



Knocknacarra District Centre, Rahaon, Galway

Urban Design Report

Issued for Stage 3 SHD Application
October 2019



Urban Design Report

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“Our vision is to transform this infill site in the heart of Knocknacarra. A vibrant new public square will be the centrepiece of this six-acre urban project and will be accessible to both new residents and the wider Knocknacarra community. The project as a whole will include a generously proportioned urban square; active, dynamic and inviting new streetscapes and landscaped areas; a new community use building; new curated food and beverage offerings; new retail and employment opportunities; and 332 new homes.”



02 - Site Context

Surrounding Public Amenity Space

Adjacent to the site there are a number of landscaped areas and parklands which will complement this proposed development.

- The new public park is to be delivered across the Western Distributor road beside the site. The twelve acres of amenity land in the Kingston area will provide a new neighbourhood park for Knocknacarra. The park, located close to St John the Apostle National School, is to be delivered into a major public park to include a children's play area, three multi-use games areas and a grass rugby pitch. These pitches can be used for both GAA and rugby. The Kingston plan, designed by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds is going through a Part 8 Planning process.
- There are 2 no. soccer pitches directly opposite the site on Miller's Lane. These pitches, which are adjacent to the site and are open to the public, provide an excellent open space amenity for this site.
- Galway Golf Club is adjacent to the site.
- Westside Playing fields are less than 1km from the site.
- McGrath's Field and Knocknacarra Playground are less than 1km from the site.
- Pearse Stadium and Salthill Knocknacarra GAA Club are less than 2km away from the site.



Distances to leisure and green spaces



02 - Site Context Photos



Aerial view of site



View from existing carpark in the Gateway Retail Park



View from An Logan estate across the Western Distributor Road



View of site from Miller's Lane



02 - Site Context Photos



Adjoining office park (Aviva / RSA)



Gort Na Bro Housing Estate



Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh



View of entrance to site from Western Distributor road



View of site with retail park to West



Aldi Convenience store on inner service road



Roundabout entrance to site



View of entrance to site from Western Distributor road



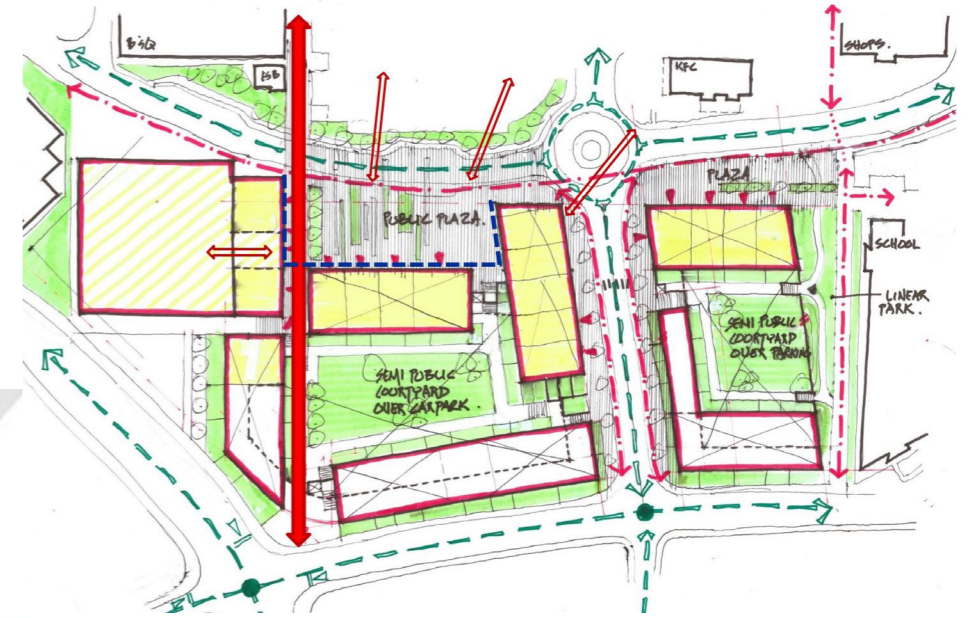
View from retail park back towards site entrance

03 - Proposed Development

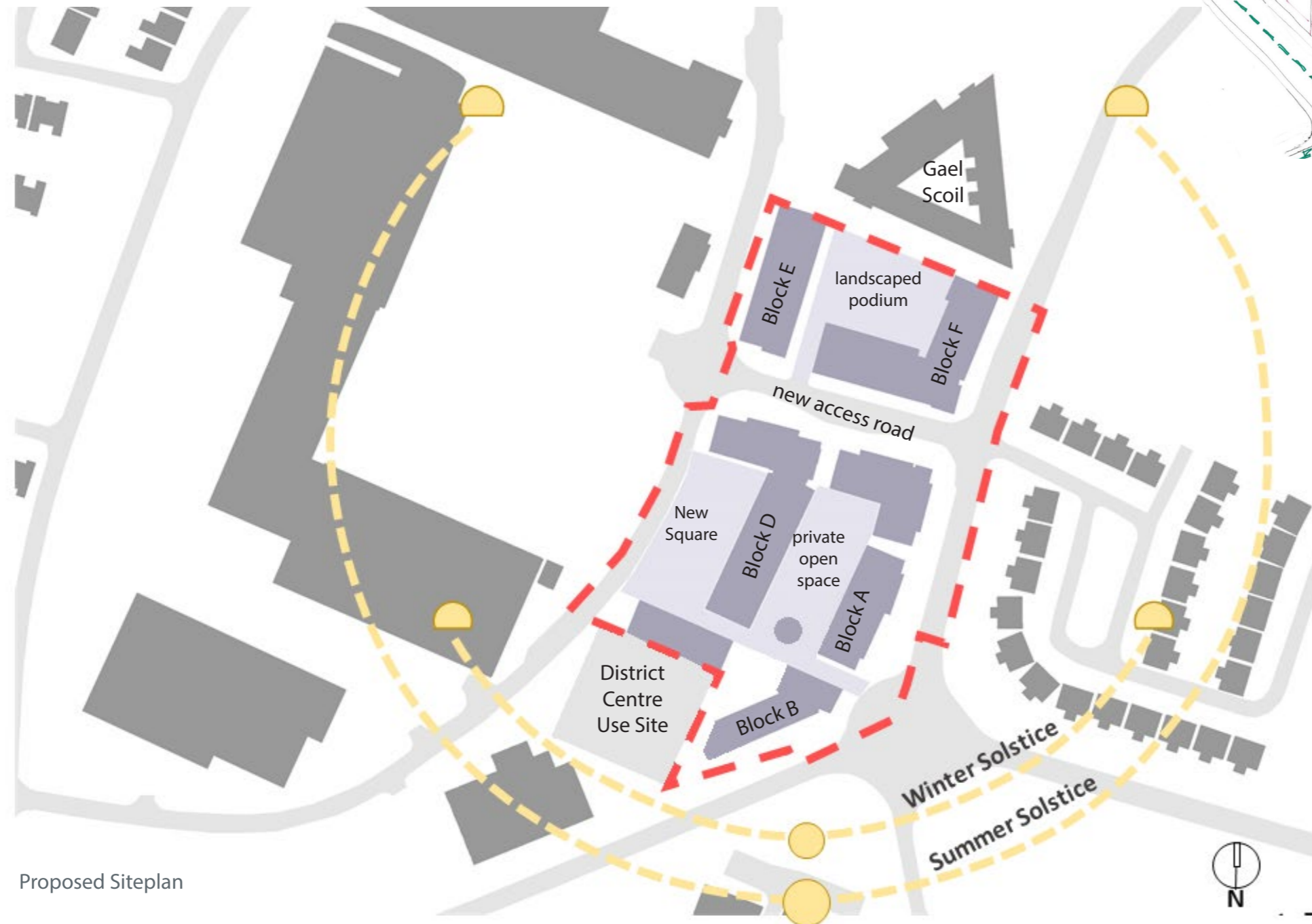
Conceptual Design Development

The project's fundamental key driver is the re-alignment of the link road that connects the retail park with the Western Distributor Road which will align with Gort Na Bro on the other side of the road. The road will be designed to the specification for the N6 Scheme and will be a signalised junction to connect with the retail park. Details around the re-design of this road and the impact are detailed under separate cover in the traffic and transportation report from Atkins Consulting Traffic Engineers.

By relocating this road the site is divided into a northern and southern site, each with their own site constraints. The road is provided with turning lane, cycle and pedestrian lanes and grass verges to make the entrance a tree lined boulevard. This new boulevard will be lined with new buildings on either side to form a new appropriately scaled streetscape.



Initial Design Concept



Proposed Siteplan



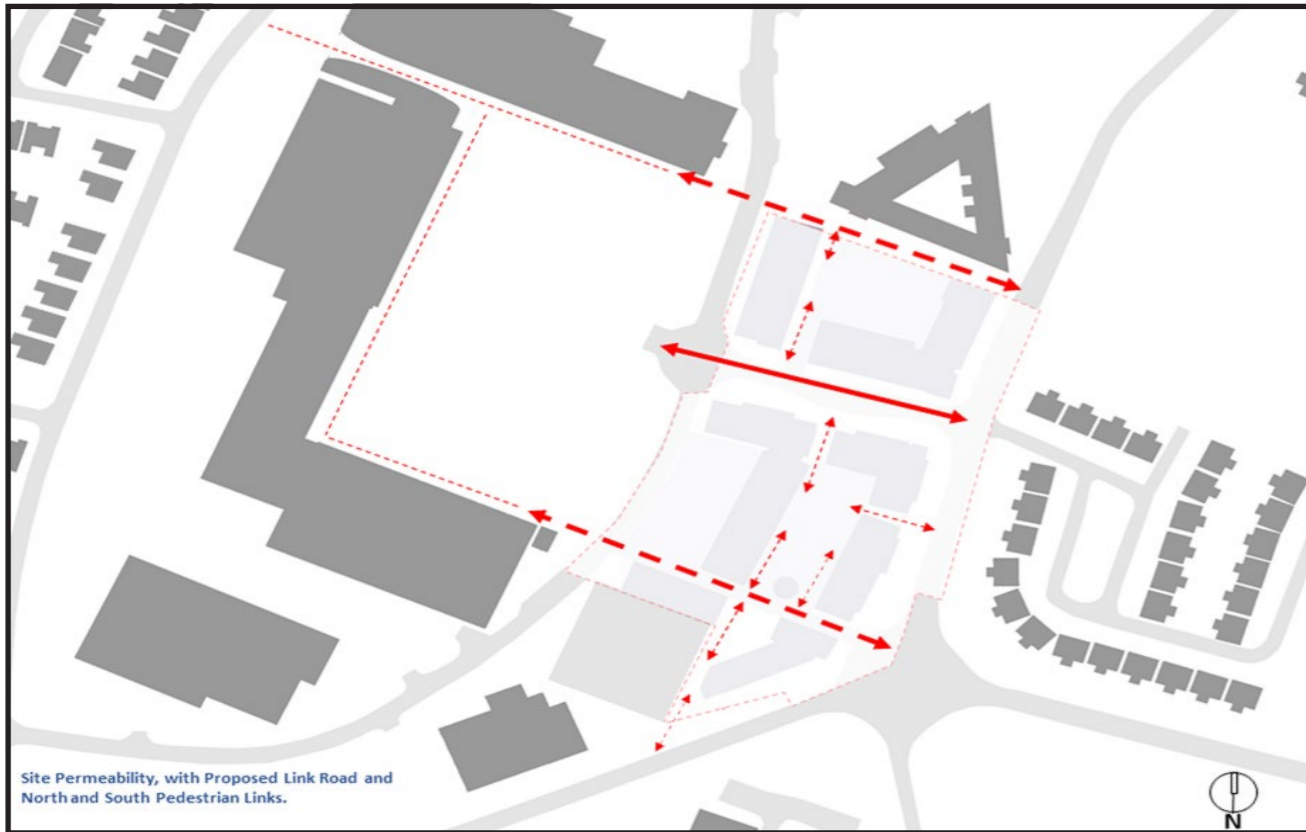
Initial Design Concept (inner courtyard)



