

DESIGN STATEMENT
for Residential Development



This Design Statement has been prepared by McCrossan O'Rourke Manning Architects, Albert Place West, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2 on behalf of Rockture 1 Ltd. for proposed Strategic Housing Development, Dublin Road, Dunshaughlin, Co Meath

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1. Site Location / General Description

The site locates to south east of Dunshaughlin town centre, on the eastern side of the R147 Regional Approach Road which links Dunshaughlin to the M50 and beyond. The lands being the subject of this application, and the earlier phases of development (approved Phases 1A, 1B and 1C) where construction and occupation is already substantially progressed, combine to form a single master-planned area.

The development will consist the construction of 913 dwellings, comprising 505 houses, 186 duplex units and 222 apartments and a Neighbourhood Centre (Retail, Creche, Community uses). A wide variety of dwelling typologies is proposed, from one, two and three bedroom apartments and duplex units to three and four bedroom houses, including also a number of bungalows incorporating specific universal access/use provisions to cater for local needs identified by Meath County Council.

The development is designed to link efficiently to the wider area, to the lands abutting the site, including employment lands, the adjoining school campus lands and particularly to the existing town. The development will integrate as a high quality extension of the Dunshaughlin town.

By virtue of its size, the development can facilitate the provision of a number of large meaningful parks and open spaces of civic scale which will serve the subject development and which it is envisaged will also offer destination point recreation facilities to Dunshaughlin Town and to the wider hinterland.

2. Masterplan Vision

The subject lands are directly abutted to the south-west by a large school campus site, further along the west by industrial/employment and residential uses, to the north by residential, to the east by recreational use and to the south by an existing residential development and main road with lands zoned for community/educational uses immediately opposite across the main road.

The lands locate south east of and approximately 750m of Dunshaughlin Town Centre on the main approach road to the town. The proposal is designed as a masterplan considered in association with the already approved and substantially constructed/occupied development known as "The Willows" immediately to the south, which is also in the ownership as the applicant.

The Masterplan Vision recognises the important location of the lands with a special awareness of the duty to deliver maximum social gain on lands located strategically close to an established town centre. The overall layout

therefore reflects the grain of the residential enclaves of the town delivered in an urban grid configuration. The orientation of the grid reflects the line of the existing hedges on site. While the condition of these hedges does not merit general retention (as advised by the project Ecologist), the orientation of the field pattern created by the hedges is reflected in the scheme design.

In delivering the urban character particular strategies are prioritised:

- Convenient links and potential connections provided to the immediately adjoining school campus, residential and industrial/lands
- Efficient and safe connections provided to the proximate town centre
- Strong permeability provided through the site with particular emphasis on cyclist and pedestrian
- Clear roads network hierarchy and directioning provided
- Directioning and sense of place enhanced by important focal points within the scheme including Open Spaces and social spaces of varying size
- Variation and sense of space delivered through Character Areas' spaces and materials
- Appropriate density delivered for most efficient land use
- Building types and heights increased to deliver urban scale along main boulevard and flanking town park
- Building heights and design lower and more intimate in residential enclaves and homezones

3. Urban Design Rationale

- Context
- Connections
- Inclusivity
- Variety
- Efficiency
- Distinctiveness
- Layout
- Public Realm
- Adaptability
- Privacy / Amenity
- Parking
- Detailed Design



Fig.1 Site Plan

(a) Context

Regional Context

- The Development Plan, Zoning and Regional Context is addressed in John Spain & Associates Report
- The Planning Context and Planning History is addressed in John Spain & Associates Report

Local Context

A SWOT analysis was carried out for the subject lands, recording adjoining uses and identifying characteristics - strengths, weaknesses and opportunities within the subject and adjoining lands and listing design approaches adopted to react to these characteristics. Ref SWOT analysis drawing above.

Site strengths include proximity to existing town centre, to employment zones, to the adjoining school campus lands and easy access to R147 and bus routes, immediately locating infrastructural services

Site weaknesses include existing rigid wayleave from south (pumping station) to north, industrial lands to west requiring visual buffering, relatively featureless terrain with limited design references.

The proposed design exploits the strengths by delivering appropriate architectural grain, maximising connectivity and creating attractive spaces, focal points and destination points.

Concurrently the proposed design minimises weaknesses through employing distinctive road and open space hierarchies to deliver recognisable features within the scheme and by using landscaping and perimeter parks as visual buffers.

(b) Connections

The masterplan indicates pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular connections through the lands, to adjoining landholdings and to the town centre. In this way a permeable new neighbourhood is provided on this strategic landholding to the south east of Dunshaughlin Town Centre which will provide for the sustainable expansion of the town over the next ten years.

The applicant also owns the employment zoned lands to the east, and an area of agricultural zoned land to the east. The applicant will facilitate development on the

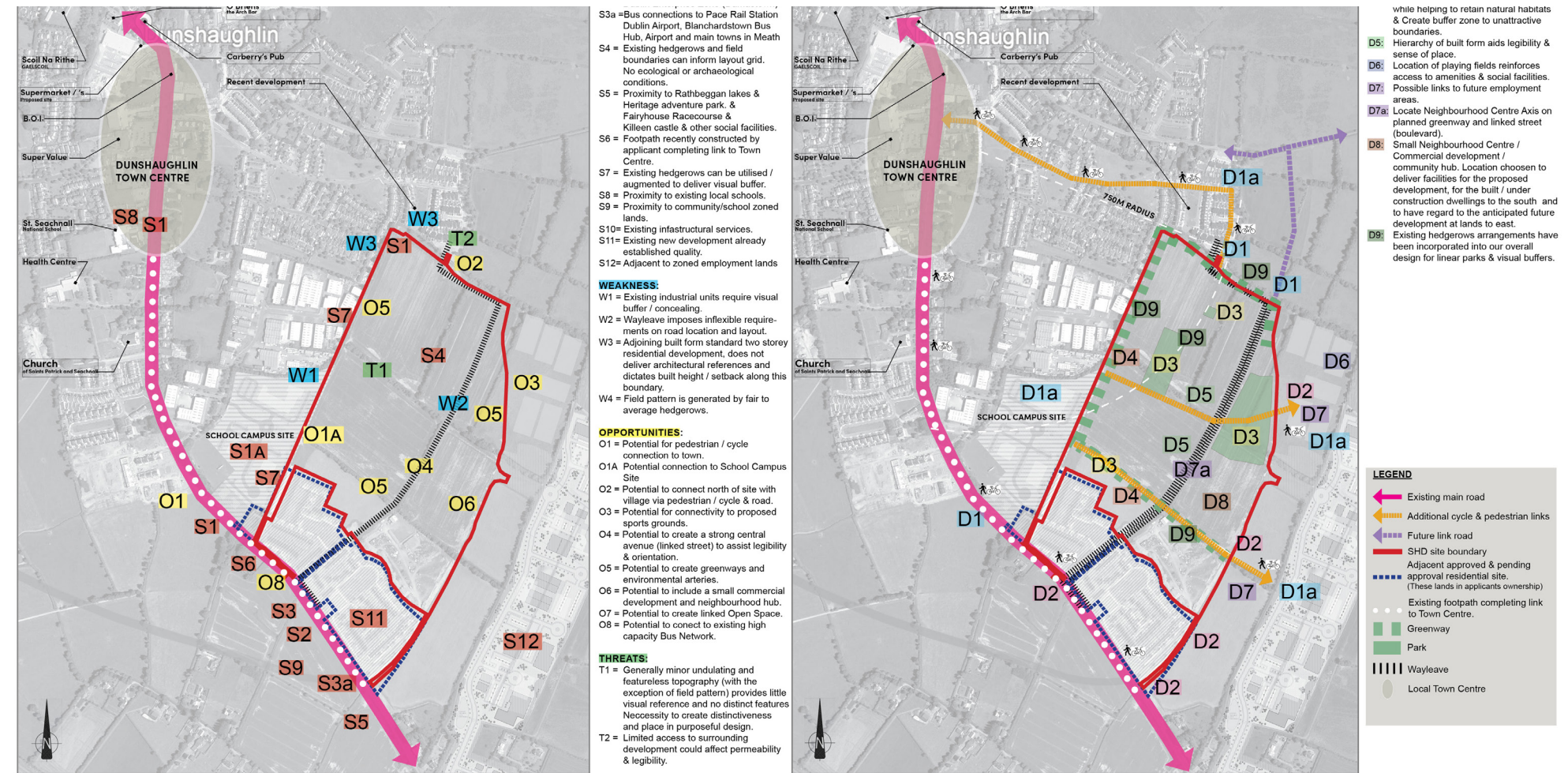


Fig.2 SWOT Analysis

employment zoned lands subject to market demand, which will enhance the job to population ratio within Dunshaughlin in line with the development of residential units.

A link road, approved under previous planning permissions, runs south to north along the eastern boundary of the site. The positioning of this link road is per the Meath County Development Plan. This route provides access to the subject lands and also allows for link from the Lagore Road to the R147.

