on a tripod with the lens 1.65m above ground level (the level of the average adult's eyes), directed at the site and levelled in the horizontal and vertical axes.
- Lenses: Prime lenses (fixed focal length with no zoom function) are used as this ensures that the image parameters for every photograph are the same and that all photographs taken with the same lens are comparable. For the close-up to middle distant views a 24mm prime lens is normally used. This lens captures a field of view of 73 degrees. This field of view is preferred for the purpose of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as it shows more of the context landscape surrounding a site. For distant viewpoints a 50mm prime lens may be used, capturing a 39 degree horizontal field of view.

Survey

The coordinates of each viewpoint/camera position, including the elevation, are recorded using a survey grade GPS receiver, the Trimble Geo7X, which is accurate to within 1cm. For each viewpoint,

the coordinates of several static objects in the view are also surveyed (e.g. lamp posts, bollards, corners of buildings, etc.). The coordinates of these 'markers' are used as reference points later in the process, to ensure that the direction of view of the cameras in the 3D model matches the direction of view of the photographs.

3D Model and Camera Matching

- **Creation of 3D Model:** An Autodesk Revit model of the proposed development was supplied by the architect for the production of the photomontages. Model Works exported the Revit model into the software package Autodesk 3DS Max, in which materials were applied to the model's buildings and surfaces. Model Works built a 3D model of the proposed public realm/landscape based on AutoCAD drawings provided by the landscape architect.
- **3D Camera Positions:** The surveyed camera positions and the markers for each view are inserted into the 3D model, with information on the focal length of the lens attributed to each camera. For each camera/view, the date and time is set to match those of the original photograph. This ensures that the direction of sunlight and shadows in the 3D model match those of the photographs.
- **Camera Matching:** The photographs are then inserted as backdrops to the views of each camera in the 3D model. The direction of view of the cameras in the 3D model are matched with the direction of view of the photographs using the surveyed markers. This ensures that the camera positions, the direction of the views and the focal length of the cameras in the 3D model are accurate, so that the proposed development appears in the correct position and scale when montaged into the photographs.

Rendering of 3D Model and Finishing of Photomontages

For each view a render of the development is generated. This is the process of creating a photo-realistic image of the 3D model, as seen from each camera position, with sunlight and shadow (i.e. sun position) applied to the model, matching the date and time the baseline photograph was taken. The render of the development is then montaged into the photograph to create the verified photomontage.

Presentation and Viewing

The individual photomontages are presented on A3 pages in landscape format in Appendix 13.1. For each photomontage, the viewpoint number, location description, and the date and time of photography are provided on the page.

13.3 The Existing Receiving Environment (Baseline)

13.3.1 The Site

The site is a disused institutional property zoned for residential use (apart from a small part zoned for open space), located at the edge of Blackrock town centre and fronting the N31/Temple Road. The site has some 230m frontage to the N31 as it enters Blackrock from the east (see Figure 13.1).



Figure 13.1 – The site frontage to the N31 approaching Blackrock town centre

The site was historically the demesne of Craigmole House (see Figure 13.2), a Victorian mansion built in 1862. The house and gate lodge remain on the site. In 1935 the property was acquired by the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul and renamed St Teresa's, and for the remainder of the 20th century it was used as a school, monastery, and retreat centre. The buildings constructed for those purposes have now been demolished in preparation for the site's redevelopment, leaving only the original house and gate lodge intact (although the house is in poor condition – see Figure 13.4).

The property also retains parts of its historic demesne woodland, most notably inside its south east and south west boundaries (see Figure 13.3).

Parts of the original demesne are now excluded from the site, including the former walled garden, in which the National Office of the Alzheimer Society was built in 2009 (see Figures 13.3, 13.4).

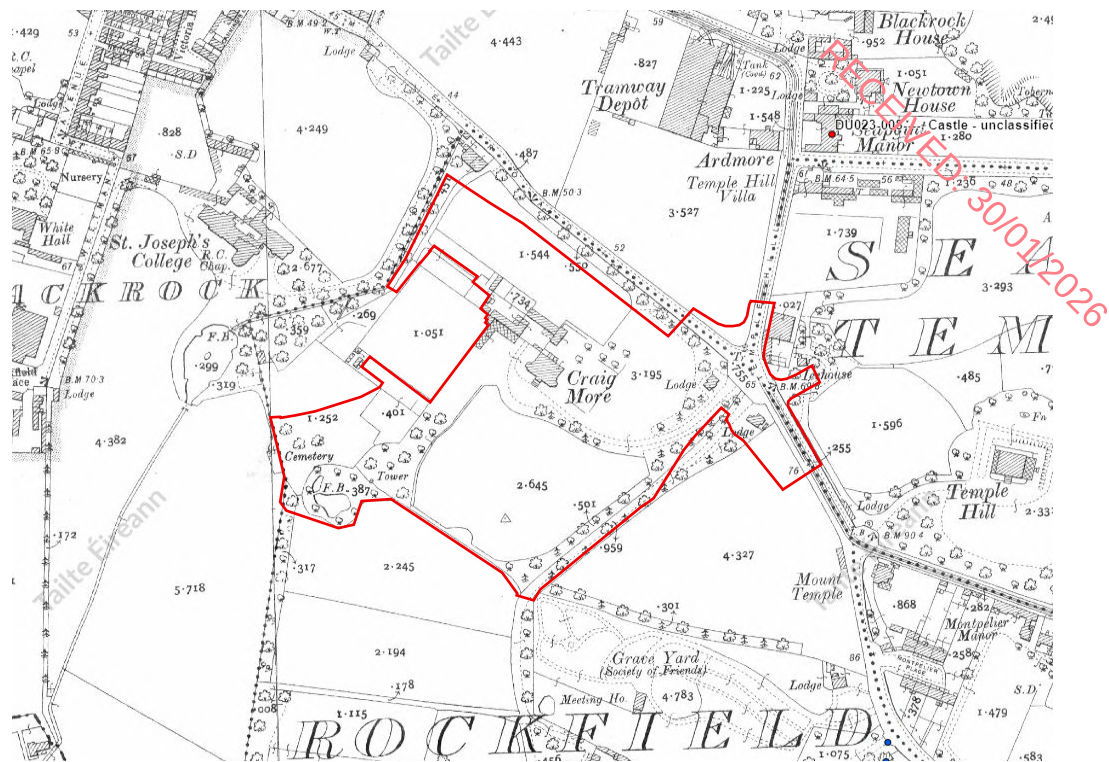


Figure 13.2 – Ordnance Survey 25 inch map (early 20th century)



Figure 13.3 – The site and immediate environs



Figure 13.4 – A view of Craigmore House from the access road to the neighbouring Alzheimer Society office



Figure 13.5 – A view of along the N31 approaching the site from the west, with Craigmore House visible between the trees

Due to the sparsity of built form on the site (other than the centrally positioned Craigmore House and the gate lodge), it is the site's vegetation that is most prominent in the landscape, and contributes most to the landscape character of the area. Along the N31 frontage, a line of trees protrudes above the tall stone boundary wall at the roadside (see Figures 13.1, 13.5). These trees were mostly planted after the construction of the N31 Blackrock Bypass in the late 1980s.

Some of the trees in the north east corner of the site, around the gate lodge (Figure 13.6), are however remnants of the original demesne vegetation.



Figure 13.6 – The gate lodge and Craigmores demesne trees in the north east corner of the site

Immediately to the south of the site is Rockfield Park, a large public open space with playing pitches and a tennis club. The historic Craigmores demesne woodland/trees on the site are a key element of the landscape and views of Rockfield Park, providing enclosure and visual amenity (Figure 13.7).



Figure 13.7 – A view towards the site from Rockfield Park to the south

The trees inside the south and east boundaries of the site are also key features of the landscape and views of the neighbouring residential estates to the east and west. They form a backdrop to views from both St Vincent's Park to the east (see Figure 13.8), and St Louise's Park to the west of the site (Figure 13.9).



Figure 13.8 – A view from St Vincent's Park to the east of the site



Figure 13.9 – A view from St Louise's Park to the west of the site

13.3.2 Site Location

The site is located at the eastern edge of Blackrock town centre, which is classified a 'district centre' in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 (DRLDP – see Figure 13.10). The site is walking distance (less than 500m) from Blackrock Main Street and the core shopping area (including Blackrock and Frascati shopping Centres), and 700m from Blackrock DART station.

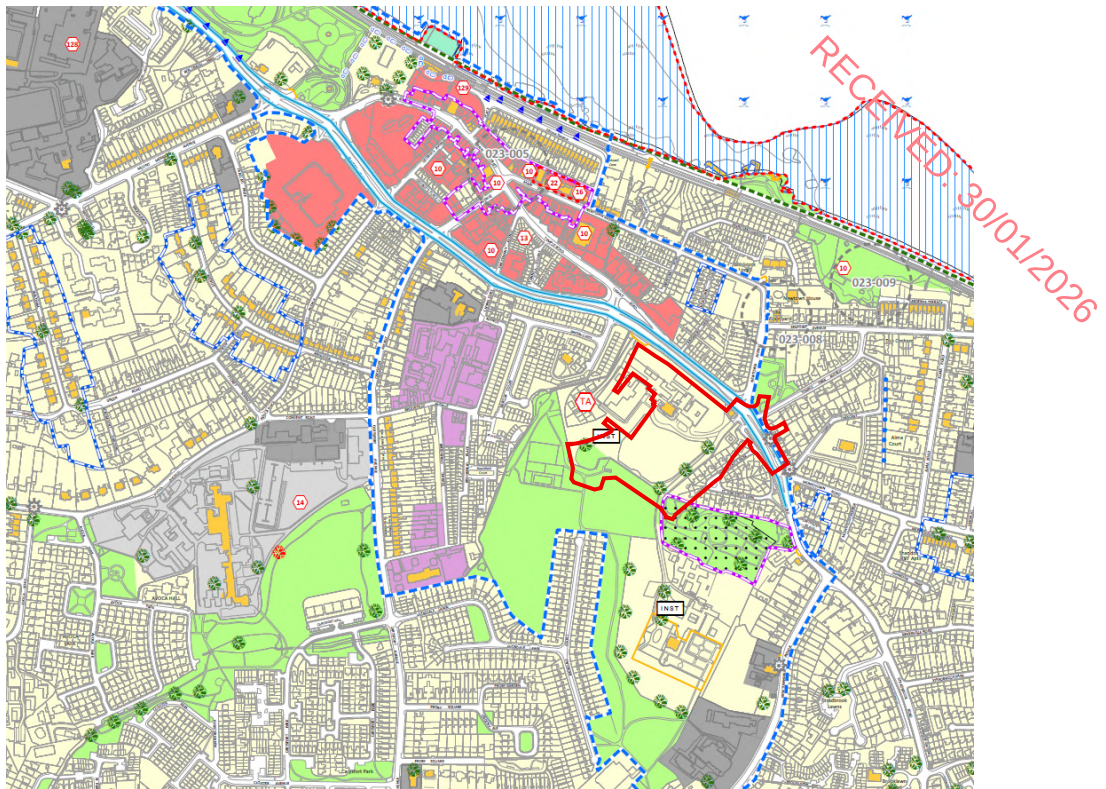


Figure 13.10 – Site location on Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 land use zoning map



Figure 13.11 – Site location on aerial photograph of Blackrock - with 'DC' (mixed use district centre) and 'E' (economic development and employment) zonings highlighted

The site has frontage to the N31/Temple Road, a major urban thoroughfare, at the road's entrance to Blackrock town centre. Its frontage to the road is one of the site's key attributes. The road provides direct access (vehicular, pedestrian and cycle) to Blackrock, as well as access to a Core Bus Corridor connecting the site to Dublin City Centre.

The N31's motorway-like specification (25m wide, with two lanes in each direction and central median with trees – see Figures 13.1 and 13.5 above), in combination with the town centre location, creates potential for development of urban character and scale on the site. The wide road provides favourable context for taller buildings, while the accessible location encourages high density use.

13.3.3 Surrounding Landscape Context and Potential Receptors of Change

The key landscape elements and areas surrounding the site, which may be affected by the proposed development, are as follows (see Figure 13.13 overleaf):

- Craigmore/St Teresa's House and grounds. Although zoned for residential development, the original house, the gate lodge and entrance gate are protected structures, and the remaining demesne trees/woodlands are a valuable landscape resource.
- N31/Temple Road. The N31 is a key element of the urban structure. The site's frontage to this major road is one of its most important attributes, as the road (a) gives prominence to the adjacent lands and buildings, and (b) has an urbanising effect due to its width and specification. There are wide junctions outside both the north west and north east corners of the site, and the landscape is dominated by the road infrastructure. Where it passes the site, the road's status as a thoroughfare entering an urban district centre is not reflected in the adjacent built form - due to the absence of development on the site and the small scale of the houses across the road (see Figures 13.1, 13.5). In contrast, to the west, as it enters Blackrock, the road is fronted by a mix of residential and commercial buildings, including buildings of contemporary urban scale and architecture (Figure 13.12). Development on the site has the potential to change the character of an important stretch of Temple Road, and the road users are the largest cohort of potential visual receptors.



Figure 13.12 – The contemporary urban character of the N31 road corridor 500m to the west of the site



Figure 13.13 – The key landscape elements and areas surrounding the proposed development.

- Temple Road and Craigmore Gardens houses. Across Temple Road from the site is a row of 14 no. houses, which face the site across the wide road corridor. Craigmore Gardens is a short cul-sac off Temple Road, also lined by 20th century houses. As residential receptors, these houses are relatively sensitive, although there must be some tolerance for change in their context due to the urban location (fronting a key thoroughfare and five minute's walk from Main Street and Blackrock DART station). The houses also benefit from the maturing trees in the central median of Temple Road.
- St Vincent's Park. To the south east of the site is the residential estate of St Vincent's Park. The estate is comprised of semi-detached dormer houses with low profiles. Some of the houses back onto the site's south east boundary. A row of tall trees on the site inside this boundary are a key feature of views from the estate (see Figure 13.8 above). The trees also provide potential screening of development on the site.
- Alzheimer Society and St Louise's Park. The Alzheimer Society headquarters (see Figure 13.4) was built in the former walled garden of Craigmore House/St Teresa's. The subject site wraps around the neighbouring institutional property on its north, east and south sides. Adjacent to the Alzheimer Society is a small residential enclave, St Louise's Park (a former institutional property), which is similarly exposed to the site (see Figure 13.9).
- Barclay Court and Prospect Hill. To the west of the Alzheimer Society and St Louise's Park is a residential neighbourhood comprised of two estates, Barclay Court and Prospect Hill. Barclay Court is a 20th century estate of semi-detached two storey houses. Prospect Hill is a recent development of townhouses alongside the refurbished and repurposed Prospect House, a period house which has been divided into apartments. This neighbourhood is buffered from the proposed development by St Louise's Park and the Alzheimer Society, but there are views towards the site over the roofs and trees of the intervening landscape (Figure 13.14).