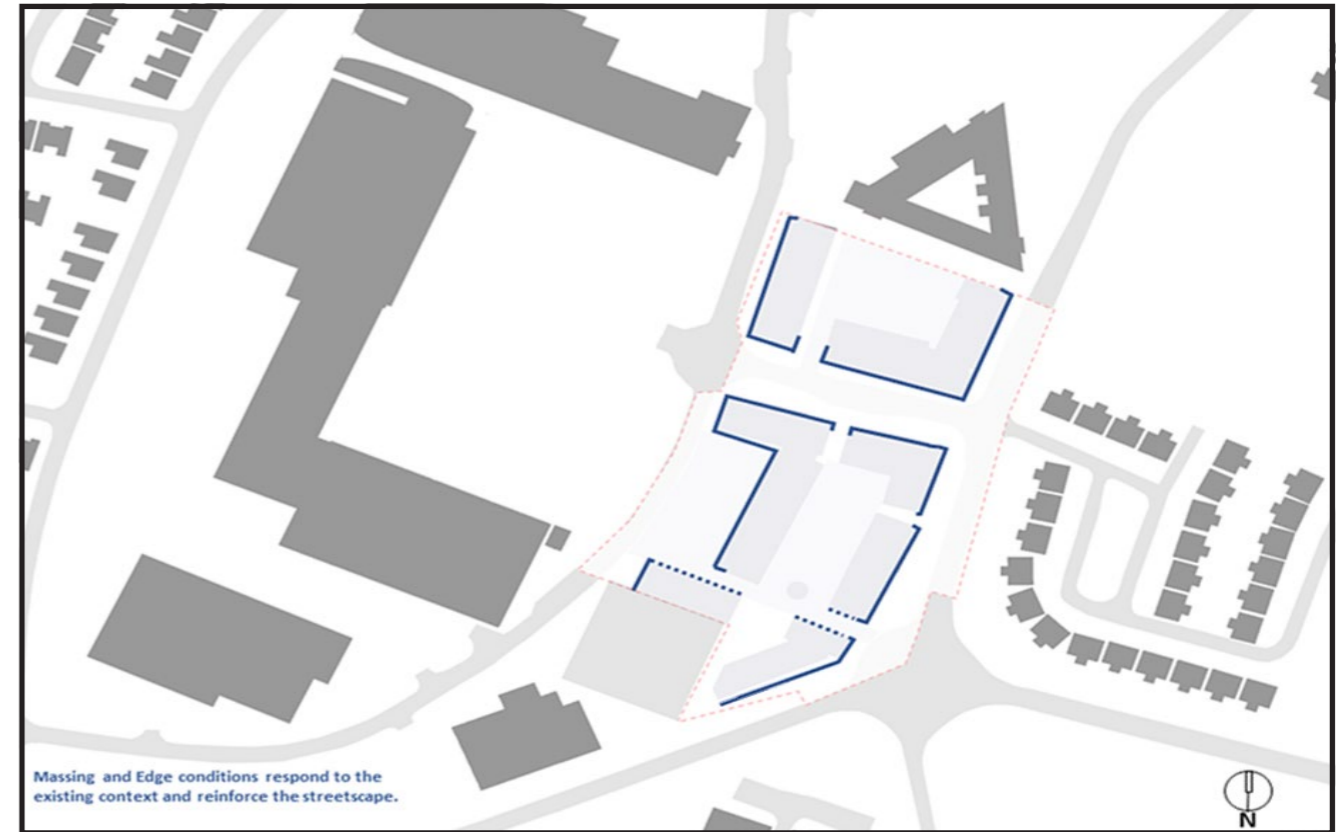
Initial Design Concept (public square)



Conceptual Design Development



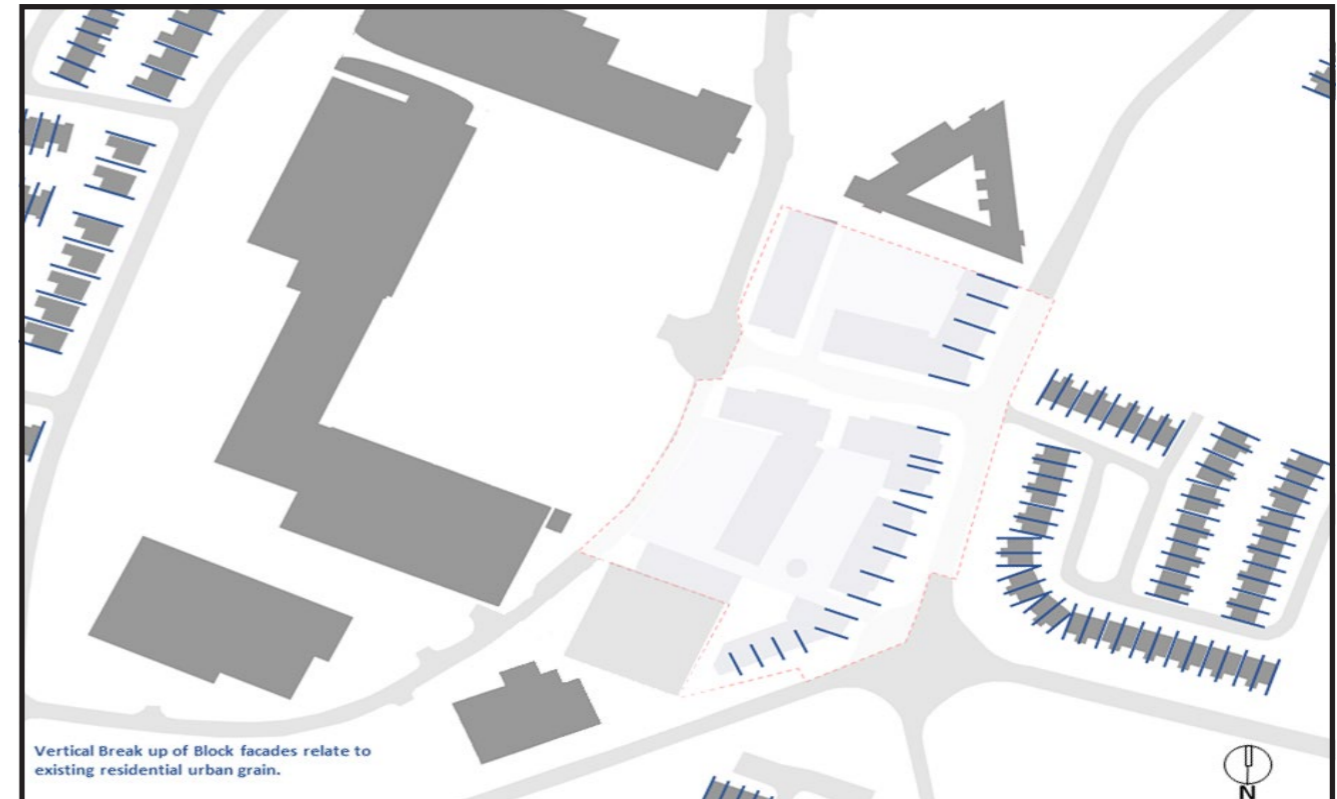
Site Permeability



Street Edges and Context



Arrangement of Building Blocks



Urban Grain

03 - Proposed Development

Development Design

This development proposes a best in class residential scheme designed to the new Planning Guidelines - 'Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments' Guidelines for Planning Authorities for a development of

- 332 apartments (93 one beds, 219 two beds & 20 three beds) including and ancillary support accommodation such as plant rooms, refuse stores and secure bicycle stores.
- Dedicated tenant amenity accommodation for shared workspaces, shared dining and lounge facilities and residential amenity space for tenants.
- Over 2667sqm of commercial / retail accommodation including 16 no. retail units for Neighbourhood Retail/ Food and Beverage.
- Creche of 174sqm with an external secure play area
- A community use facility
- A new District Centre Public Square (30mx67m) and other residential dedicated open space in the form of courtyards and podium terraces for the use of the residents.

The overall design concept for the scheme is based on delivering a high quality residential development that responds to the existing context and which seeks to create an integrated, permeable and sustainable community adjoining the Gateway Retail Park and in the heart of Knocknacarra District Centre. This new square will be a focal point for the community and deliver much need social spaces by means of public open space, restaurants and cafes and community focused facilities.

We have carefully reviewed the amount of sunlight reaching the development and have optimised how the orientation will affect the amenity of the occupants. The Dual aspect ratio is in excess of 60% given the site shape and orientation. Larger apartments and large areas of glazing on facades all give adequate compensation for the dual aspect ratio. The dual aspect ratio is appropriate for this site.



Land Uses

Existing and proposed uses for the Knocknacarra District Centre

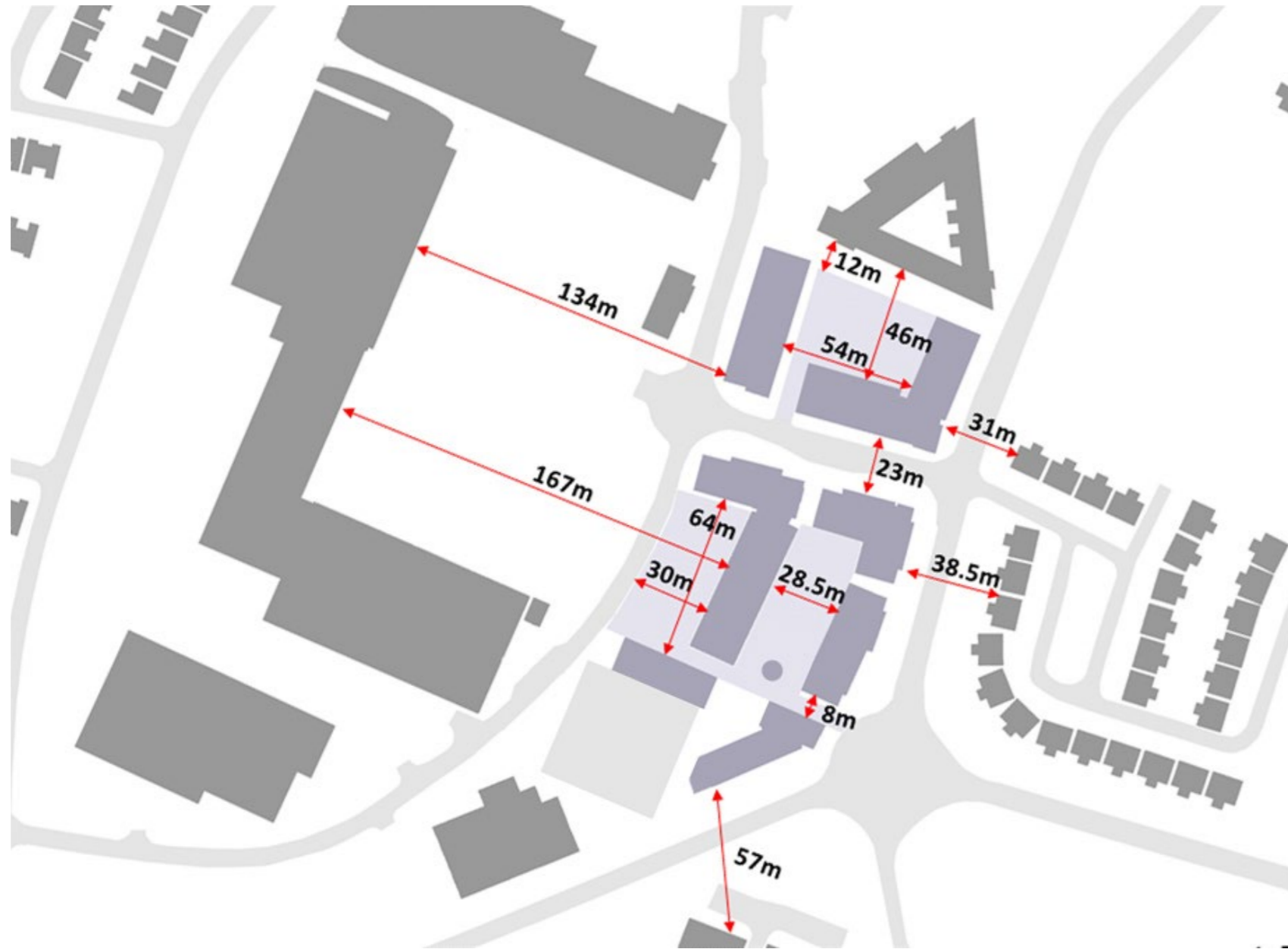
03 - Proposed Development

Separation Distances

The blocks are designed to ensure adequate separation distances are maintained to ensure sufficient daylight / sunlight and to ensure privacy for the adjoining residential development at Gort Na Bro. The internal courtyards have been designed to benefit from good orientation and be sufficiently wide to enjoy good privacy. A separate Daylight & Sunlight Study by IES Consultants is included in this application.