A strong tree-lined boulevard is proposed to run south to north within the site, with access roads feeding left and right to the proposed residential cells and character areas. The position of this boulevard is set by the existing sewer (and associated required wayleave) running north from the existing pumping station located at the R147 road. The scale of this boulevard, the strong

flanking building lines and the extensive tree planting will clearly define it as the dominant road off which lower status roads feed to provide access to the more intimate dwelling clusters. This will assist in place-making and directioning for visitors etc.

The boulevard aligns with and reads continuous with the existing road "Willow Way" in the constructed/approved scheme to the south. The adjacent link road, per the Meath County Development Plan, was conceived as the main south-north link from the R147 towards Lagore Road, therefore vehicular connection from the R147 into the southern end of Willow Way was precluded.

The masterplan provides for a high level of accessibility and permeability, ensuring ease of circulation throughout the scheme and easy access to proposed areas of public open space and neighbourhood centre facilities. Pedestrian and cycle routes will be provided throughout the scheme, with a main arterial pedestrian and cycle

route running through the scheme from north to south. There is the potential for the continuation of this north-south linkage via the connection through the lands to the north of the subject site, subject to cooperation with a separate landowner / Planning Authority of the development permitted under Reg. Ref.: RA160065, which makes provision for a pedestrian / cycle linkage with the future development on the subject site. A pedestrian and cycle route is provided also in the linear woodland park running north-south along the western boundary of the subject lands. A pedestrian and cycle route runs east to west across the lands with provision to link to the school campus site to the west, delivering a direct link from the proposed residential development to adjacent employment related uses and potentially to the village, schools etc.

These pedestrian and cycle routes interconnect to deliver an efficient movement grid through the proposed layout.

(c) Inclusivity

The masterplan provides for inclusivity through:

- Dwelling Mix
- Convenient connections to wider context
- Easy access to units and within units

Mix

The mix of dwelling types proposed will complement the adjacent development (“The Willows”) being implemented as part of the earlier approved phases under construction. This continuing variety of the housing stock will add to the home choice within the town, within the immediate area and also within the site itself, allowing for future residents to upgrade or downsize whilst maintaining their established roots.

The proposed houses are designed as generally two storey family units in a semi-detached or terraced format. Semi-detached units are generally 3, 4 or 5 bedroom while terraced units are 2 and 3 bedroom.

In addition to the above, a number of single-storey bungalows is proposed. These units will provide for a particular need in the Dunshaughlin area for single storey units for people/families with disabili-ties.

The proposed Duplex Units are three storey, incorporating a two-storey upper unit and a single-storey lower unit, each with own door access.

The proposed apartments, in blocks of generally three to four storeys (with local five storey feature areas), will be one, two and three bedroom. The apartments are arranged in a single cluster of blocks which also houses a Neighbourhood Centre incorporating retail, and crèche.

The differing dwelling types and sizes are distributed around the scheme for variety. Within each house type, there are a number of different variations, dependent of location.

The sizes of the proposed residential units are generous, providing flexible living spaces in excess of the standards set out within the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Guidelines. The are-as of the proposed apartments are set to provide spacious accommodation to attract, among oth-ers, those people who may wish to trade down to more manageable accommodation from larger houses in the local hinterland or within the proposed development

Each house will have rear private garden space and on-curtilage front parking. Planted areas will be provided to the front of dwellings. Bin storage for semi-detached houses will locate in rear gardens. Terraced houses will have bin storage enclosures to front. Three-bin storage will be provided in each case.

Duplex and apartment units will be served by centrally located communal bin stores and generously landscaped communal areas.

Each of the proposed house types demonstrate a considered architectural approach, and the scheme as a whole will benefit from a sense of visual rhythm and interest, based on the variation of house types and layouts throughout. Units local to Public Open Space will incorporate windows fac-ing the Open Space to provide passive surveillance. End gables facing public areas and Open Space will be enriched with additional windows, features and detailing

Further information on the house type and design is set out in the architectural drawings.

Convenient connections to wider context

The proposal provides for efficient pedestrian and cycle linkages within the development and to the neighbouring lands, the proximate town centre, shops, schools etc.

The entire development will be within a 30kph Slow Zone with pedestrians and cyclists given priority over vehicles through provisions including dedicated green link movement paths for pedestrians and cyclists, speed tables, narrower local street typologies and homezone enclaves etc.

In the wider context bus routes on the R147 provide opportunities for efficient access to the subject lands from Navan, Trim, Dublin Airport, Dublin Enterprise Zone (Damastown) and further afield.

A planned arterial route feeding from the R147 (Meath County Development Plan objective) flanks the eastern boundary of the subject lands. This route provides access to the subject lands and also al-lows for link from the Lagore Road to the R147. The link road incorporates a central roundabout sig-nifying vehicular access to the proposed Neighbourhood Centre and provides for a possible future link to the zoned employment lands to the east.



Fig.3 Site Context

Easy access to units and within units

The design of approach routes, entrances and accommodation within the proposed units incorporate the provisions of Building Regulations Part M Access and Use 2010.

Houses are provided with level access, accessible circulation and accessible sanitary provisions.

Apartments are provided with level access and common circulation, stairs and lifts are designed in accordance with Building Regulations Part M.

The interiors of apartments and duplex units are provided with accessible circulation and accessible sanitary provisions.

In addition the proposed development includes a number of bungalows incorporating access and use provisions beyond the requirement of Building Regulations Part M. These units are included in response to request by Meath County Council to assist in their providing dwellings for families with special needs in the local community.

The additional provisions include enlarged circulation/ wheelchair turning spaces and provision for bedroom to bathroom hoists.

Parking is provided close to each unit. Open spaces are distributed evenly across the proposed development, easily accessible and within easy walking distance from all units.

(d) Variety

How does the scheme promote a good mix of activities?

Wider Context

The proposed development, by virtue of proximity to the town centre and nearby school and employment hubs, will deliver easily accessed residential accommodation serving those employed in those areas

In addition, through the close proximity of bus routes, those working further afield will have easy access to the development.

Those living within the development will have easy access to employment, retail and recreation hubs and to public parks.

The proposed development, while in itself mostly residential, will be an appropriate addition to a hinter-land already enjoying an established variety of activities and uses (employment, retail, recreation, schools, public parks etc.). By delivering needed residential units, the development will support this variety of uses by housing prospective workers (employment hubs) and patrons of the retail, recreation and educational facilities.

Within the Scheme

The proposed building types and heights vary, ensuring a visually engaging, high quality residential environment. Typologies include two storey (and some three storey) houses, three storey duplex units, 3 and 4 storey apartment buildings (with local 5 storey zones at prominent junctions) and Neighbourhood Centre facilities. Dwelling sizes will range from 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments and duplex units to three, four and five bedroom houses. This broad range of housing typology and size will add to the variety of home choice within the immediate Dunshaughlin area and also within the site itself, catering for different demographics and providing the opportunities for future residents to upgrade or down-size whilst maintaining their established roots within the local community.

The proposed scheme will avoid mundanity in its design via the use of varying unit designs and types, all of which will be completed using a palette of high quality building materials varied across the Character Areas and interspersed with high quality public realm, landscaping and open space.

The development will be arranged as a series of distinctive Character or Neighbourhood Areas, defined by varying housing types, densities and layouts. Further definition will be delivered through variations in architectural design approach and materials. (See “Distinctiveness” below).

The development provides for a Neighbourhood Centre incorporating Creche, Retail Unit, Community Facility etc. The Centre is strategically located within the development to maximise convenience and social value (see 4 Neighbourhood Centre Area below). It is envisaged that this Centre will develop as a vibrant local facility providing a range of uses self-contained within the development.



Fig.3 Typologies

The approach to the delivery of Open Space is to distribute a series of parks/public areas across the development and to incorporate linear parks with strong footpath and cycle links at the perimeter of the site and through the site. This will foster distinctiveness and neighbourhood, with each dwelling having views over or locating within short distance of Open Space.

Focal Points Open Spaces are included in the above:

- The large “Town Park”
- The “Town Plaza”
- The Boulevard
- The Linear Parks

By virtue of its size, the development can facilitate the provision of these large meaningful parks and open spaces of civic scale which will serve the subject development and which it is envisaged will also offer destina-

tion point recreation facilities to Dunshaughlin Town and to the wider hinterland, thereby adding to the variety of recreation choices.

(e) Efficiency

How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?

Use of Land

The nett residential density over the proposed site will be c. 39-45 units per hectare. This density is in accordance with the Guidelines for Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, having regard to the outer suburban, greenfield nature of these lands. When the proposed units on the subject lands and the constructed/approved units on the lands to the south (“The Willows”) are calculated as one landbank the combined nett density comfortably exceeds 35 per hectare.

The masterplan provides for a wide range of unit types and layouts, including a variety of house types, apartments and duplex units. The density of residential development will vary across the lands in order to create a series of distinctive neighbourhood areas. It is proposed that these densities represent an efficient use of available lands.