Figure 13.14 – A view towards the site from Prospect Hill, with the repurposed Prospect House to the left

- Rockfield Park and Quaker Cemetery. Rockfield Park is a large public open space directly to the south of the site. The park includes playing fields and parkland areas with a framework of trees/woodland (see Figure 13.7), some of which remains from the original Rockfield demesne. Like Temple Road on the other side of the site, Rockfield Park provides favourable context for building height/density. The open space provides 'breathing space' and vegetation screening for large buildings, as well as amenity for the future residents. To the east of the park, and south east of the site, is the Quaker

Cemetery. This is a park-like cemetery enclosed by a dense framework of woodland, which restricts visibility of the surrounding landscape (see Figure 13.15).



Figure 13.15 – A view towards the site from the Quaker Cemetery to the south east

The above are the areas potentially most affected by the proposed development due to their proximity to the site.

13.3.4 Recognised Site Development Potential

The site has been recognised for its residential land use potential for some time. The Blackrock Local Area Plan 2015-2021 (the BLAP, which was extended to March 2025 – now expired), identified the site (St Teresa's/ Craigmores) as a Potential Development Area.

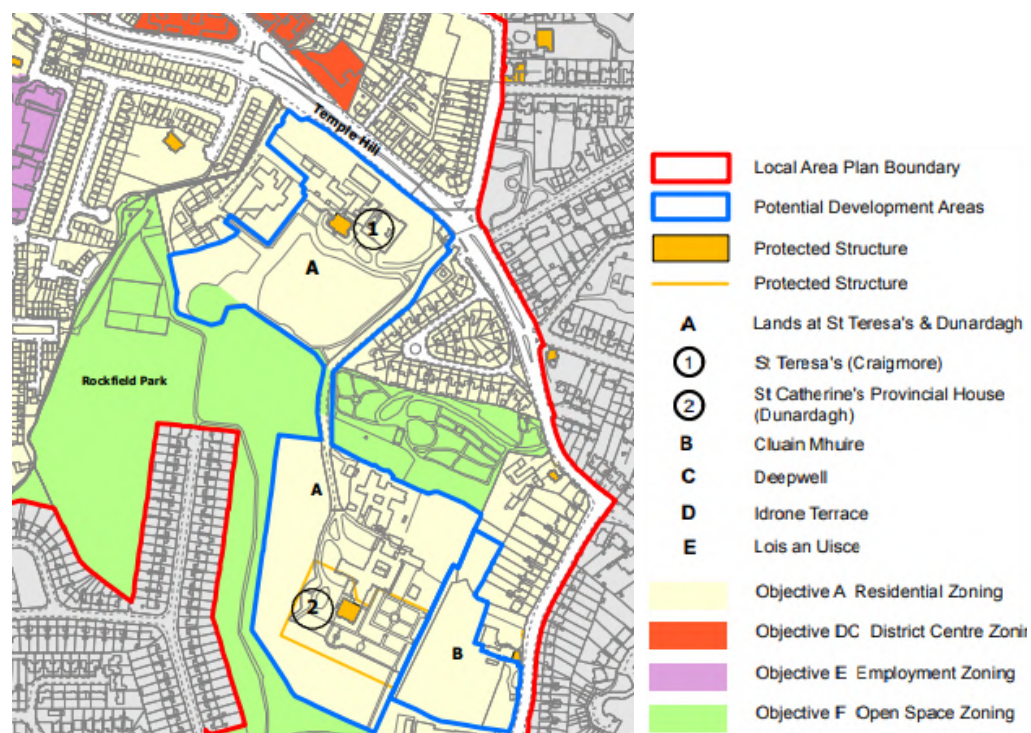


Figure 13.16 – Blackrock Local Area Plan 2015-2021 (extended to March 2025; now expired) map 5

Regarding the combined area of St Teresa's (the subject site) and Dunardagh (to the south of Rockfield Park), the BLAP stated:

"The site is considered to have substantial development potential having regard to its zoning, site size, proximity to Blackrock village core, public transport links and recreational facilities. The site presents an opportunity to consolidate and enhance the local built environment within the Plan boundary while providing additional housing within this attractive and desirable locality." (BLAP p. 28)

Regarding the site specifically (St Teresa's/Craigmore), the BLAP stated:

"Development... will be informed by the sylvan setting around St. Teresa's (Craigmore) and its relationship with Rockfield Park. Any development will also be influenced by the relationship to Temple Hill and the established developments of the Alzheimer Society of Ireland Respite Centre and St. Louise's Park Travellers Accommodation."

"This area of the landholding lends itself to higher density development, such as apartments, given its proximity to the District Centre and a major public transport corridor. Development blocks should be arranged to provide an interesting building line along Temple Hill, where possible, avoiding a parallel relationship with the road. The existing boundary wall along Temple Hill shall be removed and replaced with railings set back to facilitate generous frontage tree planting in order to improve the visual environment of Temple Hill. The vista from St Teresa's (Craigmore) to Rockfield Park should be maintained and the layout of internal routes and landscaping should be arranged to reinforce this relationship."

It is envisaged that development around the Protected Structure of St. Teresa's (Craigmore) shall incorporate an architectural language that is light and transparent using modern materials to maximise views through the tree belts towards Rockfield Park and to maximise evening-time light and passive surveillance along Temple Hill." (BLAP p. 18-29)

The BLAP has now expired, but it was part of the planning framework and contextual policy background when the current Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 (DLRDP) was in preparation. The DLRDP is also encouraging of high density development on sites such as the subject site. Table 1.4 of the DLRDP sets out the Five Strategic County Outcomes of the Plan, one of which is the following:

"Creation of a Compact and Connected County: One of the best ways to transition to a climate resilient County is to consolidate development within the existing urban footprint thus making best use of land. Sustainable planning policy has long been underpinned by the matching of land use and transport policies so that denser development takes place close to good quality public transport options and supporting services. This will allow those living, working and visiting the County easy access to amenities and services by way of high-quality public transport and the softer modes of walking and cycling." (emphasis added)

Policy Objective PHP18 of the DLRDP states: "It is a Policy Objective to:

- Promote compact urban growth through the consolidation and re-intensification of infill/brownfield sites.
- Encourage higher residential densities provided that proposals provide for high quality design and ensure a balance between the protection of existing residential amenities and the established character of the surrounding area, with the need to provide for high quality sustainable residential development." (emphasis added)

The site, located adjacent to Blackrock town centre, walking distance from retail, employment and education facilities, with access to bus and DART services, and adjacent to high quality public open

space, represents an important opportunity for the delivery of high density residential development.

13.3.5 Permitted Development on the Site

A Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application was lodged and permission was granted for the site's development in 2019 (ABP-303804-19). The permitted development (see Figure 13.17) includes 13 no. new apartment buildings (A1, B1-4, C1-2, D1, E1-5) up to eight storeys tall, and the repurposed St Teresa's House, containing a total of 291 no. residential units:

- Blocks A1 and B1-4 are positioned along the N31/Temple Road. Blocks B1-4 present their shorter elevations to the road, with gaps between the buildings to break up the built frontage (thus avoiding a 'parallel relationship' with the N31, as required by the BLAP).
- These blocks range in height from four to eight storeys, increasing in height towards Blackrock town centre (see Figures 13.18, 13.19). Block A1 beside the entrance to St Louise's Park and the Alzheimer Society office is four storeys tall.
- Blocks B2 and B3 are positioned to frame a view of St Teresa's House from the N31.
- The existing tall stone wall along the site's roadside boundary would be removed and replaced by a railing. The existing trees (dating from the 1980s) inside the boundary wall would be removed. A new line of trees would be planted inside the boundary railing to soften the built frontage.



Figure 13.17 – Layout of permitted development (ABP-303804-19)

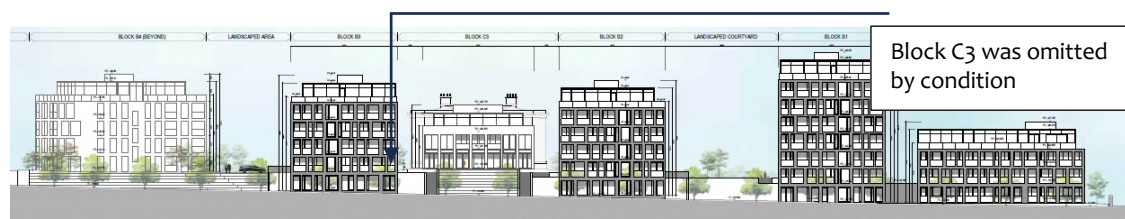


Figure 13.18 – The permitted built frontage to the N31/Temple Road (ABP-303804-19)



Figure 13.19 – Photomontage of the permitted built frontage to the N31/Temple Road (ABP-303804-19)

- The main entrance to the permitted development is in the north east corner of the site, opposite Newtown Avenue (see Figure 13.17 above). This is a wide entrance (three lanes, and footpaths both sides of the road), with an additional side connection to St Vincent's Park to the east.
- The creation of the entrance necessitates the removal of the gate lodge, which is currently located in this corner of the site (see Figure 13.6 above). The permitted development would see the relocation of the gate lodge (a protected structure) back from the Temple Road boundary to a position inside the south east boundary of the site, where the access road turns from Dunardagh Avenue to enter the new scheme.



Figure 13.20 – Photomontage of the permitted Block B4 and the main entrance to the site from N31/Temple Road, with the relocated gate lodge visible further within the site (ABP-303804-19)

- Blocks C1 and C2 are small apartment buildings (three storeys) positioned either side of the repurposed St Teresa's House.
- St Teresa's House and Blocks C1 and C2 together provide frontage/enclosure to a central open space in which a number of existing trees would be retained (along with areas of new woodland planting and lawn).

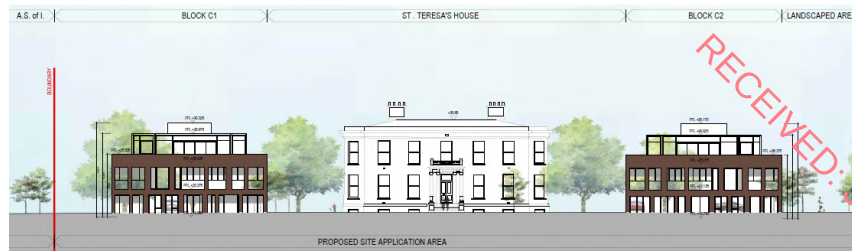


Figure 13.21 – The permitted Block C1 and C2 either side of St Teresa's House (ABP-303804-19)

- Block D1 is a linear, five storey building inside the south eastern site boundary. The building is set back from the boundary behind (a) a retained access road leading to Dunardagh (Dunardagh Avenue), (b) a retained belt of historic trees, and (c) a corridor of new shrub and tree planting. The building is thus some 27m + from the boundary shared with the St Vincent's Park residential estate to the east, and over 38m from the rear elevation of the nearest house in St Vincent's Park.
- The two upper floors are glazed and set back from the three storey body of the building, which is clad in brick. This design, in combination with the positioning of the building well back from the boundary behind the retained trees, minimised the visibility of Block D1 from St Vincent's Park to the east.

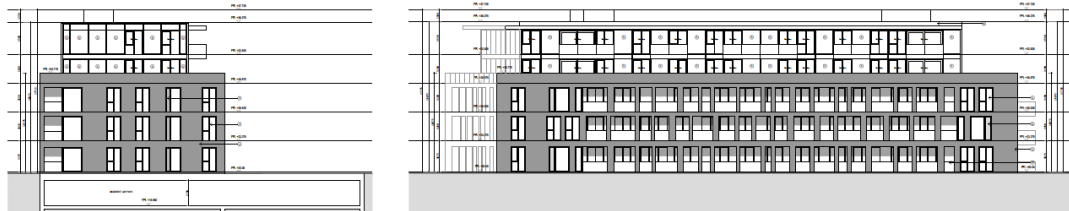


Figure 13.22 – The south and east elevations of the permitted Block D1 (ABP-303804-19)



Figure 13.23 – Photomontage of the permitted Block D1 (ABP-303804-19) as seen from St Vincent's Park

- Blocks E4 and E5 are four storey apartment buildings positioned to the south west of St Teresa's House, framing the view between the historic house and Rockfield Park, with the corridor between E4 and E5 linking the central open space to a parkland area inside the southern site boundary contiguous with Rockfield Park.



Figure 13.24 – CGI of the view of St Teresa's House between the permitted Blocks E3 and E4 (ABP-303804-19)

- Blocks E1, E2 and E3 are located in the south western corner of the site, between Rockfield Park (to the south) and St Louise's Park, a neighbouring residential estate to the north west (beside the Alzheimer Society office). These are five storey blocks with two storey connecting volumes.
- Blocks E1-3 are positioned to retain a large stand of historic trees inside the Rockfield Park boundary, while avoiding excessive impact on the houses of St Louise's Park to the north. The buildings are separated from the St Louise's Park boundary by an internal access road with perpendicular parking, and a strip of tree and shrub planting.



Figure 13.25 – The permitted Blocks E1-4 inside the boundary shared with St Louise's Park (ABP-303804-19)



Figure 13.26 – Photomontage of the permitted Blocks E1-3 (ABP-303804-19) as seen from St Louise's Park

- Inside the site boundary shared with Rockfield Park, a large number of historic trees would be retained - and supplemented with new tree and shrub/understorey planting to form a woodland park on the site contiguous with the public park (see Figure 13.17 above).



Figure 13.27 – Photomontage of the permitted development (ABP-303804-19) as seen from Rockfield Park

The permitted development (ABP-303804-19) establishes the principle of the site's use for high density residential development, in line with its designation as a Potential Development Area in the BLAP (see Section 13.3.3 above). The development would result in a high density neighbourhood on the former institutional site, making sustainable use of its favourable location with the respect to Blackrock town centre and main shopping area, the extensive employment in the area (see Figures 13.10, 13.11), the access to bus and DART services, and access to high quality public open space.

The permitted development would also exploit – to an extent – the favourable aspects of the receiving environment with regard to the accommodation of taller buildings, specifically the site's frontage to the N31/Temple Road and to Rockfield Park. The broad urban thoroughfare and the large open space fringed by mature trees both provide 'breathing space' for taller buildings, and can benefit from the spatial enclosure and passive surveillance provided by tall buildings.

The permitted development would have a variety of landscape and visual effects on the receiving environment:

- Most notably, the permitted development would transform the character of the N31/Temple Road corridor as it enters/exits Blackrock town centre (see Figure 13.15, 13.16 above). Five new buildings (Blocks A1 and B1-4) of contemporary urban character and scale (ranging from four to eight storeys) would provide built frontage and enclosure to the wide road. This would urbanise the road corridor, which currently has a motorway-like specification and is lined by commercial development and suburban housing opposite the site. This would have the effect of expanding the town centre along the N31 as it passes the site.
- There would be a far less pronounced change to Rockfield Park to the south of the site (Figure 13.23). The buildings would be discernible through the retained trees around the park boundary. This would cause a shift towards a more urban condition, but no significant change in the landscape or views/visual amenity experienced in the park.
- The low density residential areas to the west (St Louise's Park), east (St Vincent's Park), and north of the site (the houses across the N31/Temple Road, and Craigmores Gardens) would all experience change in the character of their landscape context, and the

composition of views. This is an unavoidable consequence of compact growth policy, as high density typologies are introduced to previously low density residential areas. Such change is occurring throughout the city, particularly around urban cores with public transport nodes (such as Blackrock, Stillorgan, etc.), and where former institutional lands have become available for redevelopment.