The northern block is designed to ensure privacy for the school with a landscaped podium which will be sunny and sheltered giving good amenity space for residents.

The public square is sufficiently wide to allow public functions, enjoy good sunshine and provide shelter from the prevailing winds and rain.



View from carpark to new entrance road



View along Miller's Lane



View to front of Block B at corner of site on Western Bypass

03 - Proposed Development

Massing, Height and Building Form

With the publication of the new national height policy 'Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities December 2018' A key objective of the NPF is therefore to see that greatly increased levels of residential development in our urban centres and significant increases in the building heights and overall density of development is not only facilitated but actively sought out and brought forward by our planning processes and particularly so at local authority and An Bord Pleanála levels.

Increasing prevailing building heights therefore has a critical role to play in addressing the delivery of more compact growth in our urban areas, particularly our cities and large towns through enhancing both the scale and density of development and our planning process must actively address how this objective will be secured.

Implementation of the National Planning Framework requires increased density, scale and height of development in our town and city cores, including an appropriate mix of both the living, working, social and recreational space we need in our urban areas.

The building heights are designed to be modulated with the orientation and site constraints of the site. The proposed development modulates between four storeys up to a maximum of 7 storeys. The buildings step down to four storeys where adjoining the school on the northern site and around the landscaped courtyards to ensure daylight and sunlight penetration to the amenity spaces.

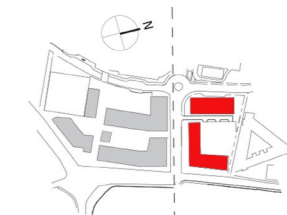
Through detailed place-making analysis, we have scaled up and down at appropriate locations without compromising on the quality of our open spaces.



View to front of Block A showing massing along street



Aerial view showing varied massing and heights



03 - Proposed Development

Development Design

Northern Site (Block E&F)

Block E: 44no. Residential & 5no. Retail Units

Block F: 72no. Residential Units & Residential Amenity

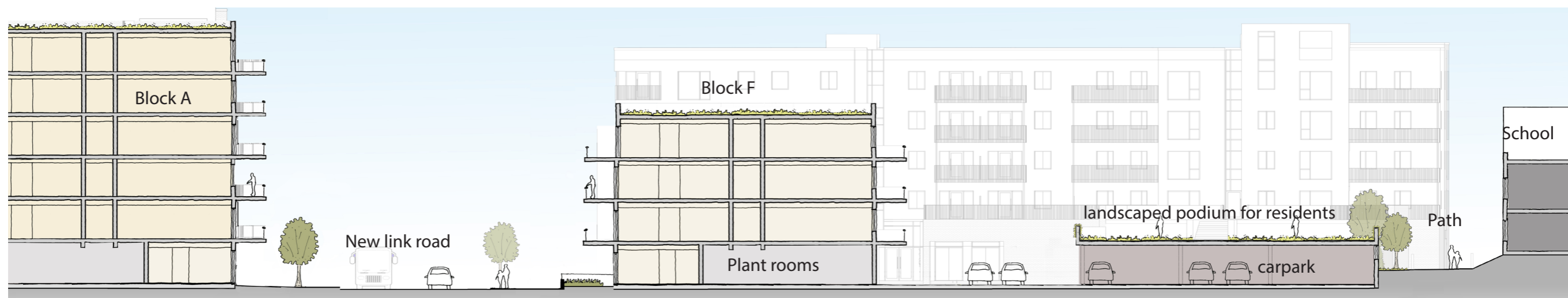
The landscaping along the new road will create a barrier between the private and public realm creating the necessary privacy for the few ground floor residential units (refer to diagram on page 26). Secure bicycle stores, substations / switch rooms and plant rooms are located onto the rear carpark so as to not clutter the streetscape.

The Block F forms an 'L' shape to screen the car park to the rear and form a streetscape on Miller's Lane and the new entrance road to the Retail park. Ground floor own door residential units form the street and have private realms in front of the units with small front gardens with low walls, railings and planting to form a privacy screen to these own door apartments. On the corner of Block F is a residential amenity space for the apartments. This space is 161sqm and will be a shared amenity space for the residents of Blocks E and F comprising of shared work spaces, library, lounge area and shared dining room / kitchens.

The elevations are broken down to look like individual buildings with the corner building taller and fully bricked to give prominence to the entrance to the Retail Park. The block F steps down towards the school and along the entrance road to allow more light over the building into the courtyard to ensure this receives more than 2 hours of good sunshine. From the daylighting / over shadowing studies carried out by IES the courtyard space will receive good sunshine during the equinox and summer periods.



View of new link road and Block E from the existing car park



Raised podium landscaped courtyard between Blocks E and F with screened carpark

03 - Proposed Development

Development Design

Northern Site (Blocks E&F)

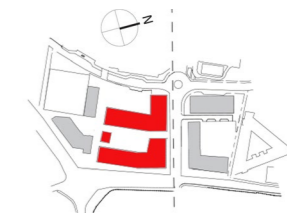
The Block E faces the rest of the retail park and has apartments above the small scale neighbourhood retail units which will be butchers, bakeries etc. which will form a counterpoint to the larger retail units in Gateway Retail Park. Servicing, refuse stores, substations and loading provision can be serviced from the rear of the new retail units. This will hide the servicing from the public view and create an active frontage to the public streets.

The northern site is designed around a raised podium with two blocks designed to form a resident's courtyard. The parking for the new development is provided under an open raised podium which will be provided with a planted deck which will be used as a residential amenity. The podium shall have a playground, seating areas in sunny locations, extensive planting and pergolas to screen the car parking below.

The courtyard space between blocks E and F will form a set-back from the School and maintain privacy for the school. The Blocks E and F shall be connected by bridges that link the blocks to the semi-private open space. This has also the advantage of screening the parking provisions from the public realm and as the car park is cut into the topography this will present a lower wall to the pedestrian route that runs along the school.

The apartment facades are broken down to look like individual buildings as a coherent townscape solution. Parapet heights are varied to give a more individual feel to each apartment. The materials are varied between brick, coloured render and cut stone to the ground floor. The shop fronts have individual shop signage.





03 - Proposed Development

Development Design

Southern Site (Blocks A&D)

Block A: 96no. Residential Units & Residential Amenity

Block D: 79no. Residential Units & 8no. Retail Units

The southern side is further divided into several distinct separate apartment blocks which further break down the scale of the development. Each block is fronted either by residential amenity spaces, community cultural space or retail /restaurants. Some of the blocks have ground floor residential uses but these are screened from the public by landscaping and private terraces which form a natural screen from the public realm.

The Blocks A and D are designed around a more private courtyard space on ground floor which will be orientated to be sunny, will have play spaces for all ages and will create a private amenity space for the residents with multiple permeable routes through the development.

The Civic square, located to the west of Block D, will be fronted by food and beverage units with apartments above. This will form an appropriate civic frontage for the square overlooked by the residences above. The restaurants can spill out on to the square and create activity both day and night and help make the square a busy active space.

Block D ground floor commercial units will add to the retail offer already in place in the Gateway Retail Park and both developments will bring customers to the area. A number of restaurants / coffee shops with free wi-fi service will attract customers from surrounding houses and places of work, such as the nearby Aviva offices.



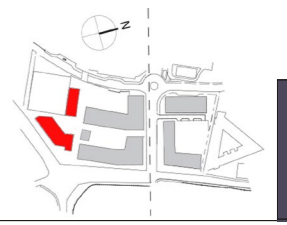
View of Block D from the existing carpark



Fig. 4 - New Public Square



View of courtyard between Block A and D



03 - Proposed Development

Development Design Southern Site (Block B&C)

Block B: 41no. Residential Units, 1no. Retail Unit

Block C: 2no. Retail Units & Community Space

When approached from the city, the first block of the development that is seen is Block B. This block forms a gateway to the development with the taller element presenting a beacon that is aligned with the end of the Western Distributor road. This acts as a counterpoint to the other blocks. This taller element is picked out in a blue/grey brick façade with the lower parts in coloured render.

Alongside Block B there is a new pedestrian link that connects Blocks B, Block C and the main pedestrian route which connects to the retail park. Block C is a double height retail and community use block along this pedestrian route which provides an animated façade to the Civic Square and brings a sense of enclosure and place. Block C features a large glazed façade, feature brick piers and select metal roof.

This new spine route will provide pedestrian permeability, enhanced safe cycle routes and new routes through the development, providing active spaces. On this new route will be the southern site tenant amenity space which is located in the green courtyard and will be accessible to all blocks. As well as this residential amenity space, there will be coffee shops, the Community/Cultural space and a Pétanque Court to provide active uses throughout the day and evening for residents of all ages.



View between Block D and Block C (Towards Block B)



View along Western Distributor Road towards Block B, from the City approach



Elevation along the Western Distributor Road (Block B and A)

03 - Proposed Development

Design Development from Stage 2 Application

The design of the development has evolved since the Stage 2 tripartite meeting. The design team has taken on board the comments from An Bord Pleanála and particularly the Local Authority to provide a more coherent design solution, particularly around Block B of the development and its relationship with adjoining blocks and the Western Distributor road. The development design has been adapted in the following ways to provide a better design solution:

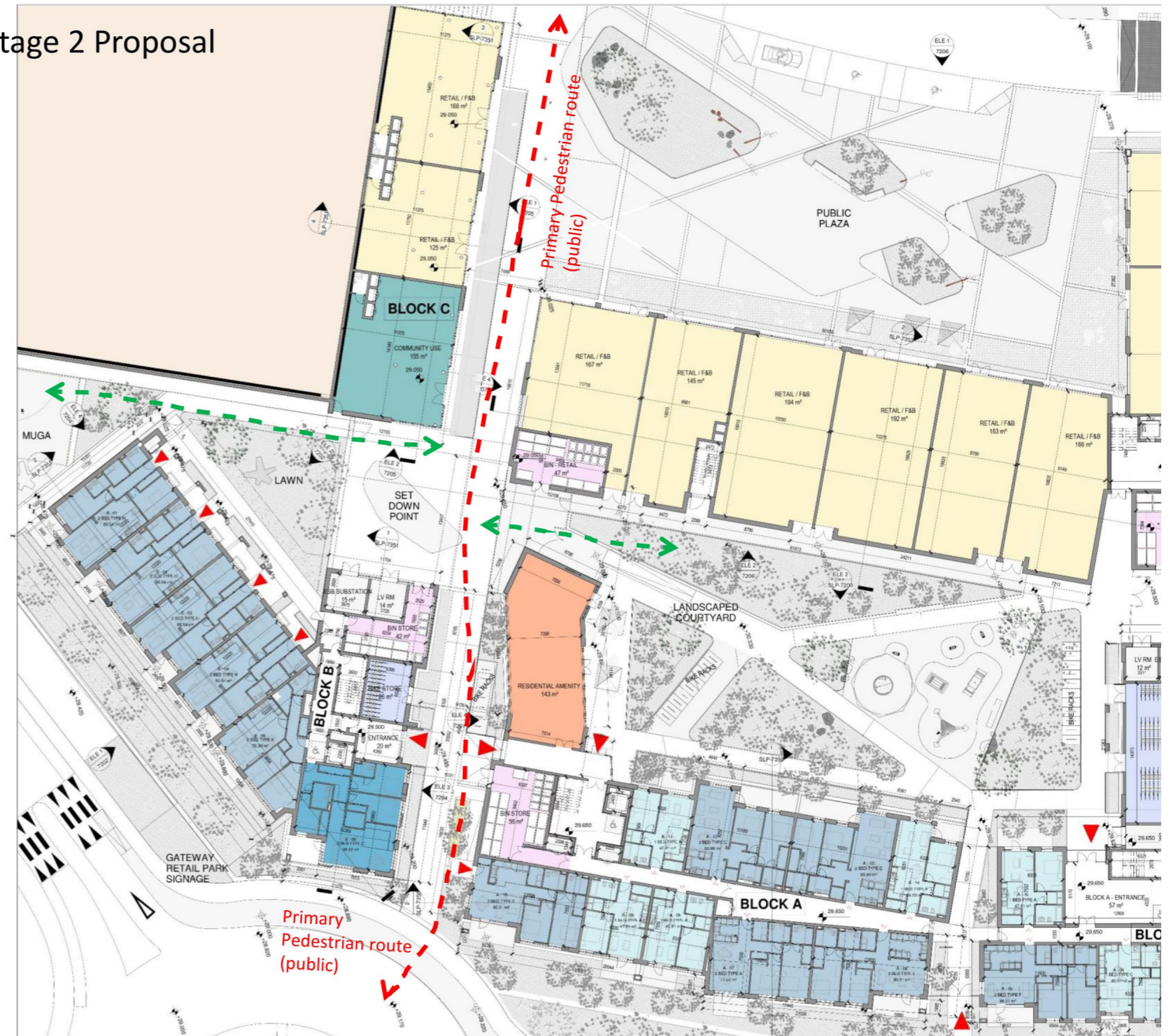
- Block B has been redesigned to address the Western Distributor road by elongating the building façade along the street and creating a more unified street frontage. This building now addresses the street better, creates an urban edge and closes off the development to the adjoining site reserved for a District Centre Use. It is noted that the reservation strip to the front of Block B is required to be left fallow for the future N11 road / Western Distributor Road Upgrade Works. This strip, along with the proposed landscape design, provides a buffer for the apartments from the busy road. The existing change in level along the road and path in this part of the site is also optimised in the proposed design by having the apartments, and associated private open space, above street level as one moves south from the roundabout (refer to diagram on page 29 for example).

- The Block B design has been redesigned to be a more linear block along the WDR so that the space to the rear is enlarged to provide a more meaningful open space and also allow sunlight penetrate the public realm. This will ensure a clear definition between public, semi private, and private space. The open space shall be overlooked and this amenity is considered as a usable integrated element in the design of the development which will benefit the residents. The boundary treatments at this location define the private realm and provide defensible space for the ground floor units which address the open space.



View along Western Distributor Road

Stage 2 Proposal



03 - Proposed Development

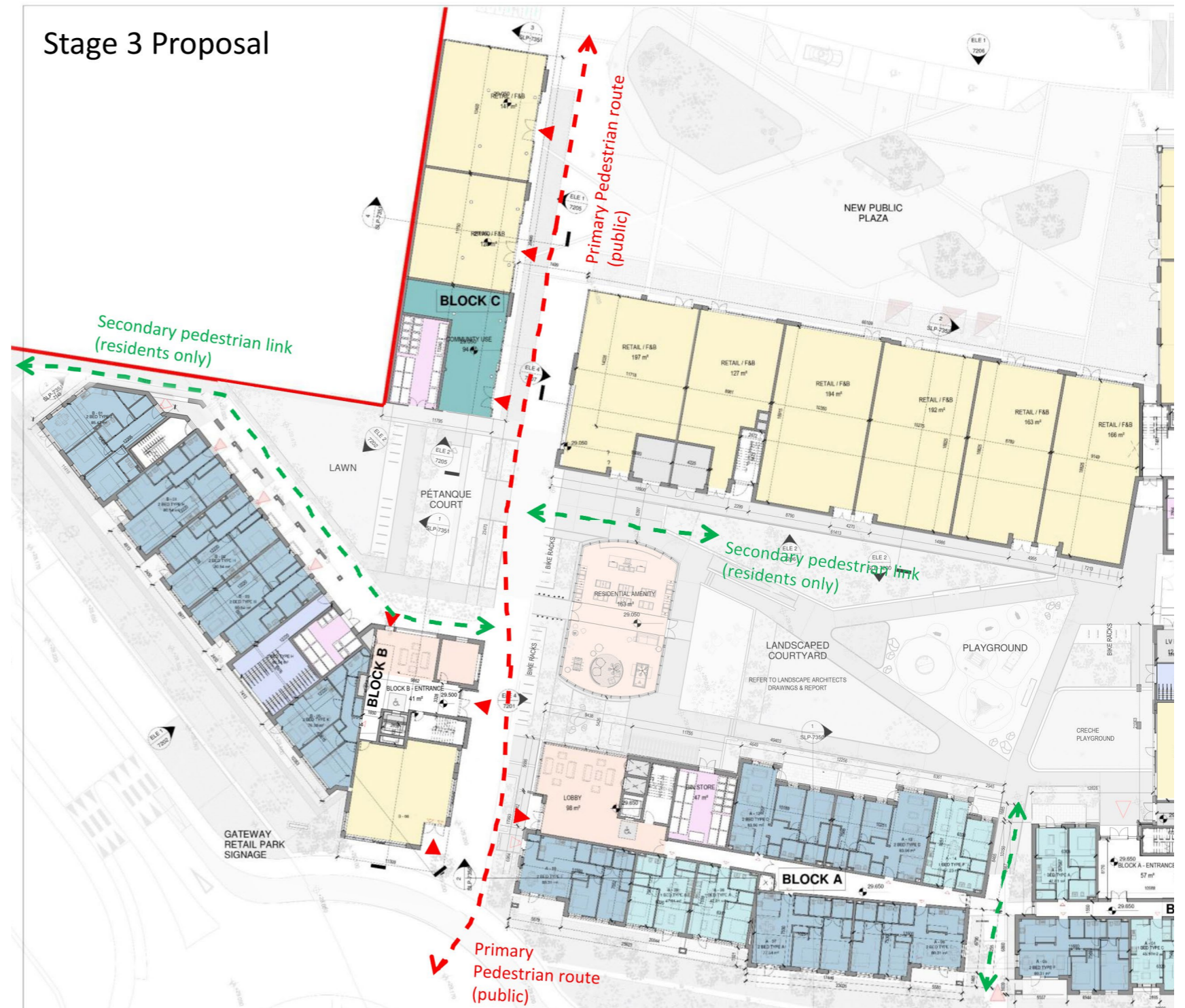
- The ESB substations, refuse rooms and bike store at the base of Block B and Block A have all been relocated to less prominent locations to optimise the circulation at ground floor level and ensure a better public realm. The ground floor uses are all active uses which will provide a more enhanced public realm and provide better passive surveillance for this important proposed pedestrian route, which links WDR to the proposed Civic Square and onto the existing retail park. This will help create people friendly streets and a hierarchy of routes for pedestrians.

- The entrance cores to both Block B and Block A have been enlarged at ground floor level to provide a more generous public realm with tenant amenity spaces. By removing the refuse store away from the street at the base of Block A and replacing this with tenant amenity space and a more generous entrance core the public realm is enhanced. This results in the reduction in the development of 2 no. residential units but provides a more active streetscape.

- The residential unit at the base of Block B on the corner has been replaced with a commercial unit. This could be a space that would support the residential development such as a coffee shop, laundry etc. This will provide active frontage for this important access route to the public plaza. The secure bike store has been relocated to the rear away from the public route. To the rear of Block B the entrance core has been widened to accommodate the lettings office and some tenant space such as a post room.



Commercial Unit at Entrance to Pedestrian Link





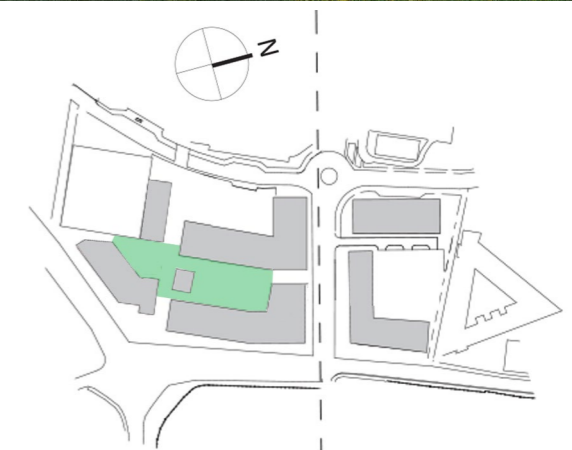
03 - Proposed Development

- The residential amenity space has been redesigned to be a stand-alone single storey pavilion which is catered to serve the entire development. This shared amenity space will provide shared recreational areas for tenants sitting in the garden space between Blocks A, D and B. This private amenity space will act as a feature for residents and act as a social hub. The shared social space is an important feature of this development and is to be supervised directly by the management company. There is also a dedicated separate residential amenity space located in Block F for the residents of both Blocks E and F. The amenity spaces shall contribute to the quality of life in its locality and provide facilities and services that complement those already available in the neighbourhood.

- The commercial waste store has also been relocated from the rear of Block D to the rear of Block C in a less prominent location to the public realm. The waste will be stored here until collected from a dedicated holding area just off the main public plaza freely accessible by bin trucks. Bins are to be stored in dedicated storage rooms in each block and then brought to a refuse collection point on the new square for weekly waste collections. The proposed change will ensure the landscaped garden space shall not have to accommodate bin trucks turning in this area.

- The landscaping has been amended to provide one dedicated landscape space rather than smaller pockets of space. The courtyard is enlarged and will benefit from more daylight and sunlight getting into the space. The MUGA has been replaced by an urban games area / petanque court, which has been integrated into the enlarged courtyard space to better suit the development and cater for people of all ages. The tenant amenity space also sits in the landscaped courtyard forming an urban edge on one side while at the same time sitting within the larger landscaped courtyard space as a single storey pavilion. There is a clear definition between public, semi private, and private space within the provision of landscaping and routes through the development.

We believe the design changes made have significantly improved the public realm, provided more active uses at ground floor level, provide a better offering for residents and will provide better permeable connections and linkages with the adjoining neighbourhood. The courtyard to the rear of Block B has been increased to allow better penetration of sunlight and the street frontage has been provided to create a better urban grain.