Density zone 1:- The higher density zone, incorporating the majority of apartments within the scheme. This zone of the development, by virtue of its “arrival point” location and visibility from the arterial link road, was earmarked at initial design stage as the location for the Neighbourhood Centre and Lower Boulevard, each requiring strong density to deliver appropriate urban scale and concentration and to support commercial viability.

Density zone 2:- Incorporating predominantly two storey dwellings in semi-detached and terrace configurations, combined with the Upper Boulevard on the eastern side, the density of this area is lower, reflecting the concentration of quieter residential enclaves locating westwards away from the Boulevard

Density zone 3:- Similar to Density zone 2, with a slight increase in density as the northern end of the site moves nearer to the eastern flanks of the town centre

Use of Existing Services' Infrastructures

Through meaningful concentration of dwellings and commercial buildings in a single location the proposed development efficiently exploits the existing public services available in the area including:

- water supply
 - electrical and communication grids
 - foul drainage (existing mains pumping station locates at the southern end)
 - transport facilities (as described in “Connections” above).
- The proximity of local schools will limit travel time for parents and students

Energy Use

Fabric insulation performances, Building Services and Renewable Technologies combined will deliver Building Energy Rating A for the proposed residential units (DEAP calculation method, as defined by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). Retail and Commercial Units will also be designed to comply with the relevant Building Regulation requirements (see also “Detailed Design” below).

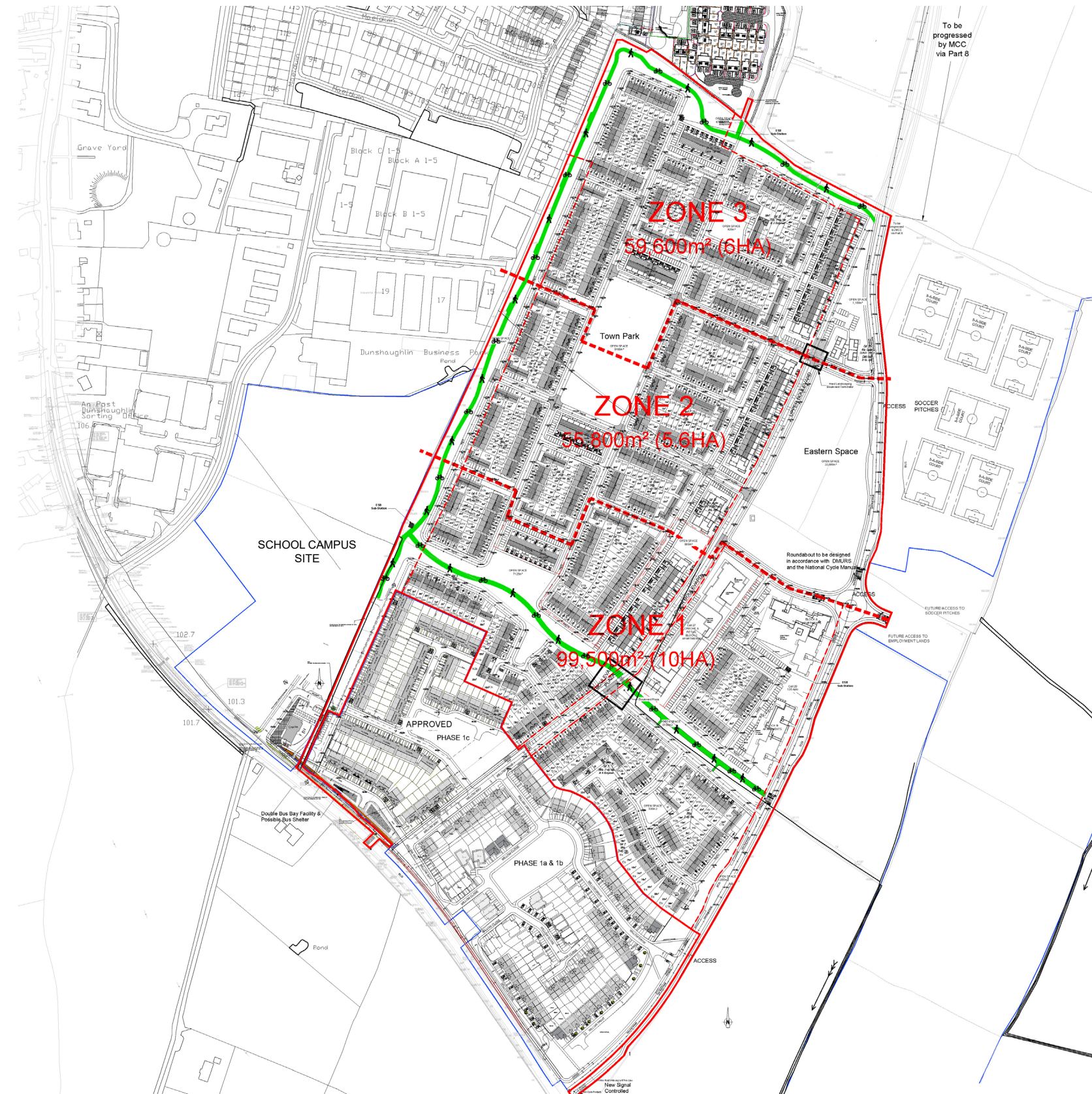


Fig.4 Density

(f) Distinctiveness

How do the proposals create a sense of place?

Two main design devices are employed to deliver distinctiveness and sense of place:

ROAD LAYOUT AND HIERARCHY

CHARACTER OF SPACES (CHARACTER AREAS) AND OPEN SPACES

A link road, approved under previous planning permissions, runs south to north along the eastern boundary of the site. The positioning of this link road is per the Meath County Development Plan. This route will be clearly defining as a landmarking connection providing access to the subject lands and ultimately providing a link from the R147 to the Lagore Road. By effectively “encircling and en-closing” the subject development, the link road will enhance the recognition of the development as part of the town.

Within the development and accessed from the link road, the first “focal point” is the Town Plaza feeding to a strong tree-lined boulevard. This boulevard will run south to north within the site, with access roads feeding left and right to the proposed residential cells and character areas. The position of this boulevard is set by the existing sewer (and associated required wayleave) running north from the existing pumping station located at the R147 road. The scale of this boulevard, the strong flanking building lines and the extensive tree planting will clearly define it as the dominant road off which lower status roads feed to provide access to the more intimate dwelling clusters. This movement from outer link road, to plaza/boulevard and thereafter to streets reducing in scale down to residential enclave/homezone status will bring the user through a recognisable hierarchy and will assist in place-making and directioning.

