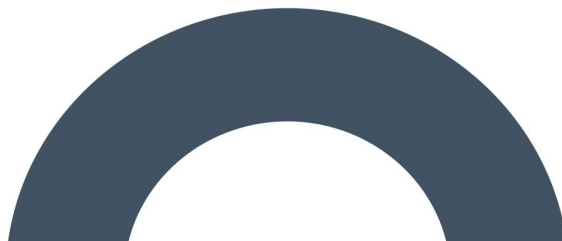


Strategic Housing Development – Rosshill, Galway

Statement of Response to
An Bord Pleanála's Pre-
Application Consultation
Opinion





DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: **Kegata Limited**

Project Title: **Statement of Response to An Bord Pleanála's Pre-Application Consultation Opinion**

Project Number: **181058**

Document Title: **Strategic Housing Development – Rosshill, Galway**

Document File Name: **2020.01.10 Response to Opinion – F - 181058**

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Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved By
	Draft	09.01.2020	MC	
	F	10.01.2020	MC/CR	CR

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1. INTRODUCTION

An Bord Pleanála published their formal Opinion regarding a proposed Strategic Housing Development ('SHD') at Rosshill, Galway on the 17th October 2019, following the consultation request under Section 5(5) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.

The Board concluded that the information lodged requires further consideration and amendment in order to constitute a reasonable basis for an application under Section 4 of the Act. A second pre-application meeting was not requested.

1.1 An Bord Pleanála's Opinion

The Board considered that the following issues, grouped under six main headings, require to be addressed in the documents submitted with the final application.

1. Design and Layout

Further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to the layout of the proposed development, in particular the documentation should demonstrate a thorough appreciation and assessment of the overall site context as the starting point in designing a distinct place. In this regard the applicant is required to revisit the 12 criteria set out in the 'Urban Design Manual' which accompanies the 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' (May 2009) and the 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (March 2013).

Particular attention should be paid to on site features of value or merit, topography and significant tree stands. Justification for, or amendments to, the layout of the apartment blocks proposed throughout the application site. The layout and relationship of these blocks relative to one another, the site topography and relative to the open spaces should be fully justified and/or reconsidered. The nature and functionality of the intervening space created between all apartment buildings, parking areas and streets should also be fully considered and justified.

Consequently, matters such as the arrangements and hierarchy of streets; configuration of the layout; connectivity with adjoining lands; provision of quality and usable open space and the creation of character areas within a high-quality scheme should be given further consideration. The further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

2. Open Space

Further consideration/amendment of the documents as they relate to the provision of high quality, safe and usable public open space. Particular attention is drawn to the size and location of open spaces in terms of topography and existing site features, and rationale for same, the potential for passive supervision of open spaces and play areas, the design of the streets, associated on-street parking and the creation of building edges/street frontages that reflect a clearly defined street hierarchy within the scheme, the location and design of bin and bicycle storage also requires greater consideration. The application of the principles of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the advice provided by the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (including the associated 'Urban Design Manual') is advised. Further consideration of these issues may require amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

3. Car Parking

Further consideration/amendment of the documents as they relate to the provision and design of car parking within the proposed development. The documentation submitted at application stage should provide a robust rationale for the amount of car parking that is proposed. This should have due regard to the pattern of demand for travel that is likely to arise from the occupation of the proposed development, as well as the likely demand from households to have access to private transport even where it does not provide the primary mode for travel to work or school. The documentation should also take proper account of the advice concerning car parking and cycle parking provided for in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities – 2018 and the design and layout of car parking outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

4. Connectivity and Public Transport

Further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to existing and proposed pedestrian and cycle facilities connecting the development with the Dublin Road (R921) to the north, illustration of existing transport services such as rail and bus and future connections to adjoining residentially zoned land to the south of the site. The applicant should consider the preparation of a robust and achievable mobility management plan for the site that highlights availability of existing and planned sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. The further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design rationale submitted.

5. Public Road Interface

Further consideration of the documents as they relate to the layout of the proposed development particularly the relationship to the Old Dublin Road and Rosshill Road. The documents should clearly show acceptable design solutions that tackle differences in level between the site and the public road without the need for incongruous and heavy engineering solutions. Layout, contiguous elevations and section drawings should detail the relationship between the buildings and the public realm, existing and proposed. In particular, drawings should show the full suite of facilities that would be expected in any urban context; such as but not limited to; footpaths, landscape margins, appropriate boundary treatments and the provision of passive supervision of these new public spaces. Any development that integrates with the public realm either existing or modified should accord with the best practice principles of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (including the associated Urban Design Manual) and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, that seek to provide better and safe pedestrian and cyclist environments. Further consideration of these issues may require amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

6. Water Services

Further consideration of documents as they relate to the water supply network, the foul sewer network and required pumping station upgrades to the Merlin Park number 1 wastewater pump station. An outline of the necessary works to address the constraints and what party or parties will be responsible for such works. In addition, there should be clarity as to whether such works would be the subject of a separate consent process and/or compulsory purchase process. Timelines for the delivery of any works is required relative to the delivery of the proposed development. Given the existing deficiencies in the provision of adequate sewerage infrastructure, the applicant should satisfy themselves that the proposed development would not be premature pending the delivery of required infrastructural improvements. Further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

Other Information

Furthermore, pursuant to article 285(5)(b) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the prospective applicant is hereby notified that, in addition to the requirements as specified in articles 297 and 298 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the following specific information should be submitted with any application for permission:

1. A layout drawing at an appropriate scale that details permitted development in the vicinity and specifically any road and footpath improvements, if any, and how they will integrate with the development as proposed. Specific reference should be made to the configuration and alignment of the local road network to the immediate east of the subject site along the Rosshill Road up to the point of a new junction with the Old Dublin Road.
2. A site layout plan clearly indicating what areas are to be taken in charge by the Local Authority. Streets should be shown up to the boundaries of the site and facilitate future access.
3. Details, including photographic samples, of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings, having regard to the need for low maintenance/high quality finishes that take account of the climatic characteristics of the area. A building lifecycle report for apartment buildings in accordance with section 6.13 of the 2018 Apartment Design Guidelines is also required.
4. Landscaping proposals including an overall landscaping masterplan for the development sites and a site layout plan indicating the full extent of tree retention and removal if proposed. Details of proposed tree protection measures during construction. Details pertaining to the quantity type and location of all proposed hard and soft landscaping including details of play equipment, street furniture including public lighting and boundary treatments should be submitted. Sections should be submitted at key locations where the public open spaces interface with the proposed residential units.
5. A construction and demolition waste management plan.

2. RESPONSE TO AN BORD PLEANÁLA'S OPINION

The following sections set out how the applicant has addressed the two issues raised in the Board's 'Notice of Pre-Application Consultation Opinion' (hereafter referred to as 'Opinion'), with reference to the accompanying documentation submitted, to ensure the subject application constitutes a reasonable basis for an application for Strategic Housing Development ('SHD').

2.1 Item 1: Design and Layout of Development

Further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to the layout of the proposed development, in particular the documentation should demonstrate a thorough appreciation and assessment of the overall site context as the starting point in designing a distinct place. In this regard the applicant is required to revisit the 12 criteria set out in the 'Urban Design Manual' which accompanies the 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' (May 2009) and the 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (March 2013).

Particular attention should be paid to on site features of value or merit, topography and significant tree stands. Justification for, or amendments to, the layout of the apartment blocks proposed throughout the application site. The layout and relationship of these blocks relative to one another, the site topography and relative to the open spaces should be fully justified and/or reconsidered. The nature and functionality of the intervening space created between all apartment buildings, parking areas and streets should also be fully considered and justified.