13.4 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Chapter 2 of the EIAR includes a detailed description of the Proposed Development. The development description is as follows:

Oval Target Limited intends to apply for permission for development of a Large-Scale Residential Development comprising amendments to previously permitted development (Strategic Housing Development ABP-303804-19) on a site of approx. 4.56 ha at 'St. Teresa's House' (A Protected Structure); 'St. Teresa's Lodge' (A Protected Structure); and associated entrance gates (A Protected Structure) at Temple Hill and Temple Road, Monkstown, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

The proposed development will consist of amendments to a development previously permitted under Strategic Housing Development ABP-303804-19 (291 no. residential units, a crèche facility and heights of 1-8 storeys) to provide for a new residential and mixed use development (1 – 8 storeys overall) of 414 no. residential apartment units in total (a proposed uplift of 123 no. residential units) with associated crèche facility, a new café and residential amenity space. The revised overall residential mix is 8 no. studio units, 164 no. 1 bed units, 159 no. 2 bed units, and 83 no. 3 bed units.

The proposed development will consist of:

1. Amendments to previously permitted Blocks C1, C2, C3, D1, E1, E2, E3, E4 and E5 as follows:
 - A revised building design for Block C1 from previously permitted building (3 storeys overall) consisting of 7 no. apartment units (6 no. 2 bed units and 1 no. 3 bed unit) to now comprise **10 no. apartment units** (4 no. 1 bed units and 6 no. 2 bed units) – an uplift of 3 no. residential units in total. Amendments will include minor revisions to overall height of the building (remains 3 storeys overall) and revisions to elevations and building footprint.
 - A revised building design for Block C2 from previously permitted building (3 storeys overall) consisting of a crèche facility (approx. 286 sq m) at level 00 and 4 no. apartment units at level 01 and 02 (3 no. 2 bed units and 1 no. 3 bed unit) to now comprise a crèche facility of approx. 401 sq m at level 00, associated outdoor play area space of 302 sq m and **6 no. apartment units** (2 no. 1 bed units and 4 no. 2 bed units) at levels 01 and 02 – an uplift of 2 no. residential units in total and increased crèche floor area size by approx. 115 sq m. Amendments will include minor revisions to overall height of the building (remains 3 storeys overall) and revisions to elevations and building footprint.
 - A New Block C3 (1 storey over basement level) comprising residential amenity space of approx. 451 sq m.
 - The omission of previously permitted Block D1 (5 storeys overall) and basement level comprising 50 no. apartment units (15 no. 1 bed units, 23 no. 2 bed units and 12 no. 3 bed units) to now deliver new Block D1 (4 - 7 storeys over new basement level) comprising **125 no. apartment units** (19 no. 1 bed units, 68 no. 2 bed units and 38 no. 3 bed units) – an uplift of 75 no. residential units in total.
 - The omission of previously permitted Block E1 (5 storeys overall) comprising 14 no. apartment units (9 no. 2 bed units, 4 no. 3 bed units and 1 no. 3 bed duplex unit) to now deliver new Block E1 (4 - 7 storeys) comprising **61 no. apartment units** (7 no. studio units, 6 no. 1 bed units, 26 no. 2 bed units and 22 no. 3 bed units) – an uplift of 47 no. residential units in total.

- The omission of previously permitted Block E2 (5 storeys overall) comprising 15 no. apartment units (9 no. 2 bed units, 4 no. 3 bed units and 2 no. 3 bed duplex units) to now deliver new Block E2 (6 storeys) comprising **50 no. apartment units** (1 no. studio unit, 25 no. 1 bed units, 20 no. 2 bed units and 4 no. 3 bed units) – an uplift of 35 no. apartment units in total.
- The omission of permitted Blocks E3 (5 storeys), E4 (4 storeys) and E5 (5 storeys) previously providing for 38 no. units in total (27 no. 2 beds, 8 no. 3 beds and 3 no. 3 bed duplex units).
- Each residential unit has associated private open space in the form of a terrace / balcony.

The above new proposals extend to a total of **252 residential units**. Blocks A1, B1, B2, B3, B4, Block H (St. Teresa's House) remain as originally permitted with no further amendments as part of this proposal (162 no. units in total and permitted heights of 3-8 storeys).

2. The structures for demolition across the site remain as permitted with no further amendments proposed. This includes any structures previously permitted for demolition that still remain on site and the removal of associated remnants of low / retaining walls and in-ground concrete steps.
3. An amended proposal for Block G (St. Teresa's Lodge) (1 storey) including a change of use from previously permitted 1 no. 1 bed unit to a new café of approx. 67.4 sq m. This proposal will again seek permission for the dismantling/deconstruction of the existing St. Teresa's Lodge (Gate Lodge) (approx. 38.56 sq m) and the demolition of a lean to extension (approx. 28.5 sq m) as previously permitted under Strategic Housing Development ABP-303804-19. The current amendment proposal seeks permission to relocate and reconstruct St. Teresa's Lodge in a new location (180 m southwest of its original position and located adjacent to Rockfield Park) using original roof timbers, decorative elements and rubble stonework, with original brickwork cleaned and re-used where appropriate. The non - original extension (approx. 28.5 sq m) will be again removed as previously permitted. The current proposal seeks further extension of this building (approx. 28.88 sq m) and a change of use from residential (1 no. unit) to café use to deliver a Part M compliant single storey building of approx. 67.4 sq m.
4. A revised landscape plan now provides for:
 - Public open space in the form of a central parkland, garden link, woodland park (incorporating an existing folly) and a tree belt (approx. 11,238 sqm overall).
 - Communal open space is now proposed in the form of entrance gardens, plazas, terraced gardens and roof terraces (approx. 3,620 sqm overall).
 - Provision is also now made for 2 no. new pedestrian connections to Rockfield Park on the southern site boundary (1 no. adjacent to the proposed relocated Gate Lodge and 1 no. at the hammerhead adjacent to Block E2) and all other pedestrian connections remain as permitted under SHD ABP-303804-19.
5. A revised total of 244 no. car parking spaces (a decrease of 28 no. spaces) and 962 no. bicycle spaces (an uplift of 296 no. spaces) are proposed. The no. of motorcycle spaces remains as permitted at 20 no. spaces.
6. The development also provides for revised proposals for Bin Storage areas, Bike Storage areas, life safety generator room, ESB substations and switch rooms with a combined floor area of approx. 609 sq m all at surface level.
7. Access to the development generally remains as permitted under Strategic Housing Development ABP-303804-19, which provides for works to the existing entrance to the overall site via Temple Hill and Temple Road to deliver the realignment and upgrade of the existing signalised junction and associated footpaths, with minor modifications to the junction layout to provide for improved and safer vehicular access/egress to the site and to/from St. Vincent's Park. Emergency vehicular access and pedestrian/cycle access also remains as permitted via a secondary and long-established existing access point along Temple Hill. There are no works proposed to the existing gates (Protected Structure) at this location. There are minor

modifications proposed to the northeastern boundary walls and access gateway to 'Carmond' to facilitate alignment improvements for safe access/egress serving St. Vincent's Park.

8. The associated site and infrastructural works include provision for water services; foul and surface water drainage and connections; attenuation proposals; permeable paving; all landscaping works; green roofs; PV panels; boundary treatment; internal roads and footpaths.

This planning application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

For the purpose of this assessment, the following aspects and elements of the proposed amendment are most relevant – as they are potentially the most visible changes to the permitted development from the surrounding public realm:

- The omission of Blocks E1 (five storeys), E2 (five storeys), E3 (five storeys) and E4 (four storeys), and their replacement by Blocks E1 (seven storeys) and E2 (six storeys).
- The omission of Block F5 (four storeys), and amendments to Block D1 including the extension of its footprint, and an increase in height from five storeys to seven storeys.
- The relocation of the gate lodge (Block G, a protected structure) from its permitted location inside the site's south east boundary to a new location inside the southern boundary adjacent to Rockfield Park.

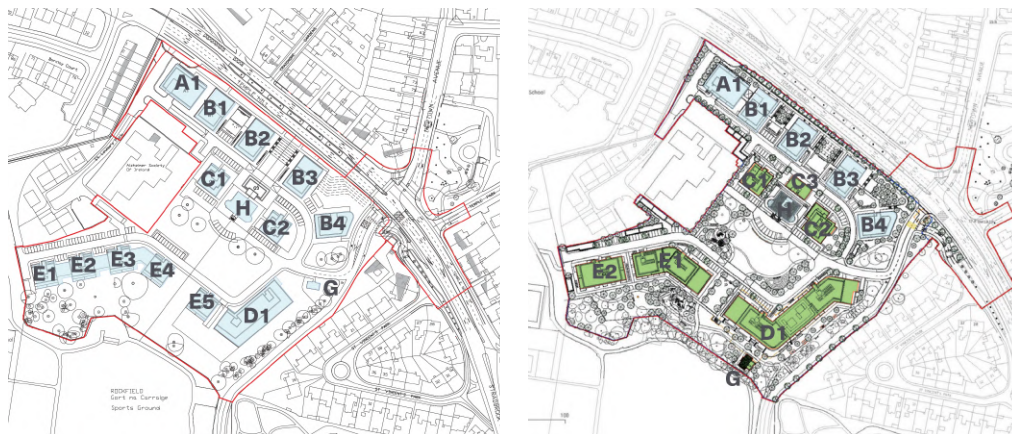


Figure 13.28 – The layout of the permitted buildings (left) and the proposed layout (right) with the buildings affected by the proposed amendment coloured green

13.4.1 Proposed Block D1

The proposed Block D1 is a linear building with a double cranked footprint adjusting to the shape of the site. The building is up to seven storeys tall, with the central volume of five storeys, and steps down in height at the ends of the building. This gives the upper levels a disaggregated form, to reduce the massing – particularly in views from the south east (the direction of the neighbouring residential estate, St Vincent's Park – see Figure 13.31 below). The building is of red brick, apart from the set-back top floor, which is glazed (see Figures 13.30 and 13.31 below).

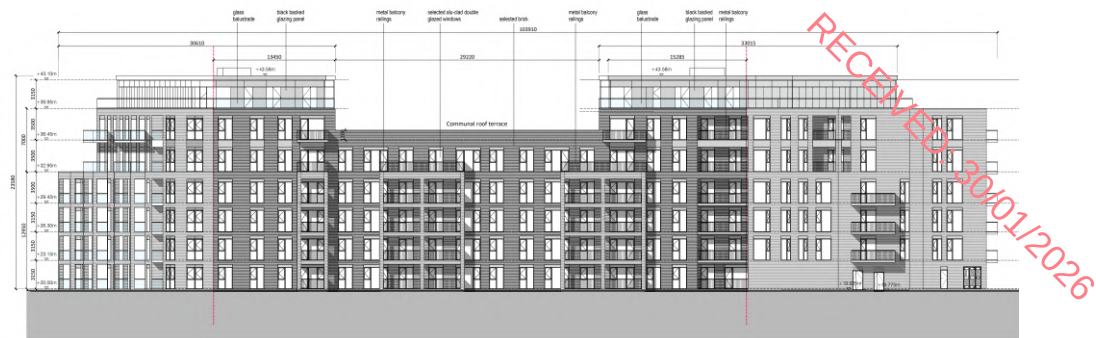


Figure 13.29 – Proposed south east elevation of Block D1



Figure 13.30 – CGI view of the proposed Block D1 and the relocated gate lodge, to be used as a café, inside the boundary shared with Rockfield Park



Figure 13.31 – Photomontage view of Block D1 as seen from St Vincent's Park to the south east

13.4.2 Proposed Blocks E1 and E2

The proposed Block E1 is a linear building with a cranked footprint adjusting to the shape of the site (see Figure 13.28 above). It is up to seven storeys tall, stepping down to four storeys towards the centre of the site where combines with Block D1 to frames an open space in front of St Teresa's House. Block E2 is six storeys tall. Both buildings are of red brick, apart from the set-back top floors, which are glazed (see Figures 13.33-35 below).

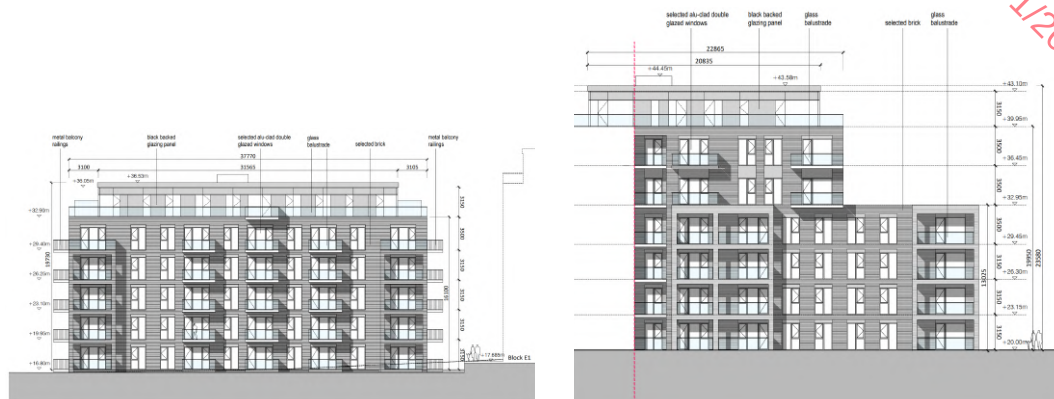


Figure 13.32 – Proposed south elevations of Blocks E2 (left) and a part of E1 (right) showing its step down to four storeys



Figure 13.33 – CGI view of the proposed Block E1 (left) and Block D1 (right), framing a view of St Teresa's House from Rockfield Park



Figure 13.34 – CGI view of Block D1 (left) and E1 (right) as seen from St Teresa's House looking south towards Rockfield Park



Figure 13.35 – Photomontage view of Blocks E1 (left) and E2 (right) as seen from St Louise's Park to the west

13.4.3 Proposed Blocks C1, C2 and C3

Minor changes are proposed to Blocks C1 and C2 either side of St Teresa's House (Block H). These amendments make no material changes to the footprint or height of the buildings, or their architectural character. Therefore, they would have no significant landscape or visual effects.

A new building, C3 is proposed beside St Teresa's House. This is a single storey glazed pavilion housing a residents' amenity facility.



Figure 13.36 – The proposed Block C3, a single storey glazed pavilion housing residents' amenity facilities beside St Teresa's House

13.5 Potential Impact of the Proposed Development – Visual Effects

13.5.1 Construction Stage

During construction the site and immediate environs would be visibly disturbed by construction activities and haulage, and the incremental growth of the buildings on site. In the earlier stages, until the buildings reach substantial height above ground, the effects would be largely limited to the immediate environs (neighbouring properties, streets and open space). As the buildings begin to grow above ground level, the visual effects would become more widespread.

The magnitude of change would range from high in the immediate environs to negligible or none further from the site. Therefore the significance of the effects would vary – although they would typically be negative during construction. Such temporary negative visual effects are unavoidable and not unusual in the urban context where change is continuous. The construction stage effects are assessed for each viewpoint in Table 13.7 below. During the construction stage, for the most part, the proposed development would have no greater visual effects than the permitted development.

