

# Planning Statement & Statement of Consistency with the Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Proposed Strategic Housing Development, 'Kenelm', Deer Park, Howth, Co. Dublin



Prepared on behalf of  
**GLL PRS Holdco Limited**

## Document Control Sheet

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## Executive Summary

*“For each local situation a balance is reached between preservation and protection of urban heritage, economic development, functionality and liveability of a city. Thus the needs of current inhabitants are responded to while sustainably enhancing the city’s natural and cultural resources for future generations”. UNESCO (2013) – New life for historic cities*

‘Kenelm’, is the name proposed for the scheme, after Kenelm Lee Guinness, a formula-one racing driver and yachtsman. His mother was a Gaisford-St. Lawrence of Howth. One of the towers of Howth Castle has been named after Kenelm Guinness. The naming of the proposed development after this historical figure creates a link to the historic demesne of Howth Castle and respects the special heritage of the wider setting.

The proposed development site is approx. 1.7 hectares and encompasses a greenfield infill zoned area of 1.16 hectares and part (0.58 hectares) of the Deer Park golf course, zoned High Amenity. The site is immediately north of Howth Road and west of the entrance to Howth Castle. It lies outside the Howth Castle Architectural Conservation Area and is approx. 115m south of Howth Castle and approx. 100m west of St Mary’s Church, both protected structures.

The site is within the historic demesne of Howth Castle, and the historic estate walls encloses it along its northern and eastern boundaries. This is the only feature of built heritage existing at the application area. The boundary walls of the Howth Demesne, including the northern boundary wall of the subject site, is not listed in the Record of Protected Structures but it is included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Ref. 11358027 and is assigned a Regional rating.

A series of bespoke heritage objectives were formulated at the early stage of the design development and they have informed the proposed development now submitted for permission to An Bord Pleanála. The objectives include (i) appropriate integration within the proposed development to enable a distinctiveness of place and identity, (ii) protect the special interest of protected structures, (iii) provide specific strategies for repair, intervention, adaption and extension to the demesne wall and (iv) ensure architectural design approach to integrate historic, contemporary architecture and landscaping with an overall coherence and integrity.

To the west of the proposed development site, there is low density residential dwellings that form a linear pattern of ribbon development in the direction of Sutton Cross. North of Howth Road, Claremont, a high density mixed use scheme is permitted and it will deliver 512 new homes, shops, a creche, a café and restaurant across 4 no. blocks of up to 8 storeys, together with a public park and civic plaza. The development of this site will alter the existing character as the town centre extends westward defining the urban edge and delivering a the first stage of a ‘gateway’ to Howth.

Kenelm, responds to Claremont and would deliver the northern element of the ‘gateway’ to the town centre. The development comprises three buildings of linear form, arranged side-by-side, aligned north-south, roughly perpendicular to the Howth Road. Each building is divided into a front and rear volume, with the two volumes offset so that the floorplan is staggered, providing the apartments in the rear volumes with views north towards the sea. The layout would create a strong

built frontage to the road, on the road's approach to the town centre, while retaining a visual connection between the buildings to the woodlands and upland to the south.

The front volumes of the proposed buildings are five storeys, with the top floor set back behind a shallow terrace. The rear volumes step up to six storeys, so that the buildings would reflect the topography of the site, which rises towards the south, away from the road and the coastline.

The three buildings are not positioned at the front of the site, i.e. they are not road-front buildings typical of an urban location. They would rather be set back behind the existing roadside green verge, the historic demesne boundary wall, and a proposed corridor of public open space inside the wall. Large specimen trees are proposed to the front of the buildings and at the north east corner adjacent to the entrance to Howth Castle to soften the built frontage while still generating a degree of street enclosure in recognition of the site's urban gateway position.

Sensitively designed openings are proposed in the northern demesne wall to facilitate access and permeability. The condition of the wall is undermined due to ivy growth and it is proposed to carry out rehabilitation works in parallel with the construction of the entrances. The vehicular access is to the west and this design measure facilitates appropriate separation from the adjacent existing dwellings. The analysis undertaken to inform this application demonstrates that there will be no perceptible impact on the amenities of existing residents.

The scheme would deliver 162 new homes on the developable area and change the use of part of the golf course to a parkland. A mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units is proposed that would accommodate a range of household types in a location that is well served by existing services and amenities to meet daily living needs.

Carparking is at basement level and the reduced ratio will facilitate a shift toward use of sustainable transport modes in this highly accessible location. This measure also facilitates a high quality landscape approach as the surface is kept free from parking and provides pedestrian priority and a more liveable environment.

An abundance of open space is provided including private balconies and terraces for ground apartments, courtyards that facilitate passive and active recreation, including play, and public open space that is designed to capitalise on the micro climate that exists in Howth by integrating a botanic garden. A pocket park with space for play benefits from passive surveillance and will therefore be a safe environment for children.

The boundaries will benefit from supplementary tree planting that will enhance the existing woodlands and hedgerows and provide further screening of the proposed development. Building C is set back from the eastern boundary in response to the adjacent ACA and protected gates.

The carrying capacity of the receiving environment is confirmed in the assessments and evaluations undertaken by the project team at the early stage of the design development. The information is presented in the comprehensive suite of reports that accompany this application.

The front and rear volumes of the proposed buildings have different primary materials. The rear volumes are clad in grey brick, the material selected to blend in with the woodlands on the lower slopes of the headland to the rear of the site. The front volumes are of buff brick, the colour intended to provide a lighter presence in the road corridor. The top floors (front and rear volumes) are clad in bronze coloured metal, matching the window frames throughout the buildings.

The front volumes have recessed balconies so that the buildings present simple, clean forms to the Howth Road corridor. The rear volumes have projecting balconies, improving the visibility of the surrounding landscape and seascape from the apartments.

A feature of the proposed buildings is their large windows, intended to take maximum advantage of the visual amenities of the site environs. The façade design is informed by this objective, with the elevations all variations of simple grid patterns of glazing framed by brick or metal cladding. As a result of the large windows, recessed balconies and the variations in material, the facades are highly articulated and the perception of massing/scale would be reduced.

The minimum floor areas have been met within all individual units and the majority (82%) of the units exceed the minimum floor area. The scheme achieves 61% (99 no. apartments) dual aspect, significantly exceeding the required 33%. The communal amenity space is over double that required by the Design Standards for New Apartment Guidelines.

In summary, the proposed development combines distinctly urban characteristics with the retention of key landscape features such as the demesne wall and woodland/trees that lend the site and the area its particular character. This is a considered response to the urban edge/gateway location (which has been reinforced by the permission for the Claremont development) and a receiving environment rich in cultural and natural heritage.



# 1 Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley (MH) Chartered Planning Consultants on behalf of the Applicant, GLL PRS Holdco Limited, to support an application for a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) on lands at Deer Park, Howth, Co. Dublin.



**FIGURE 1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE**

The proposed development meets the threshold for SHD, being a development of 100 or more units on land zoned for residential use, and accordingly is subject to the provisions of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.

The proposed development seeks to deliver a high quality, high density residential development, that makes sustainable use of a strategically located development site, which;

- a) is within walking distance of a town centre, Howth, that is within Dublin City & Suburbs,
- b) is served by Dublin Bus and DART services, with the DART station only 500m from the site, and
- c) has access to high quality open space amenities locally.

The cultural and natural heritage assets are both sensitivities and opportunities for development lands in their vicinity and the proposed development responds appropriately to this historic and natural context.

A full description of the development is set out in section 5. Briefly, the proposed development is for the construction of 162 no. residential apartment units with distributed across 3 no. buildings (A, B and C) with the following mix;

- 29 no. 1-bedroom units, - 17.9%
- 104 no. 2-bedroom units and – 64.2%
- 29 no. 3-bedroom units – 17.9%

This report provides a description of the project and an overview of the site's context, relevant planning history, and assesses the proposed development against the policies and objectives of the Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023 and Section 28 Guidelines.

This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying supporting reports included with the application and listed in the following Table.

The drawing suite included with the application are listed below and each suite is accompanied by a drawing schedule.

- Architectural Drawings – MCA Architects
- Landscape Drawings – Bernard Seymour Landscape Architects
- Engineering Drawings – Barrett Mahony Consulting Engineers
- Traffic Drawings - Barrett Mahony Consulting Engineers
- Arborist Drawings – John Morris Arboricultural Consultant
- Site Lighting Drawing – Ethos Engineering

Planning Statement & Statement of Consistency with Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023
Statement of Consistency with National, Regional & Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines
Material Contravention Statement
Social Infrastructure Audit
Childcare Demand Report
School Demand Assessment Report
Response to An Bord Pleanála Opinion
Part V Proposal
Architectural Design Statement
Summary of Areas & Housing Quality Audit
Urban Design Statement
Landscape Design Report
Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement
Infrastructure Report
Flood Risk Assessment Report
Mobility Management Plan
Traffic & Transport Assessment
DMURS Statement of Compliance
Stage 1 Road Safety Audit
Site Investigation Report
Construction Environmental Management Plan
Construction Waste Management Plan
Operational Waste Management Plan
Energy Statement
Site Lighting Report
Building Lifecycle Report
Architectural Heritage Assessment Report
Daylight and Sunlight Assessment Report
Environmental Impact Assessment Report (Volume I, II and III)
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
Natura Impact Statement
Photomontages to accompany Landscape & Visual Assessment – Chapter 5 EIAR (Vol II)
Photomontages to accompany Cultural Heritage: Built Heritage Assessment – Chapter 15 EIAR (Vol II)

TABLE 1 REPORTS SUBMITTED WITH APPLICATION

## 2 Site Description and Local Context

The site is located in Deer Park, Howth, to the south of the Howth Road, R105, and is part of the Howth Castle demesne. The site (approx. 1.7 ha) encompasses undeveloped greenfield land (1.16 ha) zoned for residential development, 'RA', with an objective to provide for residential development and to protect and improve residential amenity. The proposed residential development i.e. the buildings and all ancillary infrastructure is confined to the RA zoning.

The balance (0.58 ha) of the application area is zoned high amenity, 'HA', and the objective is to protect and enhance high amenity areas. This area encompasses part of the Deer Park golfclub and comprises managed amenity grassland together with a hedgerow (approx. 25 years old) with an east-west alignment, that forms the boundary with the golf course. The lands zoned HA are part of the buffer area for the Howth Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO).



**FIGURE 2 SITE ZONING DESIGNATIONS (EXCERPT SHEET No. 10: BALDOYLE/HOWTH)**

The site is enclosed along its northern and eastern boundary by the demesne wall which while not protected, it does have heritage value. There is no existing access to the site from the Howth Road. A combination of hedgerow and wall forms the western site boundary and beyond it are low rise residential dwellings that form ribbon type development in a westerly direction toward Sutton Cross. A hedgerow (approx. 25 years old) with an east-west alignment delineates the boundary with the golf course.



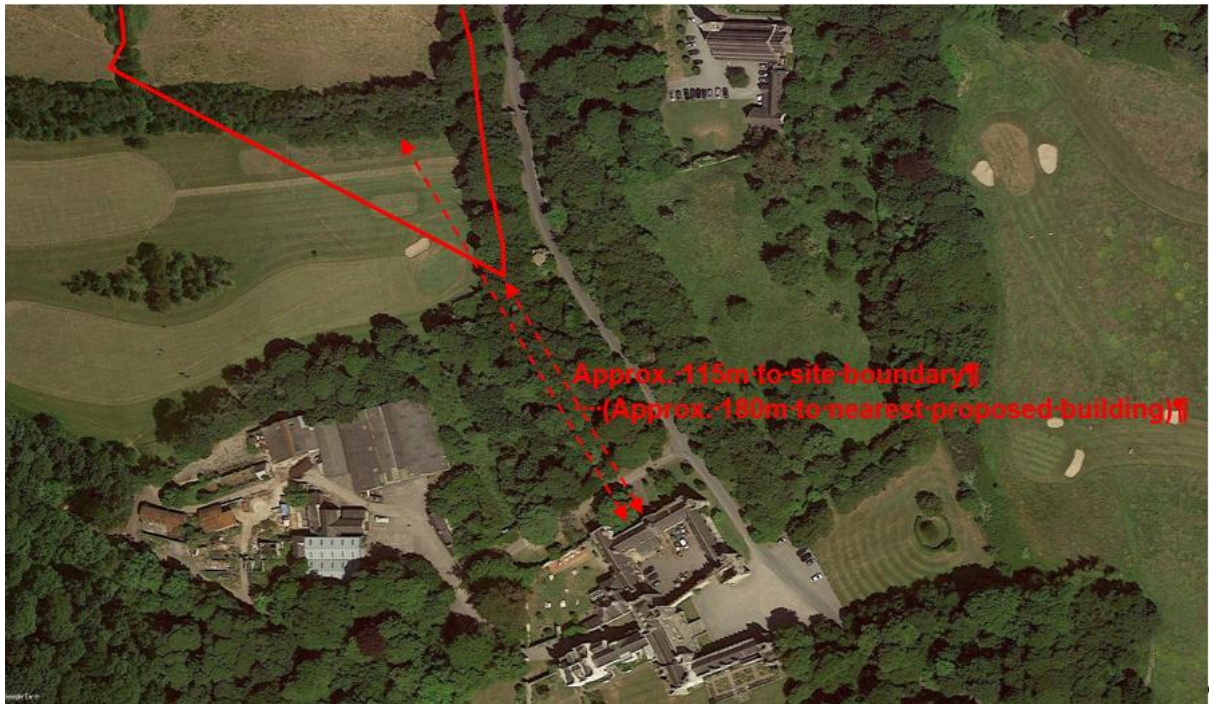
**PLATE 1 NORTHERN DEMESNE WALL**

The proposed development site is approx. 115m south of Howth Castle and approx. 100m west of St Mary's Church, both protected structures. The primary entrance to Howth Castle and the Golf Club is to the east of the subject site through gates that are set back from the public road.

A large area of historic demesne woodland surrounds and offers screening to these buildings and their setting as illustrated in the Plates below.



**PLATE 2 ST. MARY'S CHURCH RELATIVE TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE**



**PLATE 3 HOWTH CASTLE RELATIVE TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE**

The Howth Castle Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is located immediately east of the proposed development site as illustrated in the Figure below. Recognising that much of the demesne lands have been altered to accommodate the golf course and hotel complex, the boundary of the ACA was limited to a core area surrounding Howth Castle and the entrance avenue.



FIGURE 3 HOWTH CASTLE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Fingal County Councils (FCC) Statement of Character for the ACA States;

*The boundary of the Howth Castle ACA extends from the Howth Road to just south of Howth Castle and includes St. Mary’s Church, the formal gardens and old orchard to the castle, the ruins of an ancient church, the Howth Transport Museum complex, a large copse of trees to the west of the castle, as well as Howth Castle itself and adjoining outbuildings.”*

The exceptional character of Howth is recognised through the making of the Howth Special Amenity Area Order that encompasses 547 hectares of land. It includes Ireland’s Eye (28 hectares) and the heathland, woods, cliffs, shingle beaches and wooded residential areas of the south-eastern half of the Howth peninsula (519 hectares). The Order aims to preserve and enhance the character and special features of Howth. It designates a 21-kilometre network of rights-of-way as public footpaths and 35 sites and areas of special natural, historical, architectural, archaeological and geological interest. Neither the trails or sites are within the subject site, however, they do offer significant amenity value for the existing and future residents of Howth.