Consequently, matters such as the arrangements and hierarchy of streets; configuration of the layout; connectivity with adjoining lands; provision of quality and usable open space and the creation of character areas within a high-quality scheme should be given further consideration. The further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

2.1.1 Item 1 Response

The project team have further considered the following publications in light of comments received from the Board:

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and companion Urban Design Manual
- Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments - Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Urban Developments and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- The National Planning Framework

The site has been carefully assessed in terms of location, topography, characteristics and constraints. The shape of the site, with robust boundaries on three sides and a level change in the centre played a crucial role in the formulation of a sustainable and sensitive design response. The level change at the centre of the site requires to be addressed across the site and utilising the spaces available in the best means possible.

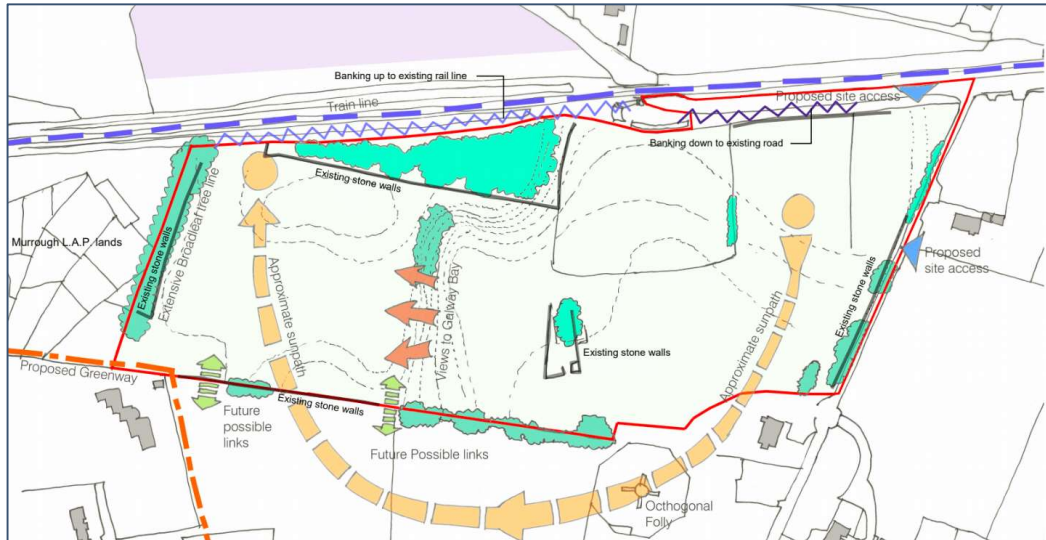


Figure 2-1: Site Analysis (extract from Design Statement)

The site is, in the main, residentially zoned and in a growing area east of the City of Galway. It is therefore required to provide a mix and range of housing types for a growing population and also ensure the creation of a successful neighbourhood in this key location.

There are some existing features on site, comprising remnants of its past use as a par 3 golf course and for keeping animals for rough grazing. The western boundary is formed by a stance of mature beech trees, considered at the outset of the design process to be an asset to the overall site and which have been retained and positively addressed through the creation of a walking route in the design proposals. A full tree survey (CSR, 2019) and landscape design statement (CSR, 2019) accompanies the application.

Aspirations for the sites layout and concepts considered by the design team (set out in the accompanying Design Statement) include:

- Work with the existing contours to inform the design, reduce cut & fill, retaining walls and engineered retaining solutions.
- Provide a coherent route through the site with central route, play spaces, hard landscaped plazas and a number of green open spaces to ensure way finding.
- A distribution of landscaped open space so the majority of houses have a view of green space. All apartments look upon and/or located next to public open spaces.
- Pulling away from site boundaries to create a green buffer to the site edges and the octagonal
- Views to Galway Bay from a central plaza and landscaped ridge which will form a legible transition when moving east to west through the scheme.
- Legible house cells providing primary elevations to public areas as well as passive supervision. The cellular layout also provides sheltered private open spaces behind the building line.
- Aim to maintain the best quality trees and the existing landscape.
- Linkages to adjoining zoned residential land for possible future developments.
- Apartments designed so the majority of balconies face south or west. Housing cells generally take advantage of east-west orientation.
- All public open spaces are overlooked with primary elevations with living space and bedrooms.

The development has been kept at a distance from trees, to protect their roots and provide a naturalistic peaceful amenity area for residents. The design takes cognisance of proposed greenway cycle link in the extant Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023, located at the south-western corner of the application site, and provides for a link into the site to allow ease of movement should the greenway become established in due course.

The northern boundary comprises a mix of trees and tree groups and is again considered an area of merit not simply for amenity/recreational purposes, but for the ability to enhance the overall ecology of the site. The intended design response is to bring this area into active use by way of an active walk through the woodland, and proposed woodland management strategy to enhance it for future generations.

The design team presented the initial design concept to the Council at the Section 247 meeting. At that time, the proposal comprised:

- 361no. units
- Overall site area of 10.19ha
- Density of 37.41 units per ha
- 138no. apartments (38.2%) and 223no. houses (61.8%)
- Public open space of 15.03% across 10no. areas



Figure 2-2: Initial Layout

In the early stages of the project design the apartment blocks were more clustered to the central area of the scheme (4no. in this area and 2no. in the eastern section of the site), making best use of the higher levels and expansive views.

The apartment blocks to the eastern section of the site, north and south of the creche building, were considered to be best placed to make signalise entry to the development, creating strong design responses which also allowed for some ground-floor non-residential uses in the northern corner block. Some ancillary uses such as a café, office space, retail were suggested as a means by which to create a neighbourhood hub, adjacent to the creche facility.

The apartment blocks located in the centre of the site were revisited, with the design team reconsidering how best to utilise the level change here while retaining an appropriate level of unit numbers across the site. Particular attention was paid to the impacts the required level of parking provision might have on the visual impact of the scheme and the open spaces in this area. Comments received at the Section 247 meeting included:

- Overuse of cul-sacs reminiscent of older residential typologies that do not relate to DMURS
- Connectivity through the site and car dominance
- Area around the folly poorly addressed, the scheme turns its back on it.
- Some public open spaces are very small, similar to urban pocket parks.
- Overall scheme looks heavy and overly dense on the site.
- Long straight of roads a concern for safety and not in line with DMURS principles.

Following the Section 247 Stage 1 meeting, a suite of design changes were made including: (refer to drawing 18128-3002 05.06.2019)

- Reduction in number of units on site to 351
- A reduction in density of 36.4 units/ha
- 165no apartments and 186no houses (47% and 53% respectively)
- Increased permeability across the site and increased open space provision
- Greater cognisance of DMURS and delineation of a roads hierarchy
- Reorientation and redistribution of apartment blocks on site
- Reconsideration of parking provision within the site
- Removal of residential units in the south-east of the site to afford greater protection to the setting of the Recorded Monument
- Greater open space around the existing trees on the western boundary and the central/northern wooded area



Figure 2-3: Revised Layout

The revised layout was issued to the Council for their comment. It was considered that the redesign of the apartment blocks spread more evenly throughout the site achieved a better mix unit types within each character area. This also allowed for the centre of the site to be reconsidered for an active play area which could make use of the contours in this location. The retention of some apartment blocks in this general area however made good use of the existing wooded planting existing on site, and due to be enhanced under the development proposals, and it was ultimately felt that some apartment development in this location responded well to the sites character.

The draft application pack prepared Stage 2 of the SHD process contained the following further revisions:

- Reduction in overall unit numbers of 350.
- A reduced site area of 9.85ha.
- A reduction in density to 36.2 units per ha
- 165no. apartments and 185no. houses (47.1% and 52.9% respectively)
- An enhanced centralised green space play area
- Pumping station included
- Introduction of ramped access to Rosshill Road to the north of the site

Apartment blocks are located close to significant positions, nodal points and significant open spaces - please refer to Section 5.2 pages 47 to 49 of the Design Statement for additional details. Balconies are sheltered within the building line creating more usable external space suited to the prevailing climate.

Apartment Block 02 bounds a large public open space with kickabout area looking over the adjoining folly recorded monument.

Apartment Block 03 and 04 have public open space on three sides close to a playground, adult exercise equipment and close to the 2.5m wide green pedestrian route. These blocks also have excellent views toward Galway Bay.