13.5.2 Operational Stage

33 no. viewpoints (see Figures 13.37, 13.38 below) have been selected for the assessment of the proposed development's potential visibility and visual effects, informed by verified photomontages. (The photomontages are provided in Appendix 13.1 of the EIAR.)

These are the same 33 no. views that were assessed for the 2019 SHD application (ABP-303804-19), and a subsequent SHD application in 2021. The viewpoints were selected with the input of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, and deemed adequate for the assessment of the proposed development's visual effects on the key receptors in the receiving environment.

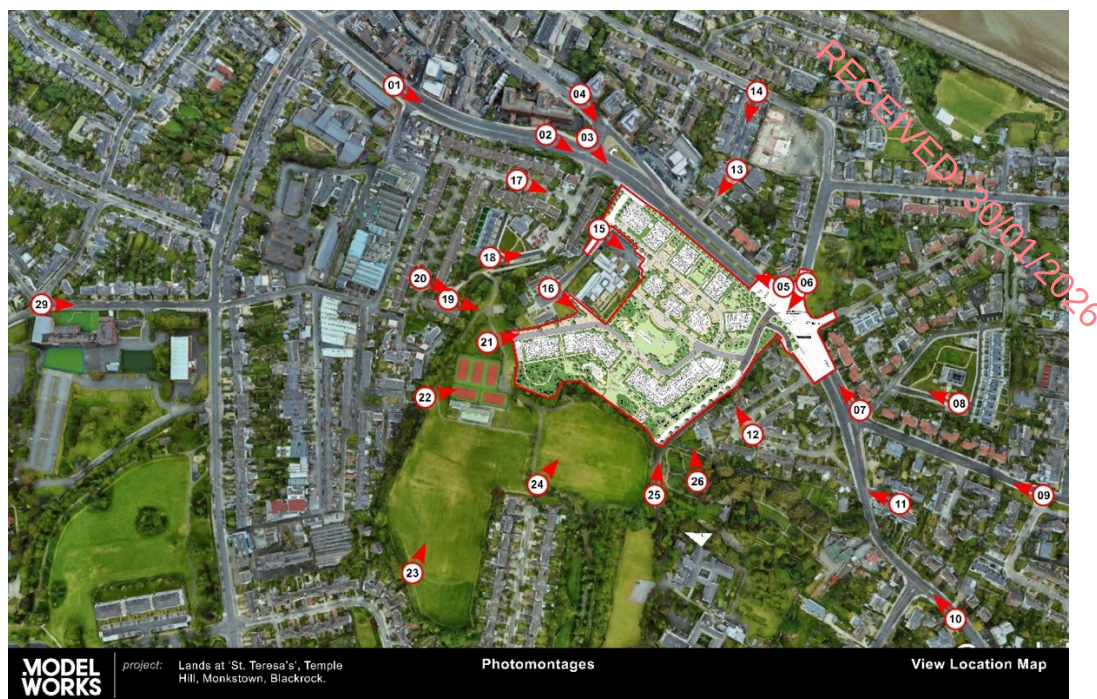


Figure 13.37 – Viewpoints for visual effects assessment – Local views

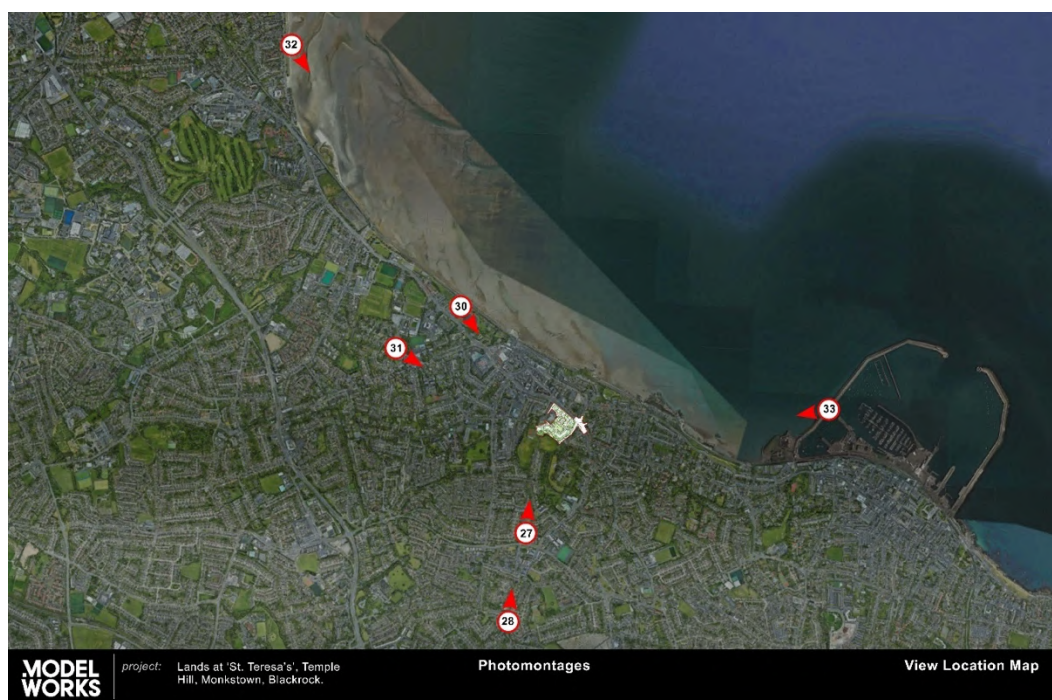


Figure 13.38 – Viewpoints for visual effects assessment – Distant views

The effects on each viewpoint are individually assessed below, with a summary provided in Table 13.7.

For the methodology, terms and criteria used in the assessment, refer to Section 13.2.2 above.

The assessment should be read in conjunction with the verified photomontages provided in Appendix 13.1 of the EIAR. For each viewpoint, the following views are provided:

- **Existing view** (a photograph taken in April 2025, before the trees came into summer leaf).
- **Baseline/Permitted view** (a photomontage of the permitted development ABP-303804-19).
- **Proposed view** (a photomontage of the proposed amended development).

Since the subject of this assessment is a proposed amendment to a permitted development (ABP-303804-19), the permitted scenario is considered the baseline against which the proposed change is measured.

13.5.2.1 Viewpoint 1 – N31 Frascati Road, Blackrock Town Centre

Existing View

- The wide dual carriageway is framed by modern 4-5 storey apartment buildings to the left and a variety of residential buildings, ranging from two to five storeys and of varied architectural character and materials, to the right.
- There is a lack of interaction between the street and the adjacent buildings/uses; the road and traffic dominate the view. This is unfortunate given the 'town centre' location. This stretch of the road contrasts strongly with the recently redeveloped stretch just behind the viewer (refer to Figure 13.12 above).

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Low.** Due to the urban location/context and limited visual amenity (with few valued elements or characteristics in the view), there is a high capacity for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted buildings (particularly the tall Block B1) are visible in the distance, protruding above the roofline of the houses further east along Frascati Road, framed by the foreground buildings.
- The magnitude of change is low, but the visibility of buildings of contemporary urban character and scale has the effect of extending the town centre character to the east along the N31.

Proposed View

- There are no visible changes to the buildings fronting the N31 (which are the most prominent in the view).
- Blocks D1 and E (which are proposed to be changed in form and height) are largely screened by the buildings along Frascati Road (the top of Block D1 protrudes very marginally above the Frascati Road roofline).

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Negligible.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Imperceptible, neutral.** There would be no material difference to the view.

13.5.2.2 Viewpoint 2 – N31 Frascati Road Approaching Temple Road Junction

Existing View

- This view illustrates the mixed/indistinct character of this part of the receiving environment. The wide, busy road is the dominant element in the landscape, with all other elements secondary to the road.
- To the left beyond the junction leading to the town centre is a motor dealership. The commercial use gives some indication of the urban context. Beyond the motor dealership are a row of houses facing the site across the wide road corridor.
- In the foreground to the right are the houses of Barclay Court, presenting their rear facades to the road and screened/buffered from the road by a high boundary wall and a row of trees. This is an 'anti-urban' arrangement that contributes to the road's barrier effect in the landscape.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Low.** Due to the urban location/context and the dominance of the road - which limits visual amenity despite the greening/softening effect of the trees - there is a high capacity for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The eight storey Block B1 protrudes above the foreground tree line. Although not prominent, the building is a notable addition to the view as it represents a new development typology (high density residential), which causes a shift in character towards a more urban condition.
- There is no sense of excessive height or enclosure. The wide road corridor can comfortably accommodate the eight storey building.

Proposed View

- The proposed changes to the development are screened by the roadside houses in the foreground.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **None.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **No effect.**

13.5.2.3 Viewpoint 3 – N31 Temple Road Approaching Site from the West

Existing View

- This view again illustrates the mixed/indistinct character of the N31 Temple Road corridor, and the dominance of the landscape by the road.
- To the left of the wide junction is a motor dealership, with the building set back behind a roadside parking area. The commercial use gives some indication of the urban context. Beyond the motor dealership are a row of houses facing the site across the wide road.

- In the foreground to the right is the entrance to the Barclay Court estate, with two storey, terraced houses lining the road.
- Notable elements of the site, which has some 230m frontage to the road, include (a) the historic gateway (a protected structure) to Craigmore/St Teresa's House, (b) the tall trees inside the boundary wall, and (c) the historic house (protected structure), with boarded up windows amongst the trees within the site.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Due to the urban location/context and the dominance of the road - which limits visual amenity - there is a high capacity for change. There are however some valued elements in the landscape (the protected structures and the trees), which lend some visual interest and amenity.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- Blocks A1 and B1-3 are prominent additions to the view, providing built frontage/enclosure to the wide road, changing the balance between road infrastructure and built form in the landscape. This change is not inappropriate in the location.
- The gaps between the buildings, the steps in height and the highly articulated facades are effective in breaking down the massing, so that the buildings do not dominate the landscape despite their substantial scale. The wide road also provides 'breathing space', so that excessive enclosure is avoided.
- The existing trees along the roadside (which were planted in the late 1980s after the N31 Blackrock Bypass was built) are removed and replaced by a new line of trees behind a railing, which replaces the high wall.
- Craigmore/St Teresa's House is screened from view by the new buildings.
- The buildings in the southern part of the site (Blocks D1, E1-5) are mostly hidden, although they do protrude marginally above the houses' roofline to the right.

Proposed View

- To the right, Blocks E1 and E2 protrude above the roofline of the Barclay Court houses. The extent of the protrusion is moderate, and the disaggregated form (setbacks and steps in height) and variations in material reduce the perceived massing – and therefore the buildings' prominence.
- The only noticeable change to the development along the road-front is a slight reduction in height of Block E3 towards the far end of the site. This has no material effect on the view.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.** The buildings ahead along the road draw the eye, so that the increased height and visibility of Blocks E1 and E2 – at the periphery of the view - would not significantly change the composition or character of the view.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** Although the effect is only of slight significance, the proposed amendment would bring the rear/southern buildings into view from the N31 (at this

location), expanding the development's urbanising influence beyond the road corridor. This is not inappropriate in this location, and there would be no change in visual amenity.

13.5.2.4 Viewpoint 4 – Temple Road Approaching the N31 Junction from Blackrock Town Centre

Existing View

- As the road approaches the junction with the N31, it is lined on both sides by multi-storey, red brick office buildings. The buildings are of their time, and -as In View 1 – there is a notable (and unfortunate) lack of interface with the public realm.
- Ahead is a broad junction where the roads merge, with no surrounding built form to give balance to the landscape. There is an abrupt change in character, from dense/urban in the foreground, to low density along the N31 to the east.
- The maturing trees inside the site boundary (planted after the construction of the N31 Blackrock Bypass in the late 1980s) are prominent in the middle distance.
- The historic house on the site is all but screened by the trees in the intervening landscape.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Low.** Due to the urban location/context, the dominance of road infrastructure and the relative lack of valued elements/features (apart from the trees), there is a high capacity for change. The abundance of trees lends some visual amenity to the view.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- Blocks B1-3 are prominent additions to the view, providing built frontage/enclosure to the wide road, changing the balance between road infrastructure and built form in the landscape. This change is not inappropriate in the location, and this view illustrates that the development represents an extension of the existing high density urban character of Blackrock town centre (as opposed to an outlier).
- The gaps between the buildings, the steps in height and the highly articulated facades break down the massing, so that the buildings do not dominate the landscape despite their scale. The wide road provides 'breathing space', so that excessive enclosure is avoided.
- The existing roadside boundary wall and trees are removed and replaced by a new line of trees behind a railing. In time, these trees will mature to have the same visual presence as the existing trees.
- The buildings in the southern part of the site (Blocks D1, E1-5) are hidden from view.

Proposed View

- To the right, Block E1 protrudes above the tree line.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.** The extent of the protrusion of Block E1 is minor, and given the relative prominence of the existing foreground buildings and Blocks B1-3 along the N31, this constitutes a low magnitude of change.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Not significant, neutral.** Seen from the distinctly urban context of Temple Road, within the defined town/district centre of Blackrock, the minor change to the view would have no significant effect.

13.5.2.5 Viewpoint 5 – N31 Temple Road Passing the Site, Approaching Blackrock Town Centre

Existing View

- The view is again dominated by the wide road, although the trees inside the site boundary wall are prominent and lend some visual amenity to the road corridor.
- To the right are a row of houses set well back from the road behind deep front gardens with high boundary walls.
- Ahead, in the middle distance, is a multi-storey office building signalling the road's arrival in Blackrock town centre. There is an abrupt change in character at that point.
- While the trees on the site are a landscape/visual asset, the site's (appreciable) disuse represents an unsustainable use of urban land and services – particularly given the location on a key thoroughfare and public transport corridor adjacent to the town centre.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Due to the urban location/context (with multi-storey development already visible) and the dominance of the road, there is capacity/tolerance for change. However, in addition to road users, this view also represents the houses on the north side of the road, which are sensitive receptors - and the trees provide visual amenity that counterbalances the negative effects of the road. Hence the medium sensitivity classification.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The road corridor is transformed by the development, with the boundary wall and trees removed from the site, replaced by the three Blocks B1-3, rising from six to eight storeys towards the town centre.
- The gaps between the buildings, the steps in height and the highly articulated facades break down the massing, so that the buildings do not dominate the landscape despite their substantial scale.
- The buildings change the balance between road infrastructure and built form in the landscape, reducing the prominence and negative effects of the road and shifting the character towards a more urban condition. This change is not inappropriate in the location.
- The view shows that the wide road can comfortably accommodate the height. There is no sense of excessive enclosure, or crowding/dominance of the houses across the road.
- A partial view of Craigmore St Teresa's House is provided at this location (in the wide gap between Blocks B3 and B4).
- The vegetated courtyards between the buildings are visible through the boundary railing, and these green spaces complement the new trees along the boundary. In time these trees will mature to have similar visual presence as the existing trees (which are removed).

Proposed View

- The only changes to the view are (a) a slight reduction in the height of Block B3, and (b) the introduction of a grass-roofed bike store fronting the road beside Block B3.
- The bike store is moved from a position further back in the same green space. The change slightly reduces the greenery at the road-front, but overall the boundary remains well vegetated and the built frontage softened/filtered by numerous trees. The shifting of the bike store to the roadside makes more efficient use of the green space, allowing for the provision of a dedicated amenity/seating area between Blocks B3 and B4 (where the bike store was previously located).