That part of the subject site, currently within the golf course, comes within an area defined as ‘other areas’ within the SAAO. The Biodiversity Chapter of the EIAR details that amenity grassland is one of the most widespread habitat types in urban and suburban areas. The variant in the golf course is heavily managed through an intensive mowing regime, and application of fertilisers. It is concluded that the habitat is of local importance on account of its low floristic diversity and abundance in the context of the Dublin area.

It is noted that the An Bord Pleanála Inspector in assessing the permitted Claremont development, stated in relation to the SAAO;

*Most of the city is visible from some parts of the special amenity area, so the mere fact that the apartment buildings would be visible from the area does not imply that it would have an adverse effect on its landscape.” In that instance it was stated that “Therefore the proposed development would not contravene the special amenity area order for Howth or the provisions of the development plan which protect it.”*

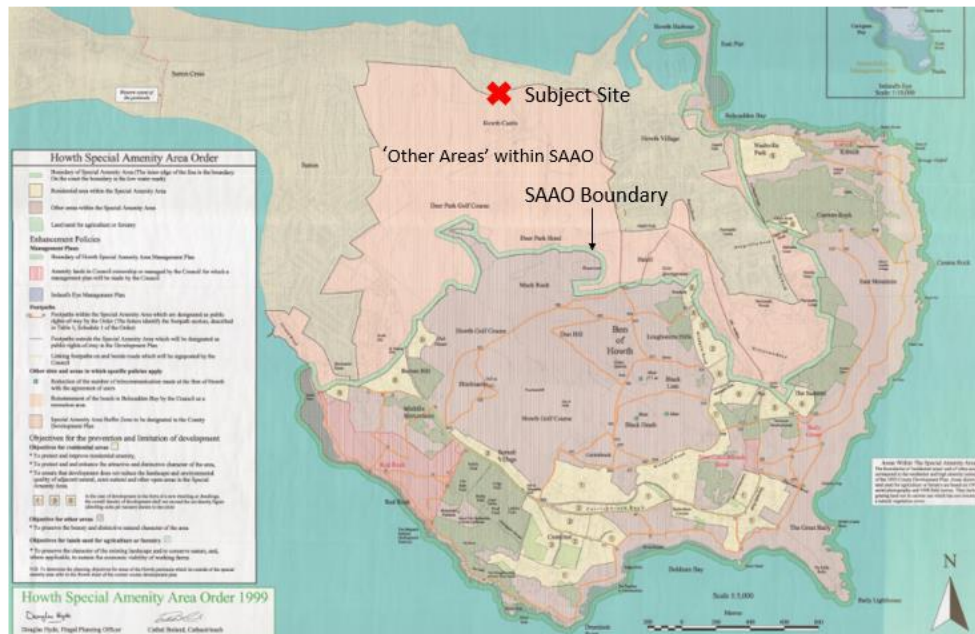


FIGURE 4 HOWTH SPECIAL AREA AMENITY ORDER

The neighbouring lands include:

- to the north across the Howth Road - between the road and the DART line along the coast - a public park (Baltray Park) and the extensive Techrete factory, now disused and the site of the permitted Claremont strategic housing development which extends to the town centre 500m to the east;
- to the west, a corridor of low density housing on both sides of the Howth Road;
- to the south, the Deer Park Golf Club and Howth Castle (protected structure), including an extensive area of historic demesne woodland surrounding the castle, and the National Transport Museum housed in a complex of outbuildings near the castle;
- to the east, the entrance and main access road to Howth Castle and Deer Park Golf Club, and beyond that St Mary’s Church (protected structure), surrounded by historic demesne woodland.

The site context is illustrated overleaf.



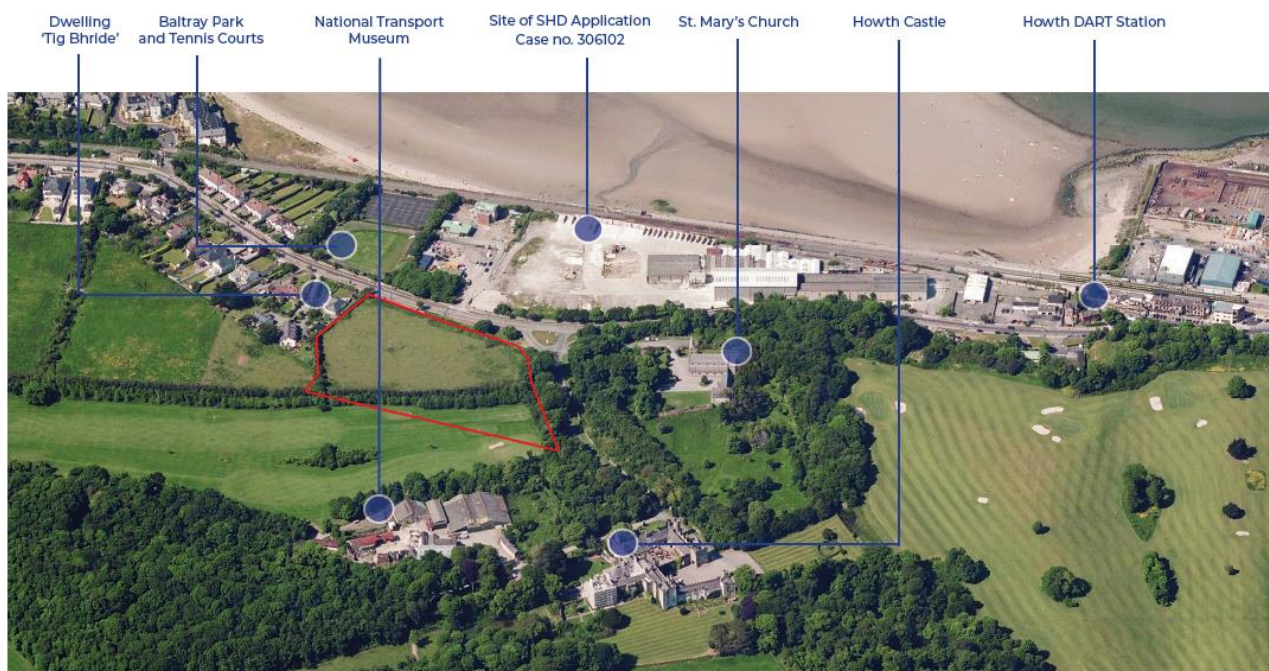


FIGURE 5 SITE CONTEXT

The proposed development site is close to the village of Howth and Sutton Cross which offers a wide range of services including *inter alia* retail, medical and educational. Both Howth and Sutton are largely characterised by low to medium density residential dwellings. A **Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA)** accompanies this submission and provides a comprehensive overview of the existing services and amenities in the local area, of which there are many. The SIA identified a deficit in children's play locally, however, this is somewhat addressed by the permitted Claremont scheme.

## 2.1 Connectivity

Howth DART station is c. 450m (5-minute walk time) from the site offering high frequency DART services to Dublin City Centre and as far south as Greystones. The DART operates a service to the city centre every 12 to 15 minutes during the morning peak time.

The Dublin Bus services in the area provide direct linkage to the city centre, the Route 31A along Howth Road towards the city centre, and the 31B Route along Carrickbrack Road towards the city centre. The frequency of services during the morning peak is set out below.

Route	Origin	Destination	AM peak hour Frequency
Route 31/a	Howth Road / Carrickbrack Road	Talbot Street	2 per hour
Route 31b	Carrickbrack Road	Talbot Street	1 per hour

Howth Village and Sutton Cross are easily accessible on foot, by bike or on public transport. A cycle lane is present along the bus corridor on the Howth Road, linking the site to Sutton Cross and onwards towards the city centre.

In terms of future public transport, the DART+ Programme will enhance the service capacity to Howth.

Bus Connects proposes the N6 orbital route across the north side of Howth, opening up a new service to Dublin City University while maintaining a good connection to the rail or the proposed D spine for travel to the city centre.

### 3 Planning History

A planning history search did not identify any records directly pertaining to the subject site. The southern portion of the site, currently in use as a golf course was developed in the 1970's.

Claremont, a mixed use development to the north of the Howth Road received approval from An Bord Pleanála.

Application Reference	Site	Development Description	Decision	Date of Decision
306102	Techrete Site, Beshoff Motors, Garden Centre, Howth Road, Howth, Dublin 13.	Demolition of structures on site, construction of 512 no. apartments, childcare facility and associated site works.	Granted	03.04.2020

TABLE 2 RELEVANT STRATEGIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Claremont, the former Techrete site, is opposite the proposed development site and statements made in the Inspector's report are relevant to the proposed development;

- Acknowledges that the proposed development would be in keeping with government policy to increase the supply of housing set out in Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness issued in July 2016.
- Highlights that the site is part of the continuous built-up area of Dublin city. Because of this, the proposed development would contribute to the achievement of objectives 3a, 3b, 11 and 35 of the National Planning Framework, as well as to the achievement of the target population of 1,408,000 for the city in 2040.
- The site is within walking distance of a railway station and town centre and so is suitable for higher density development that consists wholly of apartments in line with the advice at section 2.4 of the guidelines on apartment design issued in 2018. The density of 191dph is consistent with national and regional policy.
- SPPR 1 of the 2018 guidelines on building height states that it is government policy that building height and density should be increased on sites with good public transport accessibility, which the current site has.
- Core strategy - the proposed material contravention of the county development plan is justified by objectives 3a, 3b, 10, 11 and 35 of the national planning framework, section 5.6

and 5.8 of the 2009 guidelines on sustainable residential density, section 2.4 of the 2018 guidelines on apartment design and SPPR1 of the 2018 guidelines on building height all of which support denser residential development of the type proposed on sites like the current one. It would also be justified by objective RPO4.3 of the RSES for the same reason. It would also be justified by the government's policy to provide more housing set out in Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness issued in July 2016. As such a grant of permission can be made under section 37(2)(b)(iii) of the planning act. The proposed development falls within the definition of strategic housing set out in Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 and is supported by objectives SS01 and SS15 of the development plan, so it would also be justified by reference to section 37(2)(b)(i) and (ii) of the act.

## 4 Pre-Planning

### 4.1 Section 247 Meetings

2 no. meetings were held with representatives of Fingal County Council in advance of making this pre-application consultation request to An Bord Pleanála.

#### 4.1.1 Meeting No. 1 – June 2019

The following matters were highlighted;

- The County Architect agreed with the pavilion style development and encouraged separation between the most westerly building and adjacent development.
- Design should be cognisant of existing woodland setting;
- Protect and retain the mature tree belt along the eastern site boundary, along the avenue;
- Need to consider the scale and massing of the development having regard to the existing context;
- Consideration to be given to issues of overlooking;
- Access via the Castle Avenue was discouraged;
- Transition from existing single storey dwellings to the west should be considered;
- Instructed to submit a pre-connection enquiry to Irish Water;
- Highlighted the Development Plan's parking standards and that electric vehicle charging should be provided;
- Cumulative impacts of construction traffic with other planned/permitted development should be given consideration;
- Multiple entrances from Howth Road not considered to be a concern;
- Social Infrastructure Audit.

#### 4.1.2 Meeting No. 2 – January 2020 (Ref. FCC-PPSHD/009/20)

The following was discussed;

##### Planning

- Acknowledged the residential zoning of the site.
- Acknowledged the merits of the design but considered that it is inappropriate in this context.
- Sought clarity on number of units being proposed, noted that the IW pre-application enquiry was for 210 units.
- Queried the net density.
- Indicated that a material contravention of the core strategy arises and clarity regarding this matter would be sought from ABP.
- Noted that protecting the sylvan nature of the area and the setting of Protected Structures is a priority.
- Design should seek to avoid overbearing impacts on adjacent residences and impacts to the entrance to Howth Castle.
- Queried 22m separation distance between blocks.
- Conservation section noted that increased height at this location is inappropriate due to *inter alia* Protected Structures, the High Amenity zoning to the south and parkland setting.
- Highlighted objective Howth 1 of the Development Plan; *Ensure that development respects the special historic and architectural character of the area.*
- Queried Childcare Assessment and figures presented.

##### Roads

- Indicated that car parking ratio as proposed is acceptable.
- Noted that Development Plan requires 2 car parking spaces for 3-bedroom units.
- Cycle parking – should be overlooked at ground level and secure. Consideration should be given to increasing cycle parking in line with national guidance and not the Fingal Development Plan.
- Review the layout and ensure that there is no conflict between traffic and pedestrian/cyclists.
- Fire tender – swept path analysis to be submitted and confirm details of surfacing geo grid/grasscrete
- TTA – analysis of Sutton Cross is important.
- Construction Management Plan – review proposed timeframes of other schemes (Balscadden & Techrete) and consider cumulative impacts. Coordination with other developers is encouraged. Liaise with FCC operations in advance of lodging the application.

##### Parks

- Queried the extent of tree removal from the southern boundary.
- Queried impact on trees along the avenue.
- Queried quantity and quality of proposed public open space.
- Noted that quality of daylight to units along the eastern boundary may be compromised as a result of the tree cover.

- Queried location of play areas within courtyards and impact of noise on residents.
- Noted location of substation and queried if the plans included ancillary cabling etc.

## Drainage

- Acknowledged the significant benefit to surface water run off.
- Noted that underground attenuation is proposed but recognised that it is needed due to site constraints.
- Requested that the extent of green roofs be defined clearly.
- Construction Management Plan – requested that details on cut and fill be included.
- Noted that there is a potential for increased surface water run off during the construction phase.

## 4.2 Pre-application Consultation Meeting (Ref. ABP-308497-20)

A pre-application consultation (PAC) meeting was held on the 13th January 2021. The Agenda included 5 no. items;

1. Development Strategy – Compliance with the Core Strategy including issues relating to zoning, density, scale and height, landscape setting, landscaping, provision of public open space
2. Conservation – Built Heritage and Archaeology
3. Access and Transportation – Issues raised by the Planning Authority
4. Residential Amenity – Sunlight/Daylight/Overshadowing Analysis, Overlooking and Noise Mitigation
5. Any Other Matters

The Record of the Meeting received from An Bord Pleanála is transcribed below.

### 1. Development Strategy – Compliance with the Core Strategy including issues relating to zoning, density, scale and height, landscape setting, landscaping, provision of public open space

#### Planning Authority's Comments:

- Generally supportive of increased density but in the context of this sensitive site location the proposed density is not suitable on the approach to Howth.
- Concern regarding the building height, scale and mass and the character of the area including the adjoining suburban dwellings to the west and the entrance to Howth Castle to the immediate east which is a protected structure. Concern also expressed regarding the impact on the view of Howth Hill to the south (rear) of the site with the high amenity area and Howth SAAO.

