

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the EIAR has been prepared by John Spain Associates Planning and Development Consultants, and provides a description of the proposed development and also explains the evolution of the scheme design through the reasonable alternatives examined. This chapter of the EIAR was prepared by Niall Byrne, B.Sc. (Hons), M.Sc, MRTPI, MIPI, Associate Director, reviewed by Paul Turley, BA, MRUP, Dip Environmental & Planning Law, MIPI, Executive Director, and approved by John Spain, Managing Director of JSA.

Following An Bord Pleanála's decision to refuse permission, under Reg. Ref.: ABP-301371-18, on the 9th of July 2018, for the Phase 1 Strategic Housing Development at the Former Magee Barracks site, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare, revised proposals have been prepared which seek to address the reasons for refusal and other comments raised in the Board's decision and assessment of the development, and comments made on the pre-application proposals for this development.

The description of the proposed development is one of the two foundations upon which an EIAR is based (the other being the description of the existing environment described in this chapter and by each of the specialist consultants in the subsequent chapters). It is also a requirement of the EIA Directive (as amended) to present an outline of the main alternatives considered and a justification of the final proposed development.

A systematic approach in accordance with the EPA Draft Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in EIARs (2017), Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018) and other EIA guidance documents was used to ensure all relevant aspects of the development are accurately and fully described. The objective is to provide a description of the proposed development in sufficient detail, which when taken together with the description of the existing environment provided, will allow an independent reader without acquired technical environmental knowledge to understand the significant impacts likely to arise from the proposed development.

The description of the proposed development is set out in this chapter and the following chapters by each specialist consultant in terms of those environmental topics which will form the basis of the impact assessment process and the characteristics of the proposed development which could potentially affect population, human health, archaeology and cultural heritage, architectural heritage, biodiversity, landscape, land and soil, water, air, climate, noise and material assets and the interaction between the aforementioned factors. The EIA Directive also requires that the description of the site, design, size or scale of the development considers all relevant phases of the existence of the project from its construction through to its existence and operation (and where applicable its restoration or decommissioning).

This EIAR fully reflects the key environmental factors of the proposed development which were recognised from the scoping carried out by the design team and the level of detail required will vary considerably according to the sensitivity of the existing environment and the potential of the project for significant effects.

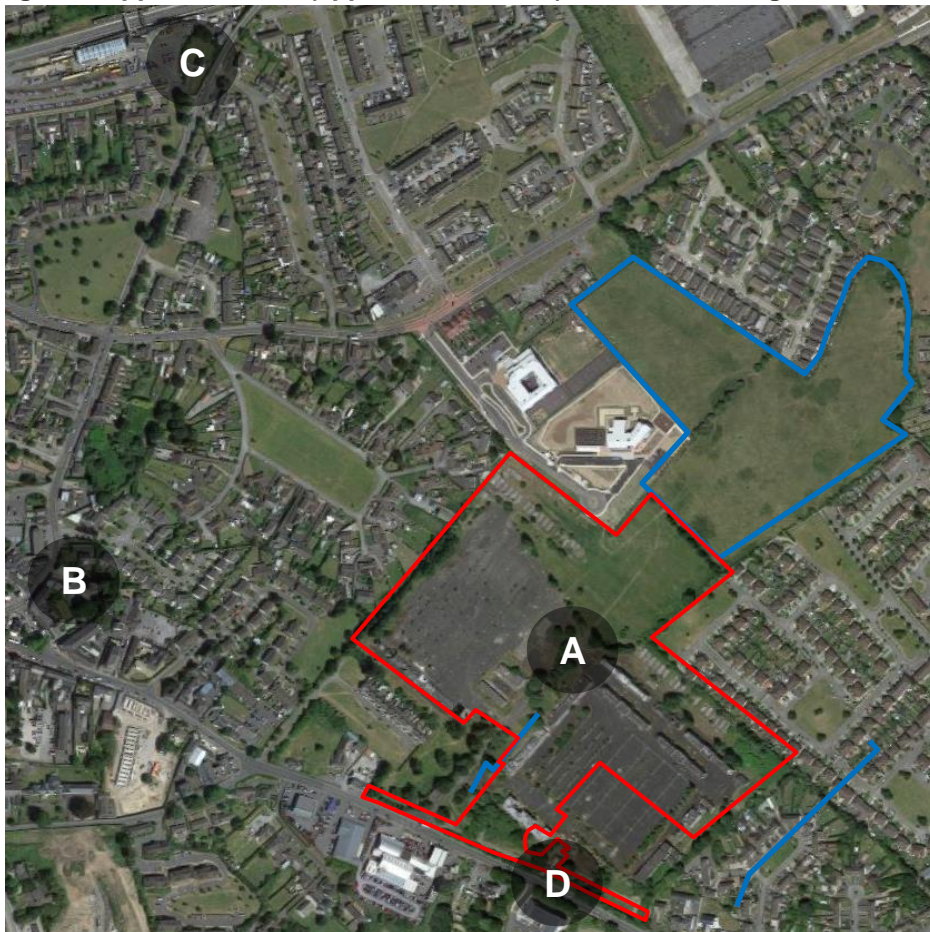
2.2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application site [A] (see Figure 2.1) comprises approximately the southern half of the former Magee Barracks site in Kildare Town, County Kildare. The site is located within the administrative area of Kildare County Council, and is subject to the land use policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012-2018. Under the Kildare Town LAP, the entire former barracks site is zoned 'Z' - 'Regeneration of Magee Barracks'.

The application site is located within c. 750 metres of the centre of Kildare town [B], and within walking distance of Kildare railway station [C], with regular services to Heuston Station in Dublin, Galway City, Cork City and Limerick City. A Bus Éireann bus stop is located adjacent to the application site's southern boundary on Hospital Street (the R445) [D]. Services from this stop operate to Dublin City, University College Dublin, Naas and Monasterevin. Pedestrian access to the application site can be gained via footpaths on both sides of Hospital Street.

A notification of decision to grant permission for a Cancer Treatment Clinic on the adjacent site to the south-west within the Overall Magee Barracks lands was issued by Kildare County Council on the 5/11/2018 under Reg. Ref.: 18/149. The application is currently on appeal with An Bord Pleanála. A final grant of planning permission for a supermarket on the adjacent site to the south-east was issued by Kildare County Council on the 18/04/2019 under Reg. Ref.: 18/273.

Fig. 2.1: Application site (approximate in red) and surrounding area



The application site is generally open in character and of generally level topography, with land rising gently toward its southern boundary. The application site currently consists of a number of vacant former military buildings, all of which are in serious disrepair, areas of hard surfacing formerly used as training grounds / assembly areas and underutilised green-field lands. The former use of the site as a barracks was discontinued in 1998; the site was subsequently used for refugee accommodation and is currently vacant / unused.

The application site presents an appropriate opportunity for a primarily residential (with neighbourhood centre) infill development to cater for a portion of the future planned population growth of Kildare Town, while enhancing the urban structure of the town and creating improved permeability and connectivity between areas to the east and north with the town centre, rail station and local community uses.

The main vehicular access route to the proposed development will be provided off Hospital Street. As part of the proposed development, upgrades will be undertaken to Hospital Street (subject to agreement with Kildare County Council). A future Phase 2 application will provide further vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links with surrounding areas.

Kildare County Council proposes to develop a new 7.5 ha public park ('Cherry Avenue Park') in the vicinity of the application site, south of Hospital Street. A wide range of existing community facilities (including a library, education centre, community centre and heritage centre) is available in Kildare town centre, approximately 750 metres west of the site.

2.3 PROJECT OVERVIEW

A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in Section 2.6 of this chapter. The description of the proposed development set out in the public notices is as follows:

'The development will consist of the demolition of 17 no. existing buildings (including a range of former Barracks buildings, the Officers' Mess building and Water Tower structure) with a GFA of 16,320 sq.m, and the construction of a development comprising of 375 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre comprising of 3 no. single-storey retail units with a GFA of 130 sq.m, 105 sq.m and 100 sq.m respectively, a café (including gallery / exhibition area at mezzanine level) with a GFA of 300 sq.m, a two-storey childcare facility with a GFA of 680 sq.m and associated play area, all internal roads, car parking, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, and all associated site and infrastructural works on an application site of c. 11.35 ha.