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.** The slight reduction in height of B3 and the introduction of the roadside bike store are minor changes, causing no significant effect to the composition or character of the view.

Significance of Visual Effect

- Not significant, neutral.

13.5.2.6 Viewpoint 6 – Newtown Avenue Approaching the Junction with Newtown Road

Existing View

- Similar to Viewpoints 2 and 3, this is another view in the site's immediate environs dominated by road spaced/infrastructure, with little surrounding built form.
- The most prominent building is the former Craigmole gatehouse (a protected structure). The small building in the north east corner of the site is surrounded by historic demesne trees. The trees are valuable landscape/visual features.
- Trees of similar stature can be seen in the distance beyond the roofscape of the St Vincent's Park estate to the left. Those are the trees in the Quaker Cemetery.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Due to the urban location/context and the dominance of the road - which limits visual amenity - there is capacity for change. There are however valued elements in the landscape (the protected structure and the trees), which lend visual interest and some visual amenity. The gatehouse is diminished by its roadside location and the associated clutter (signage, lighting, etc.) and traffic.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- A wide new road entrance from the N31 is introduced in the north east corner of the site, with Block B4 positioned beside the entrance, set back from both roads (the N31 and the access road) behind a densely vegetated open space corridor. Block B4 is five storeys tall, with a distinctive rounded corner, and the top floor set well back and glazed.
- To the right, in the gap between Blocks B4 and B3, a part of Craigmole/St Teresa's House can be seen.
- The location of the entrance in the north east corner requires the historic gatehouse to be moved. It can be seen in the middle distance, back from the N31, where the access road turns in to give access to the development.

- The permitted development also requires/allows a stand of historic trees (around the gatehouse) to be removed. A large number of new trees are planted in compensation, and a belt of retained trees can be seen inside the south east site boundary, functioning as a buffer between the development and the neighbouring St Vincent's Park estate.
- Although the view is considerably changed, the composition of new and historic architecture, and new and retained trees is pleasing. The development takes its place comfortably in the landscape and there is no loss of visual amenity.

Proposed View

- The road entrance in the corner of the site is narrowed by one lane, with the area of soft landscaping at the junction proportionally increased.
- Block B4 is unchanged.
- To the rear of Block B4, Block D1 extends closer to the site's south east boundary, and its height is increased to six storeys. The building is closer to the neighbouring St Vincent's Park, but still buffered from the houses by a retained line of trees and the access road inside the boundary.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low-medium.** While the proposed amendment does increase the volume of built form in view, the eye is drawn to Block B4 (and Blocks B1-3 fronting the N31 to the right), and the road entrance and landscaping at the corner of the site. Block D1 is thus not a prominent addition.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** Overall, there would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, and no change to visual amenity.

13.5.2.7 Viewpoint 7 – Temple Hill Approaching the Site and Blackrock Town Centre from the South East

Existing View

- The view is dominated by the wide road that curves down the hill towards Blackrock town centre.
- Despite its motorway-like width and distinctly urban specification, the road is lined by two storey houses, which buffer themselves from the road by high walls and garden vegetation. There is a high volume of vegetation in the landscape overall.
- The gatehouse is visible at the near corner of the site, beside the junction of Temple Road and Newtown Avenue.
- St John the Baptist Church in Blackrock is prominent in the middle distance, marking the town centre.
- A number of tall buildings in Dublin Docklands and Poolbeg can be seen on the distant skyline.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Due to the urban location/context and the dominance of the road - which limits visual amenity - there is capacity for change. There are however some valued elements (the historic buildings and the trees) that lend visual interest and amenity. Hence the medium classification.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The gatehouse at the corner of the site is removed (and relocated out of view) to make way for the new road entrance.
- Block B4 is visible at the corner, and steps up above the foreground tree line. The remainder of the development is hidden from view.

Proposed View

- An adjustment is made to the road entrance, and a section of wall is removed and new street trees planted, which partially screen the corner of Block B4. These are minor changes.
- To the left, the taller Block D1 rises above the foreground tree line – to a similar extent as Block B4.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.** While Block D1 would be newly visible (it is not visible as permitted), in this complex view from a busy thoroughfare approaching an urban centre, this would constitute a low magnitude of change.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** There would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, and no valued element or characteristic of the view would be affected.

13.5.2.8 Viewpoint 8 – Neptune House, Temple View

Existing View

- Neptune House is a Georgian villa 200m to the east of the site, positioned on a rise to afford views over the Dublin Bay to the north. The historic building has been divided into apartments, with a small estate of houses built in its former grounds.
- The alignment of the Temple View access road frames a view west towards the site.
- The vista is closed by the roofscape of an area of low density housing between Temple View and Temple Road (and the site). There are also a large number of old and new trees in the landscape, limiting visibility of the surroundings.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** While Neptune House is a protected structure and was positioned and designed for views of the surrounding landscape, it was views of Dublin Bay to the north and the mountains to the south that were most valued (and not the view west towards the site). The grounds of the historic house have themselves been developed. There is thus some tolerance/capacity for change in the view.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- A part of the top floor of Block B4 rises just above the roofscape of the houses in the intervening landscape, framed by the foreground trees.
- This is a minor intrusion and causes no significant landscape change, and no loss of visual amenity. The remainder of the permitted development is screened from view.

Proposed View

- The taller buildings, Blocks D1, E1 and E2, are screened from view by trees in the foreground.
- Even in the absence of these trees (or from different vantage points around Neptune House), if these buildings were visible, they would be no more prominent than the permitted Block B4.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

13.5.2.9 Viewpoint 9 – Monkstown Road

Existing View

- The alignment of Monkstown Road frames views west towards the site. The road is lined by suburban-style housing.
- In the distance, framed by the foreground houses and trees, some of the mature trees of the former Rockfield demesne (including trees on the site, inside the south east boundary and in the central area) are visible.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** This is a road traversing the urban/suburban landscape. While visual amenity is relatively high, there must be some tolerance for change in the environs.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted buildings are all hidden from view by buildings and vegetation in the intervening landscape, and the majority of the visible trees on the site inside the south east boundary and in the central area) will be retained.

Proposed View

- The lengthening and increase in height of Block D1 brings the top corner of the building into view, above the distant trees on the site.
- At this distance, and in a complex urban/suburban landscape, this is a minor intrusion in the view (less prominent than the solar panel on the roof of the building in the foreground, for example).

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Negligible.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Not significant, neutral.** The minor intrusion of a distant apartment building in the view from an urban road would have no significant effect on landscape character or visual amenity.

13.5.2.10 Viewpoint 10 – Temple Hill to South East of Site

Existing View

- Like Monkstown Road (Viewpoint 9), the alignment of Temple Hill to the south east of the site frames views towards the site, and the road is lined by suburban-style housing with high boundary walls and well vegetated gardens.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** This is a road traversing the urban/suburban landscape. While visual amenity is relatively high, there must be some tolerance for change in the environs.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted buildings are hidden from view by a combination of the topography and buildings and vegetation in the intervening landscape.

Proposed View

- The proposed development would not be visible.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

13.5.2.11 Viewpoint 11 – Montpelier Place off Temple Hill to South East of Site

Existing View

- Similar to Viewpoints 9 and 10, the alignment of Montpelier Place frames a view towards the site.
- Montpelier Place is a short, cul-de-sac street off Temple Hill, climbing steeply up a hill. The elevation towards the end of the street affords a view over the roofscape of the St Vincent's Park estate, and beyond the estate some of the trees inside the site's south east boundary and in the Quaker Cemetery can be seen.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** While Montpelier Place is an attractive street with a high relatively high level of visual amenity, it is an urban place, with the view already characterised by housing (along the street and in St Vincent's Park), roads and traffic. There is thus some tolerance/capacity for change in the view.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The top two floors of Block B1 rise above the tree line inside the site's south east boundary, in the middle distance beyond the roofscape of St Vincent's Park.
- The introduction of a higher density building typology causes a shift in landscape character towards a more urban condition, but no loss of visual amenity. The handsome houses and trees in the foreground and the distant trees are all retained, maintaining the visual amenity. The landscape has evolved in keeping with urban consolidation/compact growth policy.

Proposed View

- The increase in height of Block D1 is a notable change in this view. The building protrudes more substantially above the retained trees inside the site boundary, increasing its prominence.
- The stepped height, setbacks and the variation in materials of the top floor are effective in reducing the massing, and the building's presence is further softened by the vegetation on the roof terrace.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low-medium.** The prominence of the new building would be increased, but the overall composition and character of the view would not be substantially changed - and seen at a distance of over 250m the building would remain a relatively minor element of the view (compared to the foreground buildings, trees and cars on the street).

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight-moderate, neutral.** The already established mixed era, mixed density character of the landscape would be strengthened by the increased prominence of the apartment building.
- There would be no loss of visual amenity, however: The handsome houses and trees in the foreground and the distant trees would all be retained, and the proposed building - although larger - is arguably more attractive than the permitted building in this view, the quality of its design more appreciable due to its increased exposure.

13.5.2.12 Viewpoint 12 – St Vincent's Park

Existing View

- St Vincent's Park is a 20th century estate of dormer houses, built in the triangle of land between Temple Hill (which passes to the north east), the Quaker Cemetery (to the south), and Craigmore/St Teresa's and Rockfield Park (to the west). The estate benefits from a combination of (a) proximity/access to Blackrock town centre, DART and bus services, and (b) the landscape and visual amenity generated by the neighbouring institutional lands and public open space.

- In this view towards the site, the low profile dormer houses are seen against a backdrop of mature trees which are located inside the site boundary (separated from the boundary by the road leading to the Quaker Cemetery and Dunardagh).
- There is a taller, denser bank of trees in the Quaker Cemetery behind the houses to the left (out of view). This combines with the site vegetation to enclose St Vincent's Park on two sides, giving the estate a verdant character and a high level of visual amenity.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** Residential receptors are sensitive to change, and the landscape/visual amenity of St Vincent's Park - generated by its distinctive architectural character and the enclosing trees - is highly valued by the residents. However, the estate is located adjacent to a major urban thoroughfare and walking distance from a town/district centre and DART station. This location/context demands some tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The five storey Block D1 is visible through/between the tops of the trees (in winter) behind the houses. (In summer the building would be largely screened.) The top two floors are glazed and the roof dark grey in colour. These materials reduce the visual presence of the building.
- The introduction of a higher density building typology causes a shift in landscape character towards a more urban condition, not inappropriate for the location. The houses of the estate and the surrounding trees would maintain St Vincent's Park's high level of visual amenity. The visibility of higher density development should not be considered to detract from visual amenity. Such development is a normal and necessary element of the urban landscape.

Proposed View

- The seven storey building protrudes well above the tree line. (In summer it would remain visible over the trees.) The steps in height, the setback and variation in materials of the top floor, and the highly articulated facades reduce the massing, and create a pleasing architectural composition. The vegetation on the roof terrace contributes further to a softening of the building's presence.
- Nonetheless, the increased height increases the building's prominence, so that it becomes co-dominant with the estate in the foreground and the belt of trees between the two developments.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Medium.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Moderate, neutral/negative.** Although the proposed amendment would not introduce a new building typology (the permitted building already being visible), the proposed building is substantially more prominent, and the foreground houses and trees would be somewhat diminished in the view. The design and material quality of the building are appreciable, but this would not entirely mitigate the effect of its presence, which would likely be considered by the residents to detract from the visual amenity of St Vincent's Park.

- It must be recognised that (a) the site represents an important opportunity for compact growth and sustainable housing provision, and (b) the site has attributes lending itself to higher density/taller development - including the existing trees inside the south east boundary, which the proposal uses to its advantage. The resulting view (as proposed) would not be unusual in the 21st century city, particularly at the edge of a town centre where such juxtapositions are increasingly common. St Vincent's Park would continue to enjoy a high level of visual and residential amenity.

13.5.2.13 Viewpoint 13 – Craigmores Gardens

Existing View

- Like St Vincent's Park, Craigmores Gardens is another residential enclave of low density and small scale beside the N31 and close to Blackrock town centre. Craigmores Gardens is a cul-de-sac street directly across the N31 from the site, lined by terraced bungalows.
- Its alignment frames a view towards the site, which lies beyond the wide N31 Temple Road corridor. The boundary wall can be seen in the existing view, along with the tall trees inside the boundary.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Residential receptors are sensitive to change, but Craigmores Gardens is affected by its proximity to the N31, and additionally the urban location demands tolerance for change. It is also a factor that the houses orientate east-west, so that the principal views are not towards the site.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development will transform the view, with Blocks B1 and B2 (eight and six storeys respectively) fronting the N31 and rising prominently above the roofs of the Craigmores Gardens houses, framing a view of Block E3 further back within the site.
- The considered positioning of the Blocks B1 and B2 either side of the axis of Craigmores Gardens creates a pleasing composition of form and space.
- The development results in a landscape of dual character - the low density and diminutive scale of the 20th century Craigmores Gardens juxtaposed with the contemporary, high density development beyond the N31. Such tensions are increasingly common in the 21st century city and lend character to the urban landscape, without necessarily diminishing or devaluing the older, lower density neighbourhoods, which remain the predominant form.

Proposed View

- There are no changes proposed to Blocks B1 and B2, which remain the dominant features of the view.
- To the rear of these, within the site, Block E1 is 1-2 storeys taller than the permitted Block E3, and therefore slightly more prominent – while remaining secondary to Blocks B1 and B2 fronting the N31. Part of Block D1 is also visible to the left.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Low.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** There would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, and no valued element or characteristic of the view would be affected.

13.5.2.14 Viewpoint 14 – Newtown Villas

Existing View

- Newtown Villas is a block north from Craigmores Gardens, and similarly aligned, framing a view south towards the site. Like Craigmores Gardens, it is a street of small houses, although of distinctly urban typology. It is minutes' walk from Blackrock town centre. A four storey apartment development is recently completed on the neighbouring plot, underlining the urban location.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Residential receptors are sensitive to change, but the urban location demands tolerance for change. It is also a factor that the houses orientate east-west, so that the principal views are not towards the site.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The six storey Blocks B2, some 180m distant, is framed in the view. The remainder of the development is hidden.
- As with Viewpoint 13, the development results in a landscape of dual/mixed character, increasingly common in the 21st century city and causing no loss of visual amenity.

Proposed View

- No change is proposed to Block B2 in the focal-point position in the view. To the rear of this, the taller Block D1 is visible (whereas the permitted Block D1 is not). This slightly increases the extent of the development's intrusion in the view – but at a distance of some 300m (Block D1), and with the dominant foreground elements unchanged, this is a minor change.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Low.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Not significant, neutral.** There would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, and no valued element or characteristic of the view would be affected.

13.5.2.15 Viewpoint 15 – Access Road to Alzheimer Society Office and St Louise's Park

Existing View

- The Alzheimer Society headquarter was built in the former walled garden of Craigmores/St Teresa's House, and maintains an institutional presence on the lands. The large-footprint but low rise complex is enclosed by the wall to the right in the view.