**Response:** A modest approach to increased height is proposed, to the north (Howth Road) 4 storeys with a set back 5<sup>th</sup> storey and to the south (golf course) 5 storeys with a setback 6<sup>th</sup> storey, reflecting the topography of the site, which rises toward the south, away from the road and coastline.

The development comprises three buildings of linear form, arranged side-by-side, aligned north-south, roughly perpendicular to the Howth Road. Each building is divided into a front and rear volume, with the two volumes offset so that the floorplan is staggered, providing

the apartments in the rear volumes with views north towards the sea. The layout would create a strong built frontage to the road, on the road's approach to the town centre, while retaining a visual connection between the buildings to the woodlands and upland to the south.

The proposed access road is along the western boundary and this design measure ensures in excess of 22m separation between the proposed Block A and Tig Bhríde, the closest residential dwelling. The **Daylight & Sunlight Report** demonstrates that there will be no perceptible impact on the amenities of existing dwellings to the west.

Block C is stepped back from the eastern boundary, mindful of the ACA boundary and the protected Howth Castle Gates. The landscaping plan includes increased woodland planting at this location to supplement the existing mature woodland that exists along the avenue.

In summary, the proposed development combines distinctly urban characteristics (e.g. the building typology and scale) with the retention of key landscape features such as the demesne wall and woodland/trees that lend the site and the area its particular character. This is a considered response to the urban edge/gateway location (which has been reinforced by the permission for the Claremont development) and a receiving environment rich in cultural and natural heritage.

- Boundary of proposed development is up against a high amenity zoning.  
**Response:** The area zoned High Amenity is used as a golfclub. This area will act as a passive amenity parkland and it is considered that this offers greater potential to enhance biodiversity than the current intensively managed regime. Part of the existing relatively new hedgerow that marks the boundary with the golfclub will be removed. However, a new native woodland boundary will be located further south in line with the application boundary.
- Proposed development must be mindful of established character of area and transition accordingly.  
**Response:** The existing character of the area is acknowledged. However, the permitted Claremont scheme must also be given due consideration. It represents a significant change in the townscape of Howth, and in the site's immediate setting. It will extend Howth town centre along the Howth Road as far as the site, and it will change the character along this corridor, so that Howth will in future be approached along a street of contemporary urban character. The proposed development site is at the point of transition between this evolving urban area to the east and the suburban strip to the west.
- Site requires sensitive approach. This is a highly sensitive landscape requiring special emphasis on landscape features.  
**Response:** The proposed development is informed by extensive assessment and evaluation of the existing historical and natural environment. A comprehensive landscape scheme is proposed that integrates boundary treatments consistent with the historic woodland character of the wider demesne. The public open space integrates the demesne wall and the micro-climate that supports botanical species as evidenced in the renowned rhododendron gardens. The heavily managed golfclub that forms part of the SAAO buffer will become a passive amenity parkland.

- Lower scale typology would be more acceptable due to the location of proposed development  
**Response:** A balance must be achieved between the protection of the existing environment and achieving compact growth. A lower scale typology would result in a lower housing yield and or reduced open space within the proposed development site.
- Techrete site is not an appropriate comparison as this site is zoned Town Centre with a specific objective for a landmark gateway building and such provision is not supported on this site.  
**Response:** The proposed development site is not subject to a specific local objective therefore it must be assessed on its merits. The permitted redevelopment of the Techrete site will change the character of the local area and by increasing height at this location a gateway and urban edge will be achieved.
- No provision made for the required 10% open space provision as set out in the Development Plan  
**Response:** The proposed development site is 1.74 hectares, of this 1.16 hectares is zoned residential with the balance zoned high amenity, 'HA'. The Development Plan states that the development site area cannot include HA land. Accordingly, to meet the minimum 10% requirement 0.16 hectares is required. The proposed development satisfies this quantitative requirement and includes 1,161 sq.m of public open space.
- Concerns raised with respect to the usability and public access to the public open space proposed enclosed behind the roadside boundary wall  
**Response:** The location of the public open space to the north of the site is at the most convenient location for public access being adjacent to the Howth Road. The 2 no. proposed access points through the demesne wall will facilitate ease of access if approaching from the east or west. The hierarchy of spaces includes passive and active recreation including a pocket park play area, botanic gardens and lawns. The location ties in to public open space locally, Baltray Park and the permitted civic plaza in the Claremont scheme.
- PA cannot accept in lieu of 10% requirement  
**Response:** As outlined above the 10% public open space provision is met.
- Concerns expressed regarding the removal of the main ecological feature on the site. Preference to retain ecological features and enhance where required, in particular, any gaps along the eastern site boundary.  
**Response:** The section of hedgerow proposed for removal is approx. 25 years old. The assessment of its ecological value. The species are a mix of native and non-native species and is assigned a 'local value' in the Biodiversity Chapter of the EIAR. It does not support Potential Roost Features (PRFs). A small number of bats were observed to forage in the hedgerow for a short period of time. The Biodiversity Chapter presented in the EIAR highlights that the habitats in the adjacent demesne, particularly woodland habitats, are of high suitability for foraging and commuting bats.

New tree planting is proposed along the southern boundary where this habitat will be removed and additional planting is proposed to strengthen linear hedgerow habitats to the west. A strong woodland edge is proposed connecting to the existing retained portion, which will create a new green link of biodiversity. This planting is in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, which promotes use of native species in order to enhance wildlife.

The landscape plan includes tree planting along the eastern and north eastern boundary to supplement the existing woodland.

To conclude, A significant emphasis has been placed on tree planting and substitution of the hedgerow proposed for removal. The following new tree planting is proposed:

- Mature Trees: 9 no.
  - Semi Mature: 12 no.
  - Standards/multi stems: 44 no.
  - Whips: (replanting to reoriented section of shelter belt to south, and fill in areas to west and east): 1960 no.
- Ensure clear demarcation between public open space and communal.  
Hard boundaries are not proposed between communal and open space. It is considered that this is a more inclusive approach. Should the Planning Authority decide not to take the public open space in charge, the Applicant is satisfied to accept a condition requiring the appointed Management Company to maintain the area and keep it open for public use.
  - PA advise that they are willing to engage further with the applicant regarding provision of public open space.  
Advise received in the pre-application consultation meeting was given consideration by the landscape architect and a modified proposal was developed. It was issued to the Parks Department on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021. A response was received as follows;
    - Agreed that 10% of the site area would need to within the development zoned lands.
    - Identified that in their opinion the most appropriate area for the public open space would be along the eastern boundary incorporating the maximum amount of retained trees where possible.

This latter point was considered and discounted for the following reasons;

- i. The eastern site boundary is a sensitive area of the site having regard to its location adjacent to the ACA, the extensive woodland canopy covering from the trees outside the site boundary that line the Avenue and the value of this area for biodiversity.
- ii. Creating public open space at this location would require works that could interfere with root protection zones and undermine the woodland.
- iii. Increased activity in this area would disturb this wildlife corridor.
- iv. Achieving passive surveillance of children's play areas would be challenging having regard to the dense tree coverage.
- v. Access would be required in the eastern demesne boundary wall and this intervention could negatively impact the setting of the protected gates.



## 2. Conservation – Built Heritage and Archaeology

### Planning Authority's Comments:

- PA advised that it is the scale of the development and not the design approach that will have a negative impact.

**Response:** The application is accompanied by a suite of supporting reports that assess and evaluate the impact of the proposed development on the receiving environment. Neither the Landscape & Visual Assessment (EIAR), the Architectural Heritage Assess Report or the Cultural Heritage: Built Heritage Assessment (EIAR) conclude that there is a likely negative impact. This is clearly confirmed in the photomontages submitted with this application.

- Conservation areas cannot take landscape and green infrastructure into account in assessment.
- Negative impact on tourist value of Howth village.

**Response:** There is no evidence to support this assertion. The design is of a high quality and well considered and responds to its existing and the emerging pattern of development in the area.

## 3. Access and Transport

### Planning Authority's Comments:

- Consider potential impacts on traffic at Sutton Cross
- Acknowledge prospective applicant cannot provide solution to Sutton Cross issues
- Request that Sutton Cross is included in Traffic and Transport Assessment
- Further parking required, 0.7 parking spaces per unit not sufficient, consider 1–3-bedroom apartments
- Visitor parking is desirable
- Have consideration for access issues regarding parking and security

**Response:** The Traffic and Transport Assessment included with this application analyses the following junctions

- i. Sutton Cross Signalised junction
- ii. Howth Road / Church Road priority junction
- iii. Howth Road / Offington Park priority junction
- iv. Harbour Road / Church Street priority junction

The proposed parking ratio is 0.81 and all parking will be at basement level.

The TTA concludes that 3 of the 4 no. assessed junctions in the vicinity of the proposed development plus the proposed development entrance presently work well within capacity and will continue to do so in the projected year of opening and, 15 years thereafter. Sutton crossroads is at present at capacity and other adjacent permitted developments will result in it being over capacity in future years. The proposed development will add relatively little to further congestion at this location. The volumes generated by the proposed development constitute a very low proportion of committed flows from adjacent developments.

#### 4. Residential Amenity – Sunlight/Daylight/Overshadowing Analysis, Overlooking and Noise Mitigation`

##### Planning Authority's Comments:

- Prospective applicant to ensure established residential amenity is protected.

**Response:** The design is cognisant of the amenities of existing residences. The position of the proposed access road safeguards separation between Block A and dwellings to the west. **The Daylight & Sunlight Report** includes a comprehensive assessment of existing dwellings and concludes that the impact on sunlight and daylight will be imperceptible on the existing dwellings.

#### 5. Other Matters

- Advised to provide photomontages of Techrete site if possible

**Response:** The photomontages include a cumulative image with the permitted Claremont Scheme in place.

##### Planning Authority's Comments:

- Proposed approach to Sustainable Urban Drainage System measures is acceptable
- Flood Risk Assessment provided is acceptable, with little/no obvious flood risk
- Fire tender access should be contained in residential zoning
- Consider capacity of childcare services in area to take additional children

**Response:** The layout has been reviewed by a fire consultant who has confirmed that adequate access is in place within the residential zoning. A Childcare Demand Report is included with this application and demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity available to cater for the demand generated by the proposed development.

## 5 Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the construction of a strategic housing development located in Deer Park, Howth, Co. Dublin.

The design rationale is to create and deliver a high quality, sustainable, strategic housing development which respects its setting and maximises the site's natural attributes while achieving maximum efficiency of existing infrastructure. The Proposed Site Layout is illustrated on **Drawing No. 1101** contained within the architectural suite of drawings.

The development will consist of;

- i. 162 no. residential units distributed across 3 no. blocks (A, B & C) ranging in height from 5-6 storeys, with a cumulative gross floor area (GFA) of 13,337.10 sq.m comprising;
  - a. 29 no. 1-bedroom units, - 17.9%
  - b. 104 no. 2-bedroom units and – 64.2%
  - c. 29 no. 3-bedroom units – 17.9%
- ii. 3 no. resident services and amenity rooms (1 no. in each block A-C) to accommodate co-working space, a community room and a meeting room (combined GFA 108 sq.m)
- iii. 132 no. car parking spaces at basement level (underlying Blocks A & B) including 6 no. accessible spaces, 13 no. electric vehicle spaces and 4 no. car sharing spaces;
- iv. 325 no. residents bicycle parking spaces (long-stay) at basement level, and 30 no. visitor bicycle parking spaces (short-stay) at surface level;
- v. communal amenity space in the form of courtyards and roof gardens (combined 2,192 sq.m)
- vi. public open space of 1,161 sq.m including a botanic garden and pocket park;
- vii. a single storey ESB sub-station and switch room (45.5 sq.m);
- viii. demolition of 2 no. sections of the existing demesne northern boundary wall to provide, a primary access (vehicular/pedestrian/cyclist) to the northwest and a separate pedestrian/cyclist access at the centre;
- ix. restoration and refurbishment of the remaining extant northern and eastern demesne boundary wall;
- x. change of use and regrading of part of the Deer Park Golf Course from active recreation use to passive amenity parkland and planting of a woodland belt on the southern boundary;
- xi. undergrounding of existing ESB overhead lines, and, relocation of the existing gas main; and,
- xii. all ancillary site development works including waste storage and plant rooms at basement level, drainage, landscaping/boundary treatment and lighting.

An overview of the **key characteristics of the proposed development** is set out below.

<b>Proposed Development – Key Characteristics</b>	
<b>Exiting Site</b>	Undeveloped greenfield (1.16 ha) & part of Deer Park golf course (0.58 ha)
<b>Site - Area</b>	1.7 ha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.16 ha zoned Residential - RA</li> <li>• 0.58 ha zoned High Amenity - HA</li> </ul>
<b>Density</b>	140 units per ha
<b>Dual Aspect Units</b>	61% (99 units)
<b>Plot Ratio</b>	1.46
<b>Site Coverage</b>	32%
<b>No. Units / Mix of Units</b>	162 no. apartment units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 no. 1-bedroom units, - 17.9%</li> <li>• 104 no. 2-bedroom units and – 64.2%</li> <li>• 29 no. 3-bedroom units – 17.9%</li> </ul>
<b>Building Height</b>	3 no. Blocks (A, B & C): 5 to 6 storeys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southern Elevation (5 storeys + 6<sup>th</sup> recessed)</li> <li>• Northern Elevation (5 storeys + 5<sup>th</sup> recessed)</li> </ul>
<b>Car Parking</b>	132 no. car parking spaces (basement level), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 no. accessible spaces</li> <li>• 13 no. electric vehicle spaces</li> <li>• 4 no. 'Go-Car' spaces</li> </ul>
<b>Bicycle Parking</b>	355 no. bicycle parking spaces, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 325 no. spaces at basement (long term stay)</li> <li>• 30 no. spaces at ground level (short term stay – visitors)</li> </ul>
<b>Resident Amenity Rooms</b>	1 no. room in each Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 108 sq.m cumulative to facilitate co-working floor space, community room and meeting room)</li> </ul>
<b>ESB Substation &amp; Switch room</b>	45.5sq.m
<b>Total Private Amenity Space</b> <i>(Balconies &amp; ground floor terraces)</i>	2,435.8 sq.m
<b>Total Communal Amenity Space</b>	2,192 sq.m
<b>Total Public Open Space</b>	1,161 sq.m

**TABLE 3 KEY DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

**Table 4** sets out a summary of the key design parameters of the three proposed buildings.

Block	Height	No. Units	Residential GFA (inc. circulation)	Residents Amenity	Communal Amenity Space Roof Garden
A	5-6 storey	52	5,355m <sup>2</sup>	36 m <sup>2</sup>	244 m <sup>2</sup>
B	5-6 storey	52	5,355 m <sup>2</sup>	36 m <sup>2</sup>	244 m <sup>2</sup>
C	5-6 storey	58	5,801 m <sup>2</sup>	36 m <sup>2</sup>	244 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total</b>			<b>16,277.10 m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>108 m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>732.5 m<sup>2</sup></b>

**TABLE 4 SUMMARY – BUILDING DESIGN PARAMETERS**

## 5.1 Site Layout

The proposed development layout is illustrated on drawing **1101** (Site Layout Plan, MCA Architects) that accompanies this application and is reproduced below.