Apartment Block 5 bounds open space to the east with adult exercise equipment and the main 2.5m wide pedestrian landscaped route to the north.

Apartment Block 06 is situated next to significant open space and a kick about area. They also has views west along the mature line of trees. This block is also close to the proposed greenway. As noted, ancillary buildings such as the bins stores and covered bicycle stands have also been designed to integrate with the scheme with light coloured mottled brick and powered coated metal roofs



Figure 2-4: Revised Layout - Proposed for Planning

The Design Statement (O'Neill O'Malley, 2019) which accompanies the application is structured around the 12 Urban Design Criteria of the Urban Design Manual. Please refer to this Statement for full detail in this regard.

The design of the scheme has been developed to create a mixed and inclusive neighbourhood. The road routes & levels work with the existing contours to ensure every road & path gradient across the site is below 1:20. Please refer to drawings 18128-3002 to 3004 and 18128-3010 to 3018 for site layouts and sections indicating proposed access levels and gradients.

All access routes are at least 1800mm in width across the site. Legible crossing points will be provided with dropped kerbs and textured paving. Raised table areas are designed within the scheme as traffic calming areas.

A series of accessible amenity & play areas are situated across the site all of which are passively overlooked. All access roads have been designed to have a gradient of less than 1:20.

All dwellings will have on-curtilage parking directly to the front of each dwelling.

Apartments have been designed to be located directly beside communal open space. The descriptions below indicate the immediate amenities availed of to each apartment building. These only refer to green, communal open spaces and leisure amenities. Bike, bin stores and carpark spaces are provided to each apartment building. Please refer to Appendix 4, 5 and 6 of the Design Statement with regard to these. The majority of balconies face either south or west. Balconies have also been placed on corners to allow dual aspect views. Light from the heavily glazed stair core penetrates into the centre of the apartment

building to provide logical route finding. Balconies are within the building line to create shelter and usability in a west of Ireland temperate climate.

In detail, and as illustrated in the accompanying Design Statement:

➤ Apartment Block 01:

Located at the entrance to the site, this mixed-use block includes a proportion of commercial uses on the ground floor in addition to apartments. This block benefits from green spaces to the immediate east, which borders the realigned Rosshill Road. To the south of this block, a public open space of 355sqm is proposed, linked to the wider area. The apartment block benefits from a dedicated roof terrace, with private open space provided here and through balcony provision.

➤ Apartment Block 02:

Located to the centre of the scheme and to the south of the central access road, the block occupies an important location within the site. Green open spaces with a minimum width of 8.4 metres are located to the west. To the north there is a minimum 19.6m wide public open space of 832sqm (approx.) which buffers the main access road. To the south of this apartment block a 38.5m wide landscaped open space of 3975sqm (approx.) which includes a Kickabout area and views onto the natural stone walls encompassing Rosshill Folly.

➤ Apartment Block 03

This building is located to the centre of the scheme and to the North of the central access road. To the north there are 54 meters of public open space to the site boundary. This open space includes extensive landscaping & foliage and a 2.5m pedestrian path. This open space opens to the west of the building across and access road. The open space to the west includes a route with adult exercise equipment and an existing copse of mature trees. To the south of the building is approx. 17.6m wide open space of approx. 447 sqm's as a green buffer to the central access road

➤ Apartment Block 04

Apartment building 04 is located to the centre of the scheme and parallel to north side of the central access road. To the north of the building, across the adjacent parking is extensive green spaces that are 66 meters from the edge of the adjacent parking to the site boundary. This green space of approx. 6626sqm includes extensive landscaping and foliage, a 2.5m pedestrian path, an existing copse of mature trees and a suite of adult exercise equipment. This green space wraps around the building to the west and southwest and includes a landscaped terraced seating and a playground. The south the building is buffered from the central access route by a min. 8.8 meters of green space

➤ Apartment Block 05

Apartment building 05 is located to the northwest of the scheme. Towards the east of the building is an extensive area of landscaped open space with a 2.5m pedestrian path, existing copse with mature trees and a suite of adult exercise equipment. This is an area of approximately 6626sqm. To the north of the site is 1468sqm of heavily landscaped green space with the 2.5m pedestrian routeway. It is aimed to keep any mature good quality trees in this area. Beyond the site boundary is a railway embankment that is heavily wooded and well screened. To the south is a 3.5m green verge, adjacent carparking and access route. The access route is shared surface to reduce vehicular priority

➤ Apartment Block 06

Apartment building 06 is located towards the western boundary of the scheme. To the south of the building is a kickabout area of approx. 939 square meters and 22 meters wide. To the east is adjacent carparking with approx. 560sqm open space beyond that. There is an extensive existing mature grove of trees to the west of the building along the western boundary. This grove & adjacent green space makes up an area of open space 3714sm and located along the west of the scheme. This green belt is a minimum of 32 meters in width from apartment block 6. This area also includes the 2.5 pedestrian route that meanders along the west and north of the site.

The path network around the site ensure ease of connectivity and the network is naturally surveilled from the central spine road and through the layout of streets and buildings. A hierarchy of routes is illustrated in drawing 18128-3020, including primary, secondary, tertiary and pedestrian routes. Each apartment block benefits from immediate strong pedestrian routes which connect into the public open spaces and wider network.

The parking areas around the apartment blocks are provided to ensure the necessary 1 car parking space and 1 visitor space per every 4 apartments, in line with the 'Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments' (2018) section 4.22, is provided. These spaces will be grouped and paved and closely landscaped to reduce the visual intrusion of the car-parking. It is proposed that 2 no. electrical charge points are provided per apartment block also. In addition, 5no. 'GoCar' Car share spaces are proposed close to the retail unit. The landscape architectural design implements hedgerows, bush and tree planting as a buffer to communal parking areas to reduce the visual impact of car parking area. It is considered that the resulting layout achieves a high quality environment for both the open space and for necessary car parking requirements.

2.2 Item 2: Open Space

Further consideration/amendment of the documents as they relate to the provision of high quality, safe and usable public open space. Particular attention is drawn to the size and location of open spaces in terms of topography and existing site features, and rationale for same, the potential for passive supervision of open spaces and play areas, the design of the streets, associated on-street parking and the creation of building edges/street frontages that reflect a clearly defined street hierarchy within the scheme, the location and design of bin and bicycle storage also requires greater consideration. The application of the principles of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the advice provided by the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (including the associated 'Urban Design Manual') is advised. Further consideration of these issues may require amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

2.2.1 Item 2 Response

The topography of the site and the sites existing landscape features as well as the surrounding landscape was considered at the outset of the design process. A full topographical survey of the site followed by a tree survey was conducted (refer to accompanying drawings 18128-3005 Overall Existing Site Survey and 19112_T_101 Tree Classification).

Retention of existing features and making use of the sites topography were noted as assets in the development of the initial design concept for the site. The north and western boundaries of the site were considered of importance, containing woodland and mature beech trees. The central green space where the level changes within the site was considered and the approach to this area revised over the course of the design process, as noted in the previous section.

Underpinning the design approach was to protect and enhance, but also ensure the positive use of hard and soft landscaping and encourage movement throughout the site.

The level of open space provided in the scheme is in excess of the 15% of the gross site area sought in the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023, at 22%. In total 13no. defined public spaces are provided throughout the scheme with varied functions. Please refer to drawing 18128-3021 which illustrates clearly the open spaces in question. Dedicated open space areas range in size and layout from circa 355sqm - 3,714sqm.

Two dedicated open space recreational areas are provided in the site, one on the upper level and one on the lower. The central open space is characterised by a large playground with terraced seating, making use of the existing site contours.



Figure 2-5: Defined Central Public Open Space at Playground (extract from drawing 18128-3021)

To the north of this, moving towards the wooded area adult exercise equipment is proposed, leading in turn to the wider path network - a recreation route 2.5 metres in width which runs throughout the development connecting all areas.