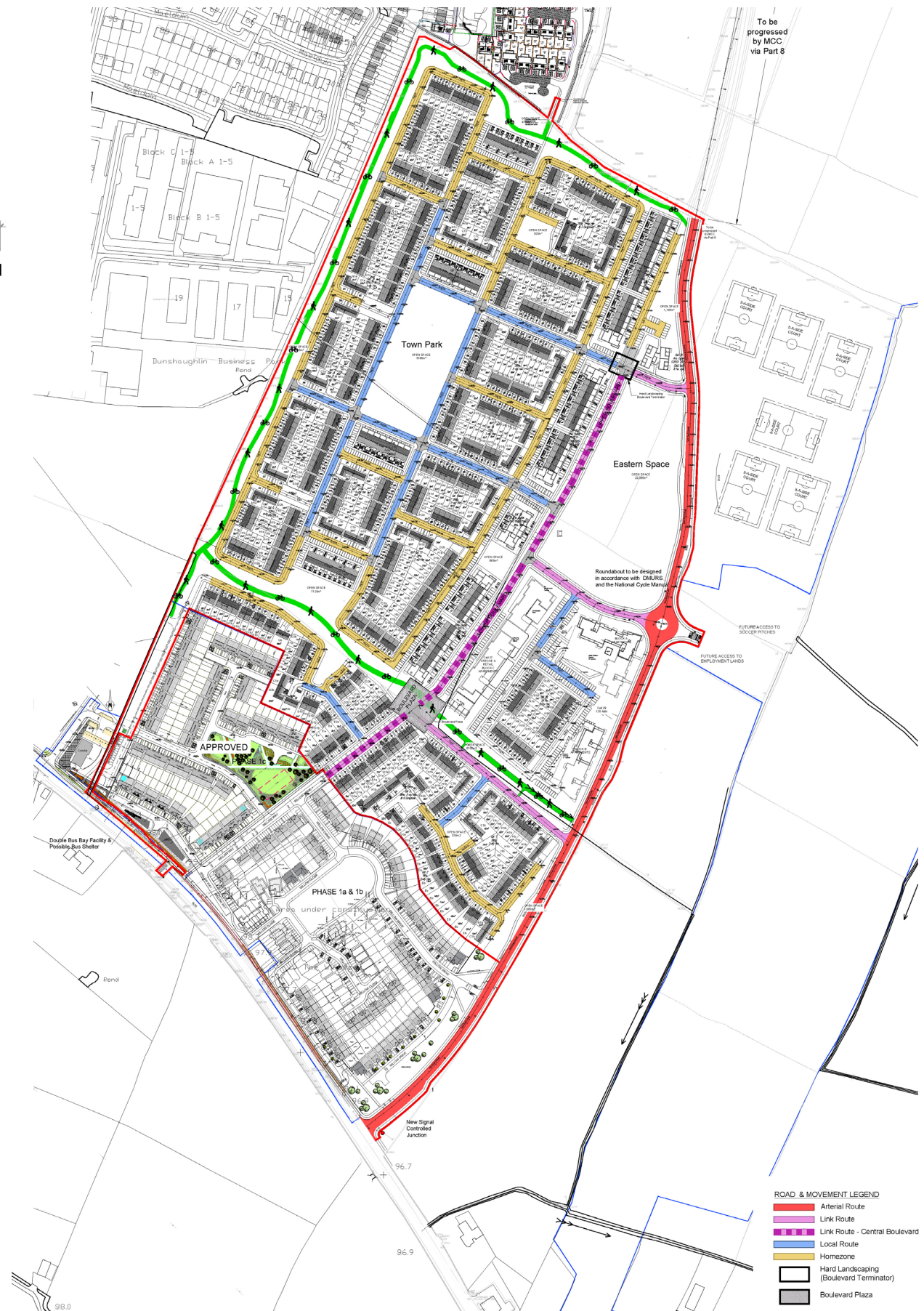
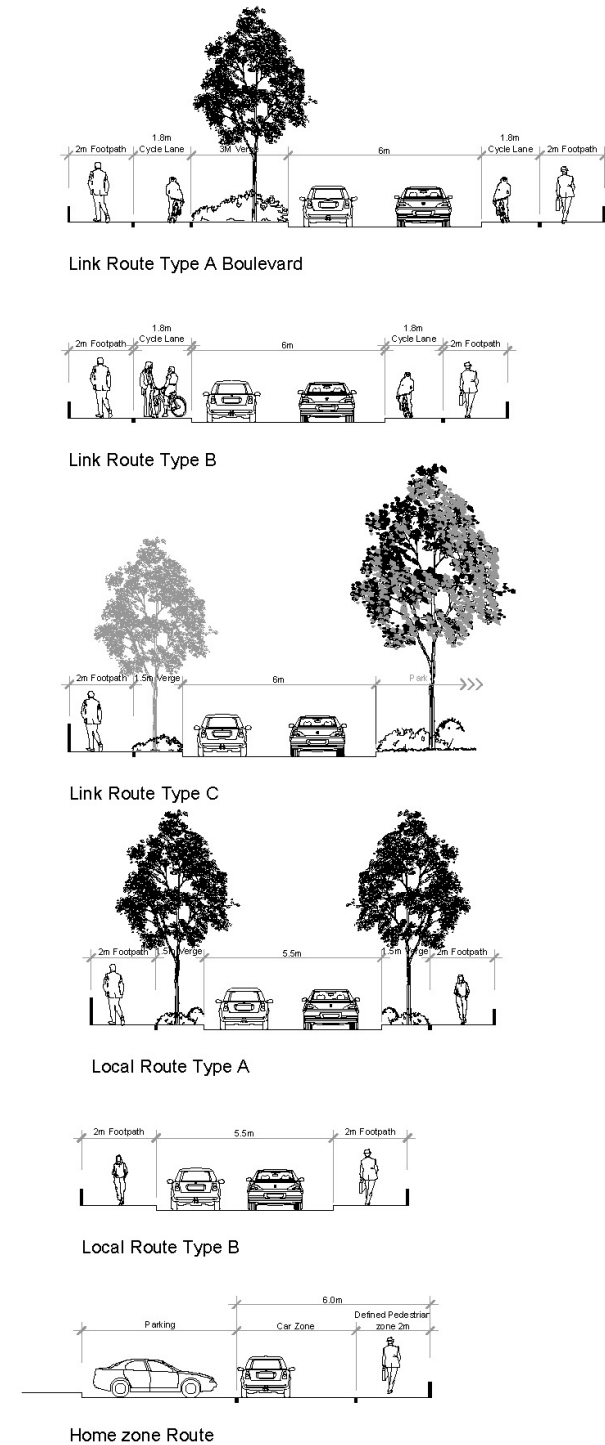


Fig.5 Hierarchy

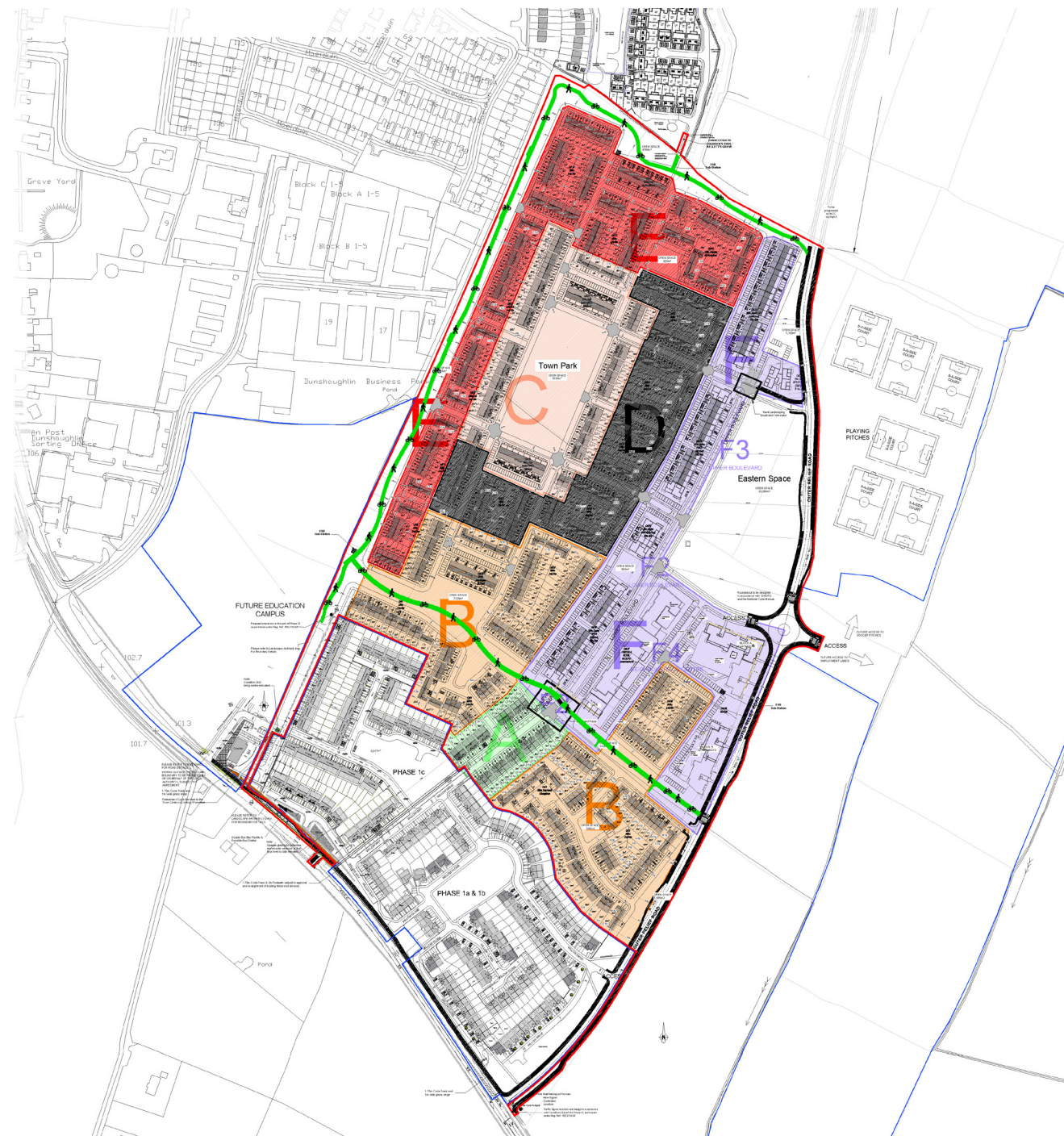


Fig.6 Active Front

Character Areas are considered under three headings:

- The Spaces
- Frontages and Passive Surveillance
- Materials and Architectural Languages

The Spaces and Frontages/Passive Surveillances are indicated in the images below.

The materials and architectural languages are indicated in the images above and are summarised as follows:



Fig.7 Character Area A

Character Area A – The transition zone to and from “The Willows”:

General:

The red brick, gable fronted aesthetic already established in the completed dwellings fronting and adjacent to R147 (“The Willows”). The red brick gabled repeating rhythm is a recognisable urban residential aesthetic which fosters an immediate sense of established settled community early in the scheme.

Unit types and street frontages:

Gable fronted two storey units with brick to match the established “Willows” development. Street width and street frontages, including front garden and curtilage treatments are taken from “Willows” to appropriately link and transition the SHD area to the built units to the south creating a visual continuation of the boulevard southwards from the Plaza.