- This view from the entrance to the facility's car park shows the derelict Craigmores House on the now overgrown site, with a number of large trees adding visual interest. The landscape generally appears disused/degraded and lacks coherence.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Low-medium.** While the view features a protected structure and some impressive specimen trees, the setting for the house is poor and visual amenity overall is limited. There is a high capacity for change in the view.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The view is transformed by the permitted development. A new stone wall, matching the historic garden wall, encloses the Alzheimer Society parking area. The neatens the foreground landscape.
- To the left of the wall is a tree-lined shared surface road entering the development alongside Blocks A1 and B1, which front the N31 (out of view to the left). Ahead, Craigmores/St Teresa's House is screened by a small new apartment building, Block C1. A new line of trees can be seen protruding above the wall in front of the building. To the right, the top floors of the E blocks can be seen over the roof of the Alzheimer Society building.
- The retention of some of the larger trees on the site is notable, and these are supplemented by a large number of new trees, which will result in a verdant landscape despite the new buildings./use.
- While the screening of Craigmores/St Teresa's House is a loss, the resulting composition of new buildings and landscaping improves the visual amenity at this location.

Proposed View

- There are minor elevational changes to Block C1 in the centre of the view. These make no material difference to the character or quality of the view.
- To the right, the two smaller E blocks are replaced by a single larger building, up to two storeys taller overall. This causes an increase in built enclosure around the Alzheimer Society, but – owing to the modest height of Block C1 and the Alzheimer Society building itself - a large area of sky space remains in the view.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Low.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Not significant, neutral.** This is a complex composition of existing and proposed buildings, road infrastructure, open space and trees. The increased scale of one of the new buildings is notable, but would not substantially change the composition or character of the view, and would have no significant effect on the visual amenity experienced at this location.

13.5.2.16 Viewpoint 16 – St Louise's Park

Existing View

- St Louise's Park is a small (6 no. unit) residential enclave built by Fingal County Council in a corner of the former Craigmore/St Teresa's grounds beside the Alzheimer Society office.
- The houses in St Louise's Park are detached and semi-detached bungalows arranged around a central parking area. The rear gardens of two of the houses back onto the site boundary. These houses are visible in View 16 against a backdrop of trees in the western corner of the site.
- To the left is the walled garden wall that now encloses the Alzheimer Society offices.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** As a residential receptor, St Louise's Park is sensitive to change, but the condition of the foreground landscape and elements such as the palisade boundary fence limit visual amenity. Combined with the location, adjacent to Blackrock town centre, this results in a medium sensitivity classification.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The five storey Blocks E1, E2 and E3, positioned inside the site's west boundary, are prominent in the view, rising above the boundary wall and the St Louise's Park houses. The disaggregated form, horizontal banding of façade materials and highly articulated facades (with high void to solid ratio) combine to break down the massing, avoiding overbearance.
- There are no retained trees in front of the buildings, so they lack existing vegetative screening. However, a line of new trees is proposed inside the boundary and these will mature to soften the built frontage.
- The introduction of the higher density typology causes a shift in landscape character towards a more urban condition. This change is not inappropriate in the location, adjacent to Blackrock town centre and walking distance from the DART and shopping centres.

Proposed View

- The E blocks are consolidated into two larger buildings, E2 up to six storeys tall to the right, and E1 up to seven storeys to the left.
- The buildings retain their disaggregated form at the upper levels (steps in height, setbacks, etc.), their highly articulated facades (projections and recesses in the building line, high void to solid ratio), and the variation in materials at the top floor. This reduces the perceived massing, and the bespoke design results in an attractive architectural composition.
- Nonetheless, the consolidated form and increased height increases the buildings' prominence, and the degree of built/visual enclosure experienced in St Louise's Park.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Medium.** Measuring against the permitted scenario as the baseline, the increase in the buildings' prominence constitutes a medium magnitude of change.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Moderate-significant, neutral/negative.** Although the proposed amendment would not introduce a new building typology to the view (the permitted buildings already being visible), the proposed buildings are substantially more prominent, and the foreground houses would be somewhat diminished in the view. The design and material quality of the development is appreciable, but this would not entirely mitigate the effect of the buildings' presence, which would likely be considered by the residents to detract from St Louise's Park's visual amenity.
- It must be recognised that the site represents an important opportunity for compact growth and sustainable housing provision, and it has attributes lending itself to higher density/taller development. The preservation of the visual amenity of a small number of houses must be weighed against the community gain of the increased provision of housing on the site – and the landscape/visual amenity that the apartments would in turn enjoy (with views of Rockfield Park or towards the coastline and Dublin Bay). The proposed development would yield greater benefit from the landscape resource.

13.5.2.17 Viewpoint 17 – Barclay Court

Existing View

- Barclay Court is a 20th century estate of semi-detached houses to the west of the site, the Alzheimer Society office and St Louise's Park, across the N31 from Blackrock's 'district centre' zoned area. Blackrock Business Park lies to the west of the estate. It can be described as an inner urban estate.
- While the N31 and multi-storey office buildings lie immediately to the north, the view east is suburban in character, the tree-lined street framed by two storey houses set back behind front gardens and driveways.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** Residential receptors are sensitive to change, but the central urban location demands a degree of tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The eight storey Block B1 is a prominent addition to the view, rising above the roofline of the houses at the end of the street, framed by the houses and trees in the foreground. Small parts of Blocks A1 and B2 are visible in front and to the side of B1.
- The development results in a landscape of dual character, distinctly suburban in the foreground, but with urban elements in the context. (This is already the case, with the N31 passing by the estate and large office and light industrial buildings directly to the north and west.)

Proposed View

- No changes are proposed to the buildings visible from this location.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **None.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **No effect.**

13.5.2.18 Viewpoint 18 – Prospect Hill

Existing View

- Prospect Hill lies between Barclay Court and St Louise's Park, to the west of the site. It is a recently developed housing estate arranged around a Georgian Villa, 'Prospect House', which has been converted into apartments.
- Prospect House is prominent in the foreground, with modern houses of varying architectural style around the big house, surrounded by trees that contribute to an attractive neighbourhood.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** While Prospect House is a protected structure and was positioned (as its name suggests) for views of the surrounding landscape, it was views of Dublin Bay to the north and the mountains to the south that were most valued (and less so the view east towards the site). The grounds of the historic house have themselves been developed, representing a form of urban consolidation. There is thus some tolerance/capacity for change in the view.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The eight storey Block B1 is a prominent addition to the view, in the middle distance, rising above the roofs of the houses and the trees in the intervening landscape. Some of the other permitted buildings are visible to the right, protruding to lesser extent and therefore less prominent (and less recognisable).
- The development results in a landscape of mixed character, of period houses, mixed modern houses, and higher density housing. This is not inappropriate in the context (minutes' walk from Blackrock town centre), and the new development does not diminish the character, value or visual amenity of the area in the foreground.

Proposed View

- Minor changes are proposed to the elevation and top floor of Block C1 to the right of Block D1. This has no material effect on the view.
- To the right, the taller (by two storeys) Block E1 is more prominent, but remains secondary to Block B1.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** There would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, and no effect on any valued element or characteristic of the view.

13.5.2.19 Viewpoint 19 – Barclay Court at Entrance to Rockfield Park

Existing View

- This view is taken from the cul-de-sac at the southern end of Barclay Court, where there is a pedestrian entrance to Rockfield Park.
- In the foreground of the view are the gardens of the houses around the cul-de-sac, and a dense patch of vegetation inside the park entrance. Some larger trees can be seen within the park (these are on the boundary of St Louise's Park).

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The view provides a high level of visual amenity, and represents residential receptors (the houses in this part of Barclay Court). However, the location of the estate adjacent to Blackrock town centre, is a factor; this demands a degree of tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The E blocks to the right and Block B1 directly ahead – seen through the foreground vegetation - are notable but not prominent additions to the view. Nonetheless, due to their divergence from the existing component elements of the view, they do cause a shift in character towards a more clearly urban condition. This is not inappropriate in the location.

Proposed View

- To the right, the taller (by two storeys) Blocks E1 and E2 (some 75 m from the gable of the nearest house in Barclay Court) are more prominent, although still filtered by the foreground trees (even in winter; in summer the development will be screened).

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Low.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** Despite the slight increase in the E blocks' prominence, there would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, which would continue to provide a high level of visual amenity for the houses around the cul-de-sac.

13.5.2.20 Viewpoint 20 – Barclay Court

Existing View

- This view is taken from a position further back from the cul-de-sac in Barclay Court. The view is supplementary to Viewpoint 20, to show the full extent of the proposed Block E2.
- The Barclay Court houses and their front gardens occupy the foreground, and the road leads to a pedestrian entrance to Rockfield Park. Through a dense patch of vegetation inside the park entrance, the brightly painted handball alley wall is visible.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The view provides a high level of visual amenity, and represents residential receptors. However, the location of the estate, adjacent to Blackrock town centre, demands a degree of tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The E blocks in the near corner of the site (approximately 120 m from the viewpoint) might just be discernible through the trees in winter, and would be fully screened in summer.

Proposed View

- The increase in height of Block E2 brings it into view over the trees of Rockfield Park. The degree of intrusion is minor, and there is no significant increase in built/visual enclosure.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** The intrusion of the development in the view would be minor, and in the urban location (just off the N31, adjacent to Blackrock town centre) it would not appear out of place. There would be no reduction in the high level of visual amenity experienced in this part of Barclay Court.

13.5.2.21 Viewpoint 21 – Rockfield Park Near South West Corner of Site

Existing View

- This view is taken from Rockfield Park beside the tennis courts, near the south west corner of the site.
- A pedestrian and cycle path crosses the open space in the foreground. A low stone wall topped with a railing marks the boundary between the park and the site. Inside the wall is an overgrown lawn area, and to the right of this (out of view to the right) is a dense stand of historic demesne trees.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The view provides a high level of visual amenity, but as an urban park there is some degree of tolerance for change in its context.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The stone boundary wall is raised, and Block E1 is a prominent addition to the view. The building is five storeys tall and presents its shorter (west) elevation to the viewer. The three storey base of the building is red brick, and the two upper floors glazed, with the windows and roof of dark metal.
- In the distance on the skyline, parts of two other buildings (B1, B2) can just be seen through the trees.
- The introduction of high density housing to the view causes a shift in landscape character – towards a more urban condition - but no reduction in visual amenity. Compact growth

and green infrastructure policy both promote the optimal (or maximum sustainable) use of resources. The landscape (and visual amenity) are resources. The park is no less attractive with a building introduced beside it. Its value is in fact enhanced by the increase in use/appreciation, passive surveillance, etc.

Proposed View

- Block E1 is increase in height by one storey. The west elevation is altered, with more windows added, forming a more symmetrical grid and giving the façade a higher void to solid ratio. The brick cladding rises to the fifth storey shoulder, with the top floor glazed. Overall, these changes improve the appearance of the building. The height increase by one storey causes no significant increase in built/visual enclosure.
- A cut stone-framed gate is introduced to the boundary wall, creating a connection between the park and the new neighbourhood. The wall height differs either side of the gate. This draws attention to the gate, making it a feature in the landscape and emphasising the connection.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, positive.** The introduction of the gate, visibly increasing pedestrian connectivity in the landscape, and the improved design of the west elevation of Block E2, cause a slight improvement in the view. The increase in the building's height has no material effect; the open space provides favourable context for building height.

13.5.2.22 Viewpoint 22 – Brookfield Court Entrance to Rockfield Park

Existing View

- This view is taken from the entrance to Rockfield Park from Brookfield Court, a residential estate to the west of the park. The park's tennis and football clubhouses are in the foreground, with the open space and trees of the park extending to left and right.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.** The buildings and fencing in the foreground reduce visual amenity somewhat at this location.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- Some of the buildings are discernible through the trees to the left. While not prominent, the development causes a slight shift in landscape character towards a more urban condition. This is not inappropriate for an urban park. There is no loss of visual amenity, which derives from the open space and trees, and these are unaffected by the change.

Proposed View

- Block E1 and E2 are increased in height, but remain filtered by the trees in the park. They cause no significant increase in the prominence of built form or the degree of built/visual enclosure of the park.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Not significant, neutral.** Despite the perceivable increase in the scale of the E blocks, there would be no significant change to the composition or character of the view, and no loss of visual amenity.

13.5.2.23 Viewpoint 23 – Rockfield Park, Southern Field

Existing View

- The southern field in the park is enclosed by housing estates on three sides. In the view north across the field, the park clubhouses are visible in the middle distance against a backdrop of tall trees in the southern part of the site.
- The church tower on the skyline is a notable feature, marking the location of Blackrock town centre.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The green open space of the park and the surrounding trees provide a high level of visual amenity. However, the buildings in view within and outside of the park denote the urban context, and contribute to a capacity for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development is mostly hidden behind the retained trees in the southern part of the site – apart from the corner of Block E1, which protrudes above the clubhouse and treeline. The change to the view is minor, and there is no loss of visual amenity.

Proposed View

- The increases in height of Blocks E1, E2 and D1 cause the buildings to protrude above the retained trees in the southern part of the site.
- The stepped roofline of Blocks E1 and E2, combined with the setbacks and variation of materials at the top floors, soften the profile and reduce the perceived massing of the buildings.
- Nonetheless, the increased visual presence of built form around the park - and particularly buildings of urban typology and scale - causes a shift in landscape character towards a more urban condition.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- **Low-medium.**

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Moderate, neutral.** While the landscape context of the park would be visibly changed, the essential visual amenity generated by the green space and trees, would be unaffected. The proposed development would not remove or compromise any of these elements.
- The park's amenity is not dependent on the absence (or sparsity) of built development in view. In the urban area, attractive landscapes and views typically include buildings (or other built elements), and it is often the combination of these with green or blue spaces that creates visual interest.

13.5.2.24 Viewpoint 24 – Rockfield Park, Northern Field

Existing View

- The northern field in the park is surrounded by belts of trees, including on the site directly to the north. Many of these trees formed part of the woodland framework of Craigmore demesne (see Figure 13.2 above). Craigmore/St Teresa's House can just be discerned through the trees in the centre of the view.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The green open space of the park and the surrounding trees provide a high level of visual amenity. However, Rockfield is an urban park surrounded by development (refer to Figure 13.13), close to a town/district centre and well within the footprint of the city. This context demands some degree of tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted buildings are discernible through the retained trees in the southern part of the site. Seen from the adjacent large open space, the buildings appear modest in height and their intrusion in the view is minimal. They cause a shift in character but no loss of visual amenity.

Proposed View

- The increased height of Blocks D1, E1 and E2 increases their visibility from the park, but they are set well back from the park boundary and remain well filtered by the retained trees, even in winter.
- The open space of the park, combined with the trees, provides favourable context for large buildings. There is therefore no sense of excessive enclosure of the park by the development. (The avoidance of blocks of uniform height contributes to this.)

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Low-medium.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Moderate, neutral.** While the development would increase in prominence, the park and trees would remain the dominant elements of the view – undiminished by the buildings and no less attractive. The park would retain its high level of visual amenity.
- This view illustrates that the park's value as a landscape/visual resource would be *heightened* by the proposed development. The park currently provides visual amenity for

those that visit/enter the park, and the houses around the park. The proposed development would significantly increase the number of homes and people that benefit from the park's visual amenity – without compromising that visual amenity.