The enclosed Design Statement illustrates the iterative design process to achieve protection of the sylvan character of the site while also creating strong connections, vistas and clear access to open space, all through the use of perpendicular road accesses.

The design aims for all dwellings to look out upon or be in close proximity to public open space. Public areas are clearly defined and overlooked by the primary facades of buildings, providing clarity between public and private realm and ensuring full passive surveillance and safe environments exist for all.

The layout achieves perpendicular dwellings to the sylvan boundary where roads are not barriers to open spaces and connections are easily reached and safe. The connections around the site ensure ease of connectivity and natural surveillance. A hierarchy of routes is illustrated in drawing 18128-3020, including primary, secondary, tertiary and pedestrian routes.

The central main vehicular access route creates views to all boundaries. The pedestrian access route which runs around the northern and western boundaries of the site and the open spaces of the site are

therefore surveilled. The existing boundary trees on the western side are retained and brought into the overall functioning of the layout via the adjacent recreational route running north/south.

Public open space with direct access is provided next to the greatest concentration of units. Open spaces vary in size from 355sqm to over 6600sqm. These spaces are overlooked on grade for passive supervision. All apartment buildings are directly linked to landscaped open space.

A rectilinear open space area has been introduced to the south of the site towards the existing Folly. This recorded monument and its curtilage is now respected with vistas of the external Folly wall across the open space and from the access road.

It is held that the design proposed here has taken full cognisance of the sites characteristics and utilised these positively to create a range of usable and meaningful open spaces, complemented by a strong pedestrian network through and around the site.

2.3 Item 3: Car Parking

Further consideration/amendment of the documents as they relate to the provision and design of car parking within the proposed development. The documentation submitted at application stage should provide a robust rationale for the amount of car parking that is proposed. This should have due regard to the pattern of demand for travel that is likely to arise from the occupation of the proposed development, as well as the likely demand from households to have access to private transport even where it does not provide the primary mode for travel to work or school. The documentation should also take proper account of the advice concerning car parking and cycle parking provided for in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities - 2018 and the design and layout of car parking outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

2.3.1 Item 3 Response

The site is located within 5km of the city centre and within 1 - 2km of local shops and services. The aerial context analysis plan (ref: 18128-3029) enclosed as part of the application illustrates this clearly. The site benefits from active bus services being in close proximity, and the applicant has engaged with a service provider regarding the potential to reopen the currently disused bus stop to the immediate north of the site. GoCar have noted their intention to support the scheme, while electric vehicle charging points ('EV') are proposed as part of the development.

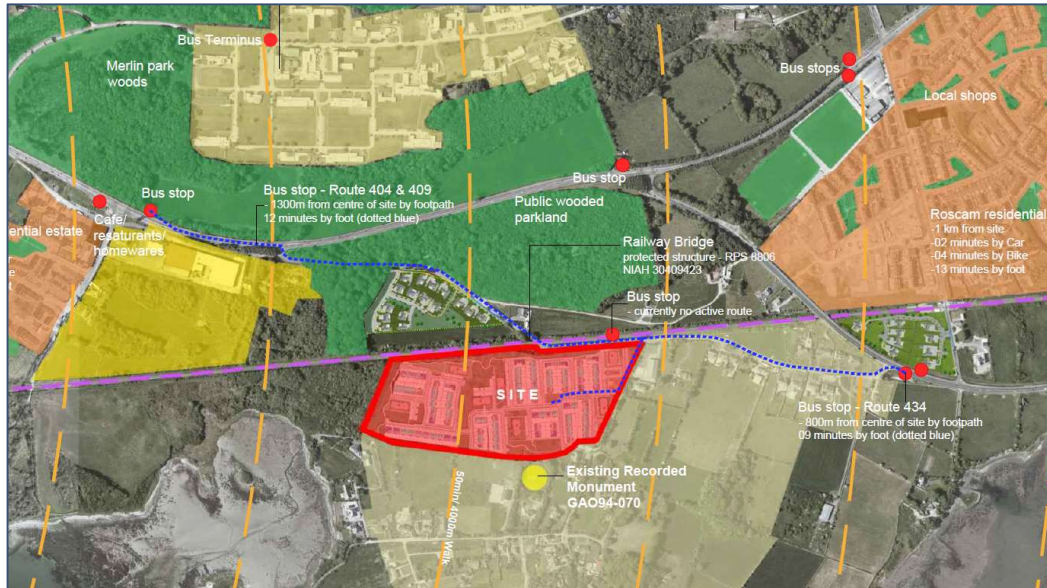


Figure 2-6: Public Transport links (extract from drawing 18128-3029)

That aside, car parking must be provided in line with the requirements of the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023, specifically section 11.10.1 and Table 11.5, and the Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments, at Section 4.22. The development is therefore required to provide 595no. car parking spaces across both houses and apartments. The full breakdown of car parking can be found in Appendix 5 of the Design Statement accompanying the application.

Apartment blocks 02 – 06 inclusive benefit from 1 space per apartment and 1 visitor space per every 4 apartments required as stated in DHPLG's Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments section 4.22. Grouped and on street parking has been provided for apartment blocks. These will be paved and landscaped with hedgerow closely to reduce their impact visually. The parking for the apartment units is clustered in close proximity to each apartment block, but also positioned to be accessible to all, and to allow green areas to function as useable and pleasant open spaces.

Houses benefit from 2no. in-curtilage parking spaces, in configuration so as to avoid a car dominated streetscape. All housing have ducting in place should occupiers wish to create an EV charging point. The Applicant, an active housebuilder in Galway, is acutely aware of the marketability of houses with reduced parking provision. There are good public transport links in the area and there are discussions underway with regards the re-opening of the most immediate bus stop on the northern boundary of the site. That aside, the ability for homeowners to have safe, secure and overlooked car parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of their home is known to be a factor the house sales. Data from the Central Statistics Office ('CSO') details that the number of new vehicles licensed for the first time rose steadily in Galway over the 2013 – 2016 period.

Based on the floorspace calculations and per the Galway City Council Development Plan 2017 – 2023, 1 space per 20sqm of operational space is required at the creche facility. With an operational space 288.37sqm,, a total of 14no. car parking spaces are required and 16no. spaces provided.

The retail/commercial element of the scheme, located on the ground floor of Apartment Block 01, necessitates 20no. spaces to be provided. The proposal is for 11no. spaces for this aspect of the scheme, where the shortfall is expected to be covered by some of the apartment spaces, typically vacated during business hours. The apartments in this location generate a requirement for 29no. spaces and 36no. spaces are provided.

The shortfall of spaces in this location is, it is held, acceptable in that there is likely to be a degree of overlap between the uses as a whole. It is noted that the Development Plan acknowledges that this situation may arise and *“Consideration will also given to grouped and dual use parking provision where peak demands do not coincide and cognisance will be given to the potential for multi-purpose trips, subject to assessment.”*

In addition, 5no. GoCar carshare spaces are positioned to the immediate south of this block, thus encouraging the use of the car share scheme in the development and GoCar have noted their support for the scheme – please refer to the accompanying Planning Report and Statement of Consistency for full detail.

The Development Plan also calls for consideration to be given to Electric Vehicle ('EV') charging, and that for commercial developments, one parking space shall be equipped with one EV point. To that end 2no. EV charging points are located at the commercial element of the scheme. 2no. more EV charging points are proposed at the creche facility on site.

Accessible parking spaces are also provided across the scheme, with 1no. space allocated per apartment block and 1no. space included at the creche facility.

As required by the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) 2019, the development proposed has been informed by the consideration of the integration of street networks, street design, quality and safety. The development has sought to balance the car parking requirements against the creation of safe and visually pleasing spaces and places. Car parking forms an integral part of the public realm and has been positioned to be understated and not visually dominant. The use of a landscape planting scheme as part of the proposals assist in achieving this aim.