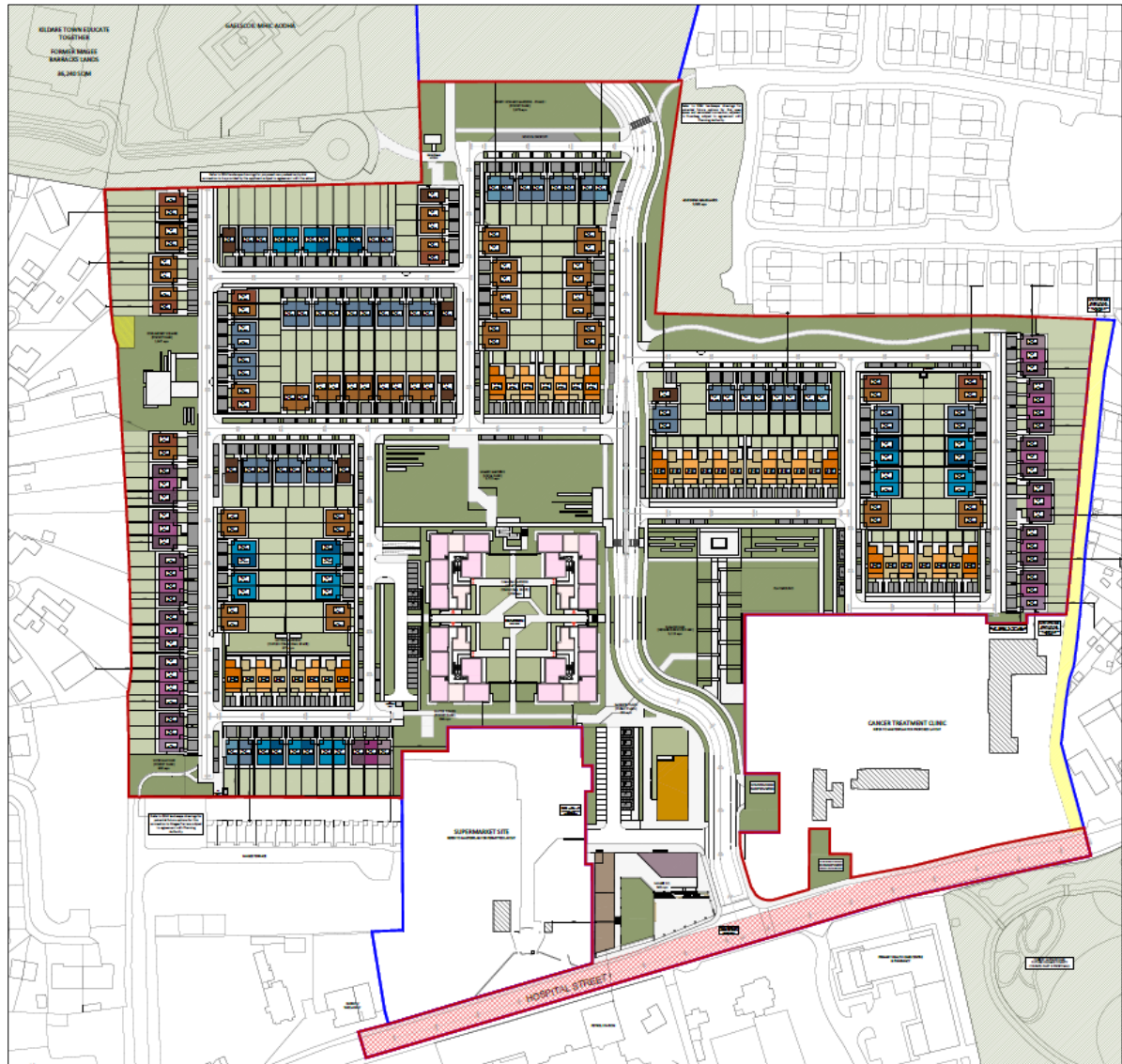
The 375 no. residential units proposed consist of the following:

- 76 no. 3 bed semi-detached units;
- 42 no. 3 bed terrace units;
- 60 no. 4 bed semi-detached units;
- 7 no. 4 bed detached units;
- 16 no. 1 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;
- 34 no. 2 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;
- 18 no. 3 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;
- 30 no. 1 bed apartment units within the apartment blocks; and
- 92 no. 2 bed apartment units within the apartment blocks.

The houses are 2 to 3 storeys in height, the duplex blocks are 2 to 3 storeys in height and the apartment blocks are 4 to 5 storeys in height over basement car park. The associated site and infrastructural works include foul and surface / storm water drainage, attenuation tanks, 639 no. car parking spaces comprising, 560 no. spaces for the residential units, 51 no. visitor spaces and 28 no. spaces to serve the proposed creche, retail, and café units, public open space measuring c. 1.80 hectares, bin and bike stores, 3 no. electricity substations, landscaping, boundary walls, railings and fences.

A new signalised road junction is proposed onto Hospital Street providing access to the proposed development and also to the adjacent lands where a supermarket and cancer treatment clinic are proposed. Road works are also proposed to Hospital Street (R445), including pedestrian crossings, provision of cycle lanes, upgrades to footpaths, signage, road markings and traffic signalling'.

Fig. 2.2: Proposed Phase 1 Site Layout Plan



The proposed development comprises the first phase of the overall development of the applicant's c. 20.78 ha landholding at this location. The planning application is accompanied by an overall site masterplan drawing indicating the permitted and future proposals for the remainder of the lands, which include a permitted supermarket, a cancer treatment clinic (proton therapy) currently at appeal stage with An Bord Pleanala and a future Phase 2 residential development of c. 250 units, which will be subject to a separate planning application.

Fig. 2.3: Masterplan for the regeneration of the Former Magee Barracks site (for information purposes and to allow for cumulative assessment)



2.4 STATUTORY PLANNING CONTEXT

The subject lands are subject to national, regional, county and local planning policy. The following outlines the key planning documents of relevance to the future development of the subject lands. This section will not address the detailed policies and objectives contained in the various plans which are relevant to the proposed development as these are addressed in the separately-bound 'Statement of Consistency with Planning Policy' prepared by John Spain Associates which accompanies the planning application.

2.4.1 National

- National Planning Framework (2017)
- Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines 2018
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), and the accompanying Urban Design Manual
- Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2008) and the accompanying Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009)

2.4.2 Regional

- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly (2018)

2.4.3 County

- Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023
- Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012-2018

Under the Kildare Town LAP, the entire former barracks site is zoned 'Z' - 'Regeneration of Magee Barracks', under which all of the proposed uses are permitted in principle.

2.5 ALTERNATIVES EXAMINED

2.5.1 Introduction

The EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) requires that Environmental Impact Assessment Reports include:

'A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of project design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.'

The presentation and consideration of various alternatives investigated by the project design team is an important requirement of the EIA process. This section of the EIAR document provides an outline of the main alternatives examined throughout the design and consultation process. This serves to indicate the main reasons for choosing the development proposed, taking into account and providing a comparison of the environmental effects. For the purposes of the Regulations, alternatives may be described at three levels:

- Alternative Locations
- Alternative Designs
- Alternative Processes

Pursuant to Section 3.4.1 of the draft 2017 EPA Guidelines, the consideration of alternatives also needs to be cognisant of the fact that:

'...in some instances some of the alternatives described below will not be applicable – e.g. there may be no relevant 'alternative location...'

The draft 2017 Guidelines are also instructive in stating:

‘Analysis of high-level or sectoral strategic alternatives cannot reasonably be expected within a project level EIAR... It should be borne in mind that the amended Directive refers to ‘reasonable alternatives... which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics’

The subject proposal is for the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of residential units, a childcare facility, 3 no. retail units, 1 no. café / gallery unit and associated open space and road and service infrastructure on brownfield land available to the developer that is zoned for regeneration under the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012-2018. The subject site is the closest site to the town centre which is zoned for development of this nature. Having regard to the above it was not considered appropriate or necessary to consider alternative locations for the proposed development.