Fig.8 Character Area B

Character Area B:

General:

A change to buff-cream brick and rendered facades with horizontal fascia lines fosters a sense of smaller intimate zones for these zones located away from the main boulevard.

Focal Points:

Two visually self-contained areas, each enjoying a centrally located pocket park – a small scale focal point in each case

Unit types and street frontages:

Generally two storey units with local bungalow and duplex zones. The bungalows cluster around a small courtyard. The two storey houses, by virtue of their

horizontal fascia lines and horizontal banding announce a quiet enclosed neighbourhood more intimate than than Character Area A



Fig.9 Character Area C

Character Area C – The “Town Park” Precinct:

General:

While the Boulevard (Character Area F) is the primary Character Area and Focal Point for the scheme, the “Town Park” is the primary focal point for the residential clusters towards the west of the site. A built progression to primarily taller units (three storey) surrounding a “Town Park”. Height and repeating red-brick rhythm introduced to frame the large space.

Focal Point:

The large scale of this SHD landholding makes possible the provision of this large focal point park which will be used by residents in the scheme and which it is envisaged will attract people from the wider hinterland as a recreation and social destination.

Unit types and street frontages:

Three storey houses and duplex units intentionally located around the park as appropriate framing of the urban space. Constant garden frontages and repeating gabled rooflines deliver robust building lines and emphasise the orthogonality of the space.



Fig.10 Character Area D

Character Area D

General

While still reading as local to the Town Park, a change to flat parapet bays with horizontal fascia lines brings a sense of smaller intimate zones. Increased numbers of terraces suggests mews lanes behind the larger Town Park fronting units in Character Area C

Focal Points:

Character Area D, while incorporating no focal point within its area, strongly links to the large Town Park focal area.

Unit types and street frontages:

Two storey predominantly terraced units with some wide frontage two storey units closing the ends of runs of terraces. Repeating 4 and 5 unit terraces create strong orthogonal streets,



Fig.11 Character Area E

Character Area E – The Perimeter Park Precinct:

General

The very long perimeter parks along the west and north boundary are introduced to deliver visual buffers between the proposed units and the adjacent industrial park, to provide efficient and attractive walkways and to compensate for vegetation reduction associated with the removal of the generally poor quality existing hedgerows on the subject lands. These parks are memorable focal

points and visual locaters in themselves, by virtue of the impressive lengths of tree planting and paths and the perspectives delivered.

Bick and render repeating facades incorporating contemporary design references (zinc bays etc) with an emphasis on active facades and active gables to monitor the extensive park area

Focal Points:

The ENTIRE linear park is a memorable focal point – a visual framer of the subject scheme. The repeating regular housing cells create an architectural rhythm of built-area, void-area, built-area against the continuous planted screen of the park.

Unit types and street frontages:

Two storey predominantly terraced units with some wide frontage two storey units closing the ends of runs of terraces and incorporating active gables. All units designed to have some frontage to the linear parks. Scale of units (limited to two storey) prevents over-bearing on adjoining lands.



Fig.12 Boulevard

Character Area F – The Boulevard Precinct:

General

Very much the physical and perceived arrival feature of the scheme from the arterial link road and beyond. A confident orthogonal urban way running south to north along a line dictated by an existing services wayleave. The “urban” lung of the scheme flanked by taut tall facades, the road and flanking features suitably wide and appropriately planted in a manner resembling large urban boulevards in Dublin City (Griffith Avenue etc)



Fig.13 Plaza

Focal Points:

F1 – The Plaza. A paved and predominantly hard landscaped urban square locating at the commercial hub of the proposed scheme. Flanked by tall buildings to the north and a coffee shop, it is envisaged that this space will develop into a destination social point.

F2 – The Lower Boulevard. The commercial end of the Boulevard feeding northwards from The Plaza. Flanked by three, four and five storey elevations to emphasise the orthogonal grid and to deliver appropriate urban enclosure

F3 – The Upper Boulevard. Maintaining tall facades, the formality of the Lower Boulevard is softened by the opening out to the large open space to the east. Scale and height of facades, with repeating runs of long duplex blocks, continues as an appropriate visual backdrop to the open space. Upper Boulevard terminated at northern end by a grouping of three and four storey buildings and a small paved square.

F4 – The Neighbourhood Centre. The Neighbourhood Centre locates primarily at ground floor level, with some areas at first floor level, all within larger buildings containing apartments overhead. See also 4. Neighbourhood Centre below.



Fig.14 Character Area F

Unit types and street frontages:

Tall repeating frontages brought close to the street to emphasise enclosure and urban line. Height and modelling, including tall framing elements in the upper duplexes, employed to deliver strong flanking aesthetic. Brick and render facades with lighter colour brick (light brown/buff) to prevent overbearing of the spaces by the close facades. Natural stone included to reflect the more commercial character of the Lower Boulevard and Plaza.

External access stairs to duplex units intentionally located on the facades away from the boulevard to provide taut un-punctured lower building lines to the boulevard and to present a more urban-commercial than urban-residential face.

Landscaping and sense of place

Hierarchy of Open Space

- As part of the master planning exercise as developed at initial concept stage, the open spaces were established and sited at appropriate locations throughout the scheme. The open spaces are woven into the scheme to provide regular breaks to the built form providing a complimentary aspect and a strong sense of cohesion to the ‘landscape’.

From early design stage, the existing lands have been considered in detail as part of the masterplanning exercise in terms of their existing features and pertaining site elements. The site arrangement and landscape design development has been guided and influenced by both the Ecological and Arboricultural appraisal of the site, both of which have been enclosed as part of this application.

Uniting the built form to the landscape, where it can provide passive and active recreation will benefit the health and lifestyle of the end user. The open space arrangements are varied in size and form, aspect and function and will provide a range of opportunities for the future users of the scheme. These spaces have the ability with the surround built elements to create a localised character offering an opportunity for living and play.

Some of the spaces are large and open offering opportunity for active recreation (kickabout zones, walking, jogging) and greater opportunity for statement artwork, compensatory woodland blocks, large meadow areas and natural play); more intimate and enclosed spaces are also proposed with seating zones with good aspect offering opportunity for local gathering, grass mounding for interest and play, interconnecting pedestrian links to pre-empt desire lines and feature tree planting with an element of native planting species.

'Linear' open spaces are also provided which promote active recreation in the form of walking, and cycling with appropriate rest stops. To the west of the scheme, a combined cycle/walking route, partly within woodland arrangement is proposed which forms part of a wider circuitous linking route of the scheme and outwards towards adjoining developments and the town centre of Dunshaughlin. A further 'linking' linear park is proposed in an east-west arrangement which is further enhanced by a mixed woodland understorey planting with a native element, and a mix of tree planting with blocks of grass areas managed as a meadow.

The broad key spaces proposed as part of the scheme include:

- (a) Large Formal Open spaces:
- (b) Pocket Parks
- (c) Linear Open Space
- (d) Semi-Private Open Space
- (e) Private Open Space



Fig.15 Townpark

Quantum and Quality of Public Open Space

(a) Large Formal Open Spaces:

The largest proposed open space (on the F1 zoned lands) is located to the east of the site. This large space (some 0.2Ha) includes the following key elements

- A large formal playground with play facilities to account for a range of age groups; from 1- 15 years. The play facility is proposed to the south-western edge of this open space where there will be an intensity of activity from the commercial centre and adjoining residential units. Whilst this space will be overlooked, it will be edged with suitable tree and shrub planting to provide comfort and an amenity value for the end use. The play facility will be finished in wetpour safety surface and will be edged with a fence in line with industry standards.
- Pathway links throughout the space are proposed to account for intended desire lines and linkages through to the proposed scheme and to future developments beyond; and in particular to the playing pitch facility and associated bus stops on the outer relief road.
- Native woodland block offering a feature within the open space to provide amenity interest, as well as providing a compensatory woodland as part of environmental mitigation measures.
- Open green areas offering multi-functional zones for kickabout and play and associated grass mounding (of a suitable scale to address future maintenance operations) to offer visual appeal

Meadow grass areas – part of this open space shall be managed as a meadow grass area which essentially means it will cut 2-3 times per annum. This management

principle reduces maintenance, encourages more species diversity, improves the sites biodiversity, and offers a variation within the ground plane of the parkland.

- Semi-matures trees, of a mixed variety, which will establish well in an open parkland. Many of the species will be grouped together in order to give greater appeal and impact.
- Naturalised bulb planting throughout the grass sward to offer visual appeal and seasonal interest.
- Opportunity for site specific artwork within this space



Fig.16 large open space

A further large open space is proposed to the west of the site. This space covers an area of 0.89Ha and contrasts with the aforementioned open space as it is more formal in nature. Suitable fastigate trees are proposed around the perimeter to reinforce its formal arrangement.