2.4 Item 4: Connectivity and Public Transport

Further consideration/justification of the documents as they relate to existing and proposed pedestrian and cycle facilities connecting the development with the Dublin Road (R921) to the north, illustration of existing transport services such as rail and bus and future connections to adjoining residentially zoned land to the south of the site. The applicant should consider the preparation of a robust and achievable mobility management plan for the site that highlights availability of existing and planned sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. The further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design rationale submitted.

2.4.1 Item 4 Response

The sites location in the context of wider services and facilities is shown on drawing 18128-3029 (O'Neill O'Malley), enclosed with this application and an extract of which is shown below at Figure 2-7.

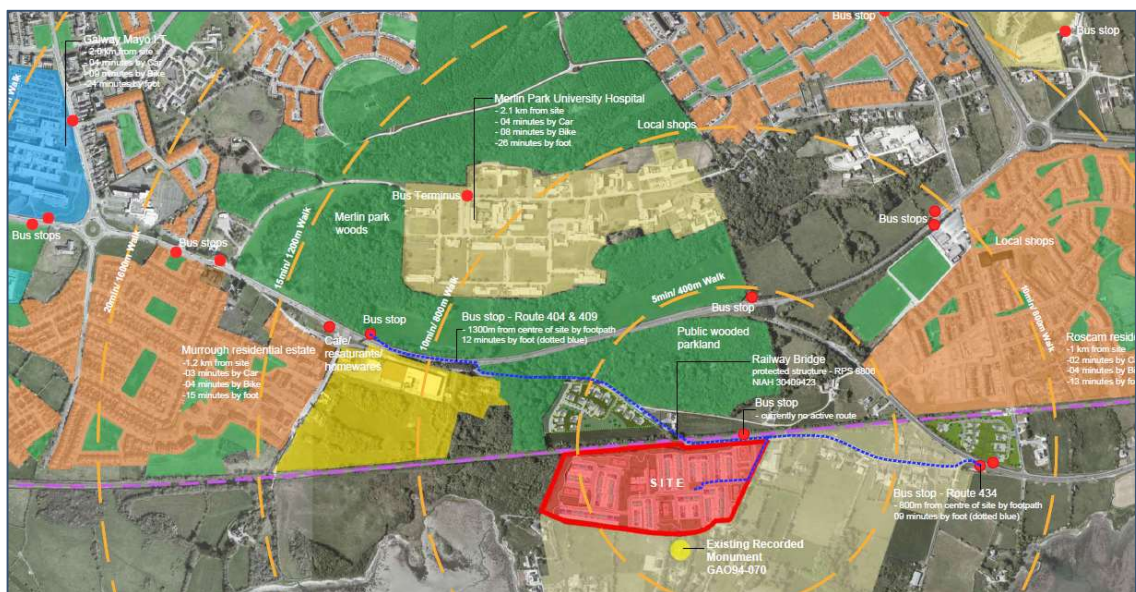


Figure 2-7: Site Context (extract drawing 18128-3029)

The site is already well connected via existing public transport, with bus stops existing to the north of the site linking the site both east and west. The Traffic and Transport Assessment ("TTA") which accompanies the application includes an audit of the existing infrastructure in the vicinity of the development site.

The existing bus stop located to the immediate north of the site is currently not in service however as part of this application the applicant has opened discussions with an operator to have this stop reinstated should planning consent be granted. This would further enhance connectivity of this part of the city with the city centre. The bus stop benefits from an existing footpath connection west and south bordering the site, which would be enhanced under the development proposals.

There are several services which run along the main roads to the north of the site. The active 404 and 409 bus routes serve Newcastle-Eyre Square-Oranmore & Eyre Square-GMIT-Parkmore respectively. Bus stops exist west on the Dublin Road (R338) Kingsvalley Hotel, and east at Castlegar Complex on the Dublin Road (R338). The 404 is a half-hourly service, running seven days a week. The 409 which also runs along the Dublin Road stops closest to the site on the western side at Galway Crystal and east at the Coast Road Junction. The 409 is a 10-minute service (weekends and public holidays differ), and is also a seven-day service. These stops are within 1.3km walk of the subject site making them wholly accessible to future residents of the site.

The number 434 bus which runs from Galway Bus Station - Market Square, Gort has 12 stops and operates on weekdays only. This stops to the east of the site on the Dublin Road (R338) at GMIT, and west of the site on the Dublin Road (R338)/Rosshill Road.

The footpath connections in place to these bus stops is broken in places, illustrated in Tobin Consulting Engineers drawing 10690-2013_Rev B which illustrates clearly the existing pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of the site. An extract of this drawing is shown below in Figure 2-8.



Figure 2-8: Footpath Existing (Blue) and Under Construction (Green) to the North of the Application Site (extract from drawing 10690-2013_Rev B)

Under this planning application it is acknowledged that some improvement to the existing network is feasible and will encourage use of the nearby bus stops and local services/facilities to the benefit of all users of the service. In that vein the Applicant is, in agreement with the Roads Section of Galway City Council, proposing to undertake improvement works the full detail of which can be seen in Tobin Consulting Engineers drawing 10690-2014_Rev B, and extract of which is shown below in Figure 2-9. These include the creation of a new pedestrian footpath, 2m in width to connect the proposed development at Rosshill Farm Road north to Rosshill Road on the southern side of the carriageway, thus linking with the footpath to be created under application 16/228. Maintenance works on the existing footpath on the northern side of the carriageway is also proposed. Taken together these improvements will significantly enhance the usership of the pedestrian network and in turn encourage use of existing (and possible new) public transport.

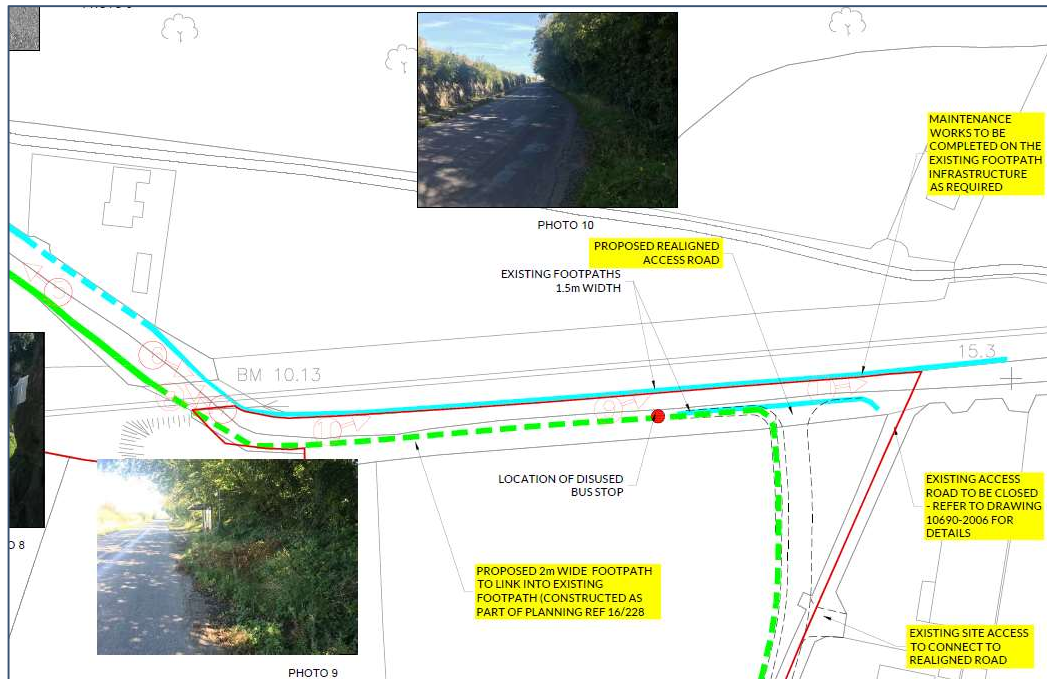


Figure 2-9: Proposed Improvements to Pedestrian Network (extract from drawing 10690-2014-Rev B)

In addition to pedestrian and bus routes, the existing Oranmore train station on the Galway-Dublin line is located 2.8km away from the site and is accessed via the R338 Coast Road. The train station is accessible via the 404-bus route (Dublin Road junction with the Coast Road) which stops in Oranmore; the train station is circa 15 minutes' walk from Oranmore.