A ‘do-nothing’ scenario was considered to represent an inappropriate, unsustainable and inefficient use of these strategically located lands which are zoned for regeneration, particularly having regard to the opportunity to provide much needed housing for both Kildare Town and the wider Greater Dublin Area (GDA). The suitability of the lands for development, location within an established development area of the county and location adjacent to public transport and excellent road infrastructure were also key considerations.

The proposals for the subject lands were the subject of 1 no. formal pre-application meetings with Kildare County Council during scheme design and a SHD pre-application meeting with An Bord Pleanála. A number of consultation meetings were also held prior to the submission of the refused application on the subject site.

The environmental issues which most informed the design process included the qualities of the urban environment to be delivered, the need to develop at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable land usage on a site close to the town centre of Kildare and its services and facilities including public transport facilities, the conservation of architectural and cultural heritage, traffic, the conservation of the site’s biodiversity interests and sustainable drainage. These issues have informed the consideration of unit mix, density, alternative layouts, landscaping and road and access arrangements up to the formalisation of the final scheme which is submitted to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

2.5.2 Description of Alternative Locations

As outlined above, the site is zoned for regeneration (includes residential development) under the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012-2018, which was itself subject to the SEA process. As such consideration of alternative locations for the proposed development was not considered appropriate or necessary.

During the design process for the proposed development several iterations of the site layout and alternative designs were considered. This planning application demonstrates that the subject site and the surrounding area have the environmental capacity to accommodate the proposed development without any significant risk of impact upon environmental sensitivities due to the site location.

2.5.3 Description of Alternative Designs

The key environmental and planning considerations which influenced the design of the proposals from the outset were the following:

- The need to develop at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable land usage

- The qualities of the urban environment to be delivered and associated effects on human beings
- The conservation of architectural and cultural heritage
- The conservation of the site's biodiversity interests

In addition, the proposed development and the overall former barracks site masterplan have been prepared having regard to the requirements of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012-2018 and have been the subject of 1 no. formal pre-application meeting with Kildare County Council prior to lodgement. A detailed account of the pre-planning discussions is set out in the Planning Report which accompanies the planning application. The proposals have also been the subject of a pre-application SHD consultation meeting with An Bord Pleanála (Tri-Partite Meeting), with design alterations arising out of this process also. The key considerations and alterations to the design of the proposed development and overall former barracks site masterplan resulting from the previous application and the pre-application design phase and consultation process for this application are discussed below, having regard to the key environmental issues.

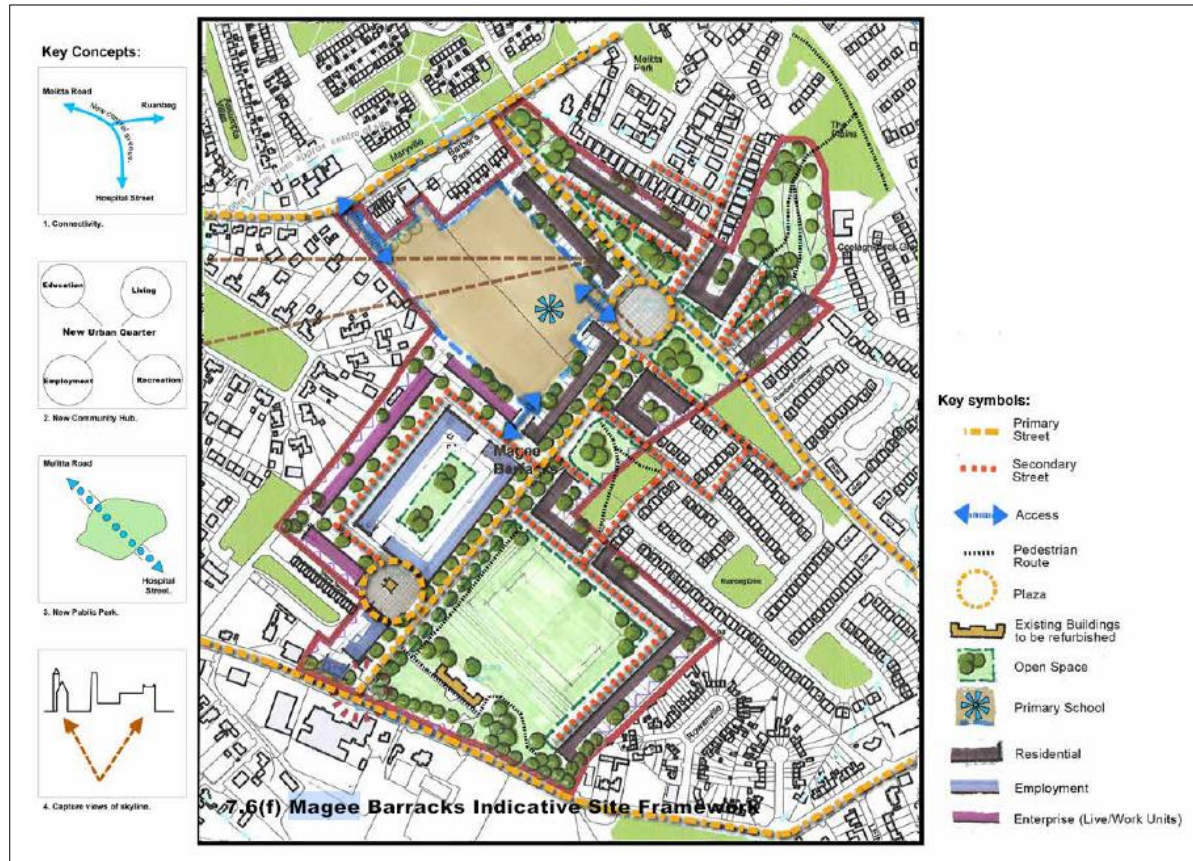
The key alternatives studies include the following:

- Alternative 1 – the Magee Barracks Indicative Site Framework set out in the Kildare Town LAP 2012-2018.
- Alternative 2 - the development proposals prepared for pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála in relation to the refused application were for a predominantly 3-4 bed housing scheme.
- Alternative 3 - the development proposed at full application stage for the refused scheme
- Alternative 4 - the proposals at pre-application submission stage for this application.
- Alternative 5 – the proposed development - the revised proposals for the proposed site.

Alternative 1 – Magee Barracks Indicative Site Framework set out in the Kildare Town LAP 2012-2018)

The Kildare Town LAP provides an indicative site framework for the Magee Barracks site which was considered as an alternative layout during the EIA process. The LAP states that the indicative framework plan set out therein is *“provided for illustration purposes only, demonstrating how the site organisation can be used to provide a new street pattern, sympathetic to the historic core using a mix of building uses and types to create a vibrant new area”*.

Fig 2.4: Magee Barracks Indicative Site Framework (Source: Kildare Town LAP 2012-2018)



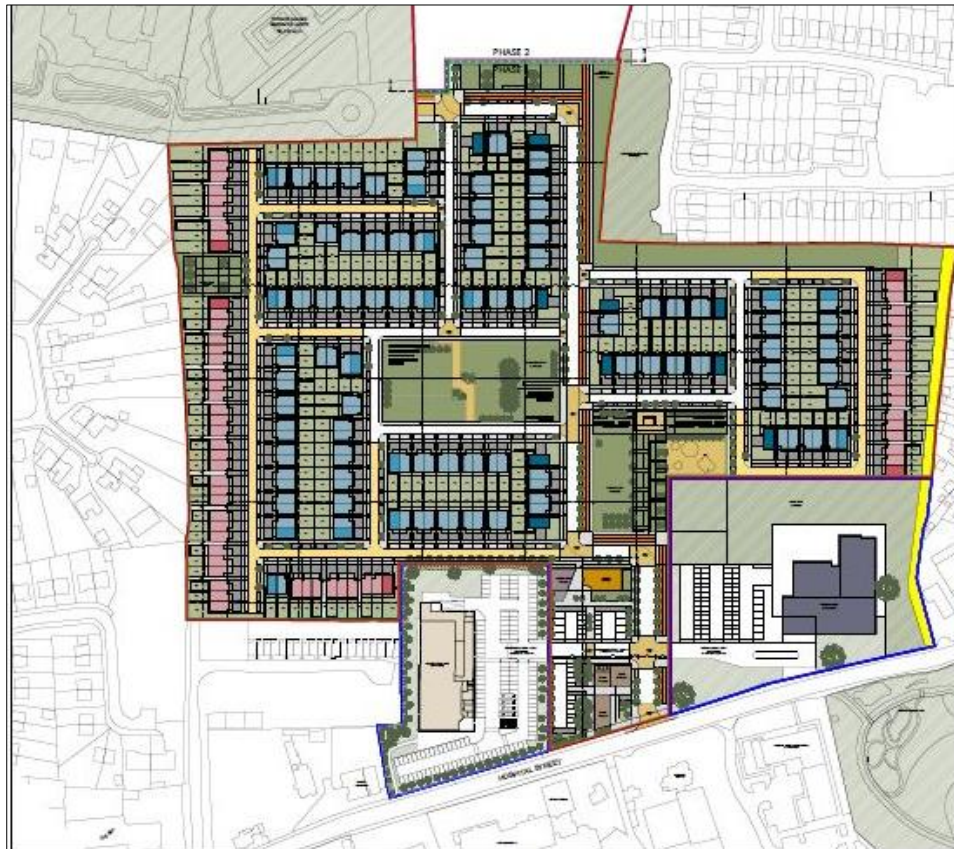
The LAP provides a table of estimated unit numbers to be accommodated on the Magee lands in accordance with the indicative framework plan provided in the LAP. This table indicates a total of 161 residential units on the lands.