The proposed layout seeks to:

- Respond to the sensitivities and opportunities in the receiving environment and to deliver a high quality living environment that protects the historical setting of the site as part of the Howth Castle demesne.
- Create a strong built frontage to Howth Road and complete the urban gateway effect that will be achieved at the former Techrete site opposite, once the Claremont permission is implemented.
- Create a permeable interconnected series of paths that are easy and logical to navigate around by all which will maximise permeability for both pedestrians and cyclists, leading to places and destinations, not purely functional paths.

The proposed development comprises three apartment blocks (A-C), each with a resident amenity room, communal amenity space at ground and roof level. Private amenity space is predominately balconies with ground floor units incorporating private terraces.



**FIGURE 6 PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT**

Car parking is proposed in a basement that underlies Blocks A and B and this measure facilitates a high-quality landscape design at surface level. Vehicular movement and access are restricted to the north-western boundary of the site which allows for segregation from the landscape amenities.

The historic boundary wall that wraps around the northern and eastern site boundary will be largely retained. Two openings are proposed in the northern wall, one to the north west to facilitate vehicular, pedestrian and cyclists access and the second to facilitate pedestrian/cyclist access only.

Each Block is separated by a landscaped courtyard, ensuring that visual connections are maintained. All open space is overlooked by surrounding homes so that the amenities enjoy passive surveillance at all times.

Public open space including a botanic garden, lawns, and pocket park play area are proposed to the north of the proposed buildings adjacent to the public road. A combination of hard and soft landscaping that facilitate active and passive uses, provide a high-quality landscape.

The existing boundary treatment along the east and west of the proposed development site will be retained and supplemented with additional planting.

To the south, it is proposed to largely remove the existing hedgerow that forms the boundary with the golf course. This area will be reprofiled and reinstated as amenity grassland, consistent with its zoning designation and allowing it to continue as a buffer area for the SAAO. The landscape proposal includes planting of a new hedgerow further south along the application area boundary and this will connect with the existing landscaping in the wider demesne.

## 5.2 Residential Unit Mix

The development provides for a diverse range of apartment types that will cater for a range of household sizes. The total number and mix of apartment units is set out below.

Building Ref.	1 Bed	2 Bed (3P)	2 Bed (4P)	3 Bed	Total
A	9	1	31	11	52
B	9	1	31	11	52
C	11	1	39	7	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Mix</b>	<b>17.9 %</b>	<b>64.2 %</b>		<b>17.9 %</b>	

TABLE 5 PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL UNIT MIX

## 5.3 Architectural Treatment

The front (Howth Road) and rear (South) volumes of the proposed buildings have different primary materials. The rear volumes are clad in grey brick, the material selected to blend in with the woodlands on the lower slopes of the headland to the rear of the site. The front volumes are of buff brick, the colour intended to provide a lighter presence in the road corridor. The top floors (front and rear volumes) are clad in bronze coloured metal, matching the window frames throughout the buildings.

The front volumes have balconies on the east and west elevations so that the buildings present simple, clean forms to the Howth Road corridor. The rear volumes have projecting balconies, improving the visibility of the surrounding landscape and seascape from the apartments.

A feature of the proposed buildings is their large windows, intended to take maximum advantage of the visual amenities of the site environs. The façade design is informed by this objective, with the elevations all variations of simple grid patterns of glazing framed by brick or zinc cladding. As a result of the large windows, recessed balconies and the variations in material, the facades would be highly articulated and the perception of massing/scale would be reduced.



PLATE 4 CGI VIEW OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AS SEEN FROM THE HOWTH ROAD

## 5.4 Height

A full description is contained in the **Architectural Design Statement** (MCA Architects) and plans that accompany this application under separate cover and it should be read in conjunction with this section.

The development is comprised of three buildings (A-C) of linear form arranged side-by-side, aligned north-south, roughly perpendicular to Howth Road. Each building is divided into a front and rear volume, with the two volumes offset so that the floorplan is staggered, providing the apartments in the rear volumes with views north towards the sea.

The height of the three apartment buildings is set out in the Table below.

Block	Front Volume (North)	Rear Volume (South)
A / B / C	5 storeys (fifth storey set back)	6 storeys (6 <sup>th</sup> storey set back)

TABLE 6 BUILDING HEIGHT

The front volumes of the proposed buildings are five storeys, with the top floor set back behind a shallow terrace. The rear volumes step up to six storeys, so that the buildings would reflect the topography of the site, which rises towards the south, away from the road and the coastline.

The layout would create a strong built frontage to the road, on the road's approach to the town centre, while retaining a visual connection between the buildings to the woodlands and upland to the south. The north-south aligned spaces between the buildings allow for sunlight penetration to the scheme.



The **Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report** demonstrates that the proposed Block A, located in closest proximity to existing dwellings to the west of the proposed development site will retain their amenity in terms of sunlight to gardens and daylight within dwellings and is compliant with the BRE standards. As such, the proposed development will not negatively affect existing residential properties.

## 5.5 Access, Car & Bicycle Parking

A combined vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian entrance is located on the north-western site boundary of the site. The design and location of this entrance will allow for separation by more than 22 metres between Block A and the closest existing dwellings to the west.

From this entrance point, an internal access road leads to a basement that underlies Blocks A and B. 132 no. car parking spaces are proposed, including 6 no. disability parking spaces. Recognising the increased penetration of electric vehicles, 13 no. of the proposed car parking spaces are fitted with electric vehicles (EV) charging points. Further to this, 4 no 'Go-Car' spaces will also be provided. The proposed car parking provides a ratio of 0.81 no car parking spaces per unit. This is consistent with recent permissions locally, most notably, Claremont (ABP-306102-19), a mixed use SHD scheme to the north of Howth Road, that received permission in April 2020 from An Bord Pleanála for a parking ratio of 0.7 spaces per unit.

Principles of permeability are integrated in the design through the inclusion of separate pedestrian and cyclist access through the existing demesne northern boundary wall which will provide enhanced connectivity eastwards towards Howth Village and the DART Howth Station as well as convenient access for residents to the proposed public park that will form part of the Claremont development. The inclusion of 2 no. pedestrian accesses along Howth Road will also encourage greater use of the proposed public open space within the proposed development site which is located to the north, inside the demesne wall.

Development of the entrances will require two openings to be made in the demesne wall. The proposed punctuation of the boundary wall would introduce physical links and would further enhance the visual connectivity and permeability across the site, where none existed previously.

An **Architectural Heritage Assessment Report** (Slattery Conservation) and **Method Statement** (Appendix 15.3, Vol III of EIAR) accompanies this application, which deals with the architectural treatment of the demesne wall and the manner in which the openings must be constructed to avoid any adverse impact on the wall. The **Construction Environmental Management Plan** (Barrett Mahony Consulting Engineers (BMCE) includes a **Method Statement** for structural aspects. The wall, in its current condition, is at risk of degradation, due to ivy growth and the poor condition of stonework. The work to the wall will facilitate an opportunity to rectify these issues and the stone removed for the creation of the openings will be reused in any rehabilitation works in so far as is feasible.

To support a transport modal shift, 355 no. cycle parking spaces are provided, a ratio of 2.19 no. spaces per unit. 325 no. cycle parking spaces are provided in the basement and 30 no. cycle spaces at surface level for short stay visitors.

The proposed development is consistent with both the principles and guidance outlined within the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) 2013 (Updated May 2019). The proposed vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle access is illustrated in the Figure below.



**FIGURE 7 PROPOSED MOVEMENT STRATEGY**

The location of proposed car and bicycle parking spaces is illustrated on the **architectural and landscape plans** that accompany this application.

BMCE Consulting Engineers have liaised with Fingal County Council Traffic and Transport Planning Department as part of the preplanning process in relation to the scope of the required **Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA)**. Items addressed as part of this applications discussions with Fingal County Council include:

- To analyse the following junctions: Sutton Cross Signalised junction; Howth Road / Church Road priority junction; Howth Road / Offington Park priority junction; and Harbour Road / Church Street priority junction.
- To identify the impact that the flows predicted to be generated by the proposed development relative to the proposed adjacent developments at Techcrete and Balscadden<sup>1</sup>.

The traffic and transportation strategy proposed responds to all matters highlighted and full details are contained in the **Traffic & Transport Assessment (BMCE)**, which accompanies the application under separate cover.

## 5.6 Landscape

The **Landscape Design Report** (Bernard Seymour Landscape Architecture (BSLA)) accompanying this application provides a more detailed description of the communal and open space design rationale. In addition, the **Housing Quality Audit** (MCA Architects) submitted with this application includes a comprehensive schedule of resident amenities areas, including communal and private amenity areas.

The provision of all car parking at basement level allows the ground surface (apart from the access road to the basement) to be dedicated to open space.

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<sup>1</sup> It is noted that permission for the Balscadden scheme no longer exists.

A key element of the landscape is the demesne wall which runs around the site's north and east boundaries. It is proposed to retain this wall as a feature of the development, opening two entrances as described above.

Another key feature of the site environs is a belt of historic demesne woodland outside the site's east boundary. This is part of the entrance avenue to Howth Castle, and is included in the Howth Castle ACA. Although the trees are outside the site boundary, many of their canopies overhang the site. The proposed development would preserve this tree belt entirely. It is also proposed to reinforce the woodland belt with new planting inside the east boundary.

The landscape strategy is designed to facilitate passive and active recreation, where residents can interact, all underpinned by a recognition of the site's rich history and the need to promote biodiversity. As mentioned above, the vehicular access and movement is limited to the western edge of the site which ensure no interference with the landscape amenities. The public realm is conceived as a pedestrian priority environment.

A combination of hard and soft landscaping, semi-private courtyards, botanic garden and pocket park play area provide a high-quality open space. In general, the paved components of the proposed landscape sequence will be characterised by durable materials and bespoke detailing sprinkled throughout such as wooden benches situated in planted enclaves.

A significant emphasis has been placed on tree planting and substitution of the hedgerow proposed for removal. The following new tree planting is proposed:

- Mature Trees: 9 no.
- Semi Mature: 12 no.
- Standards/multi stems: 44 no.
- Whips: (replanting to reoriented section of shelter belt to south, and fill in areas to west and east): 1960 no.

#### 5.6.1 Communal Open Space

A generous quantity of communal open space (2,192 sq.m) is provided. This is over double the quantity required by the Design Standards for New Apartments (2018, as amended 2020). The communal open space is distributed in courtyards at ground level, at roof level in each of the 3 no. blocks as roof gardens.

The courtyards accommodate active and passive uses for all age groups and include space for exercise stations, play areas, slides, and seating. Passive enjoyment is facilitated by plentiful sheltered seating.

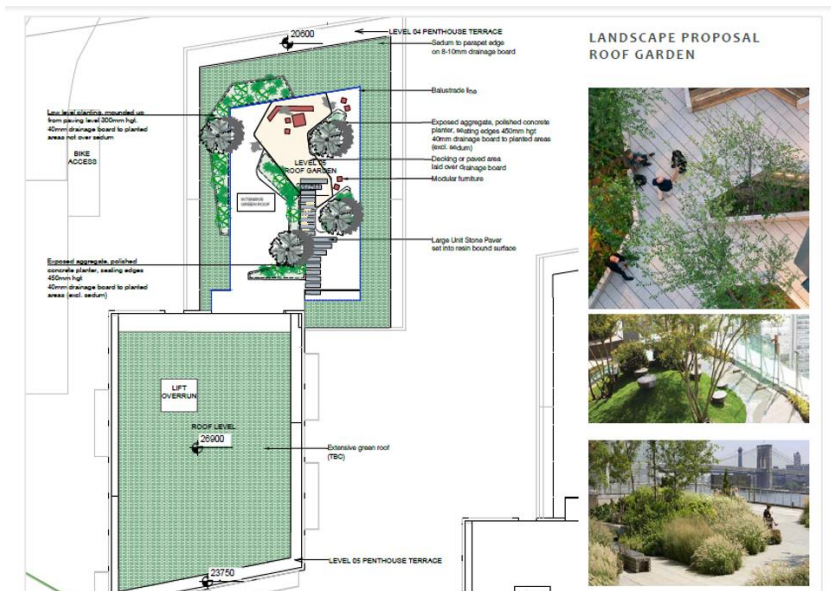
The courtyards integrate both hard and soft landscaping, see **Figure 8**.

Additionally, to the south of the application area, the land zoned 'HA' will be retained as amenity grassland and residents of the proposed development will have access to this area.



**FIGURE 8 RESIDENTIAL COURTYARDS (EXTRACT FROM LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT)**

The provision of rooftop amenity space will further supplement the range of communal open space available for residents to build a sense of community, see **Figure 9**.



**FIGURE 9 ROOF GARDEN (EXTRACT FROM LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT)**

## 5.6.2 Public Open Space

The public open space (1,161 sq.m) is provided to the north of the proposed site, immediately behind the demesne wall (see **Figure 10**) and comprises a series of different spaces. It meets the Fingal Development Plan's quantitative requirement of 10% of the developable area.

The space is designed as a public garden without any hard boundaries to allow free movement throughout the space. Access to the public open space is from the entrances proposed to the east and west on Howth Road.

This area of Howth has an unusually favourable micro-climate, demonstrated by the existence of several private gardens noted for the planting of unusual species, including Howth Castle. With the advantage of the warm current from the Gulf of Mexico almost encircling Howth, it seems that the peninsula can grow a wider range of plants than any other place of similar latitude.

The proposed public open space is sheltered to the north by the historic demesne wall and presents an immediate canvas to display unusual climbing species fronted by larger shrub species, a botanic garden which will thrive in the south facing aspect.

A pocket park (**Plate 5**), incorporating a play area has a grass area for informal activities such as playing with a ball and more formal activities with the provision of play equipment. The equipment will be aimed at the 3-10 years age group and composed of timber to further assimilate the area into the surrounding garden landscape. Sheltered seating benches are dotted around the play area for those supervising children at play. Circulation through the space connects east to west bringing the user further through the garden for a variety of experiences.

The verdant atmosphere will provide a welcome refuge from the busier environment of the Howth road or a stopping point on a walk or cycle along the coast.

A Taking in Charge Plan is included in the architectural suite of drawings. It is noted that should Fingal County Council decide to not take the proposed public open space in charge, the Applicant would maintain this area and are satisfied to accept a condition requiring them to keep it accessible for public use.



FIGURE 10 PROPOSED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE (EXTRACT FROM LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT)



PLATE 5 CGI OF POCKET PARK PLAY AREA & BOTANIC GARDEN

### 5.6.3 Private Amenity Space

Private amenity space is predominately in the form of balconies with private terraces at ground floor screened by raised planting beds. The private amenity space achieve and/or exceed the prescribed minimum areas of the 2018 Design Standards for New Apartments as outlined in the **Housing Quality Audit**.