At present, cyclists on Rosshill Road are required to share the carriageway with vehicular traffic. There are no existing cycling facilities along the R338 Dublin Road. However, there is a bus lane along the westbound carriageway which cyclists are permitted to use. There are no existing cycling facilities along the R338 Coast Road, however there is a hard shoulder in both directions which cyclists are permitted to use.

Section 14 of the TTA discusses mobility management, and discusses in detail public transport, pedestrians, and cyclists in the context of the proposed development. The site is considered to be well connected and will benefit from additional improvements in the pedestrian network and potentially from additional bus service(s) should planning permission be granted.

The proposed development includes for a bicycle rental and car share scheme. It is the case that GoCar have confirmed their intention to service the site. The design proposals include cycle racks throughout the development, covered bicycle storage for the apartment buildings and an internal path network which connects buildings and open spaces with external path linkages. As part of the proposed development, drop kerbs and tactile paving will be provided both internally and at points where the internal footpath joins the public network. The roads layout has been designed to DMURS, which has a strong focus on pedestrian safety, as demonstrated in the accompanying statement of compliance with DMURS prepared by Tobin Consulting Engineers. Signage throughout will be in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual to ensure a safe environment for all road users.

The lands to the immediate south of the site are zoned for residential development in the extant Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023. The development proposal has acknowledging this, ensuring connections exist south, should these lands be developed in due course.

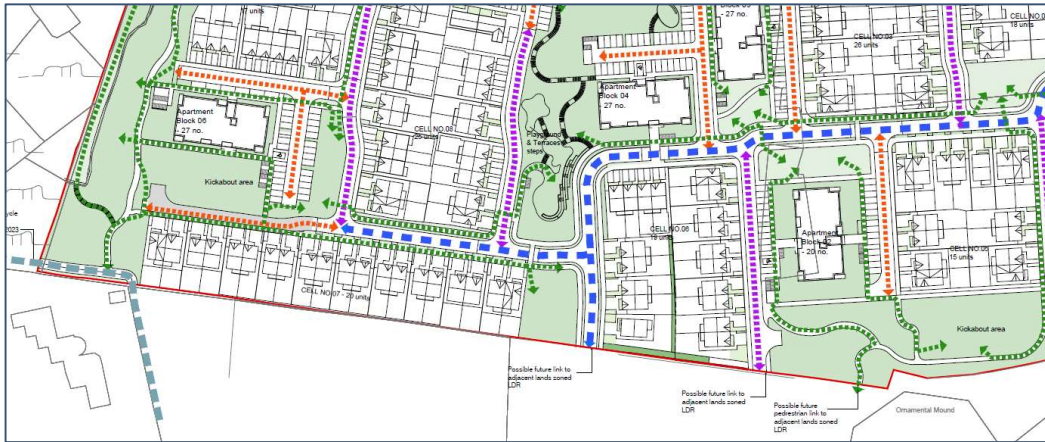


Figure 2-10: Connections to Zoned Lands to the South (extract from drawing 18128-3020)

It is held that the development proposals have been carefully considered to provide improvements the pedestrian and public infrastructure to deliver a sustainable development. The layout has been devised to achieve safe and connected spaces and places across all aspects of the development, and provision made for possible future connections to residentially zoned lands to the south of the application site.

2.5 Item 5: Public Road Interface

Further consideration of the documents as they relate to the layout of the proposed development particularly the relationship to the Old Dublin Road and Rosshill Road. The documents should clearly show acceptable design solutions that tackle differences in level between the site and the public road without the need for incongruous and heavy engineering solutions. Layout, contiguous elevations and section drawings should detail the relationship between the buildings and the public realm, existing and proposed. In particular, drawings should show the full suite of facilities that would be expected in any urban context; such as but not limited to; footpaths, landscape margins, appropriate boundary treatments and the provision of passive supervision of these new public spaces. Any development that integrates with the public realm either existing or modified should accord with the best practice principles of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (including the associated Urban Design Manual) and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, that seek to provide better and safe pedestrian and cyclist environments. Further consideration of these issues may require amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

2.5.1 Item 5 Response

At the time of the Board issuing their formal Opinion, a step and ramp link was shown on the application drawings, per Figures 2-12 and 2-13 below.

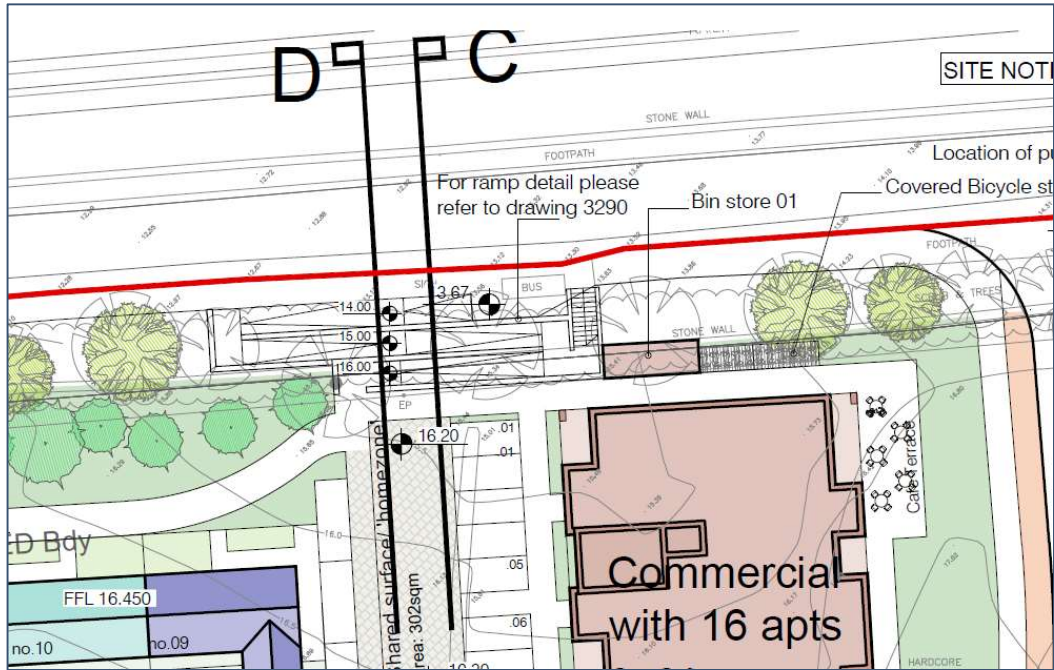


Figure 2-11: Ramp detail as shown on Stage 2 drawings (extract from drawing 18128-3004)

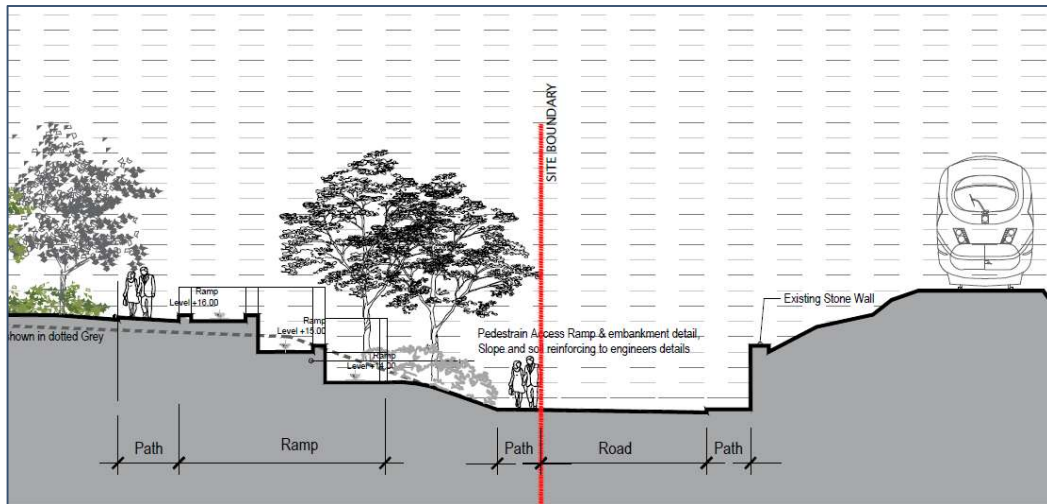


Figure 2-12: Ramp detail as shown on Stage 2 drawings (extract from drawing 18128-3013)

Following the discussion at the Tripartite meeting with the Board and with the City Council, the team reflected on the ramp purpose and design, and held that it was in reality unlikely that residents would utilise the ramp to a great extent and that it was difficult to achieve an aesthetically pleasing design.