Similar to the F1 zoned lands, this space will include formal pathways considering local desire lines, open green areas for active recreation, meadow grass managed zones and formal tree planting. It will also provide the following elements:

- A gridline arrangement of semi-mature trees to provide a formal landscape element and added interest.
- A formal playground, catering for young age groups with play elements more 'natural' in style. This play facility will be fully fenced but it is proposed that the finish will be of a resin bound bark mulch which will have a more organic appeal.
- Potential opportunity for gym equipment at key locations.

- Seating with good aspect, offering rest stops along all pedestrian routes

(b) Pocket Parks

There are a number of pocket parks proposed throughout the scheme which will individually offer a variation in character and amenity value. The 'key' pocket parks proposed can be noted as follows:

The proposed formal pocket parks (2no.) to the west of the scheme refer. These both (some 555sq.m. each) offer a similar approach in terms of design; however the plant material proposed offers sufficient variation to ensure these spaces have their own identity. It is proposed that these pocket parks will offer the following key features:

- Seating space set beneath a grid line of formal specimen trees. The ground plane shall receive a bound gravel arrangement to soften the hardscape elements within that zone.
- Pathway linkages connecting the western 'greenway' to a large formal open space
- Perimeter planting of hedging and ornamental sedges to provide vegetation with movement and strong seasonal appeal.

The formal pocket park to the north of the scheme refers, which accounts for an area of some 860 sq.m. It is proposed that this pocket park will offer the following key features:

- Formal playground catering for young ages. This playground will be finished with wetpour arrangement and will be fenced in accordance with industry standards.
- Formal specimen tree planting, grass mounding, and pathway linkages will also be provided within this space.

A further pocket park is proposed to the west of the main boulevard; located between the duplex blocks, which accounts for an area of some 802sq.m. It is proposed that this pocket park, which is open in nature, will offer the following key features:

- Formal playground catering for young ages.
- A pedestrian linkage connecting the user to the main open space at the F1 open space lands.
- Buffer planting along the eastern edge from the main boulevard.
- Good aspect for users

o A pocket park also is proposed to the south of the scheme; where it adjoins the east-west linear park with the associated cyclelane/footpath linkage. This park is some 0.2Ha in size and included the following key features:

- South-facing aspect
- Formal playground facility
- Edge planting to the north to offer a buffer from built units whilst still allowing for passive surveillance
- o Added advantage of being connected to the east-west linear park; which offers ease of access to and from the core commercial development and to Dunshaughlin Town Centre.

There are three no. further pocket park/open space areas which include:

- (a) A peripheral open space to the north east (0.18 Ha.) and south-east (0.12 Ha.) of the scheme.
- (b) Small pocket park within the confines of the built development to the south-east of the scheme. (500 sq.m.)



Fig. 17 Linear open space

(c) Linear open space

The following linear open spaces are proposed within the scheme; namely that to the west (in a north-south arrangement) and to the south (in an east-west arrangement).

- The western linear edge includes a combined cycle footpath, in the order of 3.5m in width. It is proposed that this pathway link will meander close to the edge of the western hedgerow which is scheduled for retention.

The protection of this tree line will therefore maintain some connectivity and continuity to the vegetation; and will allow a continuance of the existing wildlife corridor and habitat services provided by the trees and hedges. This will particularly benefit bats, certain species of which are known to rely on these routes for foraging. Where possible, the western edge will receive blocks of woodland planting to further reinforce the edge.

To the southern portion of the linear space, the existing open drain shall be widened (to accommodate attenuation requirements for the existing industrial lands). The widened drain (along its eastern edge) and where it adjoins the proposed cycle/footpath link will receive a side slope of 1:4 to avoid any health and safety risks. This widened drain will be allowed to regenerate naturally.

The linear open space will offer access through to the existing residential development to the north. The linear open space connects to a more open public space to the north which accommodates stormwater attenuation.

- The southern linear space, orientated in an east west direction includes a formal designated cycle lane and footpath arrangement. It is proposed that the afore-mentioned route will meander through this space where it will connect with the formal central plaza and a network of pedestrian linkages to the adjoining proposed residential units.

Swales and a stormwater attenuation arrangement is proposed along this route and the landscape scheme has developed sensitively to accommodate the same.

Mixed tree planting, open grass zones, meandering pathways, site specific planting and outer 'seamless' connections to the adjoining residential units will make this space.

Quantum and Quality of Communal Open Space for apartments / duplexes

All communal open spaces associated with the duplex blocks shall receive softscape in the form of grass finish with hedge planting at key points.

The apartments shall receive a landscape treatment which will include the following key features:

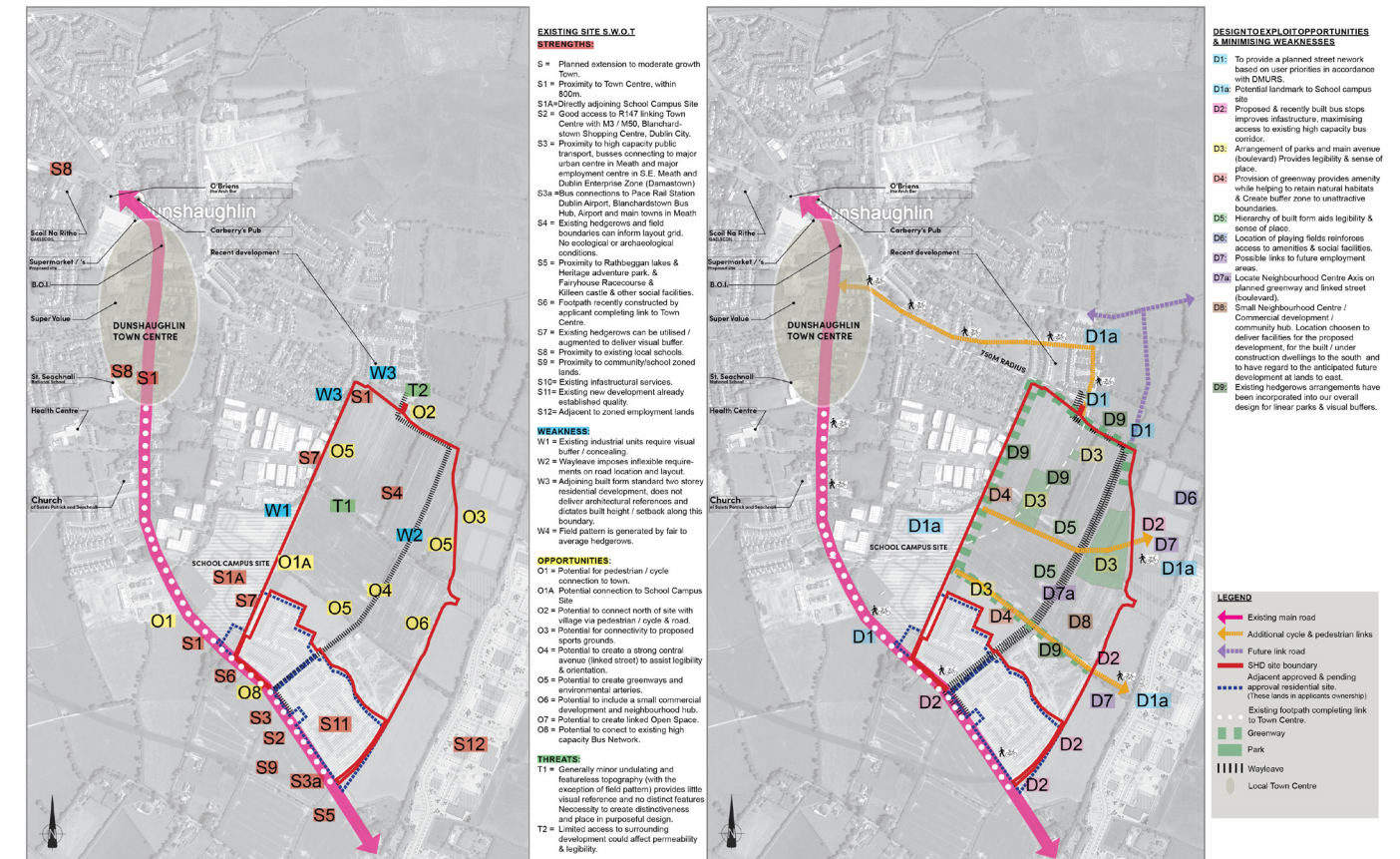


Fig. 18 SWOT Analysis

(g) Layout

Has this development evolved naturally from its surroundings?

1. Edge treatment in the form of evergreen shrub planting along the building facade to ensure a consistent edge treatment. Where recesses are proposed within the building alignment and wider planting blocks are possible, it is proposed that these areas will receive a block of herbaceous planting with an under planting of spring bulbs to provide some seasonal interest.
2. Formal specimen tree planting is proposed along the eastern edge of the apartment blocks to provide a 'buffer' to the outer relief road. Proposed tree planting is fully coordinated with proposed lighting.
3. The external space to the apartment block includes a proposed landscape space over a podium arrangement. These zones have been developed to include formal pedestrian access to building, seating zones with good aspect, screening of ventilation, ornamental planting and formal hedge planting to edge the space. The finished planting scheme has been developed in accordance with restricted soil zones over the proposed podium arrangement.