Level (all blocks)	Units	Private Amenity Area Required (sq.m)	Private Amenity Area Provided (sq.m)
Ground Level	31	206.0	562.8
Level 1	31	215.0	343.8
Level 2	31	215.0	347.0
Level 3	31	215.0	343.8
Level 4	25	197.0	537.2
Level 5	13	83.0	301.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>1,131.0</b>	<b>2,435.8</b>

TABLE 7 PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE – REQUIREMENT & PROVISION

### 5.7 Hedgerows & Trees

The layout has been directly and indirectly influenced by the existing tree cover on site. The default position has been to avoid development within the canopy or root protection area of any retained tree.

There is an existing early mature boundary hedgerow belt traversing the zoned High Amenity area in an east-west alignment. It is proposed to largely remove this hedgerow belt as illustrated in the Figure below.

This boundary shelter belt provides visual screening and shelter to the golf course. The trees are partially visible from beyond the site due to their elevated position in the local landscape.

The hedgerow comprises a mix of predominately native species (Scots pine, Birch, Oak and occasional Beech) and is approx. 25 years old as evidenced on aerial photography from 1995 on [www.heritagemaps.ie](http://www.heritagemaps.ie) and reproduced below, **Plate 6**.

The **Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement** (submitted under separate cover), identifies that individually the species are of low arboricultural quality. The project ecologist (see **Biodiversity Chapter 11**) identifies that the band of trees provide a link with other woodland habitats in the immediate area and as such have local importance. The tree line was surveyed for bats and the project ecologist confirmed that it does not host potential roost features (PRF). It is stated in the Biodiversity Chapter that *“the trees in the hedgerow are mostly of small diameter at breast height and have not developed wounds/cavities which could accommodate roosting bats. For these reasons, the trees across the proposed development site are of negligible suitability for roosting bats.”*



**PLATE 6 AERIAL VIEW OF SUBJECT SITE, 1995**

The project arborist, ecologist and landscape architect worked together to mitigate the loss of the hedgerow, and the resulting design approach includes;

- a) compensation - application of measures to create new benefits, and,
- b) enhancement - offset tree removal with appropriate replacements.

A new native woodland shelter belt will be planted along the western and southern boundaries of the application area. This native woodland feature will connect mature trees in the east with those that extend along the Deer Park Golf Course boundary in the west and south and will improve the long term arboricultural and ecological biodiversity and significantly increase future canopy within the local landscape.



**FIGURE 5.11 PROPOSED WOODLAND BELT (EXTRACT FROM BSLA LANDSCAPE DRAWINGS)**



## 5.8 Drainage

An **Infrastructure Report** (BMCE) accompanies this application and should be referenced for a comprehensive description of the proposed surface water, foul water and water supply strategies. Further details are also in EIAR **Chapter 7 Material Assets - Built Services**.

A Confirmation of Feasibility and Statement of Design Acceptance has been received from Irish Water and is included with this application.

### 5.8.1 Surface Water Drainage

There is no existing surface water infrastructure within the greenfield site. On Howth Road, to the north west of the site, there is an existing 450mm diameter surface water sewer that discharges north towards the coast.

Consistent with the requirements of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) (2005) and the CIRIA 2015 Sustainable Drainage Systems Manual, the proposed surface water strategy incorporates the most effective suite of sustainable urban drainage (SuDS) measures that can be applied to the site in treating rainfall to GDSDS and CIRIA criteria. These measures include general and extensive green roofs, permeable paving, rain gardens, bioretention systems and tree pit interceptors, and attenuation tanks.

The implementation of the SuDS measures is linked in series, this is known as SuDS Management Train (SMT), ensuring that the most effective measures are utilised in the correct sequence throughout the site. This will significantly reduce run-off rates and improve storm water quality discharging to the public storm water system. Prior to discharging to the public surface water network, the SMT will ensure that rainwater falling on site is captured, conveyed, stored, intercepted, and removed of pollutants correctly.

The stormwater management for the site is as follows:

- Each individual block shall incorporate green roofs throughout and all hard landscaping at grade within the private space of each block shall be discharged to tree pits or filter strips with overflows which shall finally discharge to an attenuation tank located within the private land of the development and maintained by the developer. The attenuation tank, along with a proprietary flow control device, hydro brake or similar, shall limit discharge from the site development to 7.91 litres per second before entering the public stormwater network.
- Communal amenity spaces between the residential blocks will comprise of permeable paving build ups over the concrete podium slab. From here, the stormwater that filters through the permeable hardcore build-up beneath the paved area will be collected in a drainage board and perforated pipes before overflowing and discharging to the attenuation tank.

### 5.8.2 Foul Water Drainage

There is no existing foul sewer infrastructure within the site boundary.

A new 225mm diameter foul sewer will connect into an existing 400mm diameter concrete foul sewer and manhole to the north of the site adjacent to Howth Road. This connection will serve as the development's foul connection to the Irish Water wastewater network, which will then discharge to Ringsend wastewater treatment plant via a pump station located in Sutton.

Rainwater run-off from vehicles entering the basement will be collected via ACOs/gulleys and below slab sewer which be pumped to ground floor level and directed to a petrol interceptor before discharging into the foul network.

The foul sewer design has been carried out in accordance with the Irish Water Code of Practice for Wastewater. Foul wastewater discharge from the proposed development will be as follows; Average – 0.835 l/s. Peak – 5.012 l/s. A full breakdown of the calculations is appended to the **Infrastructure Report** (BMCE) that accompanies this application.

Blocks		Units / m2	Daily Flow (l/day)	Average Flows (l/s)	Peak (l/s)
A, B & C	Residential	162	72,171	0.835	5.012

TABLE 8 FOUL NETWORK SUMMARY

### 5.8.3 Water Supply

The pre-connection response received from Irish Water noted that, subject to a valid connection agreement being put in place, the proposed connection to the Irish Water network can be facilitated. Confirmation of feasibility and Design Acceptance is appended to the **Infrastructure Report** (BMCE) submitted with this application.

There is an existing 160mm diameter MOPVC watermain on Howth to north of the site; however, a new 150mm diameter HDPE water pipe will be installed on site connecting to the exiting water main system on Howth Road.

The watermain connection will incorporate a bulk water meter and sluice valves. A summary of the water demand for the proposed development is in **Table 9**. A full breakdown of water demand calculations for the proposed developed is appended to the **Infrastructure Report** (BMCE) submitted with the planning application.

All connections, valves, hydrants, meters etc. have been designed and are to be installed in accordance with Irish Water's Code of Practice / Standard Details.

Blocks		Units / m2	Daily Flow (l/day)	Average Flows (l/s)	Peak (l/s)
A, B & C	Residential	162	65,610	0.949	4.746

TABLE 9 WATER SUPPLY SUMMARY

## 5.9 Site Services

### 5.9.1 Electricity Supply

A new underground cable shall connect into the existing network and route through the proposed development to serve 1 new double sub-station located on the western site boundary. A utility metering switch room shall be located at the entrance to each block in which, each apartment will have its own ESB meter.

There are existing overhead lines traversing the site supplying an existing ESB service within the area which will be diverted around the site, underground, in accordance with ESB Standards. Discussions have taken place with ESB regarding the undergrounding of the existing overhead ESB line and the most likely alignment is illustrated in this application.

### 5.9.2 Gas Supply

There is a medium pressure 4Bar gas pipe traversing the site which will be re-routed as part of the enabling works for the project. There are no natural gas requirements planned for the proposed development.

### 5.9.3 Telecommunication Network

The supply of telecommunications infrastructure to the proposed development site will be provided by way of a connection to a telecoms control room from the existing EIR telecommunication networks and new proposed Virgin Media Network on Howth Road.

### 5.9.4 Building Energy Strategy

An **Energy Statement** prepared by Ethos accompanies this application under separate cover. The design intent is to achieve at least an A3 Building Energy Rating.

The Energy Statement confirms that the proposed apartments will comply with Part L Regulations (NZEB). The strategies proposed are:

- U-values for floor and roof will exceed the building regulation backstops;
- Using a specified Glazing U-Value target;
- Better performance air permeability than the backstop, adding to building air tightness;
- High performance thermal bridging;
- Mechanical Extract Ventilation with Heat Recovery via heat pump; and,
- Exhaust Air Source Heat Pump to provide Space Heating (via radiators) and Domestic Hot Water.

### 5.9.5 Site Lighting

A **Site Lighting Report** prepared by Ethos accompanies the application under separate cover.

This external lighting design is based upon the following requirements;

- Provide adequate illumination to contribute towards the safe use of the site by both vehicles and pedestrians.
- Enhance site security.
- Provide a visually interesting environment.
- Contain the lighting within the site to lighting levels which will not impact on the neighbouring surroundings.
- Safe access to fire assembly points.
- Minimise light pollution, sky glow and visual glare for pedestrians and surrounding areas.

The proposed site lighting installation comprises of 4-metre high post top column lighting to car park roads/ main access route with decorative 4m high columns at the main entrance and 1000mm bollard lighting to pedestrian walkways.

The proposed 4m column with post top luminaires will illuminate the areas described above to achieve an average illumination level of 20 lux. The photometric curve, indicates how the light output is directed downwards with no risk of “sky glow”.

It is proposed to provide 1000mm bollard type light fittings to pedestrian walkways to achieve an average illumination level of 20 lux at ground level.

It is proposed to provide 4-meter-high column LED luminaires for the entrance courtyard to achieve the 20 lux requirement at ground level.

It is proposed to provide recessed mounted floorwash LED luminaires to the bench areas to achieve the required 20 lux at ground level.

It is proposed to provide LED strip lighting mounted inside handrail for the stairs to achieve the 100 lux requirement to comply with Part M requirements.

#### 5.9.5.1 Bats

Cognisant that bats are light-sensitive species and tend to avoid roosting or foraging in areas subject to artificial illumination. The site lighting proposal was developed in close consultation with the project ecologist, Scott Cawley.

Comprehensive bat surveys were carried out to inform the Biodiversity Chapter of this EIAR and the key issues identified during the surveys and that informed the proposed lighting plan were;

Four species of bat: common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle Leisler’s bat, and brown long-eared bats, were identified during surveys of the proposed development site and its vicinity, although only two of these species (Leisler’s bat and common pipistrelle bat) were observed foraging within or passing over the proposed development site. The two species observed in the proposed

development site are the most light-tolerant of the Irish bat species and tend to be associated with edge habitats.

Bat activity was more heavily concentrated in the area of mixed broadleaved woodland along the avenue in Deer Park, and in the vicinity of the old Abbey in Deer Park (both areas are outside of the proposed development site) on all survey dates.

Bats appear to avoid the northern boundary of the proposed development site, possibly due to the light spill from the adjacent public road, and from security lighting emitted from nearby residential dwellings.

The habitats in the adjacent Deer Park demesne, particularly woodland habitats, are of high suitability for foraging and commuting bats.

The proposed lighting design was developed in close consultation with the project ecologist, Scott Cawley Ltd. and is designed to be sensitive to the presence of commuting and foraging bats and adheres to the following guidance:

- Bats & Lighting: Guidance Notes for Planners, engineers, architects and developers (Bat Conservation Trust, 2010);
- Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01/20 (Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2020);
- Bats and Lighting in the UK – Bats and the Built Environment Series (Bat Conservation Trust UK, January 2008).

## 5.10 Waste

An **Operational Waste Management Plan (OWMP)** (Byrne Environmental) accompanies this application and should be referred to in conjunction with this section. The OWMP has been prepared with regard to British Standard BS 5906:2005 Waste Management in Buildings-Code of Practice which provides guidance on methods of storage, collection, segregation for recycling and recovery for residential building.

A scheme wide waste storage and management strategy has been developed for the control, management and monitoring of waste associated with the proposed residential development. The objective of the OWMP is to maximise the quantity of waste recycled by providing sufficient waste recycling infrastructure, waste reduction initiatives and waste collection and waste management information to the residents of the development.

Within the scheme, communal waste storage areas are proposed at basement level.

Residents will be provided with waste recycling and waste disposal information by the site's Facility Management Company who will be responsible for providing clean, safe and mobility impaired accessible communal waste storage areas. It is expected that a single Waste Collection contractor shall be engaged to remove all mixed domestic waste and recyclable wastes from the waste storage areas and from individual houses on a weekly basis.

### **5.11 Phasing**

The 3 no. proposed blocks together with all ancillary development works will be constructed over a singular programme. It is not intended to release the development in phases. Once the development is fully complete it will then be released.

### **5.12 Programme**

The development will be constructed as one project, but with basic sub-phases such as bulk dig, basement construction and super-structure erection. It is considered that the construction works will take approximately 22 months upon commencement.

## 6 Assessment

### 6.1 Introduction

Howth benefits from a high degree of protection owing to its outstanding natural environment. As a result the available land for development is limited. In this context and having regard to national, regional and local planning policy that supports consolidation of the existing built environment to achieve compact growth, particularly in locations that benefit from high quality and high frequency public transport, it is necessary to make the most efficient use of this infill development site, subject to meeting performance based criteria. The supporting information included with this application demonstrates through robust assessment and evaluation that the proposed development can be accommodated at this location without negatively effecting the natural or built environment.

Howth is defined as a 'Consolidation Area within a Gateway' in the Fingal settlement strategy. The strategy seeks to gain maximum benefit from existing transport, social and community infrastructure through the continued consolidation of the city and its suburbs.

The population of the Howth Electoral Division (ED) in 2016 was 8,294. The intercensal population increase was 0.46%. This increase is negligible when compared with the population increase of Fingal between 2011 and 2016, which was 8%.

According to the Dublin Housing Observatory (<https://airomaps.geohive.ie/dho/>), the total housing stock in the Howth ED in 2016 was 2,665. The tenure breakdown is;

- 86.80% house/bungalow/terraced
- 12.5% apartment/flat

In the context of decreasing household sizes there is a disproportionate number of houses relative to apartments in the Howth ED. Accordingly, this proposal seeks to widen the household typology and if permitted it would also facilitate downsizing in the area, thereby freeing up some of the existing housing stock.

The proposed development responds to the housing need of the local community by incorporating a mix of unit sizes that will address the shortfall in housing supply and augment the range of housing available. This proposed development meets and exceeds the requirements of the Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines (2018). Please see the **Housing Quality Audit** submitted under separate cover.

## 6.2 Principle of Proposed Development

### 6.2.1 Zoning

There are two zonings attached to the proposed development site, the northern part (1.16 hectares) of the site is zoned 'RS' – Residential with an objective to *“provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity”*.

The southern portion of the site (0.58 hectares) is zoned 'HA' – High amenity. The purpose of the 'HA' Zoning Objective is to *“protect and enhance high amenity areas”*.

The area zoned 'HA' is included in the Howth Special Amenity Area (SAA) Buffer Zone. It is an objective of the Development Plan (Objective HOWTH4) to *“Protect and manage the Special Amenity Area, having regard to the associated management plan and objectives for the buffer zone”*.