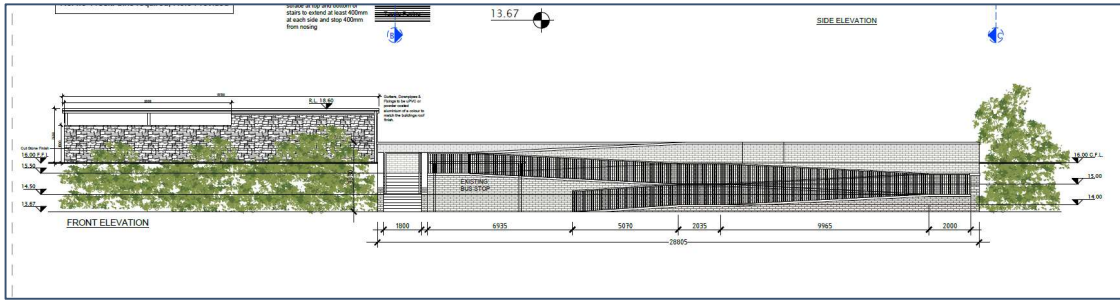


Figure 2-13: Ramp Technical Detail (extract from drawing 18128-3290)

The ramp detail has therefore been omitted from the revised designs, while the internal pedestrian network revised to ensure connection with the external footpath links. Figures 2-14 and 2-15 below illustrate the design iterations with regards connections which took place at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the SHD process.

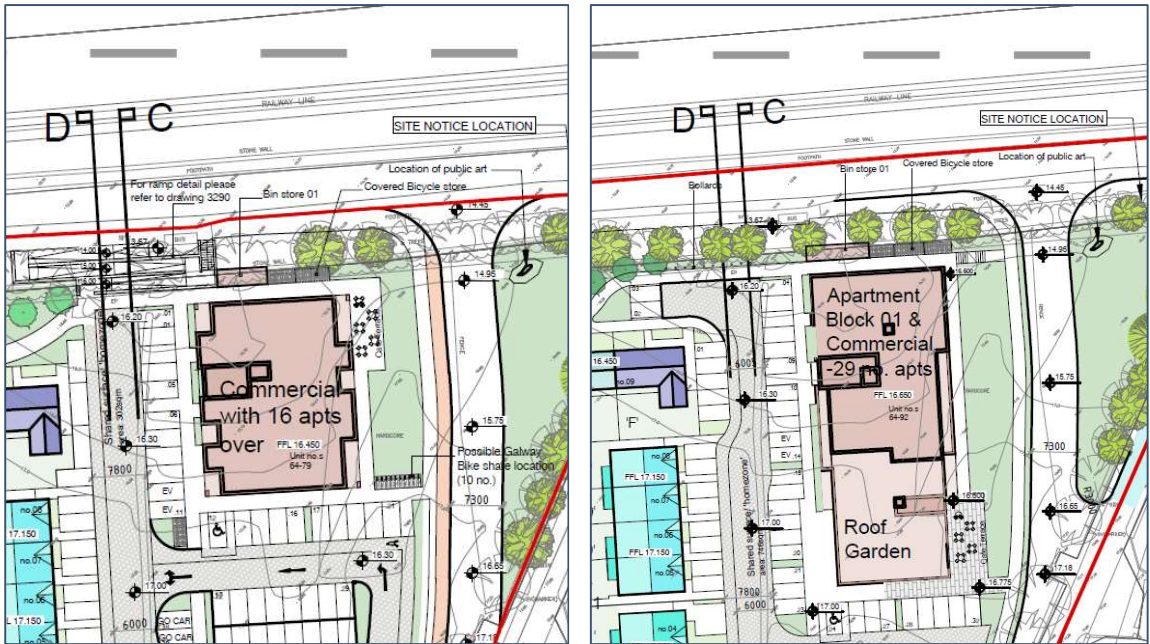


Figure 2-14: Stage 2 Ramp detail and Pedestrian Connections and Figure 2-15: Stage 3 Pedestrian Connections

The suite of drawings accompanying the application detail the overall layout (drawing ref: 18128-3002), elevations (example drawing ref: 18128-3202) and sections (drawing ref: 18128-3012) for the development proposed. They illustrate that the development is set back from the public road to the north and east, and the proposed building layouts, orientation and landscape treatment all assist in the creation of a successful place.



Figure 2-16: Site Section (extract from drawing 18128-3012 Site Section CC)

The drawings accompanying the application also contain detail of the soft and hard landscape treatments to be employed, with both the landscape and architectural disciplines taking cognisance of site constraints and best overall response. No response to design has been arrived at in isolation; rather it has been arrived at through careful thought and design iteration. In that vein the existing character of the site has heavily influenced the layout arrived at. The creation of cells of built development each with access to recreational space is complemented by a planting scheme which addresses both these open spaces but also boundaries and verges; all areas have been considered in-depth, regardless of scale or location. Figure 2-19 below illustrates that all areas of the public realm have been considered throughout the development.



Figure 2-17: Landscape Treatments (extract from drawing 191123-3100 Sheet A)

The palette of material includes clipped hedging, wildflower meadow, perennials and seasonal bulbs and woodland trees. A statement of compliance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets ('DMURS') (2019) is enclosed with the application pack which, together with the enclosed Road Safety

Audit, ensures the design of the scheme functions well for pedestrians and vehicles alike. Open spaces are overlooked and benefit from passive supervision, as discussed at Item 2 in this report.

With regards boundary treatments, the site boundaries are largely composed of retained and enhanced existing features including mature trees, mixed hedgerows, tree groupings and stone walls. A dedicated boundary drawing, informed by the accompanying Tree Survey (CSR, 2019) and inputs from the project landscape architect are illustrated on drawing 18128-3022, an extract of which is detailed below in Figure 2-18.

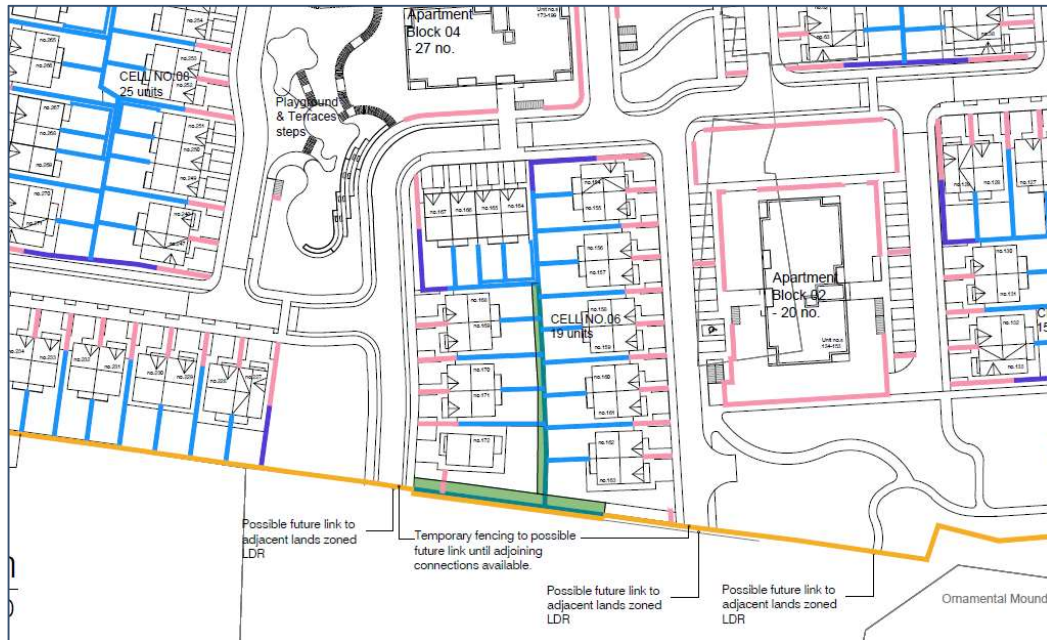


Figure 2-18: Boundary Treatment (extract from drawing 18128-3022)