A SWOT analysis was carried out for the subject lands, recording surrounding uses and identifying characteristics - strengths, weaknesses and opportunities within the subject and surrounding lands and listing design approaches adopted to react to these characteristics. Ref SWOT analysis drawing above.

Strengths include adjoining school campus site, proximity to existing town centre and to employment zones, easy access to R147 and bus routes, immediately locating infrastructural services.

Weaknesses include existing rigid wayleave from south (pumping station) to north, industrial lands to west requiring visual buffering, relatively featureless terrain with limited design references.

The proposed design exploits the strengths by delivering appropriate architectural grain, maximising connectivity and creating attractive spaces, focal points and destination points.

Concurrently the proposed design minimises weaknesses through employing distinctive road and open space hierarchies to deliver recognisable features within the scheme and by using landscaping and perimeter parks as visual buffers.

The overall layout reflects the grain of the residential enclaves of the town delivered in an urban grid configuration. The orientation of the grid reflects the line of the existing hedges on site. While the condition of these hedges does not merit general retention (as advised by the project Ecologist), the orientation of the field pattern created by the hedges is reflected in the scheme design.

(h) Public Realm

How safe and enjoyable are the public spaces?

The major new Public Space created within the proposed residential units is the large Town Park, measuring circa 8500sqm (2 acres). This park locates within short walking distance of the majority of units. The park is surrounded by homezone areas and is strongly overlooked and monitored by surrounding houses.

The open space proposed in the development includes the provision of a linear woodland park along the western boundary of the site, where the site bounds the Dunshaughlin Business Park, thereby providing a buffer from the proposed residential development to adjacent employment related uses. This park continues along the northern boundary.

An east to west linear open space traverses the development immediately south of the Town Plaza. The Town Plaza is envisaged as a destination social hub attaching to the Neighbourhood Centre which is proposed to include retail, community, crèche and plaza-fronting coffee shop.

The remainder of the proposed public open space is to be distributed throughout the development and presented as a series of open squares, pocket parks and recreational areas which will ensure an extremely high standard of open space access and residential amenity throughout the proposed development.



Fig. 19 Plaza

The layout of the open space, and the scheme as a whole, (which was formulated in consultation with the project ecologist) has been predicated on the need to preserve existing trees and green infrastructure on the boundaries of the site where considered appropriate and practical.

The perimeters of the proposed development will primarily be defined by the existing treelines and hedgerows to be retained and enhanced. This will create a strong boundary and a link to hedgerows in the adjoining hinterland thereby enhancing biodiversity and wildlife linkages. The hedgerows within the landholding, given their poor overall condition and visual appeal, will be removed with the exception of a select number of hedgerow trees

which will be retained within Open Spaces where condition and long term suitability allow. The augmenting of perimeter boundary planting will mitigate this removal.

Informal play areas are proposed within several of the proposed areas of public open space within the scheme, located for user convenience and adjacent to house frontages to benefit from the active windows and passive surveillance delivering a feeling of security for users of these spaces.

Landscape strategy around creation of safe and pleasant pedestrian and cycle routes through the scheme

All cycle/pedestrian routes throughout the scheme have been developed to ensure a supporting lighting scheme is proposed, passive surveillance is achievable and that a quality landscape is developed offering a variety of experiences.

The landscaping design is developed in a manner to support the passive surveillance delivered through the buildings' design – active elevations facing open spaces, articulated gables with monitoring windows turning corners and overlooking public areas, avoiding long lengths of blank wall/backlands.

Trees positioning, growth height and landscaping density is developed in a manner to avoid the creation of un-monitored concealed zones in the open spaces.

(i) Adaptability

How will the scheme cope with change?

At regional and local level, the proposed development, by virtue of the inbuilt interconnectivity and the proposed links to adjoining and proximate lands to the east, to the north and to the west, positions itself to benefit from and join to the future development on these lands. The masterplan indicates vehicular, cycle and pedestrian connections through the lands, to adjoining landholdings and to the town centre. In this way a permeable new neighbourhood is provided on this strategic landholding to the south east of Dunshaughlin Town Centre which will provide for the sustainable expansion and change of the town over the next ten years and beyond.

At a masterplanning level the proposed development is designed to cater for change in the demographics and family needs of its residents and of the wider community, allowing people to trade up and trade down as families increase in size and thereafter become smaller as children leave home and parents reach retirement. Dwelling sizes in the proposed development will range from 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments and duplex units to three, four and five bedroom houses. This broad range of housing typology and size will provide a variety of home choice within the immediate Dunshaughlin area and also within the site itself, catering for different demographics and providing the opportunities for future residents to up-grade or downsize whilst maintaining their established roots within the local community.

Taken as a whole, the broad range of units proposed, from one bedroom apartments through to five bedroom houses, will robustly cater for changing tenure needs.

The structure and build methods of the proposed houses will be considered with a view to in-building adaptability. Consideration will include, in smaller three-bedroom houses, structural provisions for future upgrading of attics to accommodate an additional bedroom suite. While the structure and build methods of the apartment buildings do not lend to extending, it is envisaged that the internal walls of individual apartments will be mostly non loadbearing providing for easy future re-configuration making the apartments individually adaptable for the changing needs of occupants.

(j) Privacy/Amenity

How will the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?

All houses are provided with private front garden areas with on-curtilage parking and planting to define the spaces. This is a traditional urban approach to distinguishing private from public. The approach delivers a circa 5m buffer between public areas and house frontages. All houses are, in addition, provided with private rear gardens sized in accordance with Meath County Development Plan standards and delivering the required rear garden depths and house separation distances.

Duplex units and apartments are provided with private patios, balconies or terraces. The majority of apartments enjoy dual aspect amenity.

Street widths and configurations deliver sizeable separation distances between house fronts, augmented on particular streets by tree planting.

All dwellings locate within convenient walking distance of parks and public areas contributing to the amenity and enjoyment of the residents.

Communal bins storage is provided in the undercroft parking areas of the apartment buildings. For the duplex blocks (including the small apartment “bookends” of these blocks) bin storage is provided at ground floor level adjoining the units, as indicated on the floorplans. For dwelling houses, rear gardens provide for bin storage except in the case of terraced units without side passages where front garden binstores are provided. The above provisions will provide for the efficient management of bins and waste.

A Bring Centre (3 bin provision) is proposed within the management controlled area to the west of Apartment Block B.

A Bring Centre is already provided within the already approved Phase 1C lands directly to the south of the subject lands (“The Willows”). All Phases of the lands to the south link into the subject lands



Fig.20 Open Space



Fig.21 Public Park



Fig.22 Elevations and sections

(k) Parking

Car parking for dwelling houses is provided in paved areas locating in the front private curtilage of each house. The paved parking areas are sized to allow for a wheelchair to pass easily beside a parked car.

Where units in the higher density zones of the proposed development are served by grouped communal car parking (duplex units and apartments) this is visually broken in the case of duplex units by planted bays and trees. In the case of the proposed apartments, to avoid the visual intrusion of the large number of car spaces required, the communal parking is concealed in undercroft areas located under landscaped podiums and shielded from vision by banked perimeter planted areas. This will

protect the visual amenity of the apartment occupants and of the general users of the scheme.

Communal parking serving apartments includes provision for disabled spaces

Car parking for users of the retail and commercial units is provided on-street adjacent to these units. Staff and set-down parking for the proposed crèche is included.

Enclosed communal bicycle storage is provided in the undercroft parking areas and in on-podium stores of the large apartment buildings. For the duplex blocks (including the small apartment “bookends” of these blocks) bicycle storage is provided at ground floor level adjoining

the units, as indicated on the floorplans.

For dwelling houses, rear gardens provide for the safe storage of bicycles.

It is envisaged that all grouped and communal parking will be controlled and monitored by an appointed Management Company to discourage misuse and to ensure availability for residents and re-tail/commercial patrons.

(l) Detailed Design

While a constant aesthetic approach is adopted across the scheme, architectural devices and material variations are employed to deliver variety and placemaking (see “Distinctiveness” above).

Visible building materials and finishes are chosen to deliver durability and low maintenance:

- Sloped roofs – dark grey/black concrete tiles
- External walls – selected brickwork and self-coloured render on front facades and on public facing gables and articulated returns.
- Self-coloured render on other elevations
- Windows – High performance upvc.
- Fascias/Soffites/Rainwater Goods – Upvc in black/ dark grey

Conservation of Energy

Building Fabric

The subject buildings will incorporate floor, wall and roof insulation to deliver combined U-values superior to the Maximum Fabric Insulation values set out in Technical Guidance Document L Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Dwellings. Windows will be double glazed to deliver insulation performance in accordance with that set out in Technical Guidance Document L Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Dwellings.

Construction detailing around window and door opens, at floor edges etc. in all dwellings will incorporate the provisions of the document “Limiting Thermal Bridging and Air Infiltration – Acceptable Construction Details”, published by Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. This detailing limits heat loss and also limits the air permeability of the envelope of the buildings.