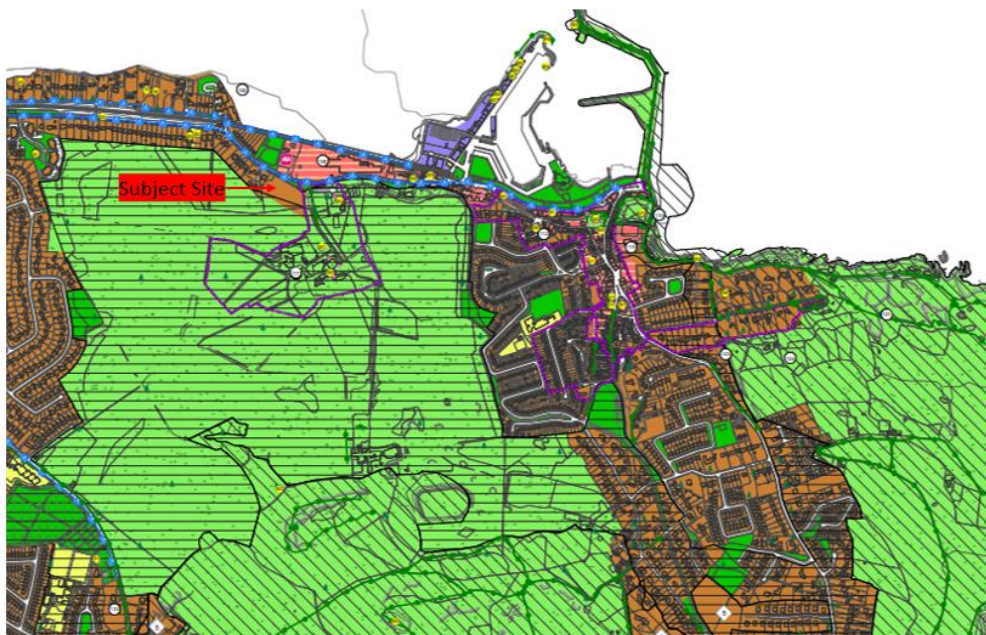


FIGURE 4 SITE ZONING (EXTRACT FROM SHEET 10 OF FINGAL COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2023)

Residential development is a permissible in principle use on the RS zoned lands. The proposed 3 no. apartment blocks and all ancillary development is wholly located within the RS zoning.

Within the HA zoned lands, part of the existing approx. 1265 sq.m of the southern hedgerow is planned for removal as part of the proposed development and approx. 726 sq.m of the hedgerow is to be retained. A new hedgerow will be planted to create a boundary along the application southern boundary line. Within this area the land will be reprofiled and reinstated as passive amenity parkland use. It is noted that this area is not counted toward the public open space requirement for residential development. As outlined earlier the 10% requirement is located to the north of the site and within the RS zoned area.



The Development Plan includes the following objectives for HA zoned lands;

*Objective NH51 Protect High Amenity areas from inappropriate development and reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place.*

Open space is a permitted in principle use. The landscape measures outlined complement the sylvan nature of the wider demesne lands.

*Objective NH52 Ensure that development reflects and reinforces the distinctiveness and sense of place of High Amenity areas, including the retention of important features or characteristics, taking into account the various elements which contribute to its distinctiveness such as geology and landform, habitats, scenic quality, settlement pattern, historic heritage, local vernacular heritage, land-use and tranquillity.*

Although a part of the golf course perimeter tree belt (25 years old), new woodland planting is proposed further south, ultimately resulting in a net increase in tree cover and diversity on the site – with amenity and biodiversity benefits. The compensatory woodland further south will maintain the biodiversity corridor linkages with the hedgerows/tree belts to the east and west. Changing the use of this area from golf course to parkland would allow for a more natural environment to develop.

### 6.3 Core Strategy

The core settlement strategy for Howth in the Fingal Development Plan indicates a figure of 498 potential residential units. Table 2.8 of Variation No. 2 *Alignment of the Fingal Development Plan with the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)* indicates that there is 14 hectares of zoned land remaining in Howth, with a capacity to deliver 436 residential units. This represents a density of 31 units per hectare across the zoned available land.

Together with the permitted Claremont development (512 units) the combined total number of houses would be 674 no. units. Accordingly, An Bord Pleanála may consider the proposed development to be a material contravention of the core settlement strategy for Howth.

A **Material Contravention Statement** accompanies this submission under separate cover and concludes that the Board may grant permission under Section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) for the following reasons;

- i. the proposed development is of strategic and national importance and therefore meets the first criteria to allow the Board grant permission in circumstances where the development would materially contravene the core strategy of the Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023.
- ii. National and Regional planning policy advocate compact growth through consolidation of the existing built environment together with a sequential approach to development. This proposed development is within the Dublin Metropolitan Area and is zoned for residential development. It is located on the approach to Howth and within proximity of excellent public transport connections. Its development would realise both national and regional policy objectives and would satisfy the criteria of Section 37(2)(b)(i) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

- iii. There are conflicting objectives in the Development Plan and Variation No. 2 having regard to the recommended density of 50 units per hectare established in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009, accordingly the Board may grant permission for the proposed development in accordance with 37(2)(b)(ii) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- iv. Having regard to the emerging pattern of development in Howth and the Board’s recent decision to grant permission for high density developments notwithstanding the population targets set out in the core strategy of the Development Plan, it is submitted that the proposed development meets the criteria of Section 37(2)(b)(iii) that *permission for the proposed development should be granted having regard to the pattern of development, and permissions granted, in the area since the making of the development plan.*

## 6.4 Design, Height & Layout

Objective HOWTH 1 Ensure that development respects the special historic and architectural character of the area.

Objective 13 of the National Planning Framework states that building height standards need to be based on performance criteria and SPPR 1 of the Building Height Guidelines promotes increased height and density in central accessible locations, such as this.

The proposed development site is located at the edge of Howth and it sits in an area that is undergoing transition from the unsustainable pattern of low density ribbon housing to compact growth. A large site, the former Techrete lands, to the north of the Howth Road received permission for the development of a mixed use development including 512 no. new homes across 4 no. buildings of up to 8 storeys. Together with the proposed development, these developments would act as a gateway, marking urban edge of Howth.



**FIGURE 12 LOCATION OF APPLICATION AREA RELATIVE TO TECHRETE SITE**

The introduction of a high density residential scheme would complement the evolving pattern of land use in the area, (a) filling a gap in the otherwise continuous strip of development along the Howth Road, (b) increasing the density and sustainability of residential use in proximity to the town centre and the DART station, and (c) contributing (in concert with the Claremont scheme) to the

establishment of an appreciable edge between the town centre and the suburban area to the west, as illustrated in the image overleaf.

The layout would create a strong built frontage to the road, at the point where it enters the town centre urban area, while retaining a visual connection, between the buildings, to the woodlands and upland to the south. The north-south aligned spaces between the buildings would also allow for sunlight penetration to the scheme.



**PLATE 7 CGI VISUALISATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT (RIGHT) & CLAREMONT (LEFT)**

The proposed punctuation of the boundary wall would introduce physical links and would further enhance the visual connectivity with the site.



**PLATE 8 CGI ILLUSTRATING PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, HOWTH ROAD**

The topography of the application site rises to the south and the site is screened from the wider demesne lands and protected structures as a result of the mature woodland that exists within the demesne. As the land rises there are long distance views over the site. The visual effect of the proposed development from this high ground is illustrated below.



**PLATE 9 VIEW LOOKING NORTH**

The Claremont development will be a significant change in the view, the buildings appearing to project out from the coastline into the bay directly behind the castle and St Mary's Church. It will have the effect of expanding the town westwards from the harbour, reducing the separation of the castle from the urban area in the view.

The proposed development would be visible beyond the golf course and the woodlands, taking their place in the built-up strip along the coastline, well removed from Howth Castle.

The detached houses in its vicinity do not form a sustainable pattern of development that should be replicated on the site. Notwithstanding, the vehicular access road is proposed to the west of the site and separates Block A from the closest existing dwelling by more than 22m. The analysis of sunlight access to amenity areas demonstrates that the proposed development will have an imperceptible impact on the amenity of existing residential dwellings to the west of the site. All assessed gardens will continue to receive well in excess of the BRE threshold value of 2 hours of sunlight over 50% of the area on the reference date of the 21st of March.

The separation distances between the blocks exceeds 22m which ensures privacy and prevents overshadowing. The communal amenity areas achieve well in excess of the BRE guideline value for sunlight.

The front and rear volumes of the proposed buildings have different primary materials. The rear volumes would be clad in grey brick, the material selected to blend in with the woodlands. The front volumes would be clad in buff brick, the colour intended to provide a lighter presence in the road corridor. The top floors (front and rear volumes) would be set back slightly from the parapets of the brick-clad bodies of the buildings and clad in zinc.

The front volumes of the proposed buildings have recessed balconies, so that the buildings present simple, clean forms to the Howth Road corridor. The rear volumes have projecting balconies, improving the visibility of the surrounding landscape and seascape from the apartments.

A feature of the proposed buildings is their large windows, intended to take maximum advantage of the surrounding visual amenities. The façade design is informed by this objective, with the elevations all variations of simple grid patterns of glazing framed by brick or zinc cladding. As a result of the large windows, recessed balconies and the variations in material, the facades would be highly articulated and in this way the massing/scale would be reduced.

A key element of the landscape is the demesne wall which runs around the site's north and east boundaries. It is proposed to retain this wall as a feature of the development, opening two gateways – one for vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access and one for pedestrian and cycle access only.

Another key feature of the site environs is a belt of historic demesne woodland outside the site's east boundary. This is part of the entrance avenue to Howth Castle, and is included in the Howth Castle ACA. Although the trees are outside the site boundary, many of their canopies overhang the site. The proposed development would preserve this tree belt entirely. It is also proposed to reinforce the woodland belt with new planting inside the east boundary.

In summary, the proposed development combines distinctly urban characteristics with the retention of key landscape features such as the demesne wall and woodland/trees that lend the site and

area its particular character. This is a considered response to the urban edge/gateway location (which has been reinforced by the permission for the Claremont development) and a receiving environment rich in cultural and natural heritage.

The proposed development would change the character of the area, this change would be positive and responds to and integrates with permitted high density development to the north of the proposed development site. The supporting documentation that accompanies this submission demonstrates that the proposed development would meet the criteria for increased height set out in section 3.2 of the Building Height Guidelines.

The proposed development is compliant with objectives for Howth in the Fingal Development Plan, specifically,

- HOWTH 1 to “Ensure that development respects the special historic and architectural character of the area”
- HOWTH 4 to protect and manage the special amenity area.
- PM33 “Enhance and develop the fabric of existing and developing rural and urban centres in accordance with the principles of good urban design, including the promotion of high quality well-designed visually attractive main entries into our towns and villages”
- ED85 “Ensure that settlements and locations within the Metropolitan Area pursue development policies of consolidation, and maximise their economic strengths and competitive advantages such as tourism and marine sectoral activities in Malahide and Howth, while the lands within the southern part of the County maximise their economic potential through the strong functional linkages to the M50”
- Objective DMS28 of the Development Plan which requires a separation distance of a minimum of 22 metres between directly opposing rear first floor windows unless alternative provision has been designed to ensure privacy. In residential developments over 3 storeys, minimum separation distances shall be increased in instances where overlooking or overshadowing occurs.

## 6.5 Apartment Design Standards

The provisions contained in the Development Plan are largely superseded by the Apartment Guidelines, 2018. A **Housing Quality Audit** accompanies this submission and demonstrates that the proposed scheme Complies with the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments — Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018.

**SPPR 1:** Apartment developments may include up to 50% one-bedroom or studio type units (with no more than 20-25% of the total proposed development as studios) and there shall be no minimum requirement for apartments with three or more bedrooms.

The proposed mix does not include studio apartments and the number of 1-bedroom apartments is well below the 50% threshold. The proposed mix set out below is compliant with SPPR 1.

- 29 no. 1-bedroom units, - 17.9%
- 104 no. 2-bedroom units and – 64.2%
- 29 no. 3-bedroom units – 17.9%

**SPPR 2:** The SPPR relates to building refurbishment schemes, or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha. The proposed development site is 1.7 hectares and exceeds the area threshold, accordingly, the SPPRR is not relevant.

**SPPR 3** sets out the minimum apartment floor areas as follows;

- Studio (1 person) – 37 sq.m
- 1-Bed (2 persons) – 45 sq.m
- 2-Bed (4 persons) – 73 sq.m
- 3-Bed (5 persons) – 90 sq.m

The minimum floor areas have been met within all individual units and the majority of the units exceed the minimum floor area as is illustrated in the Housing Quality Assessment.

The requirement for the majority of all apartments to exceed the minimum floor area by a minimum of 10% is met, 82% of the proposed units will exceed this requirement.

No more than 10% of the total number of units in any private residential development may comprise of two-bedroom three-person apartment. Of the 162 no. units, 3 no. 2-bed, 3 person apartments are proposed.

**SPPR 4** requires that a minimum of 33% of dual aspect units is required in central and accessible urban locations. The scheme achieves 61% (99 no. apartments) dual aspect. Single Aspect units are located facing east and west, (no north-facing single aspect units), and 57% of which benefit from a projecting bay window arrangement, meaning living room windows look in two directions.

**SPPR 5** relates to ground level floor to ceiling heights, in this regard the proposed development meets the minimum requirement of 2.7m in all units.

**SPPR 6** limits the number of apartments per core to 12 no. per floor. Within the scheme, the number of units per core vary, however, in all cases they are below 12 units as set out in the Table below.

Building Ref.	Ground – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor	5 <sup>th</sup> Floor
<b>A</b>	10	8	4
<b>B</b>	10	8	4
<b>C</b>	11	9	5

It is noted that **Objective DMS23** of the Fingal Development Plan states: “Permit up to 8 apartments per individual stair/lift core within apartment schemes”. As outlined above this is superseded by SPPR 6 and in our opinion represents a contravention of the Development Plan but not a Material Contravention owing to the status of the Section 28 Apartment Guidelines. Notwithstanding, should An Bord Pleanála consider differently a justification having regard to the provisions of s. 37(2)(b)(iii and iv) is set out in the **Material Contravention Statement** submitted under separate cover.

In relation to **Private amenity space** it is a requirement to provide apartments with private open space in the form of balconies and terraces. The proposed development incorporates ground floor terraces with boundary treatment and balconies for the upper residential units in line with the policy requirement. The area requirements set out in Appendix 1 are met and or exceeded. Balconies are located on the south, east and west elevations where they will receive adequate sunlight and overlooking is minimised. Balconies are designed to have a functional relationship with the main living areas of the apartment.

**Communal amenity space** (2,192 sq.m) is provided at ground and roof level. Based on the Guidelines requirements, the communal amenity space required is 1,131 sq.m. Thus the proposed communal amenity space significantly exceeds the requirement. The sunlight assessment of the communal amenity space demonstrates that all areas exceed the BRE standard, see **Daylight and Sunlight Report** submitted under separate cover.