04 - Landscaping Masterplan

Landscaping Masterplan

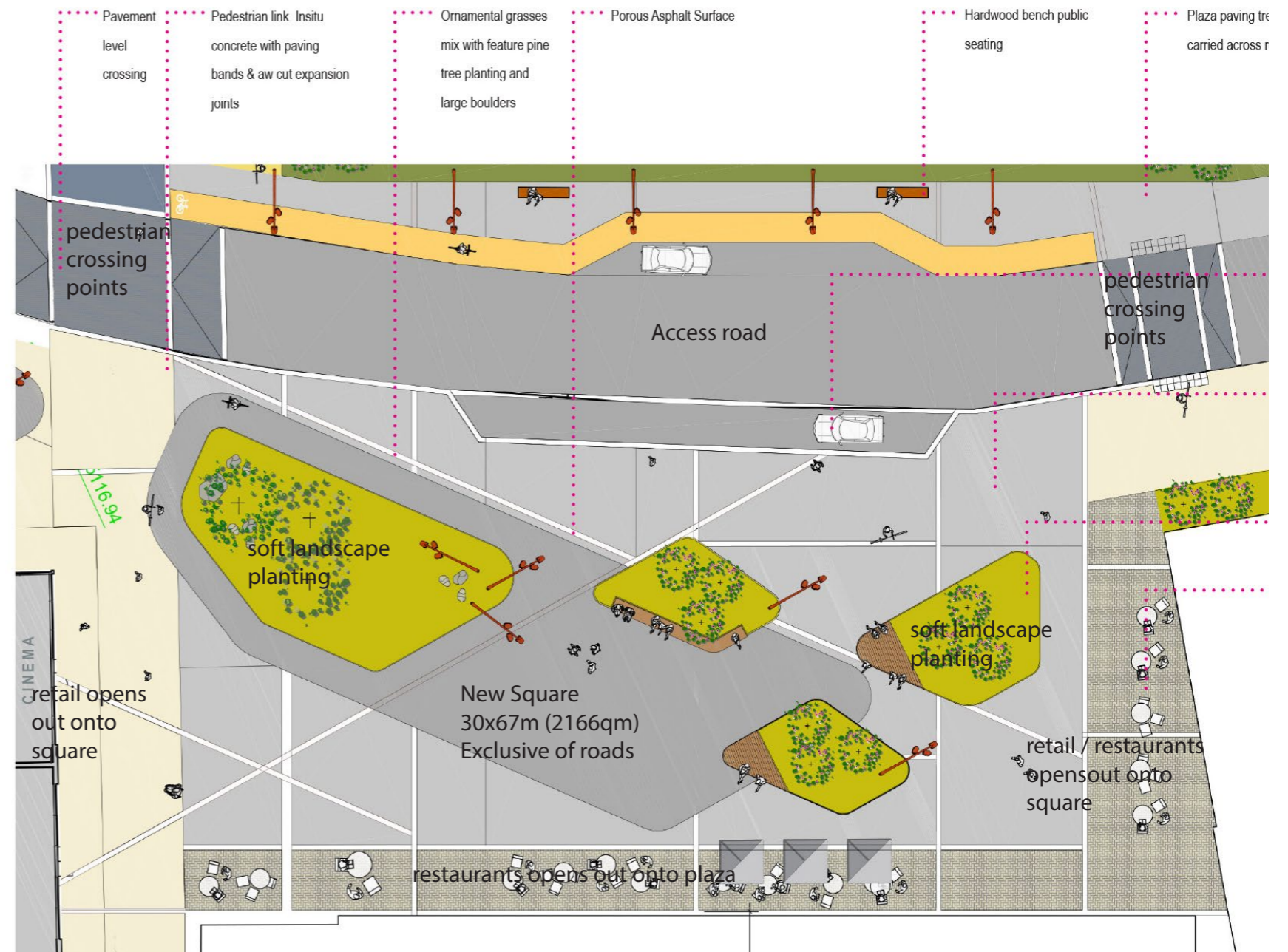
We have designed the development to be centered around a new public civic space, this is a key aspiration of Galway City Council's vision for the Knocknacarra District Centre. The new square will be 30sqm x 67sqm (excluding roads and footpaths) and fronted by retail units and restaurants. This will bring critical day time and night time activity to the district centre.

By fronting Retail / Food & Beverage onto the square, activity will be created at ground floor level and bring the necessary footfall to make the new square successful. A visual connection will be made between the existing retail at Phase 1 & 2 and the new District Centre. The restaurant / coffee shops will be able to spill out onto the sunny side of the square, avail of shelter from prevailing winds and bring activity.

The spaces between the buildings will be critical in achieving the Urban Density necessary to ensure a successful urban environment, where day time and night time uses can flourish. The design of the new urban square will be key to ensure it is overlooked by food / beverage offerings, good retail units that bring footfall and critically residential elements which will bring their own activity at entrance cores and social spaces for use of the residents and public.



New Square Design visualisations



New Square Design



04 - Landscaping Masterplan

Comparison with other urban squares

The new District Centre Square will be 30mx67m (exclusive of roads) and will compare favourably with other Urban Squares of comparable use in Ireland as indicated on the pages below.

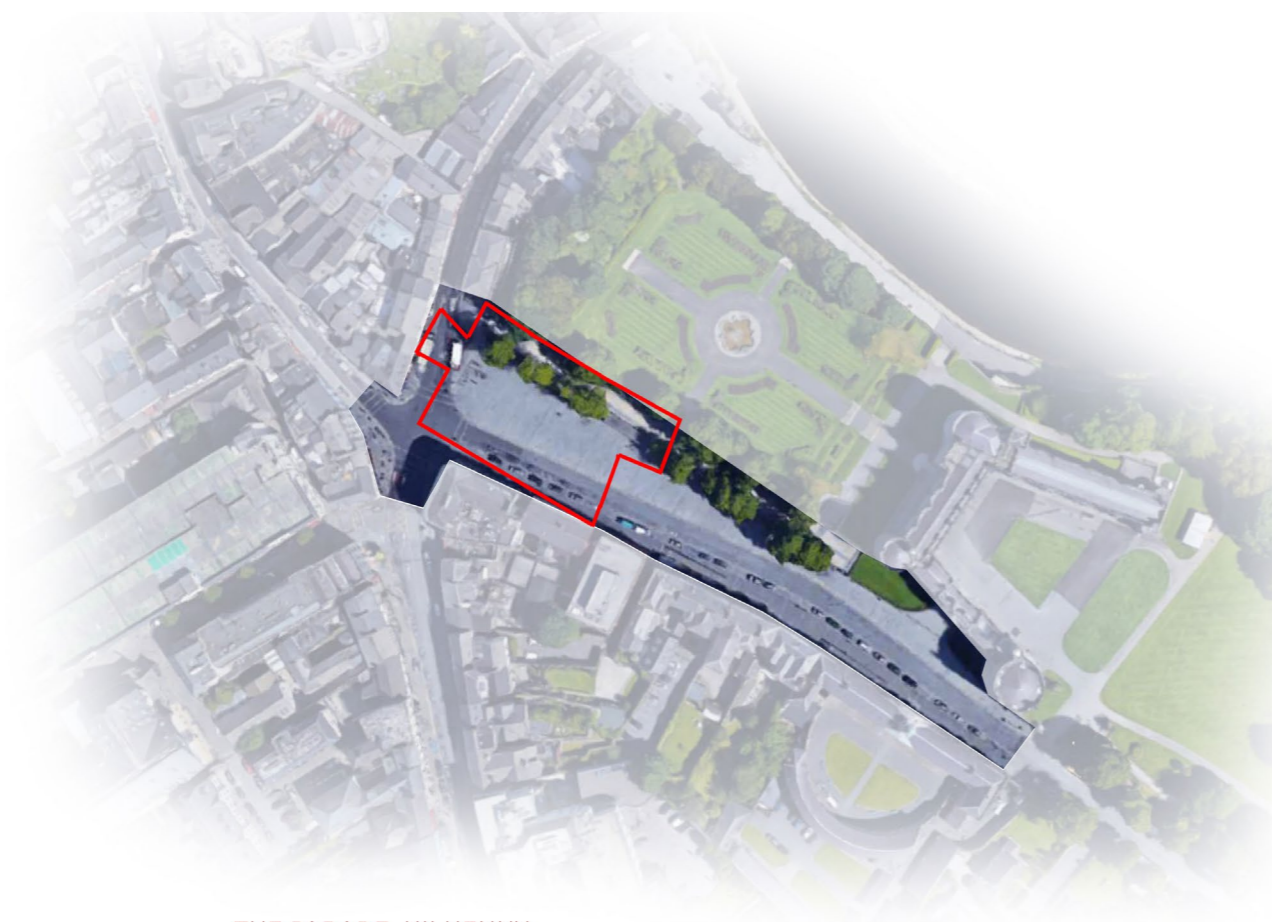
The square will be able to accommodate farmer's markets, Christmas fairs, social and cultural events, civic and community events and other functions like any village square.

Critical to the success of the square is the uses that can spill out onto the square, just like all the other successful squares listed below where footfall, shelter, orientation and activity are key to ensuring successful city spaces.

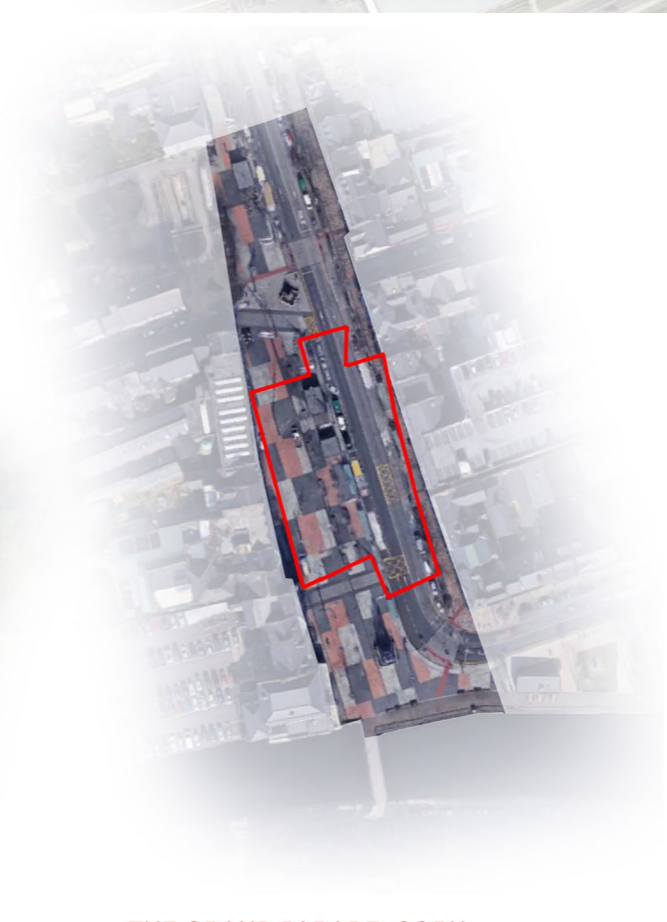
Please refer to Landscape Design Report from Ait Landscape + Urbanism