13.5.2.25 Viewpoint 25 – Dunardagh Avenue

Existing View

- Dunardagh Avenue provides road access (from the N31) to St Catherine's Provincial House (of the Daughters of Charity). This is a complex of buildings built around the historic Dunardagh House, to the south east of Craigmore/St Teresa's.
- The road from St Catherine/s passes by the Quaker Cemetery (to the right behind the wall), Rockfield Park (to the left behind the wall) and the subject site (ahead behind the trees) before emerging on the N31 beside the site, at the edge of Blackrock town centre.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The isolated road enclosed by stone walls and trees provides a high level of visual amenity. However, the location/context is urban and this demands some tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted buildings are screened by the trees in Rockfield Park and retained inside the site's south and east boundaries.

Proposed View

- The increased height of Blocks D1 and E1 brings the buildings into view above the tree line in places, but the development remains largely screened.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Low.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Slight, neutral.** There would be a shift in character towards a more urban condition, similar to the views from Rockfield Park (Views 21-24), but due to the screening effect of the retained trees, no reduction in visual amenity.

13.5.2.26 Viewpoint 26 – Quaker Cemetery

Existing View

- The cemetery is separated from the surrounding public realm and densely vegetated, with belts of tall trees around the perimeter. In the view north west from the cemetery, a gap in the enclosing trees affords a view towards the site.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium-High.** The secluded green space and the trees provide a high level of visual amenity. However, the cemetery is within the urban area, surrounded by development (refer to Figure 13.13), and close to the N31 and Blackrock town/district centre. The Newtownpark SHD development is nearing completion just to the south east of the cemetery, reinforcing its urban context. This demands some degree of tolerance for change.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- Block D1 is just discernible through the trees to the north west. The dark coloured cladding and glazing of the upper floors minimises its visual presence.

Proposed View

- The increased height of Blocks D1 brings the building clearly into view above the tree line. The building is brick-clad up to the fifth floor shoulder, with the set-back top floor of dark metal and glazing, and the visible corner rounded, forming an attractive architectural composition.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Medium.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Moderate, neutral.** The development would increase in prominence, but the cemetery and trees would remain the dominant elements of the view – undiminished by the building, and no less attractive (than the existing or permitted scenarios). The context would be more urban in character, but (a) this is not inappropriate in the location, and (b) the cemetery would retain its high level of visual amenity.

In the 2019 SHD planning application process (ABP-303804-19), Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Co. Co. requested that a number of distant views be assessed to determine the proposed development's visibility from the wider environs. Viewpoints no. 27-33 below are the distant views requested by the Council at that time.

13.5.2.27 Viewpoint 27 – Castlebyrne Park

Existing View

- Castlebyrne Park is an estate on the west side of Newtownpark Avenue, directly to the south of Rockfield Park and the site (some 700 m distant). The central open space of the estate is north-south-aligned, and affords views north towards the site. The gradient falls to the north, towards the coastline. However, the vista is closed by the houses and trees at the northern end of the green.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.**

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- As a result of the falling topography to the north, the permitted development is not visible.

Proposed View

- Despite the increase in height of Blocks D1, E1 and E2, the development would remain screened by the houses and trees in the intervening landscape.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

13.5.2.28 Viewpoint 28 – Newtownpark Avenue

Existing View

- Newtownpark Avenue descends a steep hillside towards Blackrock and the coastline from the N11. At this location (Viewpoint 28), the alignment of the road frames a view towards the site. However, as a result of the road's winding alignment, the vista is closed by the roadside houses and trees.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- Medium.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- As a result of the falling topography and the screening effect of the foreground houses and trees, the permitted development is not visible.

Proposed View

- Despite the increase in height of Blocks D1, E1 and E2, the development would remain screened by the houses and trees in the intervening landscape.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

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13.5.2.29 Viewpoint 29 – Convent Road, West of Site

Existing View

- The alignment of Convent Road frames a view east towards the site (some 500m distant). The urban street is lined by houses and Carysfort National School, and there is a prominent stand of mature trees on the school grounds towards the end of the street.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- Medium.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development is almost entirely screened by buildings and trees in the intervening landscape. Only a small part of one of the buildings may be discernible between the treetops in the centre of the view.

Proposed View

- The taller proposed Blocks D1, E1 and E2 are off the axis of the view and screened by the foreground trees.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

13.5.2.30 Viewpoint 30 – Blackrock Park

Existing View

- An elevated garden in the western part of Blackrock Park provides a vantage point for views east towards Blackrock town centre (and the site, beyond the town centre). Some of the contemporary, multi-storey buildings in the town centre can be seen above the treetops of the park.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- Medium-High.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development will not be visible.

Proposed View

- The proposed development would not be visible.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

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13.5.2.31 Viewpoint 31 – Cross Avenue, West of Site

Existing View

- The alignment of Cross Avenue frames a view east towards the site (over 1km distant). The street is lined by tall trees, houses, and a new multi-storey residential development under construction on a former institutional site.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- Medium.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development will not be visible.

Proposed View

- The proposed development would not be visible.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

13.5.2.32 Viewpoint 32 – Southern End of Sandymount Strand

Existing View

- The southern end of Sandymount Strand affords views south east along the coastline of Dublin Bay towards Blackrock (and the site).
- The sea and the coastline, the urban edge around the bay, and the distant wooded uplands create a view of high visual amenity value. However, the wide variety of building typologies, scale and architecture in the urban complex creates capacity to accommodate change.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- Medium.

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development will not be visible.

Proposed View

- Small parts of some of the buildings may be discernible above the existing roofline of Blackrock, some 3 km distant.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- Negligible.

Significance of Visual Effect

- **Indiscernible, neutral.** The development may be discernible, but would have no effect on the character or visual amenity of the view

13.5.2.33 Viewpoint 33 – Dun Laoghaire Harbour Wall

Existing View

- The harbour wall affords a view north west along the coastline of Dublin Bay towards Blackrock and the city centre.
- The sea, the coastline and the urban edge around the bay create a view of high visual amenity value. However, the wide variety of building typologies, scale and architecture in the urban complex creates capacity to accommodate change.

Viewpoint Sensitivity

- **Medium.**

Permitted/Baseline View (ABP-303804-19)

- The permitted development will not be visible.

Proposed View

- The proposed development would not be visible.

Magnitude of Change (Proposed vs. Permitted/Baseline View)

- None.

Significance of Visual Effect

- No effect.

The following table summarises the visual effects assessments in Sections 13.5.2.1-33 above.

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No	Viewpoint Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance & Quality of Effects	
				Construction (Temporary)	Operation (Permanent)
1	N31 Frascati Rd, Blackrock town centre	Low	Negligible	Imperceptible neutral	Imperceptible neutral
2	N31 Frascati Rd approaching Temple Rd junction	Low	None	No effect	No effect
3	N31 Temple Rd approaching site from the west	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
4	Temple Rd approaching N31 from Blackrock town centre	Low	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Not significant neutral
5	N31 Temple Rd passing site, approaching Blackrock centre	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Not significant neutral
6	Newtown Ave approaching junction with Newtown Rd	Medium	Low-medium	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
7	Temple Hill approaching the site and Blackrock from the SE	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
8	Neptune House, Temple View	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
9	Monkstown Rd	Medium	Negligible	Not significant negative	Not significant neutral
10	Temple Hill to SE of site	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
11	Montpelier Place off Temple Hill to SE of site	Medium	Low-medium	Imperceptible neutral	Slight-moderate neutral
12	St Vincent's Park	Medium-High	Medium	Slight negative	Moderate-neutral/ negative
13	Craigmore Gardens	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
14	Newtown Villas	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Not significant neutral
15	Access Road to Alzheimer Society and St Louise's Park	Low-Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Not significant neutral
16	St Louise's Park	Medium	Medium	Imperceptible neutral	Moderate-significant neutral/ negative
17	Barclay Court	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
18	Prospect Hill	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
19	Barclay Court at Entrance to Rockfield Park	Medium-High	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
20	Barclay Court	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight neutral
21	Rockfield Park near SW corner of site	Medium-High	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Slight positive
22	Brookfield Court Entrance to Rockfield Park	Medium	Low	Imperceptible neutral	Not significant neutral

No	Viewpoint Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance & Quality of Effects	
				Construction (Temporary)	Operation (Permanent)
23	Rockfield Park, southern field	Medium-High	Low-Medium	Slight negative	Moderate neutral
24	Rockfield Park, northern field	Medium-High	Low-Medium	Slight negative	Moderate neutral
25	Dunardagh Avenue	Medium-High	Low	Not significant negative	Slight neutral
26	Quaker Cemetery	Medium-High	Medium	Slight negative	Moderate neutral
27	Castlebyrne Park	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
28	Newtownpark Avenue	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
29	Convent Rd, west of site	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
30	Blackrock Park	Medium-High	None	No effect	No effect
31	Cross Ave, west of site	Medium	None	No effect	No effect
32	Southern end of Sandymount Strand	Medium	Negligible	Imperceptible neutral	Imperceptible neutral
33	Dun Laoghaire Harbour Wall	Medium	None	No effect	No effect

Table 13-7 Summary of potential visual effects assessment

13.6 Potential Impact of the Proposed Development – Landscape Effects

13.6.1 Construction Stage

The landscape effects of the proposed development during construction would be very similar to the effects of the permitted development during construction. This is due to the site area being the same, and the building positions approximately the same, so that a very similar construction process would be required for the two developments.

The site landscape would be disturbed by construction activities, and the incremental growth of the buildings. In the earlier stages, until the buildings reach substantial height above ground, the effects would be largely limited to the immediate environs (neighbouring properties, streets and open space). As the buildings begin to grow above ground level, the visual effects would become more widespread.

The magnitude of change to the landscape in the immediate vicinity of the site would be medium-high (although temporary), and the effects would reduce with increased distance from site. Overall, the sensitivity of the landscape can be classified medium (refer to 13.6.2.1). Therefore, the effects on the landscape would be 'moderate' and negative in the immediate vicinity of the site, reducing in significance with distance from the site. The effects would be temporary.

13.6.2 Operational Stage

13.6.2.1 Landscape Sensitivity

The landscape sensitivity of the receiving environment can be classified 'medium'.

(Medium sensitivity definition – see Table 13.1 above: Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong, or has evidence of alteration, degradation or erosion of elements and characteristics. The landscape character is such that there is some capacity for change. These areas may be recognised in landscape

policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.)

The medium sensitivity classification reflects the following:

- The site is located in the Dublin metropolitan area, adjacent to the mixed use town centre of Blackrock (classified as a 'district centre' in the DLRCDP). The site has frontage to a wide urban thoroughfare (the N31 Blackrock Bypass/Temple Road) as it enters/exits Blackrock town centre. The site context is thus urban.
- The site is zoned for residential development, and planning permission was previously granted for a development of comparable typology and scale to that now proposed on the site.
- The site is part brownfield and part greenfield. The brownfield area alongside Temple Road was previously occupied by a cluster of institutional buildings. The modern (20th century) institutional buildings have been removed in anticipation of the site's redevelopment, leaving this portion of the site in a disturbed condition.
- The original Craigmore/St Teresa's House (a protected structure) remains standing on the site, albeit in poor condition. The site also includes an original gate lodge (also a protected structure) beside Temple Road opposite the Newtown Avenue junction.
- The site includes a framework of woodland/trees remaining from the Craigmore demesne. These trees are a valuable local landscape feature, and also provide established vegetation screening for development on the site.
- The land uses and plot and building typologies around the site are typical of the urban location. The area includes commercial buildings (some of large scale) along the N31, institutional buildings, and areas of low density suburban style housing developed through the 20th century. The neighbouring residential streets and estates can be considered sensitive receptors, although their urban location demands a degree of tolerance for change/development in their context.
- To the south, the site borders on a large public open space, Rockfield Park. Urban open spaces, like wide roads (the N31), provide favourable context for higher density development as the space provides 'breathing space' for taller buildings, and can benefit from the spatial enclosure/definition and passive surveillance provided by tall buildings.

Based on the above, the sensitivity of the receiving environment can be classified medium. There are several landscape factors that indicate capacity to accommodate change (e.g. the urban location, the site's frontage to both a wide urban thoroughfare and a large open space, and the diversity of the surrounding land use and plot and building typologies). The site's planning history and the national and local planning/development policy of compact growth support this. There are also certain landscape/visual receptors that are sensitive to change. Most notable among these are the neighbouring lower density residential estates and streets, and the historic buildings and vegetation on the site.

13.6.2.2 Magnitude of Change and Significance of Landscape Effects

The proposed development, the subject of this assessment, is an amendment to an existing planning permission (ABP-303804-19). In order to assess the magnitude of change that would result from the proposed amendment, the landscape change that would result from the permitted development must first be understood.

The effects of the permitted development on the landscape character of the receiving environment would be mixed:

- Its effects would be 'significant' along the N31 corridor, which would be transformed by the row of buildings of contemporary urban character and scale, at the road's entrance/exit to Blackrock town centre. This would have the effect of extending the town centre eastwards along the N31 as far as the Newtown Avenue junction. The design quality of the development is such that it would enhance the N31 corridor, counteracting the road's current dominance of its immediate environs. The landscape effects on the N31 corridor would thus be significant positive.
- The permitted development would have 'moderate' effects on the landscape context of (a) the houses across the N31 and on Craigmore Gardens to the north, and (b) the small estate of St Louise's Park, and Barclay Court to the west. These housing areas lie adjacent to the town centre and the N31, and the permitted development will reinforce their urban context – not inappropriately. The significance of the effects on these areas would thus be moderate neutral.
- The permitted development would have an effect of slight-moderate significance on the landscape context of St Vincent's Park to the east. The moderation of the height of Block D1, combined with its setback from the boundary and the retention of the trees inside the boundary, limit its visibility from the neighbouring estate. It will be visible but not prominent. The visibility of higher density development cannot be considered inappropriate in this location, and St Vincent's Park would retain a high level of visual amenity. The effect on this area would be of slight-moderate significance and neutral.
- The permitted development would have a similar effect on the landscape context of Rockfield Park to the south. For the most part, the moderation of the height of the buildings, their setback from the park boundary and the retention of the belt of mature trees inside the boundary, would limit the development's visibility, so that its effect would be slight neutral.

The proposed amendment seeks to increase the height of the D and E blocks inside the south (Rockfield Park and St Louise's Park) and south east (St Vincent's Park) boundaries, to achieve a greater yield of homes from the site.

The assessment of potential visual effects in Section 13.5.1 above (summarised in Table 13.7) shows that the proposed amendments would have no significant effect on (a) views from the N31 corridor (Viewpoints 1-7), (b) the houses and residential streets across the N31 to the north (Viewpoints 13 and 14), (c) Barclay Court and Prospect Hill (Viewpoints 17-20), and (d) views from the wider environs (e.g. Viewpoints 27-33). The landscape effects of the proposed amendment on these areas - compared to the effects of the permitted development - would effectively be the same.