This alternative was not considered an efficient use of zoned lands proximate to the town centre and public transport. The indicative site framework set out in the LAP was not also considered to accord with national planning guidance which requires increased urban densities, and does not address the requirements of the Board outlined in their pre-application opinion which notes the ‘*need to develop at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable zoned land usage on a site close to the town centre of Kildare and its services and facilities, including public transport facilities*’.

Alternative 2 – Application No.1 Refused scheme (SHD consultation stage – September 2017)

The development proposals prepared for pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála in relation to the refused application were for a predominantly 3-4 bed housing scheme.

Fig. 2.5: Phase 1 site layout plan at SHD pre-application stage (September 2017)



The proposals for proposed development site included 241 no. 3 and 4-bedroom semi-detached and terraced houses, a neighbourhood centre and public open space. This alternative was not considered an efficient use of zoned lands proximate to the town centre and public transport.

Alternative 3 – Application No.1 Refused scheme (SHD Application – April 2018)

The development proposed at full application stage for the refused scheme was for a higher density development with an improved unit mix consisting of *'the demolition of 16 no. existing buildings (including a range of former Barracks buildings, the Officers' Mess building and Water Tower structure) with a GFA of 16,115 sq.m, and the construction of a development comprising of 264 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre comprising of 3 no. single storey retail units with a GFA of 115 sq.m, 105 sq.m and 100 sq.m respectively, a café (including gallery / exhibition area at mezzanine level) with a GFA of 300 sq.m, a two-storey childcare facility with a GFA of 680 sq.m and associated play area, all internal roads, car parking, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, and all associated site and infrastructural works on an application site of c. 11.14 ha'*.

This alternative design is considered to have similar environmental effects to the proposed development, however in relation to the efficient use of resources particularly land, and having regard to the ABP refusal of the proposal, this alternative is not considered to deliver on the requirement to develop at sufficiently high densities to provide for an acceptable efficiency in the use of serviceable land, given the proximity of Kildare Town Centre and to established social and community services in the immediate vicinity.

Fig. 2.6: Phase 1 site layout plan at SHD Application Stage (April 2018)



Alternative 4 – Application No.2 (SHD consultation stage – October 2018)

The proposals at pre-application submission sought to address the refusal reasons for the previous Phase 1 SHD proposal which primarily related to concerns in respect to the overall mix of unit types (i.e. lack of overall unit mix and requirement to include more apartments) and the density not being sufficiently high for this centrally located brownfield site within Kildare Town.

The proposed development consisted of 'the demolition of 16 no. existing buildings (including a range of former Barracks buildings, the Officers' Mess building and Water Tower structure) with a GFA of 16,115 sq.m, and the construction of a development comprising of 298 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre comprising of 3 no. single storey retail units with a GFA of 115 sq.m, 105 sq.m and 100 sq.m respectively, a café (including gallery / exhibition area at mezzanine level) with a GFA of 300 sq.m, a two-storey childcare facility with a GFA of 680 sq.m and associated play area, all internal roads, car parking, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, and all associated site and infrastructural works on an application site of c. 11.32 ha'.

Fig. 2.7: Phase 1 Site Layout Plan as of October 2018 (SHD Pre-application submission to ABP)



The revised proposals provide a more varied and balanced unit mix including apartments and houses of varying types and sizes. The revised unit mix significantly reduced the proportion of 3 bed units (from 75% to c. 50%) and increased the number of 1 and 2 bed units to 29.2% of the overall development.

With respect to the qualities of the urban environment and effects on human beings, this design included a mix of uses on site in accordance with the zoning policy, links through the site to connect the town centre with its eastern suburbs and Hospital Street to Melitta Road (a local planning policy objective), set-backs from existing dwellings and significant amounts of public open space.

With respect to the conservation of architectural and cultural heritage, conservation architect Cathal Crimmins determined the existing buildings on site to have little architectural merit and that the site's military history could be best represented through the proposed contemporary design and layout features. With respect to the site's biodiversity interests, BSM landscape consultants undertook a tree survey of the site and such trees were retained and incorporated into the design wherever possible.

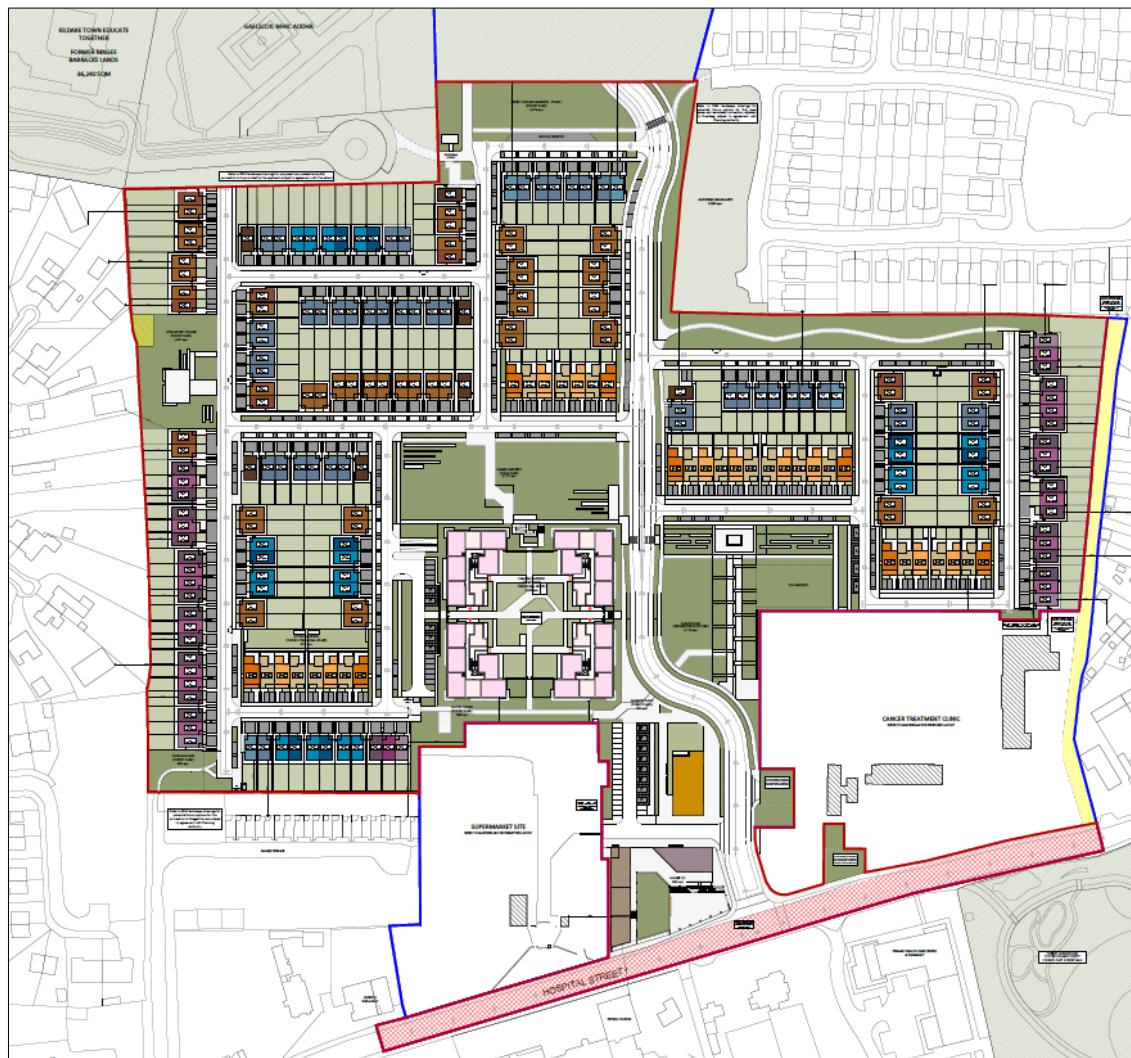
In relation to the need to develop at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable land usage, ABP determined that the density proposed would be insufficient, having regard to their interpretation of the appropriate method of calculating the net site area and net site density. This alternative was therefore not carried forward to the final design proposal and it was considered that a higher density development was required.