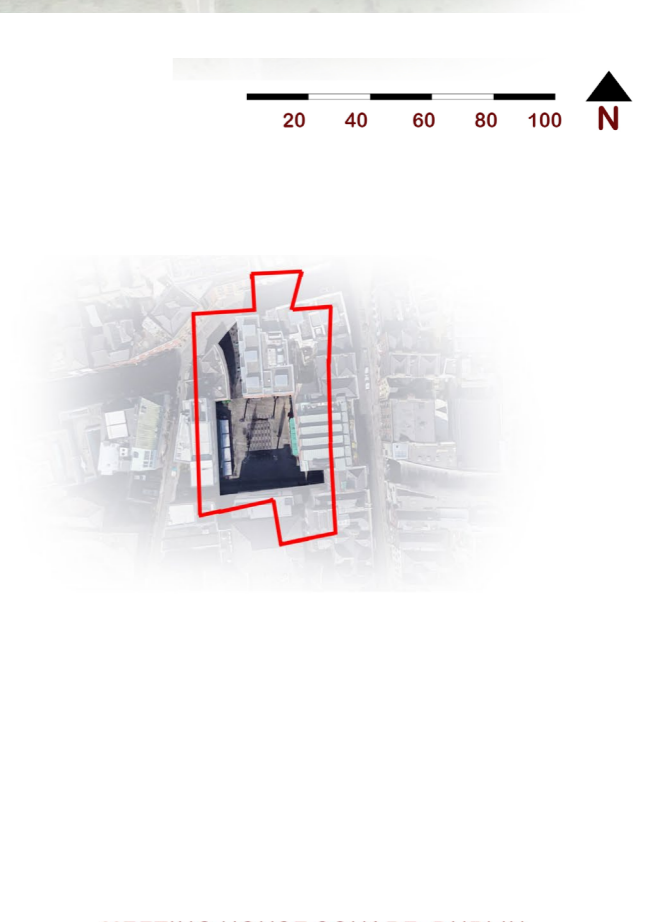
KNOCKNACARRA DISTRICT PLAZA



THE PARADE, KILKENNY



THE GRAND PARADE, CORK



MEETING HOUSE SQUARE, DUBLIN

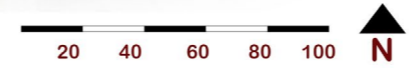




Comparison with other urban squares



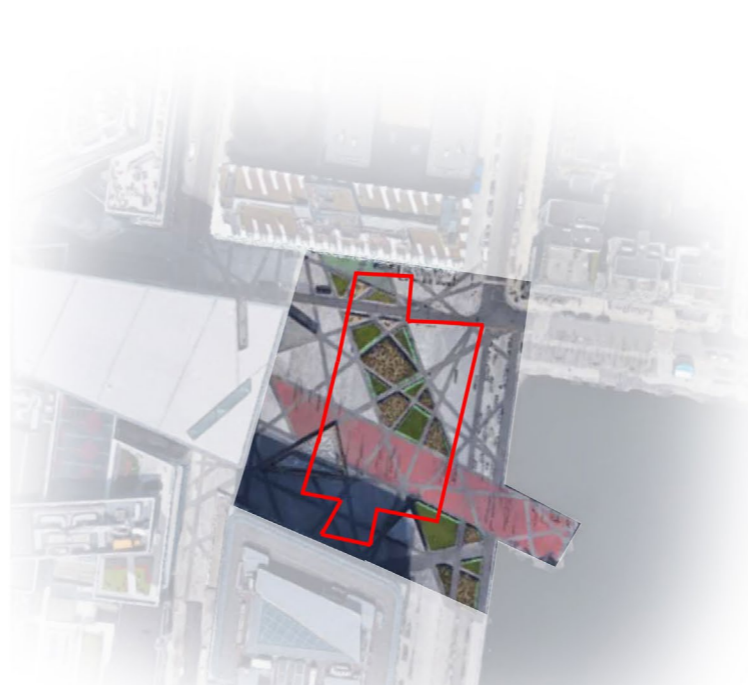
KNOCKNACARRA DISTRICT PLAZA



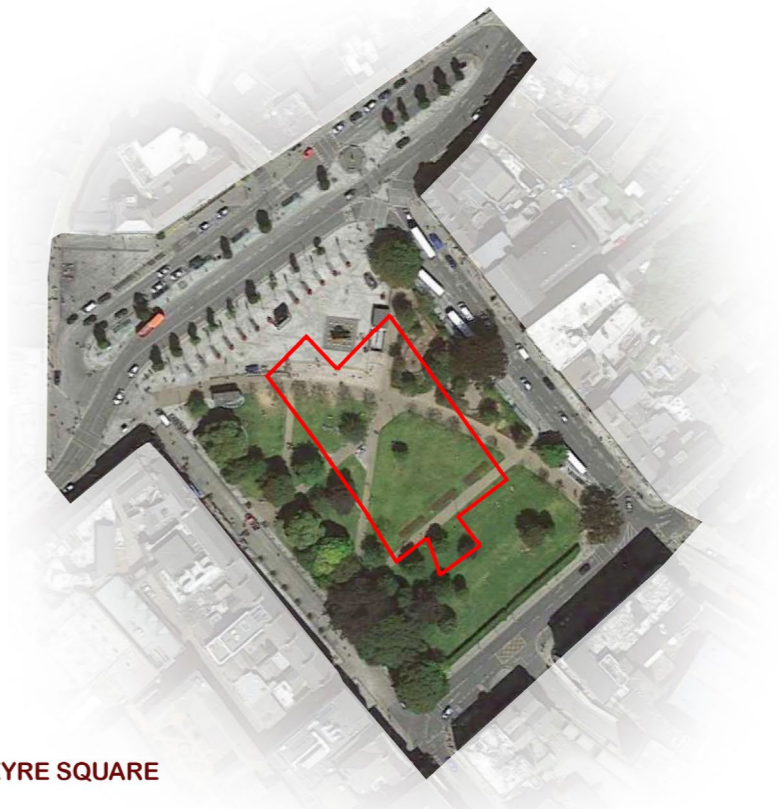
NUI GALWAY QUADRANGLE



KILLORGLIN SQUARE, KERRY



GRAND CANAL DOCK, DUBLIN



EYRE SQUARE

01 Context

How does the development respond to its surroundings?

- *The development seems to have evolved naturally as part of its surroundings*
- *Appropriate increases in density respect the form of buildings and landscape around the site's edges and the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring users*
- *Form, architecture and landscaping have been informed by the development's place and time*
- *The development positively contributes to the character and identity of the neighbourhood. Appropriate responses are made to the nature of specific boundary conditions*

Response: Any new development should improve on the existing situation while remaining sensitive to its context. The proposed development shall enhance the surroundings and provide an appropriate centre for the Knocknacarra area. The design response has been informed by the site and environment making positive connections to the neighbourhood. The District Centre shall contribute positively to the location by providing a new centre beside the retail park, places of work and leisure.

The design has undergone a thorough site analysis, context review and appropriate response to inform how the buildings have been designed. The buildings have been placed on the site to form coherent streetscapes, connect with the locality and form urban spaces which will contribute positively to the locality.

An Urban village should have a discernible central space or focal point. The space in the proposed Knocknacarra District Centre will be in the form of civic plaza or square which will enliven the urban village and provide safe and enjoyable spaces for living, working and shopping. It is important to provide a community focal point for the development in the form of the new Square and Community space off the square. These shall provide a more appropriate civic character to the area.

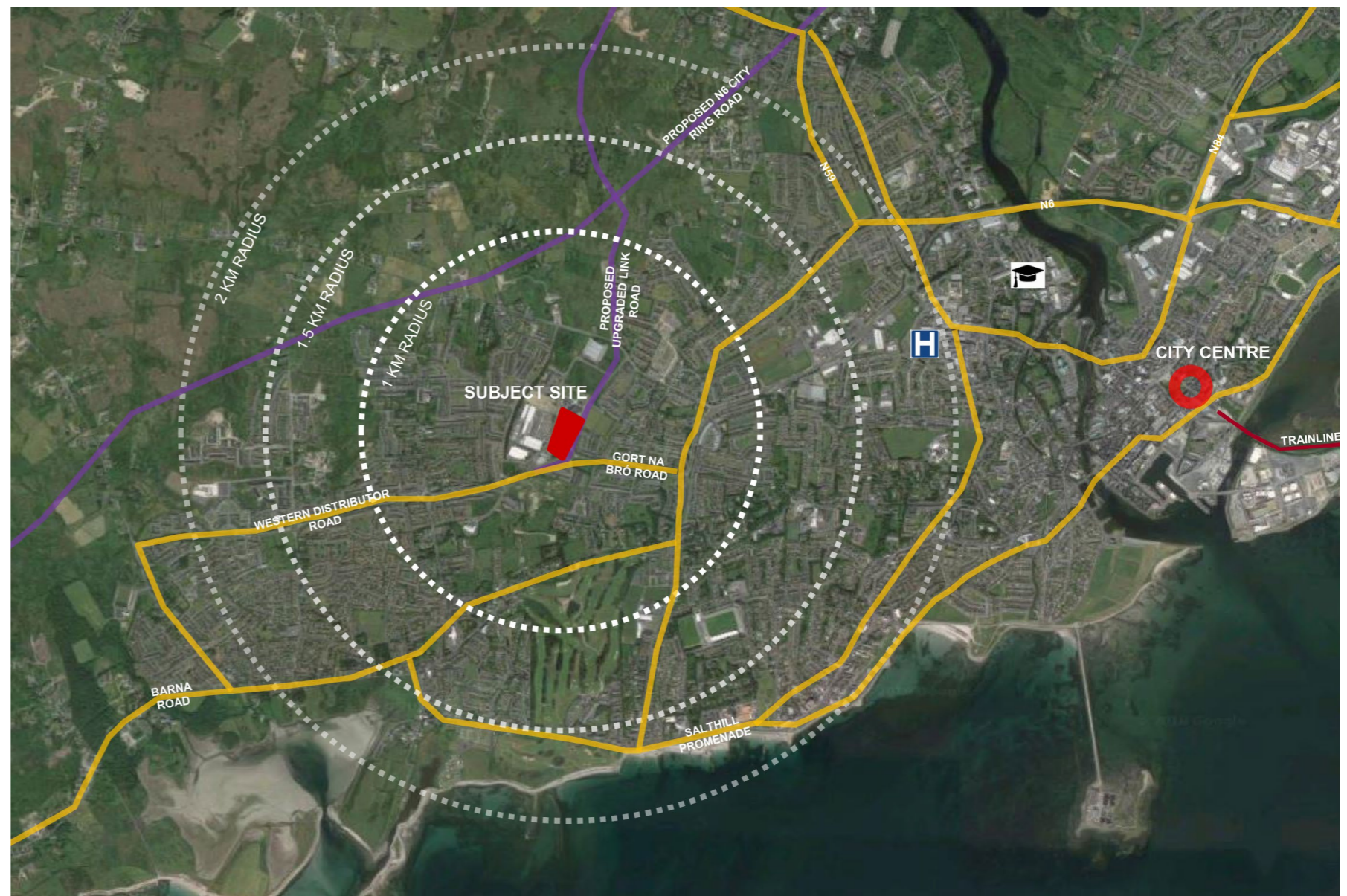
This development shall positively contribute to the character and identity of the neighbourhood by providing much needed residential accommodation, community spaces and a new urban square which will all add to the quality of the surroundings.

The massing has been developed to take account of the adjoining buildings, site location and through consideration of how the amenity of others will be affected, especially views, privacy and rights of light. The massing will form an appropriate response to its urban streetscape and location of the adjoining Retail Park. (Refer to Photomontage Report by Unique).

The development sits comfortably in its surroundings and provides an appropriate scale and density, while respecting nearby dwellings and the amenity enjoyed by the residents at Gort Na Bro (approximately 38 metres to the east of the site).

The Development shall specifically enhance its context through

- Delivery of the urban square as a placemaking opportunity;
- The taller element of the scheme and hierarchy of the architecture will provide a much needed landmark to provide a discernible centre for the Knocknacarra area;
- The landscaped courtyards will compliment the existing sports facilities in the nearby areas;
- The new community use building will act as a hub for future residents and the wider community.
- The range of smaller shops and restaurants / cafes shall provide an enhanced civic offering for this town centre.



Site location relative to Galway City Centre

02 Connections

How well connected is the new neighbourhood?

- There are attractive routes in and out for pedestrians and cyclists
- The development is located in or close to a mixed-use centre
- The development's layout makes it easy for a bus to serve the scheme
- The layout links to existing movement routes and the places people will want to get to.

Response: The development will be connected to the locality and form attractive routes between the surrounding streets for pedestrians and cyclists by providing permeable routes through the neighbourhood. By creating better connected places with the new routes, facilities and amenities the development will help support a good quality of life.

The delivery of the newly aligned road will provide better access and line of sight to the existing retail offering and the future development of the area. By providing new permeable cycle and pedestrian routes along with safe traffic routes, connections to the neighbourhood shall be enhanced. Cycle parking for residents and visitors is provided throughout the development, with 677 spaces in total provided.

The development shall create connections to places of leisure, work and living. The new development will enhance the existing traffic and bus routes, by forming easy links to the transport network, including the N6, Western Distributor road and toward the city centre. By providing an appropriate high density urban district centre a connected neighbourhood will be provided. The centre shall be connected to places of work at the retail park and business park, local schools adjacent to the site, leisure facilities within the retail park, shopping opportunities at the numerous retailers in the vicinity and other community facilities.

Active public spaces and landmark buildings provide a sense of place in cities. Our vision is to create quality architecture and a public realm that will identify this part of Galway as a quality place to live, work and play.