The main changes to the development's visual and landscape affects as a result of the proposed amendment would be to (a) Rockfield Park to the south, and (b) St Louise's Park to the west and St Vincent's Park to the east:

- The proposed amendment would increase the significance of the landscape effects on Rockfield Park from slight to moderate. The development (Blocks D1, E1 and E2 specifically) would be more visible/prominent above the retained tree belt along the park boundary, but the photomontages show that the effect would not be negative. The park is large enough to comfortably accommodate the building height with no sense of excessive enclosure. The screening/filtering of the buildings by the retained trees contributes to this. The park's amenity value derives from the open space and surrounding trees, which would be unaffected by the development. They would remain the defining elements of the landscape experienced in the park. As an urban open space, it cannot be expected that surrounding development should not be visible from the park. This would be unrealistic and unsustainable, and would limit the value of the park as a resource. Both green infrastructure and compact growth policy promote the maximum

sustainable use of resources, including landscape assets such as Rockfield Park. The proposed development would derive new/greater value from the resource by the increase in the number of apartments alongside and overlooking the park. Importantly, this would be achieved with no detriment to the park's amenities. In summary, the proposed amendment would increase the significance of the landscape effects on Rockfield Park from slight to moderate - and the effect would be positive.

- The proposed amendment would increase the significance of the landscape effects on St Vincent's Park (see Viewpoint 12) from slight to moderate, and on St Louise's Park (see Viewpoint 16) from moderate to moderate-significant. The increased height of Blocks D1, E1 and E2 would increase the buildings' prominence in views from these neighbouring low density estates. The buildings' increased intrusion in the views towards the site, and the increased built/visual enclosure, would likely be considered by the residents of those estates to detract from their visual amenity. However, considered objectively, the buildings are of appreciably high design and material quality, so that (a) as stand-alone features they would be attractive, and (b) the views in which they feature (with other elements such as the estate houses, and trees) would not be unsightly. Additionally, due to their own low density, low rise typology, the neighbouring estates would retain large areas of sky space in views in all other directions; the built/visual enclosure would not be excessive.
- The resulting compositions of large-scale contemporary buildings juxtaposed with smaller scale, older buildings – as illustrated by the photomontages for Viewpoints 12 and 16 – are increasingly common in the city, and are an unavoidable consequence of compact growth policy. The introduction of high density typologies to previously low density areas inevitably leads to juxtapositions of development era, building scale and architecture - particularly at the edges of urban cores (such as Blackrock, Stillorgan, Dun Laoghaire, etc.). This cannot be avoided, and the perceived negative effects at the interface must be weighed against the sustainability benefits of increased density. Such diversity can also generate visual interest and character in the urban landscape.

13.7 Potential Cumulative Impacts

The planning permitted developments in the vicinity of the site with potential to interact with the proposed development were identified by the EIAR coordinator. These are shown in Figure 13.39 below.

None of these permitted developments is (a) so close to the subject site, and/or (b) of such large scale that they could interact with the proposed development to result in landscape or visual impacts of greater significance than those predicted in Sections 13.5 and 13.6 above.

However, a number of the permitted developments fall into the same broad category, of 'contemporary, multi-storey buildings', as the proposed development. These include:

- The Frascati Centre (no. 7 on the map below);
- 13-15 Rock Hill (no. 8);
- Newtownpark SHD (no. 12);
- The former Europa Garage site (no. 10);
- Dalguise House (no. 5);
- Old Dun Leary Road site (no. 1).

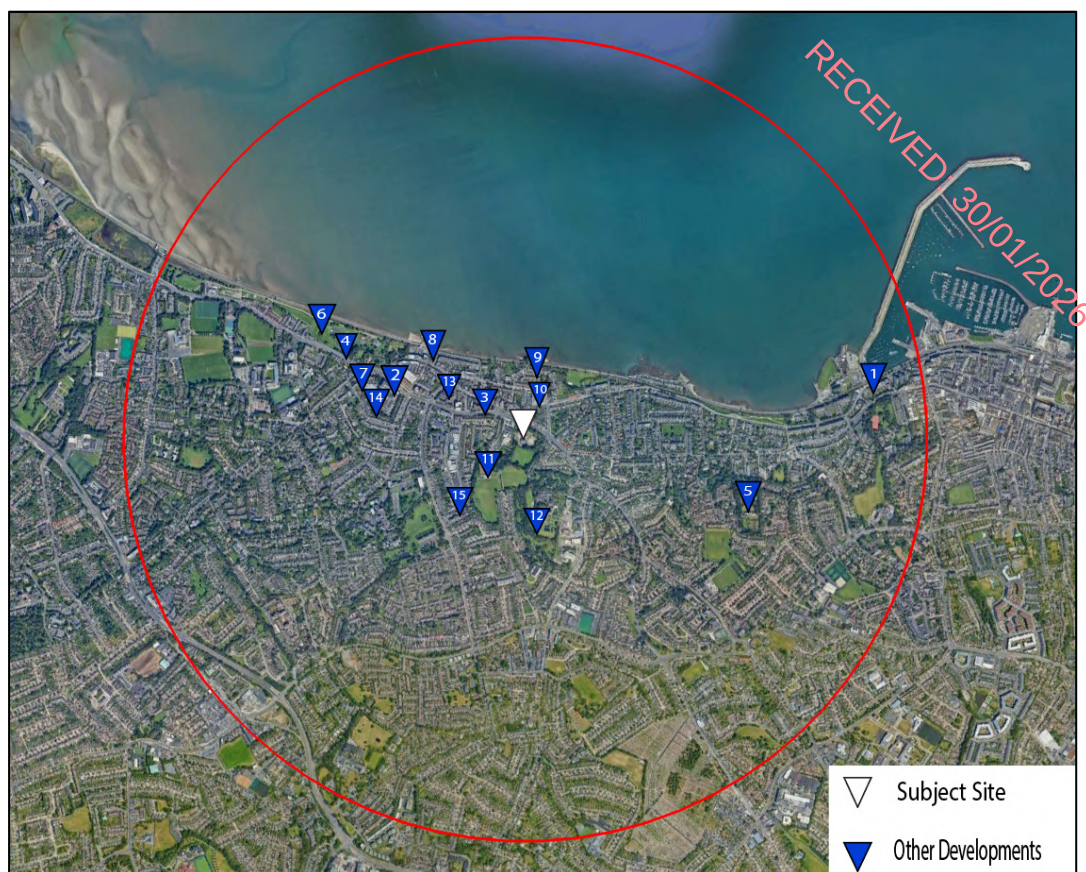


Figure 13.39 – Permitted developments identified in the Viewpoints for visual effects assessment – Distant views

For the most part, it is unlikely that the proposed development would be seen side-by-side or one in front of the other with any of these developments; the proposed development is too far removed from them.

However, in combination, these developments will all contribute to the ongoing, widespread trend of urban consolidation, densification and increased height in the city. This trend is plan-led, resulting from compact growth and building height policy at national and local level. As the trend progresses, it creates increasingly favourable context/conditions for similar development.

For example, a person travelling down Newtownpark Avenue towards Blackrock will pass by the Newtownpark SHD development (no. 12 on the map above). This is a development of apartment buildings up to five storeys tall on a former institutional property. The development is located beside a large church, a school, the Daughters of Charity facility in Dunardagh House, and a part of Rockfield Park. The development also lies adjacent (to the rear of) a row of suburban-style houses fronting Newtownpark Avenue. It is thus has a similar context to the site, albeit further removed from Blackrock town centre. Having passed by the Newtownpark Avenue development, the viewer would not be surprised to pass the proposed development a short time later on the N31 entering Blackrock town centre. The two developments would provide mutually favourable context for each other. It should be noted, however, that the vast majority of housing in the area would remain of 'traditional house' typology.

13.8 Do Nothing Scenario

If the proposed amendment is not permitted, the permitted development would likely be implemented. A new, high density residential neighbourhood would be added to the landscape of Blackrock, adjacent to the N31 and the town centre, with landscape/visual effects of greatest significance along the N31 Temple Road corridor.

If no development were to go ahead, the site would remain as a large area of formerly institutional land - part brownfield and visibly disturbed, and part greenfield, of parkland character - within an urban area of mixed character. There would be no access to the lands, and the residential land use objective for the site would be unrealised. Parts of the site would continue to appear disused/disturbed, including the protected structure, Craigmole/St Teresa's House. Other parts/elements of the site, particularly the trees/woodland, would continue to provide visual amenity and ecosystem services to the environs. However, in the context of urban consolidation/compact growth policy, the site is considered an unsustainable use of the land resource.

13.9 Mitigation Measures

Construction Stage

Apart from (a) the measures for tree protection (as recommended in the Arboricultural Report prepared by The Tree File Ltd), and (b) standard best practice construction site management (as set out in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan by JJ Campbell & Associates), no additional mitigation measures are proposed for landscape and visual effects.

Operational Stage

The only potential negative effects of the proposed amendment are in the views from St Vincent's Park and St Louise's Park, where the increased height of Blocks D1, E1 and E2 would increase these buildings' prominence, changing the character of these neighbouring estates' landscape context.

These existing low density estates are located adjacent to the subject site, which was identified in the Blackrock Local Area Plan 2015-2021 (the 'BLAP', which was extended to March 2025) as having "substantial development potential having regard to its zoning, site size, proximity to Blackrock village core, public transport links and recreational facilities". The BLAP stated: "The site presents an opportunity to consolidate and enhance the local built environment within the Plan boundary while providing additional housing within this attractive and desirable locality... This area of the landholding lends itself to higher density development... given its proximity to the District Centre and a major public transport corridor".

The Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 (DLRDP) is also encouraging of high density development on sites such as the subject site. Table 1.4 of the DLRDP sets out the Five Strategic County Outcomes of the Plan, including the following:

"Creation of a Compact and Connected County: One of the best ways to transition to a climate resilient County is to consolidate development within the existing urban footprint thus making best use of land. Sustainable planning policy has long been underpinned by the matching of land use and transport policies so that denser development takes place close to good quality public transport options and supporting services. This will allow those living, working and visiting the County easy access to amenities and services by way of high-quality public transport and the softer modes of walking and cycling." (emphasis added)

Accordingly, Policy Objective PHP18 of the DLRDP states: "It is a Policy Objective to:

- Promote compact urban growth through the consolidation and re-intensification of infill/brownfield sites.
- Encourage higher residential densities provided that proposals provide for high quality design and ensure a balance between the protection of existing residential amenities and the established character of the surrounding area, with the need to provide for high quality sustainable residential development." (emphasis added)

The introduction of taller, high density building typologies to the landscape (and views from the surroundings, including pre-existing lower density areas) is an unavoidable – and not undesirable - consequence of compact growth policy, and is increasingly common in the city as former

institutional and industrial lands are redeveloped for high density residential use. This was assumed to cause negative landscape/visual impacts, but there are now numerous examples of high density development that have taken place successfully in the urban landscape without unduly affecting the visual and residential amenities of neighbouring lower density areas. Policy PHP18 of the DLRDP speaks of ensuring a *balance* between protecting existing residential amenities and the need to provide high density residential development. The implication of this is that views in the urban area will change (as taller buildings are introduced); taller development will take place beside lower rise development; there will be juxtapositions in typology and scale. This is normal in the 21st century city, and the most appropriate locations for it are close to urban centres where public transport and the widest range of services and amenities are available.

A reduction in height of Blocks D1, E1 and E2 may reduce the landscape and visual effects of the development on St Vincent's Park and St Louise's Park, but this would reduce the housing yield from the valuable urban site. The preservation of the views and landscape character of the neighbouring estates must be weighed against the community gain of the increased provision of housing on the site.

13.10 Residual Impacts

Since no mitigation measures have been recommended, the residual impacts would be the same as the potential impacts described and classified in Section 13.5 (visual effects) and 13.6 (landscape effects) above.

13.11 Monitoring

The retention of existing trees on site is an important element of the proposal. Any unplanned loss of trees beyond that considered and designed for in the application could result in negative landscape and visual impacts.

The planning application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Method Statement, Tree Protection Plan and Preliminary Management Recommendations in the Arboricultural Report by the Tree File Consulting Arborists. These include the requirement for all works potentially affecting trees on the site to be supervised by a Project Arborist, and for retained tree population to be reviewed for any ongoing monitoring or management needs.

13.12 Reinstatement

No reinstatement measures are required.

13.13 Interactions

Biodiversity

The proposed landscape plan demonstrates a strong integration with ecological considerations by incorporating retained trees, new native planting, habitat creation, and sustainable drainage features. Open spaces will provide amenity areas for residents and the public, including play zones, fitness areas, and seating. To facilitate these features, some vegetation removal is required.

Mitigation measures have been embedded within the design to offset these impacts. Native shrubs will be planted in the woodland understory to enhance structural diversity and maintain ecological function. This approach ensures that perimeter areas remain largely inaccessible to the public, preserving a commuting and foraging corridor for wildlife and maintaining a habitat protection zone. Tree loss will be compensated through the planting of both native and selected non-native species across the site, improving canopy cover and providing nesting and feeding opportunities for birds. Lawn and wildflower meadows are incorporated into the design to offset any loss of grassland habitat.

Boundary zones and southern green areas are designed as biodiversity buffers, supporting pollinators and small mammals through wildflower meadows, native shrubs, and log piles. Tree retention and protection (for the majority of trees on Site) and proposed tree planting throughout the Site enhances ecological connectivity (The Tree File, 2025), while swales, tree pits and attenuation areas provide natural stormwater management, accounting for the quality and quantity of runoff, as well as the amenity value of surface water in the urban environment. These measures collectively promote habitat diversity and strengthen the site's ecological resilience within an urban context.

Overall, the interaction between biodiversity and landscape is considered long-term, slight, and neutral, with ecological connectivity maintained and enhanced through targeted planting strategies.

Population and Human Health

The proposed development would introduce a new, high density residential neighbourhood to the urban landscape, favourably located with respect to Blackrock town centre and shopping areas, employment and education facilities, public transport services and public open space. This would have significant, long-term, positive impacts for the new resident community

The proposal includes a substantial area of public open space contiguous with Rockfield Park adjacent to the site. The southern and central open space areas would be visible and accessible from Rockfield Park, effectively expanding the park onto the site and incorporating the numerous retained trees in these areas into the expanded public open space. The interaction between landscape and population and human health would constitute a moderate, long term, positive effect.

Architectural Heritage

The site includes three protected structures, 'St. Teresa's House', 'St. Teresa's Lodge' and associated entrance gates:

- The proposed development would retain, refurbish and re-purpose St Teresa's House, dividing the house into six apartments.
- The proposed development would relocate St Teresa's Lodge from its current position in the north east corner of the site beside the N31, to a position inside the southern boundary, adjacent to Rockfield Park. The gate lodge would be re-purposed as a café, accessible to the public from Rockfield Park.
- The entrance gates would be retained in their current position.

The condition of the three protected structures, and the condition of their landscape contexts, would be improved. Their incorporation into a high quality residential neighbourhood landscape, and their new functions, would make them more accessible to the public, allowing for greater appreciation as well as securing their long term maintenance.

Overall, the interaction between architectural heritage and landscape is considered long-term, moderate, and positive.

13.14 Difficulties Encountered

No difficulties were encountered in the preparation of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment chapter.

13.15 References

- Blackrock Local Area Plan 2015-2021, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council;
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council;
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition (2013), Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, 2018, published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022), Environmental Protection Agency.
- Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2011), Landscape Institute.
- Townscape Character Assessment, Technical Information Note 05/2017 (2017), Landscape Institute.
- Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009), Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018), Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.