Alternative 5 – Current Proposed Development (July 2019)

The revised proposals for the proposed site provide for a substantial increase in unit numbers on the site and a substantial increase in density from the proposals at pre-application stage through the introduction of 4 no. apartment blocks located centrally within the site.

The proposed development now consists ‘of the demolition of 17 no. existing buildings (including a range of former Barracks buildings, the Officers’ Mess building and Water Tower structure) with a GFA of 16,320 sq.m, and the construction of a development comprising of 375 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre comprising of 3 no. single-storey retail units with a GFA of 130 sq.m, 105 sq.m and 100 sq.m respectively, a café (including gallery / exhibition area at mezzanine level) with a GFA of 300 sq.m, a two-storey childcare facility with a GFA of 680 sq.m and associated play area, all internal roads, car parking, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, and all associated site and infrastructural works on an application site of c. 11.35 ha’.

Fig. 2.8: Phase 1 Site Layout Plan (Proposed Development)



The 185 no. houses are 2 to 3 storeys in height, the 4 no. duplex blocks are 2 to 3 storeys in height and the 4 no. apartment blocks are 4 to 5 storeys in height over basement / undercroft car park.

The revised proposals include a substantial increase in number of units and density, provide a greater mix of unit types and introduce a variety of building typologies including taller buildings. The proposal chosen is considered the most efficient design and in terms of environmental effects it represents the most sustainable use of valuable zoned lands out of the alternatives studied. In summary, the design

of the proposed development takes into account all environmental issues raised with respect to previous design alternatives and provides for a development that has been optimised to amplify positive environmental effects whilst reducing negative environmental impacts wherever possible.

2.5.4 Description of Alternative Processes

This is not considered relevant to this EIAR having regard to the nature of the proposed development.

2.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECT

2.6.1 Description of Proposed Development

The description of development for which permission is sought is as follows:

'The development will consist of the demolition of 17 no. existing buildings (including a range of former Barracks buildings, the Officers' Mess building and Water Tower structure) with a GFA of 16,320 sq.m, and the construction of a development comprising of 375 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre comprising of 3 no. single-storey retail units with a GFA of 130 sq.m, 105 sq.m and 100 sq.m respectively, a café (including gallery / exhibition area at mezzanine level) with a GFA of 300 sq.m, a two-storey childcare facility with a GFA of 680 sq.m and associated play area, all internal roads, car parking, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, and all associated site and infrastructural works on an application site of c. 11.35 ha.

The 375 no. residential units proposed consist of the following:

- 76 no. 3 bed semi-detached units;
- 42 no. 3 bed terrace units;
- 60 no. 4 bed semi-detached units;
- 7 no. 4 bed detached units;
- 16 no. 1 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;
- 34 no. 2 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;
- 18 no. 3 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;
- 30 no. 1 bed apartment units within the apartment blocks; and
- 92 no. 2 bed apartment units within the apartment blocks.

The houses are 2 to 3 storeys in height, the duplex blocks are 2 to 3 storeys in height and the apartment blocks are 4 to 5 storeys in height over basement car park. The associated site and infrastructural works include foul and surface / storm water drainage, attenuation tanks, 639 no. car parking spaces comprising, 560 no. spaces for the residential units, 51 no. visitor spaces and 28 no. spaces to serve the proposed creche, retail, and café units, public open space measuring c. 1.80 hectares, bin and bike stores, 3 no. electricity substations, landscaping, boundary walls, railings and fences.

A new signalised road junction is proposed onto Hospital Street providing access to the proposed development and also to the adjacent lands where a supermarket and cancer treatment clinic are proposed. Road works are also proposed to Hospital Street (R445), including pedestrian crossings, provision of cycle lanes, upgrades to footpaths, signage, road markings and traffic signalling'.

The proposed development comprises the first phase of the overall development of the applicant's c. 20.78 ha landholding at this location. The planning application is accompanied by an overall site masterplan drawing indicating the permitted and future phases of development on the remainder of the lands, which include a permitted supermarket, a cancer treatment clinic (proton therapy) currently on appeal with ABP, and a Phase 2 residential development of c. 250 units, which will be subject to a future separate planning application.

2.6.2 Phasing

It is envisaged that the proposed development will be delivered over 4 no. phases as described below. Each phase would deliver an public open space component with active frontage residential accommodation.

A phasing plan has been provided as part of the planning application drawings (RKD Drawing No. A1501 - PHASE 1 CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCING) and the phasing strategy is discussed within Section 03 of the Architectural Design Statement.

It is envisaged that the proposed development will be delivered over 4 no. phases as described below. The proposed development phasing is greatly informed by the open space and amenity strategy. Each phase would deliver an public open space component with active frontage residential accommodation. As such, each phase would be 'standalone' in terms of its open space provision.

Phase A includes a temporary road to access this phase of development, public open space in the form of Magee Gardens and the neighbourhood centre and creche. This phasing ensures the initial and up-front delivery of community facilities and services with subsequent phases of development providing additional residential units.

In relation to links to be provided to the adjoining parts of the town, including Magee Terrace, the Ruanbeg Estate, Melitta Road and the road serving the neighbouring schools, it is intended that Phases A and B will offer new connections to the adjoining neighbourhoods, developments and to Kildare Town. Phase A provides connections to the permitted supermarket and proposed cancer treatment clinic (currently under appeal) and to Magee Terrace. Phase B provides connections to the Ruanbeg Estate and the schools to the north east.

Phase C includes public open space (Parade Park) and additional houses and duplex units and Phase D includes the 4 no. apartment blocks and communal open space.

This phasing ensures the initial and up-front delivery in the first development phase of amenities including open space and the neighbourhood centre facilities, with the subsequent phases of development providing for additional open space and residential units. This approach, whereby the delivery of the neighbourhood centre and main Phase 1 open spaces are front-loaded will ensure a high standard of residential amenity for all future residents from the initial phase through to the completion of the overall Phase 1 development

Figure 2.9: Proposed Phasing



2.6.3 Demolition of Existing Buildings and Structures

The proposed development includes the demolition and clearance of derelict buildings and structures and hard surfacing associated with the former barracks. The effect upon the historic environment of the removal of these structures is assessed in detail in the Architectural Heritage chapter of this EIAR. None of the structures on site are listed as protected structures and the impact upon the historic environment of their removal has been assessed as minor adverse (non-significant) before the taking of proposed mitigation measures in the form of contemporary design and landscaping features designed to reflect and increase awareness of the site's military heritage.

Demolition of the structures on site will be carried out in accordance with the proposed method and best practice techniques described in the Construction Environmental Management Plan and Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan that accompany the planning application.

2.6.4 Design and Layout

The application is accompanied by a Design Statement and drawings prepared by RKD Architects which provide a rationale for the design and layout of the proposed scheme including the dwellings, crèche and retail units.

Building Design

The planning application is accompanied by a Residential Quality Assessment which demonstrates that the design of the proposed buildings is consistent with best practice and standards set out in Government guidance and the Development Plan.