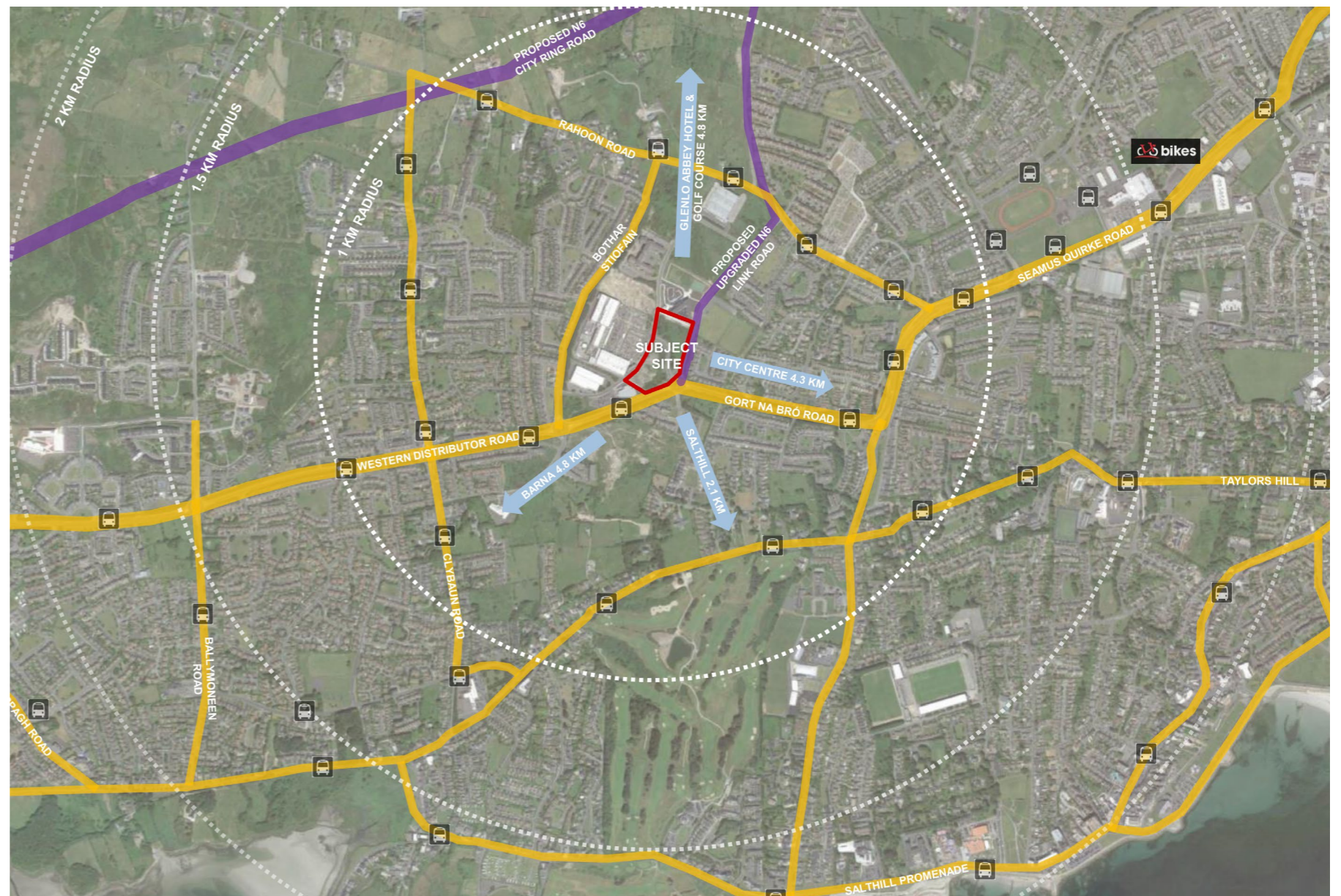
03 Inclusivity

How easily can people use and access the development?

- New homes meet the aspirations of a range of people and households
- Design and layout enable easy access by all. There is a range of public, communal and/or private amenity spaces and facilities for children of different ages, parents and the elderly
- Areas defined as public open space that have either been taken in charge or privately managed will be clearly defined, accessible and open to all.

- New buildings present a positive aspect to passers by, avoiding unnecessary physical and visual barriers

Response: For a residential development to be considered inclusive, it should include provision for housing of different types, sizes and tenures. Providing this choice will enable people from different backgrounds to benefit from the opportunity afforded by the development, and will help to create a balanced, sustainable community. We are providing a mix of unit sizes and tenure types to provide a balanced community.



Site location and surrounding transport connectivities

03 Inclusivity (contd.)

The overall mix selected will create a varied neighbourhood that can support a variety of people through all stages of their lives. For example ground floor units are designed specifically for the aged with larger hallways and bathrooms that are adaptable, two bedroom apartments are designed with sprinklers to be open plan and a range of different apartment sizes will be provided for greater balance. The range of one, two and three bedroom apartments within the development provide this balance along with the existing housing stock of three and four bedroom houses and provide quality new apartment accommodation much needed for Galway (refer to development matrix on page 35).

The amenities and facilities created by the development is designed so that all members of society can use them. The open spaces will be inclusive and provide a balance of spaces for all ages such as children's play areas, seating areas in sunny sheltered locations and areas for teenagers. The open space is designed to be overlooked by the apartments and restaurants / shops so that the objective is to provide well trafficked, central areas of the neighbourhood rather than trying to hide them.

The layout and design of the development provides a clear distinction between public, communal and private areas through designation of the public plaza, semi-private courtyard and private podium landscaped courtyard.



View from Western Distributor Road

04 Variety

How does the development promote a good mix of activities?

- *Activities generated by the development contribute to the quality of life in its locality*
- *Uses that attract the most people are in the most accessible places*
- *Neighbouring uses and activities are compatible with each other*
- *Housing types and tenure add to the choice available in the area*
- *Opportunities have been taken to provide shops, facilities and services that complement those already available in the neighbourhood*

Response: The most successful and sustainable communities are the ones that contain a good variety of things to do, see and enjoy. This site will provide a good balance of day time and evening uses with the retail and restaurant units supported by the surrounding retail and leisure uses. This development provides an appropriate balance between the residential uses and retail to provide a variety which will contribute to the quality of life in its locality.



View of Civic Square showing a variety of different uses and a rich palette of materials.

The amenity areas proposed for this development shall provide a variety of different types of amenity spaces for both residents and visitors to the area. The open spaces are designed for a variety of activities. For example, the urban square is capable of hosting markets, marquee events and screen events. In addition, there is semi-private open space which includes areas for walking, cycling, dog walking and general recreation. The community use building shall also form a positive contribution for the area.

The apartments shall have indoor resident amenity spaces located in a stand-alone pavilion adjacent to Block A/D and in Block F. These spaces shall be shared by residents as lounge areas, shared work-spaces and meeting places for the community to come together. They will be serviced by the Management Company and available for all residents.

The ground floor smaller retail units, restaurant and cafes will complement the larger scale shops in the Retail Park and provide an attractive variety for residents. This will enhance the offering of the Knocknacarra area and provide the necessary variety for this area

05 Efficiency

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

- *The proposal looks at the potential of higher density, taking into account appropriate accessibility by public transport and the objectives of good design*
- *Landscaped areas are designed to provide amenity and biodiversity, protect buildings and spaces from the elements and incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems*
- *Buildings, gardens and public spaces are laid out to exploit the best solar orientation*
- *The scheme brings a redundant building or derelict site back into productive use*
- *Appropriate recycling facilities are provided*

Response: Achieving efficiencies in land use should be considered in tandem with the objective of creating well-designed neighbourhoods that are pleasant to live in. Good urban design, whilst increasing densities, should also provide good quality, liveable homes. This development is appropriately scaled in the correct location to ensure sustainable communities.

The homes will be sustainable through the use of low energy materials, efficient energy systems and by using the highest quality materials to provide a truly sustainable development.

The blocks are laid out to optimise the solar orientation and ensure apartments have excellent daylighting. The private open space is placed in locations to benefit from solar orientation and the garden spaces and terraces are located to the south to benefit from solar heat gain. IES Consulting Daylight Specialists have been retained to calculate the daylighting and confirm that all apartment receive more than adequate daylight, the buildings do not overshadow neighbouring properties and the landscaped courtyards receive many hours of sunshine daily throughout the year.



Sectional Elevation along new Link road to Retail Park showing public and private realm for apartments

06 Distinctiveness

How do the proposals create a sense of place?

- *The place has recognisable features so that people can describe where they live and form an emotional attachment to the place*
- *The scheme is a positive addition to the identity of the locality*
- *The layout makes the most of the opportunities presented by existing buildings, landform and ecological features to create a memorable layout*
- *The proposal successfully exploits views into and out of the site. There is a discernable focal point to the scheme, or the proposals reinforce the role of an existing centre*

Response: Each successful community has a distinct and special character. By creating a series of vibrant streetscapes with distinctive elevations a sense of place will be encouraged with the Gateway District Centre. By providing a new urban square surrounded by restaurants and overlooked by apartments a new focal point for the District Centre shall be created. Alongside making physical connections between the site and its surroundings, it is important to make visual connections between the scheme and neighbouring development and landscape. The apartments shall enjoy views out over the surrounding area and to the sea beyond.

Views into the site can help to create strong connections between existing areas of development and new and help to reduce a sense of separateness or social division. The apartments are designed around a series of landscaped courtyards and will create a strong visual connection to provide a positive identity and sense of place. Creating views out of the site will also help to give the new development a strong sense of local identity and place. These visual connections are created through the use of axial movement routes that bisect the site connecting with the retail park and surrounding streets.

Connections are also made through permeable routes or strategic 'gaps' in the urban form and through the varying of building heights to provide tangible streetscapes.

07 Layout

How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?

- *Layout aligns routes with desire lines to create a permeable interconnected series of routes that are easy and logical to navigate around. The layout focuses activity on the streets by creating active frontages with front doors directly serving the street*
- *The streets are designed as places instead of roads for cars, helping to create a hierarchy of space with less busy routes having surfaces shared by pedestrians, cyclists and drivers*

Response: The proposed site plan will create people friendly environments by creating sheltered courtyards which place pedestrians and cyclists in priority by creating permeable routes through the development.

The carpark will be placed under a landscaped podium which will shield the car parking from view and create a people centric environment for the apartments.

Traffic speeds will be controlled by the new entrance road to the retail park which will have new footpaths and a cycle path. Semi-private private realms will be created in front of the ground floor apartments to create 'defensible' space where residents have a barrier between the street and their homes. The development will create active frontage along new entrance road by providing ground floor own door apartments, retail uses and a café on the corner of the new District Centre square. The landscape design shall create people friendly environments by providing sunny sheltered spaces for both residents and the public to enjoy.



Aerial view of new development in context to the surrounding area

08 Public Realm

How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?

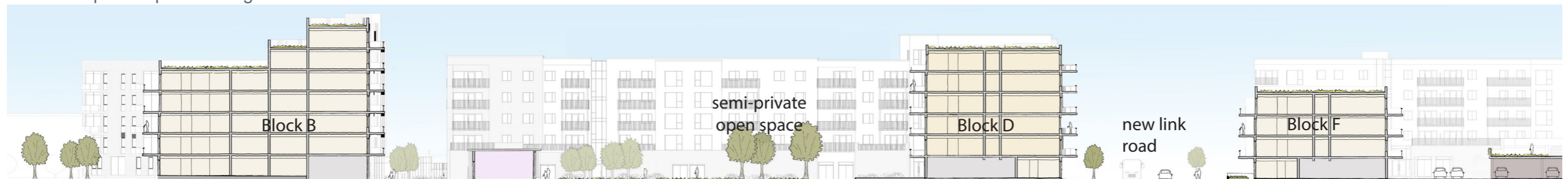
- All public open space is overlooked by surrounding homes so that this amenity is owned by the residents and safe to use. The public realm is considered as a usable integrated element in the design of the development
- Children's play areas are sited where they will be overlooked, safe and contribute to the amenities of the neighborhood
- There is a clear definition between public, semi private, and private space
- Roads and parking areas are considered as an integral landscaped element in the design of the public realm.