Building Services and Renewable Technologies

The use of Heat Recovery Ventilation, designed to capture heat from extracted air, will be considered in the detailed design of the subject buildings. This system reduces the heating demand and contributes to a superior air quality within the buildings by delivering a constant background air change, with the incoming air tempered to avoid discomfort and to contribute to the heating requirement of the buildings.

Photovoltaic Panels which use solar/daylight power to generate electricity will be considered as the main renewable energy provision in the buildings.

Lighting points will be suitable for the use of low energy lighting

Boilers will be high performance condensing type

Vehicle Charging Points

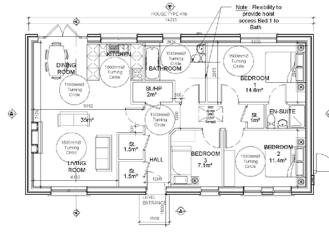
It is proposed that provision will be made across the development for the fitting of external electric car charging points

Building Energy Rating

Fabric insulation performances, Building Services and Renewable Technologies combined will deliver Building Energy Rating A for the proposed dwellings (DEAP calculation method, as defined by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

NZEB (Near Zero Energy Buildings) Standards

The proposed buildings will incorporate the provisions of the NZEB standards from their effective date.



House Type K
Ground Floor Plan
3 bed (5 Person) Semi-Detached
Area: 107.10sqm



Fig.23 House Type K

Accessibility

The design of approach routes, entrances and accommodation within the proposed units incorporate the provisions of Building Regulations Part M Access and Use 2010.

Houses are provided with level access, accessible circulation and sanitary provisions. Apartments are provided with level access and common circulation, stairs and lifts are designed in accordance with Building Regulations Part M. The interiors of apartments and duplex units are provided with accessible circulation and sanitary provisions.

In addition the proposed development includes a number of bungalows incorporating access and use provisions beyond the requirement of Building Regulations Part M. These units are included in response to request by Meath County Council to assist in their providing dwellings for families with special needs in the local community. The additional provisions include enlarged circulation/wheelchair turning spaces and provision for bedroom to bathroom hoists.

4 Neighbourhood Centre Area

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Plans of the Neighbourhood Centre are included in the drawings submitted.

The Neighbourhood Centre locates primarily at ground floor level, with some areas at first floor level, all within larger buildings containing apartments overhead. A proposed Creche and Community Facility locate in Block C while a proposed Retail Unit and proposed Primary Healthcare/Gym Unit locate also in Block C.

Location

The decision to locate the Neighbourhood Centre within the apartment Blocks cluster was driven by the social and commercial considerations around population needs / densities and the convenience of location required to support Neighbourhood facilities. The Neighbourhood Centre location as proposed is within convenient distances from all zones of the development and the constructed houses to the south. In addition, by virtue of its location within the apartments cluster it is close to those residential units of smaller size likely to be occupied by older people trading down into apartments. These residents will, in particular, benefit from the convenience of local Retail and Community facilities.



Fig.24 Neighbourhood Centr

Facades and Volumes

These uses deliver concentrated activity along the Lower Boulevard with large windows and entrance points presenting to the street. The inclusion of retail and coffee shop will extend this activity into evenings, maximising vibrancy and colour along The Plaza and Boulevard. Building volumes are strong with clean sheer volumes and confident massing.

Building elevations are tall and taut with stone features and large glass areas introduced to underline the urban centre nature of this zone

Integration

The Neighbourhood Centre is delivered within the first construction phase. A coffee shop/café is proposed at the south of the Neighbourhood Centre. This opens to the Town Plaza which is a memorable node and focal point within the development. It is hoped that this Plaza and the coffee shop will grow to integrate at an early stage as a strong social hub and a recreation destination point for Dunshaughlin Town and beyond.

5 Phasing

The envisaged phasing of the overall development is indicated on the plan layout above. The phasing is structured to deliver early links to the established town areas and town activities

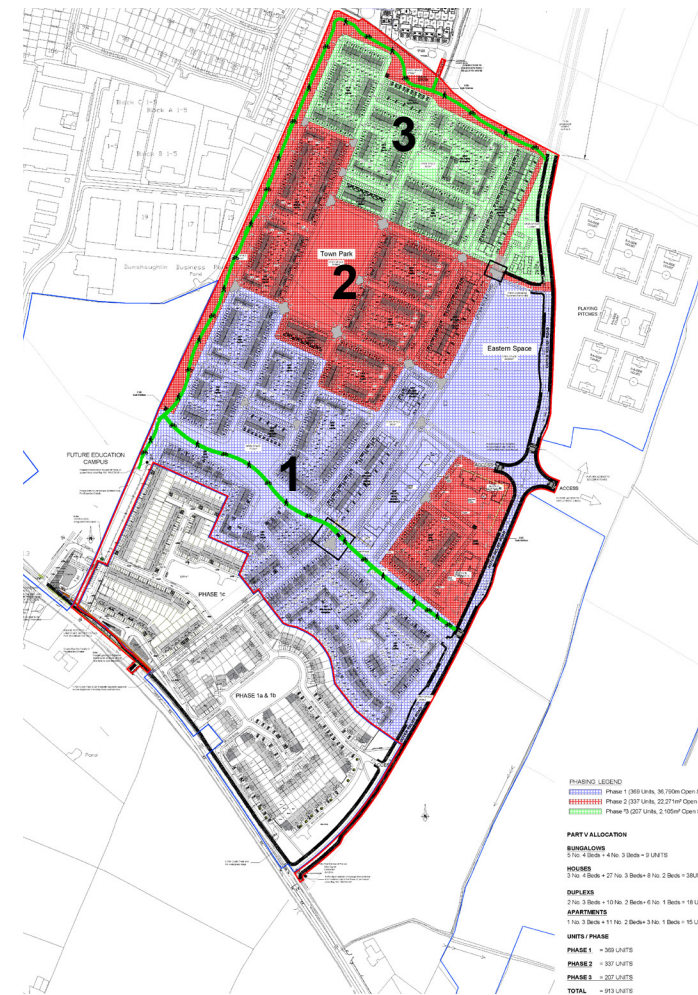


Fig.25 Phasing Plan

SHD Phasing Area 1:

A natural progression of house construction northwards from the residential quarter ("The Willows"), currently under construction and occupation, adjacent to R147. Completion of house construction up to approximately the mid-point of the south to west axis of the site. A centrally located street in The Willows (Willow Drive) is continued northwards to become The Boulevard, delivering early easy connection from The Willows.

Construction of the east to west green link delivering an early stage pedestrian and cyclist link to the town centre and across the site to foster early integration with town and town centre.

Construction of Town Plaza, Neighbourhood Centre (Commercial) and Lower Boulevard to create early commercial and social facilities for the development and which it is envisaged will also attract residents from the adjacent town, contributing to early integration.

Delivery of the large Eastern Open Space bringing this built first phase close to the playing pitch area fostering links and integration of the scheme (including the Commercial Centre) with the established playing pitch town use.

The east flank arterial link road completed for its portion flanking SHD Phasing Area 1 (the portion of the link road south of this being previously completed as part of the Planning Permissions relating to the houses currently under construction in the residential quarter fronting/near R147). Inclusion of a roundabout with provision for access to lands further eastwards.

Phase 1 is the largest proposed construction phase delivering extensive infrastructure and public open space. To support the delivery of this quantum of open space a proportionally large number of dwellings is proposed as part of Phase 1

Phase 1 presents the full range of dwelling tenure types offered by this development, from 1 and 2 bed apartments through duplex units, bungalows with special adaptability provisions, to 3, 4 and 5 bedroom houses. It is envisaged that the introduction to Dunshaughlin of this broad tenure choice will offer new opportunities to residents of the existing town and beyond to trade up or down, depending on their personal or family circumstances, into the proposed scheme thereby immediately establishing early family and social links and cementing the scheme as an organic high quality extension of Dunshaughlin town.

SHD Phasing Area 2:

A natural progression of construction from Phasing Area 1 northwards along the site and incorporating the large "Town Park".

The linear parks/links along the west and north flanks of the lands, plus the road northwards from The Upper Boulevard completed as part of this phase delivering completed south to north links through the site and providing provisions for connections to lands to the north of the site, again aimed at fostering early integration of the proposed scheme as an extension of the established town. Phase 2 again presents the full range of tenure types offered by this development, continuing to offer opportunities for residents of the town and beyond to trade into the scheme fostering continuing family and social links. The large scale of this SHD landholding makes possible the provision of the large focal point Town Park which will be used by residents in the scheme and which it is envisaged will attract people from the established town wider hinterland as a recreation and social destination, a quality addition to the recreation facilities of Dunshaughlin town

SHD Phasing Area 3:

Completion of construction of the balance of the development and the balance of the arterial link road at the eastern boundary completing the applicant's contribution to the construction by Meath County Council of the future link to Lagore Road.

END
MCORM Architects November 2018