Scheme Design and Layout

The houses will be 2 to 3 storeys in height, the 4 no. duplex blocks are 2 to 3 storeys in height and the 4 no. apartment blocks are 4 to 5 storeys in height over basement / undercroft car park. The taller elements are located centrally within the site to protect residential amenity in the surrounding areas. The development also includes a neighbourhood centre including a childcare facility, 3 no. shops and a café unit (including gallery / exhibition area) which will rise to a height of 2 storeys.

The buildings are arranged around a rectilinear grid of streets and landscaped open spaces designed to reflect the site's military heritage. The vehicular and primary pedestrian entrance to the site will be via Hospital Street and the proposed neighbourhood centre.

A future Phase 2 extension to the development will extend the grid of streets to provide a link through the site from Hospital Street to Melitta Road (a local planning policy objective).

The overall redevelopment proposals for the former barracks site include employment, retail and healthcare uses: a supermarket is permitted on lands west of the proposed neighbourhood centre, and a cancer clinic is proposed to the east (currently on appeal with ABP).

2.6.5 Dwelling Types and Mix

The proposed residential units will consist of 1,2,3 and 4 bed properties with 1, 2 and 3-bed apartments within duplex units and apartment blocks, and 3 and 4 bed terrace, semi detached and detached houses.

- *76 no. 3 bed semi-detached units;*
- *42 no. 3 bed terrace units;*
- *60 no. 4 bed semi-detached units;*
- *7 no. 4 bed detached units;*
- *16 no. 1 bed apartment units within the duplex blocks;*
- *34 no. 2 bed duplex apartment units within the duplex blocks;*
- *18 no. 3 bed duplex apartment units within the duplex blocks;*
- *30 no. 1 bed apartment units within the apartment blocks; and*
- *92 no. 2 bed apartment units within the apartment blocks.*

The mix of dwelling types and sizes have been designed to ensure that the scheme caters for a wide range of choices, including starter homes for young professionals and families and smaller properties for those wishing to downscale, thereby achieving an appropriate dwelling mix in accordance with the Development Plan and which will meet market demand in this part of County Kildare. It also has regard to the established pattern of development immediately surrounding the site.

2.6.6 Residential Density

The application site has an overall site area of 11.35 ha. Having regard to Appendix A of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, the following areas have been excluded from the site area in order to calculate net density:

- The neighbourhood centre
- The spine road

The resulting net site area is c. 9.5 ha. Thus, based on the proposal for 375 no. residential units on the site, a net density of 39.42 units per hectare is proposed. The density has been increased significantly from the previous application to respond to the reasons for refusal, the Board's Opinion on the pre-application consultation and new Section 28 Guidelines.

2.6.7 Childcare Facilities

The proposed development provides for a childcare facility with a GFA of 680 sq.m, which has capacity to cater for c. 136 no. children depending on the end-user and type of childcare offered. The proposed development of 375 no. units requires a childcare facility which could cater for up to 99 no. children to comply with the Childcare Guidelines 2001. The proposed facility has also been designed to cater for the potential future requirements of the Phase 2 lands, and is considered to be suitably located within the Neighbourhood Centre to serve the subject lands and adjoining areas.

2.6.8 Landscape Proposals

A detailed report on the landscape proposals for the proposed development is provided in the Landscape Design Rationale Report and landscape drawings prepared by Brady Shipman Martin. The key objectives of the landscaping proposals for the site are:

- To provide appropriate quantities of quality amenity space for residents;
- To reflect and increase awareness of the site's military heritage;
- To ensure permeability for pedestrians and cyclists within and through the proposed development;
- To protect the amenities of established residential areas;
- To beautify the streetscape;
- To provide a playable landscape that provides opportunities for play throughout the scheme
- To retain important mature trees and hedgerows where feasible; and
- To incorporate SUDS.

The proposed development includes c. 1.8 ha of public open space in total, featuring three key open spaces described below:

- Magee Gardens (local park) – The formal layout of the park aims to reflect and increase awareness of the site's military heritage. This park will include retained mature trees and ornamental grasses.
- Parade Park (neighbourhood park)– Parade Park will provide multiple recreation facilities including a play park, table tennis, boules and fitness area and a kick-about space.
- Magee Square (civic square) – This hard-landscaped civic square will address Hospital Street and include several retained mature trees.

The landscaping proposals also include two pocket parks (Coolmoney Square and Henry Howard Gardens) with ornamental grasses, paved areas and seating.

A future Phase 2 extension to the proposed development will deliver additional areas of landscaped public open space, as indicated on Figure 2.3.

2.6.9 Access and Parking

The vehicular entrance to the proposed development will be via Hospital Street and the proposed neighbourhood centre. A temporary internal road will be utilised to access Phase 1.

The development is defined by a rectilinear grid of streets designed to reflect the site's military heritage and provide maximum permeability within and through the site. Within this rectilinear pattern, a clear hierarchy of streets is proposed, including a tree-lined central boulevard complete with parallel segregated pedestrian and cycling routes, and local streets that will promote pedestrian and cyclist priority and ensure lower vehicle speeds.

A total of 639 parking spaces are to be provided within the proposed development with 611 spaces associated with the residential part of the development and 28 spaces associated with the crèche, coffee shop and retail part of the development.

The parking provision within the development is well laid out with an emphasis on residential parking within the curtilage of the proposed residential units, as requested by the Planning Authority, in order to reduce street clutter and ensure an environment which encourages walking and cycling. The on-street car parking is softened through the provision of landscaped buffers and the specification of continuous rows of large street trees.

A pedestrian and cycle link with the schools to the west of the site will be provided as part of the proposed development. Pedestrian and cycle linkages to neighbouring residential areas will be provided (subject to agreement with Kildare County Council).

A future Phase 2 extension to the development will extend the grid of streets to provide a link through the site from Hospital Street to Melitta Road (a local planning policy objective).

The planning application is accompanied by a Traffic Impact Assessment which demonstrates that the local road network has sufficient capacity to cater for all developments proposed on the former Barracks site, including the Phase 2 residential development, supermarket and cancer treatment clinic to be brought forward via separate planning applications.

2.6.9 Water and Infrastructure Proposals

The planning application is accompanied by a Water Services Design Report and drawings that provides details of the water and infrastructure proposals for the proposed development.

2.7 THE EXISTENCE OF THE PROJECT

2.7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide a description of the proposed development considering all relevant aspects of the project life cycle during both construction and operation, including secondary and off-site developments where relevant.

2.7.2 Description of Construction Stage

This section of the EIAR summarises the construction and phasing of the proposed development and summarises the measures to be taken to ensure that the impact of construction activity is minimised. The Construction Environmental Management Plan and Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan, which are included as standalone reports with the planning application, should be referred to for a more detailed assessment of the construction, waste and indicative phasing proposals for the development.

Construction Stages

The proposed development will be delivered over three phases as described below:

- Phase 1 – Access, site clearance, demolition, Neighbourhood Centre + Creche, Magee Gardens Open Space, Spine Rd (partial up to the south of Parade Park), Temporary road to the south of Phase 4 to access the Phase 1 residential, X No. House and duplex residential mix;
- Phase 2 – Spine Rd (up to the boundary with Phase 2), Coolmoney Gardens, Henry Howard Garden's, X No. House and duplex residential mix, Connectivity to the School and associated site infrastructure;
- Phase 3 – Parade Park, Linear Park, X No. House and duplex residential mix and associated site infrastructure;

- Phase 4 – Camara Gardens’ (communal open space), Apartment Blocks (x 4), Temporary Phase 1 access road to be replaced with new landscaped ‘Green Connection’ and associated site infrastructure

This phasing ensures the initial and up-front delivery of community facilities and services with subsequent phases of development providing additional residential units.

Construction Activities

The proposed construction activities can be divided into six general categories (independent of phasing):

- Demolition – Demolition of the 17 no. derelict buildings on site
- Excavation – Includes site clearance and removal of hard surfacing and earth / rock required to prepare the site for the foundations of proposed buildings
- Structures – The concrete foundations and frames of proposed buildings
- Enclosures – The enclosures of buildings will be formed from brick, blockwork, timber and glass, with slate roofs, with insulation and waterproof membranes
- Services – Services will be provided including drainage and lighting
- Landscaping – Includes hard and soft landscaping, roads, footpaths, cycle-paths and open spaces

2.7.3 Geotechnical Investigation

Ground conditions are described in detail in Chapter 8 (Land and Soils) and Chapter 9 (Water) of this EIAR.