Assessed Area	Area Capable of Receiving 2 Hours of Sunlight on March 21st	Recommended minimum	Level of Compliance with BRE Guidelines
Amenity Area 1	89.6%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Amenity Area 2	92.1%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Roof Garden A	100.0%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Roof Garden B	100.0%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Roof Garden C	100.0%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Public Amenity Area	81.6%	50.0%	BRE Compliant

\* The BRE Guidelines recommend that for a garden or amenity appear adequately sunlit throughout the year, at least half of a garden or amenity area should receive at least two hours of sunlight on March 21st.

The 2018 Apartment Guidelines require provision for children’s play needs as follows:

- *within the private open space associated with individual apartments (see chapter 3);*

All units proposed benefit from generous balconies or at ground level, private terraces, that meet the quantitative development management standards established in Appendix 1 of the Guidelines.

- *within small play spaces (about 85 – 100 sq. metres) for the specific needs of toddlers and children up to the age of six, with suitable play equipment, seating for parents/guardians,*



*and within sight of the apartment building, in a scheme that includes 25 or more units with two or more bedrooms; and*

The proposed pocket park that occupies an area of 350 sq.m is designed to facilitate play for children. The play space has a grass area for informal activities such as playing with a ball and more formal activities with the provision of play equipment. The equipment will be aimed at the 2-10 years age group and composed of timber materials to assimilate the area into the surrounding garden landscape. The surface will be of bark mulch. Sheltered seating benches are dotted around the play area for those supervising children at play. The pocket park benefits from passive supervision, being located to the north east of the proposed Block A. This pocket park play area is supplemented with opportunities for play integrated into the courtyard design.

- *within play areas (200–400 sq. metres) for older children and young teenagers, in a scheme that includes 100 or more apartments with two or more bedrooms.*

As outlined above, the design of the scheme integrates opportunities for play aimed at older children including space for ball play within the pocket park and space dedicated to games, table tennis and exercise stations within the courtyards.

The proposed play areas meet the minimum cumulative play area (285 sq.m) requirement established in the Apartment Guidelines.

The proposed streetscape and public realm have been designed to provide a high degree of amenity, connectivity and encourage activity by pedestrians and cyclists. The internal network segregate vehicular movement from pedestrians, including two separate access points on to Howth Road. The scheme prioritises pedestrian movement, enhancing the level of resident amenity within the development.

The Guidelines require that occupants and visitors should benefit from a sense of safety and security by overlooking of the public realm. All open spaces areas are designed to be overlooked to ensure that they function as safe and secure areas for the enjoyment of residents.

Refuse storage provision is a requirement of the Guidelines in apartment schemes and must be accessible to each stair core and designed with regard to the projected waste generation, types and quantities. Within apartments there must be sufficient provision for temporary storage of segregated materials prior to deposition in communal facilities. The scheme provides adequate storage within individual apartments and communal waste storage is provided at basement level.

## 6.6 Public Open Space

Objectives DMS57A and DMS57B require a minimum of 10% of a proposed development site area to be designated for use as public open space. Financial contributions in lieu of the minimum public open space requirement are not acceptable.

The proposed development site is 1.74 hectares, of this 1.16 hectares is zoned residential with the balance zoned high amenity, 'HA'. The Development Plan states that the development site area cannot include HA land. Accordingly, to meet the minimum 10% requirement 0.16 hectares is required. The proposed development satisfies this quantitative requirement and includes 1,161 sq.m of public open space.

The Development Plan states;

*“For all developments with a residential component, the overall standard for public open space provision is a minimum 2.5 hectares per 1000 population. In general this shall be provided at a ratio of 75% Class 1 and 25% Class 2. In order to provide existing and future communities with adequate recreational and leisure opportunities, the Council will employ a flexible approach to the delivery of public open space and more intensive recreational/amenity facilities.”*

Based on the proposed mix (29 no. 1-bed, 104 no. 2-bed and 29 no. 3 bed units) and applying the occupancy levels in PM25, the scheme will generate a population of 301. This would mean a requirement of 0.75 hectares.

The difference between the proposed public open space and the minimum requirement per head of population is 0.59 hectares. Objective DMS57A and DMS57B provide for a financial contribution in lieu of the open space requirement and the Applicant is satisfied to accept this as a condition of any forthcoming permission.

Regarding the qualitative public open space criteria of the Development Plan, there are 5 no. stated Objectives;

- *Objective DMS66 Ensure open spaces are not located to the side or the rear of housing units.*  
This requirement is met in the proposed development, the proposed public open space is located to the north of the site and in front of the proposed 3 blocks.
- *Objective DMS67 Ensure open space provision is suitably proportioned and inappropriate narrow tracts are not provided.*  
The proposed development incorporates a pocket park to the north east of the site, a linear botanic garden set against the existing demesne wall that provides the optimum environment for species to succeed, together with planted lawn areas to the front of the proposed blocks B and C. The individual spaces are suitably proportioned and accommodate both active and passive recreation. The distribution of public open space does not constitute a narrow tract.
- *Objective DMS68 Ensure, where possible, complementary facilities, such as dressing rooms and storage facilities, are provided as part of the open space provision, for new and existing areas.*  
The proposed development incorporates short-stay bicycle parking to accommodate visitors.

- *Objective DMS69 Ensure developers lay out and maintain open space areas to a high standard, until such a time as they are taken in charge and facilitate the early handover of areas of public open space to the Council. The Council, at its discretion, may in certain circumstances accept a financial contribution in order to complete the landscaping and development of these areas.*

The Applicant is committed to developing a high quality public open space and a Taking in Charge Plan is included in the architectural suite of drawings. Should the Council conclude that they will not take the public open space in charge, the Applicant is satisfied to accept a condition in any forthcoming Grant of Permission requiring them to maintain the area and provide ongoing access to the public.

- *Objective DMS70 Require properly constituted management companies to be set up and ensure that the necessary management structures are put in place where it is intended that open spaces will be retained in private ownership. Arrangements must be approved by the Council before completion of the project and must be in operation before release of required bonds.*

As outlined above, the Applicant would be satisfied to enter such an arrangement with the Council.

The Development Plan includes other qualitative criteria with respect to public open space;

- *Green corridors will not generally be included as part of the quantitative calculation for open space provision, except with the agreement of the Planning Authority.*

The proposed public open space does not include the area to the east of the proposed development site where an existing mature tree belt exists and supplementary tree planting is proposed.

- *Properly designed and located SuDS features can be incorporated within and can complement the amenity and aesthetic value of open spaces. SuDS areas do not form part of the public open space provision, except where they contribute in a significant way to the design and quality of open space.*

A significant portion of the podium area comprises of pathways which allows for permeable paving to be incorporated into the hard surfaces design, green pavers also used within the scheme. Other measures such as green roofs & tree pits work with the attenuation tank (outside of public open space provision) and been incorporated as part of SuDS measures within the design proposal.

- *Underground tanks and storage systems will not be accepted under public open space, as part of a SuDS solution (Objective DMS73)*

The proposed underground storage tank is not located within the public open space area.

Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposed public open space is fully compliant with both the quantitative and qualitative requirements of the Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023.

Having regard to feedback received from Fingal's Parks Department, a Taking in Charge Plan is included in the architectural suite of drawings. It is noted that should Fingal County Council decide to not take the proposed public open space in charge, the Applicant would maintain this area and are satisfied to accept a condition requiring them to keep it accessible for public use.

Regarding play areas, the following quantitative Objective is included in the Development Plan.

- *Objective DMS75 Provide appropriately scaled children's playground facilities within residential development. Playground facilities shall be provided at a rate of 4 sq m per residential unit. All residential schemes in excess of 50 units shall incorporate playground facilities clearly delineated on the planning application drawings and demarcated and built, where feasible and appropriate, in advance of the sale of any units.*

The proposed development is for 162 no. units and this would generate a requirement for 648 sq.m of play area. The proposed pocket park encompasses 350 sq.m and it is designed as a children's playground. The proposed courtyards that form part of the communal open space integrate opportunities for play.

It is not considered that the proposed scheme represents a material contravention of the Development Plan. Notwithstanding, should the Board consider it to be, a justification having regard to the provisions of 37(2)(b)(ii) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended is set out in the **Material Contravention Statement**.

## 6.7 Residential Unit Mix

The subject site is located in the Howth Electoral District. A review of Census 2016 results highlights that the population increased by just 0.48% in the intercensal period. Put in context, the population of Fingal County increased by 8% in the same period, with the overall population across the four Dublin Local Authorities increasing by 5.3% and the State's population increasing by 3.8%.

A review of the age profile for the Howth ED indicates that it has a rapidly ageing profile. Old age dependency is 42%, compared to 20.4% for the State, and Fingal with the lowest old dependency ratios of all counties at 13.8%.

The primary housing stock in the ED is houses/bungalows with just 12.5% apartments/flats.

It is clear from Census 2016 that the Howth ED requires a greater mix of housing types, sizes and tenures. Affordability and the range of housing stock available is contributing to the very low population increase in Howth.

The subject site has the capacity to make a substantial contribution to the provision of new residential stock in an accessible location, well served by public transport and social infrastructure. It will allow greater choice in the area and assist the ageing population to vacate larger family homes while remaining within their community. As the housing stock increases, the cost of houses will stabilise and will afford those hitherto unable to buy properties in the area to enter the housing market.

In response, the proposed development is for an appropriate mix (compliant with SPPR1) of apartment typologies including;

- 29 no. 1 bedroom - 18%
- 3 no. 2 bedroom (3 person) – 2%
- 101 no. 2 bedroom (4 person) – 62%
- 29 no 3 bedroom – 18%

## 6.8 Density

The subject site meets the criteria of Central and/or Accessible Urban Locations established in the *Design Standards for New Apartments* (2018). These are;

- Sites within walking distance (i.e. up to 15 minutes or 1,000- 1,500m), of principal city centres, or significant employment locations, that may include hospitals and third-level institutions;
- Sites within reasonable walking distance (i.e. up to 10 minutes or 800- 1,000m) to/from high capacity urban public transport stops (such as DART or Luas); and
- Sites within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 5 minutes or 400-500m) to/ from high frequency (i.e. min 10 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services. The Guidelines advise that such locations are generally suitable for higher density development that may wholly comprise apartments.

The Fingal County Development Plan encourages high densities at appropriate locations. Objective PM41 aims to “*encourage increased densities at appropriate locations whilst ensuring that the quality of place, residential accommodation and amenities for either existing or future residents are not compromised*”.

Howth DART station is c. 350 m from the site offering high frequency DART services to Dublin City Centre and as far south as Greystones. Several bus stops are located on the Howth Road with the No. 31 providing frequent services to surrounding suburbs and to Dublin City Centre. Howth Village and Sutton Cross which provide a range of amenities are easily accessible on foot, by bike or on public transport.

The net density is calculated on the developable area i.e. the land zoned for residential development, 1.16 hectares. The proposed net density is thus 140 units per hectare. This is in compliance with relevant section 28 ministerial guidelines and it less than that permitted for Claremont (191 uph), located opposite the proposed development site.

## 6.9 Car Parking

Car parking standards are set out in Chapter 12 of the Development Plan and are described as 'normal' and not 'maximum'.

The Apartment Guidelines state that for Central and/or Accessible Urban Locations the default policy is for car parking provision to be minimised, substantially reduced or wholly eliminated in certain circumstances

Dwelling Type	Residential Development Plan Standard	Visitor Development Plan Standard	Proposed Units	Required
1 bed Apt	1	1 per 5 units	29	35
2 Bed Apt	1.5	1 per 5 units	104	177
3 Bed Apt	2	1 per 5 units	29	64
			<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>

TABLE 10 DEVELOPMENT PLAN CARPARKING STANDARD

132 no. carparking spaces are proposed at basement level, a ratio of 0.81 spaces per unit. This is considered reasonable and would support a modal shift.

The Development Plan requires;

- One space or more per 100 spaces should be reserved for disabled parking bays; and,
- One space or more per 100 spaces should be reserved for electric vehicles with charging.

The proposed development complies with the above standards, 6 no. disability access parking spaces are proposed together with 13 no. electric car charging spaces.

Objective PM69 of the Development Plan seeks to ensure that proposals do not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of traffic, parking, noise or loss of privacy of adjacent residents.

A **Traffic & Transport Assessment** accompanies this submission under separate cover. It concludes that;

- The network analysis indicates that 3 of the 4 no. existing critical junctions in the vicinity of the proposed development plus the proposed development entrance presently work well within capacity and will continue to do so in 2023 the projected year of opening and in 2038, 15 years thereafter.
- Sutton crossroads is at present at capacity and other adjacent permitted developments will result in it being over capacity in future years. The proposed development will add relatively little to further congestion at this location. The volumes generated by the proposed development constitute a very low proportion of these committed flows from adjacent developments.
- The subject site is highly accessible to pedestrians and cyclists in the vicinity of Howth Road and its environs, with excellent pedestrian connectivity from the proposed development eastwards towards Howth Village and access to the DART.

Notably, An Bord Pleanála's Inspector Report for the permitted Claremont Strategic Housing Development on the former Techrete site states in relation to the capacity of Sutton Cross;

*"The traffic congestion that occurs in the town centre and at Sutton Cross is not a result of a growing population in Howth because no such growth has occurred. Rather it is a result of a more dispersed pattern of settlement in and around Howth and the city that depends more on the use private car to access services, employment and, especially in the case of Howth, places of recreation. The proposed development would counteract this pattern of dispersal and its general impact on traffic would therefore be positive. Refusing permission for the proposed development or significantly reducing its scale would do nothing to alleviate traffic congestion in Howth or at Sutton Cross."*

## 6.10 Cycle Parking

Table 12.9 of the Development Plan sets out the cycle parking standards and the requirement is 1 per unit and 1 visitor space per 5 units. For the proposed development, the requirement is 162 long-stay cycle parking spaces and 32 no. short stay spaces.

The Apartment Guidelines provide a general minimum standard of 1 cycle storage space per bedroom.

The proposed development incorporates 324 no. bedrooms and 325 no. secure cycle spaces are provided at basement level in two-tier bicycle racks in two secure zones.

The visitor parking requirement is 1 space per 2 units, for the proposed scheme 81 no. visitor parking spaces would be required. Having regard to the site's location it is considered that this quantum would result in redundant spaces and 30 no. spaces (Sheffield stands) are proposed at ground level. An over provision of visitor cycle parking would also take away from the quality of the open space. The usage of visitor parking will be monitored by the management company following occupation of the scheme and should additional parking be deemed necessary it will be retrofitted.

## 6.11 Built Heritage

Objective HOWTH 1 of the Development Plan is to "Ensure that development respects the special historic and architectural character of the area".