Full consideration has been given to all aspects of the layout and its overall eventual functionality. The ancillary drawings of the architectural package demonstrate this; bin stores and bicycle stores have been carefully designed to be functional but not visually dominant. The connectivity within and through the site for road users, pedestrians, residents and recreational users has been carefully interwoven with the necessary technical and safety aspects of development. Clear delineation of spaces through materials and landscape planting is proposed, along with a robust landscape plan which incorporates clearly defined public play and recreational areas. The integration of the development with the public realm is ultimately found to accord with the best practice principles of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (including the associated Urban Design Manual) and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

2.6 Item 6: Water Services

Further consideration of documents as they relate to the water supply network, the foul sewer network and required pumping station upgrades to the Merlin Park number 1 wastewater pump station. An outline of the necessary works to address the constraints and what party or parties will be responsible for such works. In addition, there should be clarity as to whether such works would be the subject of a separate consent process and/or compulsory purchase process. Timelines for the delivery of any works is required relative to the delivery of the proposed development. Given the existing deficiencies in the provision of adequate sewerage infrastructure, the applicant should satisfy themselves that the proposed development would not be premature pending the delivery of required infrastructural improvements. Further consideration of these issues may require an amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted.

2.6.1 Item 6 Response

The team have engaged with Irish Water from the outset of the project. Irish Water submitted at Stage 2, prior to the tripartite meeting, that the proposed development would have to utilise the Merlin Park upgrade which is due to be operational by 2024. On receipt of this information a meeting was sought with Irish Water. Subsequently the Applicant, project engineers and project planners met with Irish Water on the 8th November 2019.

It is our understanding that the existing pumping station at Merlin Park has sufficient capacity for phase 1 and phase 2 of the proposed Rosshill SHD development - ie 106no. units, including the creche.

It is further our understanding that constraints on the pumping station are two-fold; firstly storage and secondly the network. Phases 1 and 2 of the development can be served under the existing storage and network without any upgrade works. Irish Water are, as part of their capital works programme, upgrading the pump station and network. These works are required primarily to facilitate the planned growth of the Ardaun area of the City. The project is part of the Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan and scheduled for completion in 2024. We understand that designs are being progressed within IW and that potential transfer of land to accommodate additional storage is being investigated.

Irish Water are responsible for the works

The storage aspect of the upgrade works is, at the time of writing and from our most recent engagement with Irish Water, expected to require planning permission which will be sought from Galway City Council. Allowance has been made in Irish Water's overall timeline of 2024 for this process.

The timelines for the delivery of works relative to the delivery of the proposed development at Rosshill are as follows, assuming a grant date in June 2020:

- > Phase 1 - 63 - occupation Dec 2021
- > Phase 2 - 44 - occupation Dec 2022
- > Phase 3 - 147 - occupation Dec 2024
- > Phase 4 - 88 - occupation June 2025

Irish Water have confirmed that phases 1 and 2 can be accommodated in the current network. Phase 3 will be ready for occupation in line with the operational upgraded Merlin Park pumping station. Phase 4 will have access to the operational upgraded pumping station.

On the basis of our discussions with Irish Water and on the agreed phasing set out above, the proposed development would not be premature pending the delivery of the upgrade works. Irish Water have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate commitment to bringing the upgrade to fruition and into operation by 2024.

2.7 Other Matters

1. *A layout drawing at an appropriate scale that details permitted development in the vicinity and specifically any road and footpath improvements, if any, and how they will integrate with the development as proposed. Specific reference should be made to the configuration and alignment of the local road network to the immediate east of the subject site along the Rosshill Road up to the point of a new junction with the Old Dublin Road.*

2. *A site layout plan clearly indicating what areas are to be taken in charge by the Local Authority. Streets should be shown up to the boundaries of the site and facilitate future access.*

3. *Details, including photographic samples, of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings, having regard to the need for low maintenance/high quality finishes that take account of the climatic characteristics of the area. A building lifecycle report for apartment buildings in accordance with section 6.13 of the 2018 Apartment Design Guidelines is also required.*

4. *Landscaping proposals including an overall landscaping masterplan for the development sites and a site layout plan indicating the full extent of tree retention and removal if proposed. Details of proposed tree protection measures during construction. Details pertaining to the quantity type and location of all proposed hard and soft landscaping including details of play equipment, street furniture including public lighting and boundary treatments should be submitted. Sections should be submitted at key locations where the public open spaces interface with the proposed residential units.*
5. *A construction and demolition waste management plan.*

2.7.1 Summary of Response

1. Please refer to Tobin Consulting Engineers drawings:
 - 10690-2013 Rev B Existing Pedestrian., Cycle and Public Transport Infrastructure
 - 10690-2014 Rev B Proposed Pedestrian, Cycle and Public Transport Infrastructure
2. Please refer to O'Neill O'Malley Ltd architectural drawing:
 - 18128-3024 Indicative Taking in Charge Drawing
3. Materials proposed are illustrated in the accompanying Design Statement (O'Neill O'Malley Ltd)
4. A landscaping plan and tree survey have been prepared and accompany the application. Please refer to the following Cunnane Stratton Reynolds landscape architecture drawings and reports:
 - Landscape Design and Outline Maintenance Report
 - Rosshill Tree Survey Report
 - Drawing 19112-3-100 Landscape Masterplan
 - Drawing 19112-3-100 Sheet A Landscape Masterplan
 - Drawing 19112-3-100 Sheet B Landscape Masterplan
 - Drawing 19112-T-101 Tree Classification
 - Drawing 19112-T-103 Tree Constraints
 - Drawing 19112-T-103 Tree Protection and Removal

A series of site sections are also provided by O'Neill O'Malley Ltd including:

- Drawing 18128-3010 Site Section A-A
- Drawing 18128-3011 Site Section B-B
- Drawing 18128-3015 Site Section F-F
- Drawing 18128-3015 Site Section E-E

The Landscape Design and Outline Maintenance Report (CSR, 2019) and Design Statement (ONOM, 2019) should be read in conjunction for full detail regarding hard and soft landscaping, equipment and furniture.

Boundary treatments proposed consist of a mix of new, retained and enhanced features including but not limited to hedging, blockwork, powder coated metal fencing, stone walls. Please refer to ONOM drawing 18128-3022 Layout Boundary Treatments.

With regards public lighting, Moloney Fox Consulting Engineers have prepared a site lighting drawing (reference 19.1849 E100 Site Lighting A1 and associated Site Lighting Report, both developed in close conjunction with the project team including project ecologists.

5. A Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan accompanies the application.

3. **CONCLUDING SUMMARY**

The matters raised in An Bord Pleanála's formal Opinion following the Tripartite meeting on the project have been duly considered by the entire project team. The feedback from the Board on the day together with that of the written Opinion have been considered and addressed in the development proposal now before the Board. This report, together with the suite of information provided as part of the application pack, demonstrates that the development proposal is a sound response to meeting the housing requirements of the City in a sustainable and sensitive manner. Ultimately it is held that the proposal will result in a high quality, responsive and welcoming new residential development for this location which accords with national, regional and local planning policy and guidance.