2.7.4 Predicted Impact of the Construction Stage

The major issues to be considered in the assessment of possible impacts of the construction of the proposed development include:

- Construction methods, duration and phasing
- Construction traffic and parking
- Health and safety issues
- Noise and vibration
- Air quality
- Construction waste management

Construction Methods, Duration and Phasing

Construction methods will use techniques that afford safe, efficient, and cost-effective means of working. Development will be phased as described in Section 2.7.2 of this Chapter.

It is proposed that standard construction working hours will apply (7am to 6pm Mondays to Fridays, and 8am to 2pm on Saturdays). Any works outside this period shall be strictly by agreement with Kildare County Council.

Construction Traffic and Parking

Further detail with respect to construction traffic can be found in the Traffic Impact Assessment that accompanies the planning application.

Construction of the proposed development will generate additional traffic on the public road network associated with the delivery of materials, removal of waste, arrival and departure of construction workers, etc.

The vehicles associated with construction activities will include:

- Excavators;
- Dump trucks;
- Concrete delivery trucks;
- Concrete pumps; and
- Mobile cranes.

The appointed contractor will prepare a detailed construction traffic management plan to ensure the smooth operation of the local road network during construction. The plan will be agreed with Kildare County Council in advance of the commencement of works and reviewed at regular intervals.

Health & Safety Issues

The development will comply with all health and safety regulations during the construction. Where possible potential risks will be omitted from the design so that the impact on the construction phase will be reduced.

Noise and Vibration

The potential impacts associated with noise and vibration during construction are addressed in the Noise and Vibration chapter of this EIAR.

Air Quality

The potential air quality impacts of construction of the proposed development are addressed in the Air Quality and Climate chapter of this EIAR.

Construction Waste Management

A standalone Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan for the proposed development accompanies the planning application. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that best practice is followed in terms of waste and environmental management during the construction phase of the proposed development, and to ensure adverse impacts on the receiving environment, including local residents and the occupants of the proposed development, are minimised.

2.7.5 Control of Construction Effects

Avoidance, remedial and mitigation measures specific to each aspect of the environment likely to be affected by the construction of the proposed development are set out within the relevant chapters of this EIAR (and listed in Chapter 14 for ease of reference). In addition, the following general measures to control the effects of construction are recommended in the case of the proposed development:

PDA CONST 1: No development works (including demolition) shall take place outside the hours of 7am to 6pm Mondays to Fridays, and 8am to 2pm on Saturdays without the prior agreement of Kildare County Council.

PDA CONST 2: No development works shall take place before a construction and demolition environmental management plan has been prepared by the relevant appointed contractor(s) and approved by Kildare County Council. The purpose of the plan

shall be to ensure that all adverse environmental effects of construction are avoided or minimised. The approved construction and demolition environmental management plan shall be implemented and adhered to at all times by relevant contractor(s) and subcontractors unless otherwise agreed with Kildare County Council.

PDA CONST 3: No development works shall take place before a construction traffic management plan has been prepared by the relevant appointed contractor(s) and approved by Kildare County Council. The purpose of the plan shall be to ensure the safe and smooth operation of the local road network and it shall be reviewed periodically to ensure its efficacy. The approved construction traffic management plan shall be implemented and adhered to at all times by relevant contractor(s) and subcontractors unless otherwise agreed with Kildare County Council

PDA CONST 4: No development works shall take place before a construction and demolition waste management plan has been prepared by the relevant appointed contractor(s) and approved by Kildare County Council. The purpose of the plan shall be to ensure that best practice is followed in terms of waste management during demolition and construction, and to ensure that all adverse effects on the receiving environment, including local residents and future occupants of the proposed development, are avoided or minimised. The approved construction and demolition waste management plan shall be implemented and adhered to at all times by relevant appointed contractor(s) and subcontractors unless otherwise agreed with Kildare County Council.

2.7.6 Description of Operational Stage

Pursuant to the EIA Directive an EIAR is required to set out a description of the project processes, activities, materials and natural resources utilised; and the activities, materials and natural resources and the effects, residues and emissions anticipated by the operation of the project.

The proposal is for a residential development of 375 no. units, a neighbourhood centre and associated infrastructural works. The proposed development is part of a wider masterplan for the development for the former Magee Barracks site. The environmental impacts (including cumulative, secondary and indirect impacts) of the operation of the proposed development are fully addressed in this report.

2.7.7 Description of Secondary and Off-Site Developments

No significant secondary enabling development is deemed necessary to facilitate the proposed development. The planning application includes details of the road works required to facilitate the development. The environmental effects of these works are assessed within this EIAR.

2.8 RELATED DEVELOPMENT AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The proposed development is part of a wider masterplan for the redevelopment for the former Magee Barracks site which includes a permitted supermarket, a proposed cancer treatment clinic (currently on appeal with ABP) and a future Phase 2 residential development of potentially 250 no. residential units to be brought forward via a separate planning application. The masterplan drawing included with the application indicates the details of these permitted and potential future developments.

Each chapter of this EIAR includes a cumulative impact assessment of the proposed development together with other permitted and planned projects in the area, which includes all developments within the wider masterplan for the redevelopment of the former barracks site

APPENDIX 2.1 PLANNING HISTORY

The following section provides an overview of the most relevant planning history for the subject lands and surrounding area.

Solar PV - Supermarket/Foodstore – Reg. Ref.: 19641

A planning application was lodged to Kildare County Council on the 6/06/2019 for modification to a previous permission (Reg. Ref. 18/273 – Supermarket) comprising the installation of a roof-mounted array of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels together with inverters and electrical cabling on the permitted foodstore located on lands within the overall Magee Barracks site fronting Hospital Street.

The decision due date is the 31/7/2019/

Supermarket/Foodstore – Reg. Ref.: 18273

Permission was granted by Kildare County Council on the 18/04/2019 for a supermarket/discount foodstore (Reg Ref: 18273) on lands within the overall Magee Barracks site fronting Hospital Street and to the south west of the proposed Phase 1 residential development.

The proposal comprises:

'Demolition of existing structures including the gatehouse and an ancillary building. The construction of a single storey, licensed, discount foodstore with a gross internal area of 2,192sqm incorporating an off-licence area. Public realm space and pedestrian access to and from Hospital Street. A temporary, single point of vehicular access and egress is proposed to and from Hospital Street. The temporary access would be closed off when vehicular access through the wider Magee Barracks Masterplan lands is available. Boundary treatment consistent with that on either side, along Hospital Street would be put in place once the temporary access is closed off. Provision is made in this development for a point of vehicular access within the application site up to the application site's eastern boundary to allow for the future permanent access. The development also includes two pedestrian crossing points on Hospital Street; car parking and cycle parking; all boundary treatment both temporary and permanent as required; ancillary mechanical plant; trolley bay structure; ancillary signage including 1 No. double sided illuminated totem sign at the entrance from Hospital street and other signage associated with the foodstore; ESB substation building; and all necessary site development works and services including all drainage and related underground works.'

Cancer Treatment Clinic – Reg. Ref.: 18149

An application for a proposed Cancer Treatment Clinic was lodged with Kildare County Council on the 14/02/2018. on lands within the former Magee Barracks site fronting Hospital Street and south east of the proposed Phase 1 residential development. Permission was granted on the 5/11/2018 by Kildare County Council. The application is currently the subject of a first party appeal against conditions and is due to be decided in August 2019.

The development will consist of the demolition of 6 no. existing buildings (with a GFA of c. 2,180 sq.m) and the removal of hard surfacing on the subject site, and the construction of a part 1, part 2 and part 3 no. storey Health Care Facility for a Cancer Treatment Clinic (Proton Therapy) with a GFA of c. 3,555 sq.m, including a terrace and plant areas at roof level, on a site area of approximately 2.5 hectares. The proposal includes a service yard which also contains a substation, switchroom, transformer, waste storage area and 2 no. chillers.