*The Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) state at para. 2.8*

*"Historic environments can be sensitive to large scale and tall buildings. In that context, Planning Authorities must determine if increased height buildings are an appropriate typology or not in particular settings. An Initial assessment of the existing character and setting of a place will assist in a robust framework for decision-making that will facilitate increases in building height and involve an integrated understanding of place. With regards to large-scale and tall buildings in historic urban areas, an examination of the existing character of a place can assist planning authorities, and others to:*

*establish the sensitivities of a place and its capacity for development or change and;*

*define opportunities for new development and inform its design."*

It is a requirement of the Guidelines that in order to consider proposals in an integrated and informed way, an Urban Design Statement along with a specific Architectural Design Statement on the individual development proposal. An **Urban Design Statement** focussing on addressing aspects of impact on the historic built environment accompanies this application.

Howth Castle and St. Mary's Church are protected structures. The castle and the church are included in the Architectural Conservation Area.

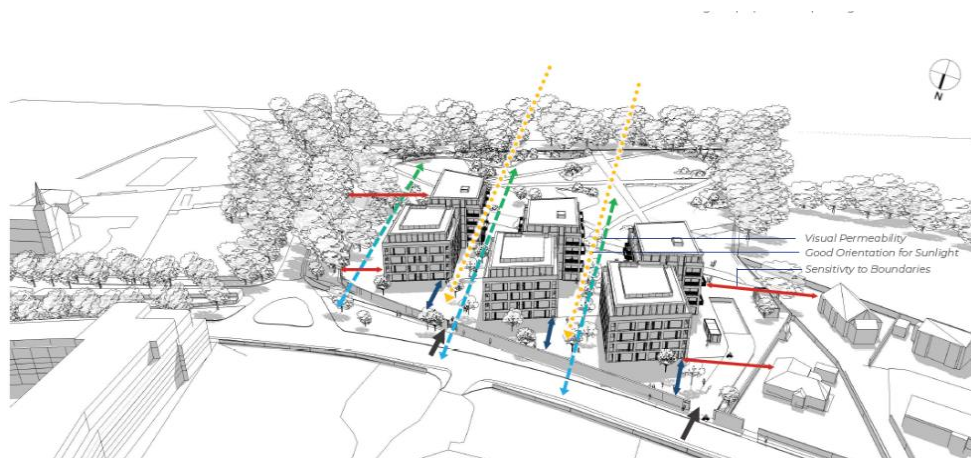
Objective PM33 seeks to enhance and develop the fabric of existing and developing rural and urban centres in accordance with the principles of good urban design, including **the promotion of high quality well-designed visually attractive main entries** into our towns and villages” (emp. added)

The site is outside the Howth Castle ACA and is enclosed along its northern and eastern boundary by the demesne wall. The proposed design is high quality and together with the permitted Claremont scheme will create a clearly defined entry point to Howth.

An **Architectural Heritage Assessment Report** is included with this submission. It includes an impact assessment on Protected Structures, the Architectural Conservation Area and local views and vistas.

The assessment consider the impact of interventions to the Demesne Wall, and concludes that having regard to the site's zoning for residential development it is appropriate to make openings in the wall to facilitate access. The benefit of this approach is that access will not be through the protected Howth Castle gates.

The design is cognisant of the proximity of the protected gates and Block C is set back from the eastern boundary and sits behind the existing mature tree belt that lines the Avenue.



**PLATE 10 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT – BOUNDARY CONSIDERATIONS**



Development of the site will alter the existing landscape and visual character of the local area when viewed from the Howth Road. However, the moderate scale of development coupled with the high quality architectural detailing and materiality will mitigate the changes that will arise.



**PLATE 11 VIEW OF HOWTH CASTLE GATES PRE AND POST DEVELOPMENT FROM HOWTH ROAD**

The image below demonstrates that the proposed development will be screened by the existing mature tree belt that lines the avenue to Howth Castle and the impact from this vantage point on the protected gates will be imperceptible.



**PLATE 12 VIEW NORTH ALONG HOWTH CASTLE AVENUE**

There is no significant impact from the proposed development on Howth Castle due to the intervening screening.



PLATE 13 VIEW FROM HOWTH CASTLE

Views from St. Mary's Church are similarly well concealed due to the existing landscaping as illustrated below.



PLATE 14 VIEW WEST FROM ST. MARYS CHURCH

The only direct physical impact on a feature of heritage value within the site, is the proposed entrances along the northern boundary. The interventions are necessary to provide access to this zoned land. The Architectural design Statement provides a detailed description of the proposed works and with regard to the materiality states;

*The use of Corten or similar self-finishing steel in slender sheets of cladding to elegantly wrap around the edges of the openings asymmetrically will contrast attractively to the robust stone in the wall. The earthy tones of the metal are complementary to those of the stone, whilst still appearing juxtaposed to highlight the entrance points. The metal also picks up on the use of bronze-toned zinc finishes employed throughout the architecture, maintaining cohesion throughout the scheme.*

A Conservation Method Statement is included as an Appendix to the EIAR and it is proposed to take the opportunity during the construction phase to carryout rehabilitation works to the wider wall.

The proposed development will not significantly alter the character and setting of Howth Castle or St. Mary's Church. It will change the character of the entrance to Howth Castle but this is consistent with emerging patterns of development locally. The proposed development would make a positive contribution to achieving a high quality urban design and when taken together with the Claremont development will act as a gateway to Howth.

## 6.12 Visual Impact

The accompanying **Architectural Design Statement** submitted under separate cover, provides a detailed description of the architectural design approach which has underpinned the proposed development. The **Urban Design Statement** establishes the Key Heritage Objectives that informed the design.

A **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** is included as a Chapter in the EIAR and **Photomontages** are included under separate cover.

The LVIA rates the impact of the proposed development during both the construction and operational phases. The residual visual effect of the development i.e. post application of mitigation measures on each of the views presented range from neutral to positive.

The report highlights that there is potential for the proposed development and the permitted Claremont (Techrete) development to have cumulative effects on the landscape/townscape and some views. The two developments would form a corridor of contemporary urban buildings as the Howth Road enters/exits the town centre, forming a distinct western edge to the town centre, and emphasising the historic character of the harbour area by their contrast with it.

## 6.13 Trees

*Objective DMS77 Protect, preserve and ensure the effective management of trees and groups of trees.*

*Objective NH27 Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.*

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment accompanies this application under separate cover.

The layout of the development proposal has been designed to ensure the protection and incorporation of trees located along the eastern boundary, which have been collectively identified as an important arboricultural feature that contributes to the landscape character of the local area. The aim has been to utilise these boundary trees as key features, to create a harmonious relationship between the existing natural infrastructure and the new built environment.

The aim has been to avoid development that will result in the loss of trees from all lands within the Applicants ownership, however where this has not been possible, a compensatory approach has been adopted that will see a diverse mix of new tree species planted across these lands. This proposed planting will occur across central areas of the lands to function in harmony with the proposed development and in the form of a new belt of native woodland, which will connect mature trees in the east to those along the golf course boundary in the south and west. This will result in a

future increase in canopy cover within the local landscape and create a post-development situation that improves the long-term arboricultural quality of the lands.

It is not considered that the impact on trees represents a material contravention of the Development Plan, however, should An Bord Pleanála consider otherwise, then a justification is set out in the **Material Contravention Statement** having regard to section 37(2)(b) (ii) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

### 6.14 Daylight and Sunlight Analysis

A **Sunlight/Daylight and Overshadowing Analysis** prepared by 3D Design Bureau is submitted under separate cover.

The Vertical Sky Component, Annual Probable Sunlight Hours and sunlight to existing private amenity space analysis of adjacent existing dwellings demonstrates that the impact of the proposed development will be imperceptible.

An assessment of the proposed communal amenity areas (ground and roof level) and public open space has been undertaken and the report demonstrates that the proposed design significantly exceeds the BRE Guideline recommendation that at least half of the proposed amenity area should receive at least 2 hours of sunlight on the 21<sup>st</sup> March.

Assessed Area	Area Capable of Receiving 2 Hours of Sunlight on March 21st	Recommended minimum	Level of Compliance with BRE Guidelines
Amenity Area 1	89.6%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Amenity Area 2	92.1%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Roof Garden A	100.0%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Roof Garden B	100.0%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Roof Garden C	100.0%	50.0%	BRE Compliant
Public Amenity Area	81.6%	50.0%	BRE Compliant

\* The BRE Guidelines recommend that for a garden or amenity appear adequately sunlit throughout the year, at least half of a garden or amenity area should receive at least two hours of sunlight on March 21st.

TABLE 11 SUNLIGHT TO PROPOSED COMMUNAL AND PUBLIC AMENITY AREAS

Objective DMS30 of the Fingal Development Plan is to *“Ensure all new residential units comply with the recommendations of Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (B.R.209, 2011) and B.S. 8206 Lighting for Buildings, Part 2 2008: Code of Practice for Daylighting or other updated relevant documents.”*

The recommended minimum for Average Daylight Factor (ADF) is based on the function of the room being assessed. The recommendations as per the BS 8206-2:2008 are as follows:

- 2% for kitchens;
- 1.5% for living rooms; and,
- 1% for bedrooms.

BS 8206-2:2008 also recommends that where a room serves more than one purpose e.g. living/kitchen/dining (LKD) space, the minimum average daylight factor should be taken for the room with the highest value.

The **Daylight & Sunlight Report** that accompanies this application demonstrates that when measured against the 2% criteria the approx. overall compliance rate is 93%.

Achieving a high quality, modern, living environment e.g. generous room sizes and private amenity space (balconies) as is proposed in this application results in a deep floor plan for LKDs and this can affect daylight penetration.

Having regard to this and notwithstanding the recommendation of 2% contained in BS 8206-2:2008, 3D Design Bureau, the specialist daylight consultant appointed to the project, recommend that that an ADF target value of 1.5% is appropriate for LKDs in this context. The rationale for this departure from the recommended minimum ADF of 2%, is;

- i. the primary function of LKDs within apartment developments is typically that of a living space.
- ii. the quality of the overall living environment could be compromised if the 2% target is applied as it would necessitate removal of balconies (private amenity space) and reduction in the floor areas of the LKDs. Such mitigation measures could reduce the quality of living within the proposed units to a greater degree than the improvements that would be gained with increased ADF values.
- iii. the scheme includes compensatory design solutions including direct access to balconies/terraces, access to conveniently located communal amenity space (at ground and roof level) that benefits from excellent sunlight and access to resident amenity rooms in each block that all meet the 2% target.

The ADF study demonstrates that when measured against a 1.5% target value, the proposed development achieves a approx. 96% compliance rate.

The report details that the primary reason for the ADF results in the lower performing rooms is due to the recessed balconies, which are an integral part of the proposed design, providing privacy for future residents. These balconies, whilst they affect the level of daylight in the units, they also provide a valuable amenity of private external space.

Importantly, the design integrates large windows which ensure that even the rooms that do not achieve the recommended ADF value of 1.5% will benefit from good day light access in the areas of the room that are within close proximity to the windows, with the rear of the rooms likely to require supplementary electric lighting. This is qualified by an additional assessment of the living areas as standalone space i.e. without the kitchen area included. The results confirm that all living spaces would be in receipt of adequate levels of daylight.

Acknowledging that Objective DMS30 requires compliance with the Guidelines and having regard to the development management criteria set out in the Building Height Guidelines, a justification for a justification having regard to the provisions of 37(2)(b)(iii) and(iv) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended is set out in the **Material Contravention Statement**.

## 6.15 Noise

The principal receptors external to the proposed development site are residential dwellings located to the west of the site. The proposed access road will act as a buffer between Block A and the existing dwellings. It is noted that the site is located within Noise Zone D for Dublin Airport as identified in Variation No.1 of the Development Plan. Table 7.2 of the Variation notes that “*All noise sensitive development within this zone is likely to be acceptable from a noise perspective. An associated application would not normally be refused on noise grounds, however where the development is residential-led and comprises non-residential noise sensitive uses, or comprises 50 residential units or more, it may be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate that a good acoustic design has been followed.*” The Building is designed to comply with Part E of the Building Regulations. A Noise and Vibration Assessment is included in the EIAR and necessary acoustic mitigation measures are incorporated to ensure good acoustic design.

## 6.16 Childcare

A **Childcare Demand Report** accompanies this application. Notwithstanding the flexibility provided in the Design Standards for New Apartments, the assessment takes a conservative approach and includes all 2-bedroom plus units to determine the future demand for childcare arising from the proposed development.

In calculating the projected number of pre-school children generated by the proposed development, the State percentage for 0-4 year olds of 7% is used rather than the much lower percentage of 4.8% recorded in the 2016 Census for Howth. A robust methodology is applied whereby it is assumed that all 3-4 years olds in the catchment would avail of care in a creche setting, owing to the support provided by the ECCE scheme. It is then assumed that 25% of children aged up to 3 years would require childcare and this is consistent with the CSO Quarterly National Household Survey.

The cumulative demand for childcare in Howth ED is established to be 302 no. spaces. There are at least 332 no. places provided by existing and permitted facilities, meaning the future demand arising from the proposed development (18 no. childcare spaces) can be comfortably accommodated.

Accordingly, the report concludes there is no requirement for the provision of a childcare facility as part of this development proposal having regard to the existing geographical distribution and capacity of childcare facilities existing and permitted in the catchment. This conclusion is consistent with the ‘Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (2001) which state that the threshold for childcare provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas.

## 6.17 Part V Social Housing

It is the policy of Fingal County Council to increase the stock of social housing to meet the long term housing needs of those households on the Local Authority housing list.

A **Part V Proposal** including proposed units, locations, costings and letter of validation from Fingal County Council is included with this application under separate cover.

It is proposed to provide 16 no. units on site distributed across proposed Blocks B and C. The breakdown of units is;

- 6 no. 1 bedroom units
- 7 no. 2 bedroom units
- 3 no. 3 bedroom units

## 7 Conclusion

The subject proposal will provide a high-quality development, with an appropriate mix of units and an acceptable density of development catering to a range of people at varying stages of the lifecycle and responding to the existing need in Howth. Given the central and accessible location of the site to the services offered by Howth and Sutton and the availability of public transport, the most sustainable strategy for development is to maximise density.

The principle of residential development, being a zoned and serviceable site within the continuous built-up area of Dublin city where a wide range of services and facilities exist is acceptable in principle. The proposal is in compliance with both national and local policy, together with relevant section 28 ministerial guidelines. It promotes national policy objectives for compact urban growth (NPO 2A, 3A and 3B) to achieve effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl.

The design of the proposed development has been informed by an understanding of the site's historic context. The proposed development achieves a balance between consolidation of the built environment and protection of the surrounding features of exceptional heritage value. The proposed development exhibits a high quality of architecture and careful consideration has been given to ensure that it will not detract from the character or setting of Howth Castle, the demesne lands and other protected structures in the immediate environs.

The nature and scale of the proposed development would be in keeping with the applicable national, regional and local planning policy, notwithstanding the identified material contraventions of the Development Plan.

Development of this site at the density proposed and with modest heights represents a sustainable approach. It would consolidate the existing built environment and deliver homes in a location that benefits from a high-level of amenities and services, including high quality and high frequency public transport. Increasing densities on infill sites such as this is appropriate and critical in the context of the scarcity of developable land in Howth.

The proposed development fully accords with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.