Response: The most successful neighbourhoods contain streets, squares, parks and public gardens that are as good quality – if not better, than the private buildings and spaces within the neighbourhood. The new district centre will have a range of quality open spaces of varying degrees of privacy. The quality of the private and public realm of this development is key to having a successful neighbourhood. The open spaces will be inviting, are located to optimise sunlight and shelter from prevailing winds and will be well appointed with high quality finishes and fixtures.

The open spaces will enjoy a good level of natural surveillance from the apartments above so that users of the open space will feel comfortable and safe, creating a strong relationship between the private home and public space will mean that residents will be encouraged to feel a strong sense of ownership over the public realm. This strong sense of ownership will reinforce the safety and security of the public realm by ensuring that anti-social behaviour will not go unchallenged. Additionally, it will lead to the public spaces being better maintained.



New District Centre Public Open Space



Site Section

09 Adaptability

How will the buildings cope with change?

- Designs exploit good practice lessons, such as the knowledge that certain house types are proven to be ideal for adaptation
- The homes are energy-efficient and equipped for challenges anticipated from a changing climate
- Homes can be extended without ruining the character of the types, layout and outdoor space
- The structure of the home and its loose fit design allows for adaptation and subdivision, such as the creation of an annexe or small office

Response: The apartments are designed to be adaptable and future-proofed to allow the apartments be modified in the future. Retail units can be combined or divided to form larger or smaller shop units to suit potential tenants. The building shall have a transfer structure to allow for future modifications which will give flexibility to the retail units.

All apartments are provided with an open plan kitchen, living and dining room. The internal walls in the apartments are designed to be predominantly non structural. The majority of apartments within the scheme are generous in area. This allows for easy future adaptations to layouts. The larger two bed apartments in the scheme are designed to be flexible with the option of subdivision into an office space, secondary walk in closet or enlarged living/dining area.

All dwellings are designed to maximise daylight admittance, and building fabric is highly insulated meeting or exceeding the requirements of the current Part L of the Building Regulations. Apartment structure minimises air leakage paths, with the provision of mechanical ventilation heat recovery to maintain air quality. Lighting will be high efficiency LED type throughout. Apartments will achieve a minimum BER - A rating.

10 Privacy and Amenity

How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?

- Each home has access to an area of useable private outdoor space
- The design maximises the number of homes enjoying dual aspect. Homes are designed to prevent sound transmission by appropriate acoustic insulation or layout
- Windows are sited to avoid views into the home from other houses or the street and adequate privacy is affordable to ground floor units.

Response: Ground floor apartments shall have separation from the public street through the provision of a small front garden and/or through a slight change in levels to ensure the windows serving habitable rooms are raised up. The private courtyards will have hedges and railings to separate the private realm from the semi-private courtyards.

All apartments are provided with ample private outdoor space. Balconies overlook the shared open amenity spaces, providing passive surveillance and visual connections. The apartments are designed to a high standard with the aim of maximising natural daylight throughout living areas.

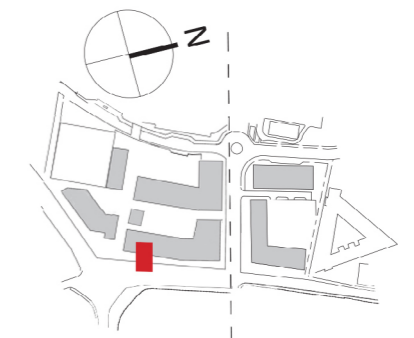


Fig. 3 - Residence Park

Sectional Elevation along Gort Na Bro / Western Distributer Road road showing separation of public and private realm

11 Parking

How will the parking be secure and attractive?

- *Appropriate car parking is on-street or within easy reach of the home's front door.*
- *Parked cars are overlooked by houses, pedestrians and traffic, or stored securely, with a choice of parking appropriate to the situation.*
- *Parking is provided communally to maximise efficiency and accommodate visitors without the need to provide additional dedicated spaces*
- *Adequate secure facilities are provided for bicycle storage*

Response: It is proposed to accommodate new car parking provision in undercroft parking (e.g. parking located at ground level beneath residential blocks or a courtyard slab) This has been seen to work very well in urban locations and to utilise the roof space of carparking as amenity space. The site already enjoys a two-level car park with a significant basement which is under utilised for the provision of the retail use. By having connections between the existing car park and the new development the over flow capacity of the existing car park can be used for the residents. Please refer to the Traffic and Transportation reports from Atkins Global Engineers.

12 Detailed Design

How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

- *The materials and external design make a positive contribution to the locality*
- *The landscape design facilitates the use of the public spaces from the outset*
- *Design of the buildings and public space will facilitate easy and regular maintenance*
- *Open car parking areas are considered as an integral element within the public realm design and are treated accordingly*
- *Care has been taken over the siting of flues, vents and bin stores*

Response: The architecture and landscape design of the scheme will work together to make a high quality coherent

scheme.

Particular attention has been paid to the materials used in those parts of the public realm that will be well used such as a central public space and streets that connect the District Centre with the rest of the surrounding area and the retail park and streets beyond.

The materials proposed for the external façade shall be easy to maintain and have excellent life-cycle qualities. The choice of external materials has been driven by our Client's requirement for a fully sustainable, green and robust design solution. The high-quality façade materials are designed to look as good over their design life with brick, high quality render finishes and high quality glazing all designed to ensure minimal staining. The choice of materials also will be

harmonious with the surrounding buildings in Knocknacarra. Bin stores are located to the rear in discreet locations. Flues for the restaurants are contained within the buildings and ducted to high level where they do not impact on residents.

Residential amenity spaces are provided at ground floor level for exclusive use for the inhabitants. Uses such as home-offices, shared dining and sitting rooms and shared facilities such as laundries will enhance the offering for residents and create spaces for people to interact helping form a richer community. This is seen as key to creating a vibrant village where people converge for social interaction just as they would have at village cross roads. By providing these bespoke internal amenity spaces the quality of development is enhanced and the community is established.



New Link Road



06 - Proposed Facade Materials

Facade Materials

By having contrasting materials the form of the building is broken down into separate elements. Facades become streetscapes so that blocks are broken down into legible pieces. Balconies are simply detailed with glazed or metal ballustrades. Windows are high quality aluminium or timber windows designed to meet A rating and NZEB Compliance.

The facade concept is to provide a modern interpretation of the Irish vernacular townscape by providing varied elevations breaking down the larger blocks into smaller more familiar house frontages. The blocks are broken down to form more vertical elements with varied facade treatments such as coloured render, brick and panelised facades. This will create interest and visual variety for this development and form a more meaningful architectural language appropriate for Galway City.



Facade Concept



06 - Proposed Facade Materials

Facade Material Proposals

The façades of the new development shall be articulated to create a lively/moving façade. The existing surrounding facades have no real urban context with regard to materials. A new urban context has to be created through the placement of the new streets and facades.

A choice of contextual materials such as natural stone cladding at ground, glazed screens and self coloured render will provide a modern interpretation with traditional materials.

The proposed buildings will use a mix of buff / grey brick and coloured render facades. Different bricks and different facade colours are used to create diversity on the different blocks which will lead to a more varied and interesting facade typology.

At the lower levels robust cladding shall be used in difference to the street realm to ensure a quality treatment to the visited areas. This will ensure the buildings shall not deteriorate over their life times. The architectural language will be contemporary throughout but picks up on the language of Galway and the Irish streetscape.

Windows shall be a high quality, thermally broken, ppc aluminium product (Velfac or similar). The balcony structures will be factory painted mild steel, as will the infill panels. A portion of the roofs to all blocks will have p.v. panels which will be concealed behind the parapets.





06 - Proposed Facade Materials

Facade Material Proposals



Elevation to new District Square showing brick / metal railings and local stone cladding to ground floor retail units



Pigmented render to courtyard elevations



Grey brick to Block B on street elevations



Heritage buff brick to elevations to street



Reconstituted stone cladding to lower levels



Elevation to courtyard between Blocks A and D

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the proposed development represents a significant planning gain for the area for the following reasons:

The proposed development provides a high standard of development that will provide a significant impetus to the development and upgrading of Knocknacarra and the western suburbs of Galway City creating a strong sense of place in an area needing rejuvenation.

The proposed development will maximise diversity and mixed planning uses creating a sense of place and character. The proposed development recognises the need to ensure higher densities and a mix of uses in urban areas. The proposed commercial development of small-scale retail, food and beverage units complimenting the existing large scale retailers in Phase 1 & 2 of Gateway Retail Park will provide a mix of both day time and evening uses that will provide the necessary activity and create footfall in the area.

The proposed development fully accords with Galway City Council's overall strategy for the area and is consistent with Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities Planning Guidelines and take cognisance of the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023

The proposed residential scheme for over 332 apartments, built to best-practice for sustainable development, for Knocknacarra at the Gateway Retail Park will provide quality apartment accommodation that will compliment the three and four bedrooms housing stock in the Knocknacarra area thus promoting sustainable development.

The detailing and specification for materials and finishes has taken into account the Micro-climate of sunlight, daylight, wind to ensure a design solution that is robust, fit-for-purpose and will be of the highest quality over its design life. Particular care has been taken for the design of the private and public realm to ensure high quality and sustainable finishes and details which will create a distinctive character for the development.

We believe the design changes made have significantly improved the public realm, provided more active uses at ground floor level, provide a better offering for residents and will provide better permeable connections and linkages with the adjoining neighbourhood. .



Appendix A - Project Metrics

BLOCK STATISTICS			NIA - SQM										
	UNITS NUMBERS		GDA - SQM	RESIDENTIAL	AMENITY	RETAIL	CRECHE	COMMUNITY	BIKE STORES	BIN STORES	SERVICES	TOTAL	NIA/GDA
BLOCK A			9450	6700	260		174		43	47	145	7369	78%
1 BED	32	33.3%											
2 BED	64	66.7%											
3 BED	0	0.0%											
TOTAL	96	100%											
BLOCK B			4207	3274	49	103			54	29		3509	83%
1 BED	5	12.2%											
2 BED	30	73.2%											
3 BED	6	14.6%											
TOTAL	41	100%											
BLOCK C			424			275		93		48		416	98%
BLOCK D			9183	5917		1467				64	75	7523	82%
1 BED	18	22.8%											
2 BED	56	70.9%											
3 BED	5	6.3%											
TOTAL	79	100%											
BLOCK E			4944	3105		822				58		3985	81%
1 BED	16	36.4%											
2 BED	24	54.5%											
3 BED	4	9.1%											
TOTAL	44	100%											
BLOCK F			7194	5070	161				166	90	155	5642	78%
1 BED	22	30.6%											
2 BED	45	62.5%											
3 BED	5	6.9%											
TOTAL	72	100%											
				24066	470	2667	174	93	263	336	375	28444	
TOTAL	332	100%	35402										83%
1 BED	93	28.0%											
2 BED	219	66.0%											
3 BED	20	6.0%											
DUAL ASPECT UNITS	203	61%											
UNITS OVER 10%	167	50%											

SITE AREA (Excludes Phase 02 Basement)	
24323 SQM / 2.43 Ha / 6.01 Acres	
SITE COVERAGE	30%
PLOT RATIO	1.46
RESIDENTIAL UNITS PER HECTARE	137
OVERALL DEVELOPMENT AREA - SQM	35402

COMMUNAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITY	SQM
DISTRICT PLAZA	2166
RESIDENTIAL COURTYARD	1350
LANDSCAPED PODIUM	1054
BLOCK B LANDSCAPING	475
TOTAL	2879
REQUIRED	2167

RESIDENTIAL PARKING	
BLOCK F	82
OFF-STREET	3
PHASE 02	181
TOTAL	266
CAR SPACE PER UNIT RATIO	0.80

RESIDENTIAL & VISITOR CYCLE PARKING	
BLOCK A - ENCLOSED	64
BLOCK B - ENCLOSED	70
BLOCK F - ENCLOSED	252
SURFACE STAND SPACES	291
TOTAL	677