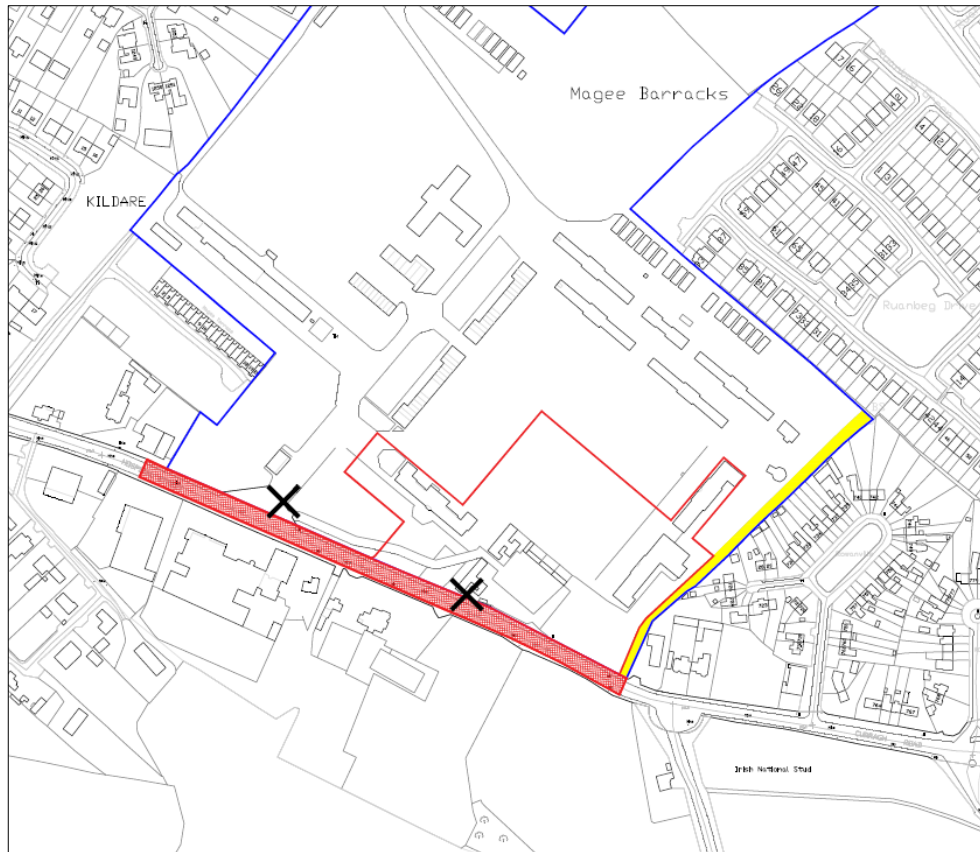


Figure A: Proposed Cancer Treatment Clinic/Proton Clinic Site Location Map

Summary

The proposed phase 1 residential application has been designed to fully integrate with the proposed Cancer Treatment Clinic and permitted supermarket/foodstore.

The temporary access for the proposed supermarket/discount foodstore will be closed off when vehicular access through the wider Magee Barracks Masterplan lands is available, as provided for in this proposed application for the Phase 1 residential development.

The permitted and proposed developments will further contribute to the community facilities being provided on the subject lands and introduce a significant element of employment on the overall Magee Barracks site.

Part 8 Planning Application – Cherry Avenue

A Part 8 application by Kildare County Council has been approved for the development of a public park (Cherry Avenue Park) on 18.1 acres of land on the Dublin Road, Kildare Town, which is located to the south east of the proposed Phase 1 application site area.



Figure B: Proposed Part 8 Planning Application – Cherry Avenue Park

The public notice stated that ‘*The lands were formerly part of the National Stud. The development of the park will consist of a perimeter path catering for pedestrians and cyclists, demonstration gardens, community garden, amphitheatre, Land Art feature, playground, pump track, wetlands, extensive tree planting, upgrading to the entrance, car parking and public toilets and seating.*’



Figure C: 3D Aerial View of Cherry Avenue Park

From the outset of the proposed design development of the masterplan proposals for the regeneration of Magee Barracks, the design team have taken cognisance of the planning history and proposed development context of the area and have designed in accordance with principles of integration and connectivity with existing and proposed surrounding land uses.

Please refer to RKD drawing ‘*A1505 Masterplan – Connectivity & Permeability*’ and the Architectural Design Statement and Landscape Design rationale report for further detail of how the proposal

integrates with the permitted and proposed developments and open space network in the surrounding area.

Kildare County Council Reg. Ref.: 13635 / An Bord Pleanála Ref.: PL09.243089

This permission relates to a portion of land in the north-western corner of the former Magee Barracks landholding. This new national school has been delivered and is in operation. The school site forms part of the vision for the overall site to provide for a mixed-use extension of the existing town centre and provide an important community use to serve existing and future residents. This school also ties in to the school phase of the Magee Barracks redevelopment as set out in the Kildare Town LAP.

Following a 3rd party appeal against the decision of the council and a 1st party appeal against Condition No 40, An Bord Pleanála granted permission for the development on 9th July 2014.



Figure D: Extract of site layout plan of Reg. Ref. 13635

The Inspector’s Report noted the appropriateness of the redevelopment of the Magee Barracks site. The Inspector stated that the overall land holding is located in an ideal area to expand and enhance the existing town centre and that the connectivity and new access routes that will be created from the redevelopment of the site will significantly increase the connectivity and activity of the town. The Inspector continued to justify the development of the lands due to its ‘heart of the town’ location and its position within the existing urban fabric.

However, the Inspector also noted that the vacant nature of the site and the underutilised development potential of the lands acts as an island within the town, secluded and disconnected from the main areas. The re-development of the site was therefore strongly encouraged and welcomed to improve the overall vitality and connectivity of Kildare Town.

“Although Market Square is circa 500 metres from the main gate, the entire site is an island providing no connecting routes with Hospital Street, Melitta Road and adjoining areas. For this reason alone, I encourage and welcome the access to the proposed development from Melitta Road. The proposed access provides access to the Magee Barracks site from a point that has a large population base in addition to close links to the town centre. Successful developments depend on good access and connections.

Having regard to the amount of residential developments to the north and east of the site when accessed from Melitta Road, the location of the access is making a positive discrimination in favour of walking and cycling as opposed to generating traffic. The access onto Melitta Road provides a new principle linkage to the surrounding urban fabric, and it is designed as a tree lined boulevard”.

Overall it is clear from the Inspector’s Report that the re-development of the former Magee Barracks site is welcomed by both Kildare County Council and An Bord Pleanála. The development of the school site also sets a precedent for future development by providing community infrastructure to support additional residential units. The Board’s Order states the following:

“Having regard to the nature and design of the proposed school, the policies and provision in the Kildare Local Area Plan regarding the former Magee Barracks site, to the town centre location on a brownfield site adjoining residential development. To the benefits of the proposed development to the community and to the revised submission made during the course of the planning application, the Board considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of properties in the vicinity, would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience and would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area”.

Kildare County Council Reg. Ref.: 1613

A final grant of permission was issued by Kildare County Council on the 13th of January 2016, following the submission of Further Information, for the development of a school building (Gaelscoil Mhic Aodha) comprising of 1 no. 2 storey building with 8 no. classrooms, school hall and support teaching space. This new national school has been delivered and is in operation.



Figure E: Extract from site layout plan of Reg. Ref. 1613

The site of this second school is situated to the northwest of (and immediately adjacent to) the current Phase 1 site.

The Kildare County Council initial planners report, which recommended the requesting of Further Information noted that the principle of educational development on the site was acceptable in principle, having regard to the zoning of the site for the ‘*Regeneration of Magee Barracks*’.

As part of the planning history review undertaken in respect of the proposed development, a review was undertaken of current / recent permissions on lands zoned for Phase 1 residential development in the

Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012-2018. A summary of these permissions is provided in Appendix 1 for the Board's information.

This wider planning history review revealed that the large majority of Phase 1 residential zoned lands have active planning permission, while the remaining Phase 1 zoned lands are less strategically located in sequential terms than the former Magee Barracks Lands. This further reinforces the suitability of the site for a significant quantum of residential development.