

Planning & Design Statement

For Development at Coolcarron (townland), Fermoy, Co.
Cork

on behalf of Cumnor Construction Ltd.

March 2022



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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CORK

6 Joyce House
Barrack Square
Ballincollig
Cork
P31 YX97

T. +353 (0)21 420 8710

DUBLIN

Kreston House
Arran Court
Arran Quay
Dublin 7
D07 K271

T. +353 (0)1 676 6971

www.mhplanning.ie

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1. Introduction

This Planning and Design Statement has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning to accompany a planning application submission to An Bord Pleanála for a Strategic Housing Development at Coolcarron (townland), Fermoy, Co. Cork. The proposed development consists of the following:

- The construction of 336 no. residential units comprising 242 dwellings houses (comprising a mix of 5, 4, 3 and 2 bed detached, semi-detached and townhouse/terraced units) and 94 no. duplex/simplex units (comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bed units);
- A 587m² creche/childcare facility;
- The provision of landscaping and amenity areas to include 4 no. flexible open space areas with natural play features, a linear green route with a 3m wide shared surface path running along the western boundary and a number of informal grassed areas;
- Public Realm upgrades along the R639, including a shared footpath and cycleway, a 4m toucan crossing with tactile paving;
- The proposed alteration to the Barrymore-Coolcarron 38kv line. The proposed alteration will involve the undergrounding of a section of the above mentioned overhead 38kV line to facilitate the housing development and the realignment of approximately 13.6 metres of 38kv overhead line. The proposed alterations will comprise of one (1) 12 metre Type "F" lattice steel end terminate mast structure and one (1) 38kV cable sealing ends. The proposed retirement of 282 metres of overhead conductors and one (1) type "F" Lattice steel mast structure, one (1) Type "C" light angle strain structure and one (1) Type "B" portal suspension structure; and
- All associated ancillary development including vehicular access on to the R639 road, 2 no. access gates to the existing weighbridge and associated ancillary development, lighting, drainage, boundary treatments, bicycle & car parking and bin storage.

A design team with extensive experience in residential applications has been appointed by the applicant including McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants, Geraldine Coughlan Architects, Walsh Design Group and Cathal O'Meara Landscape Architect to ensure a high quality design and a robust and comprehensive planning application submission is made to An Bord Pleanála.

This report has been structured as follows:

1. Introduction;
2. Site Context & Development Description;
3. Planning Context;
4. Assessment; and
 - Overview
 - Site Characteristics & constraints;
 - Design Concept – Neighbourhood;
 - Development Principles;
 - Proposed Layout;
 - Recreation & Amenity;
 - Detailed Design;
5. Conclusion

2. Site Context and Development Description

2.1 Site Context

The proposed development is located in the townland of Coolcarron within the town of Fermoy which is identified as a main town in the Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017. The subject site is situated approximately 1m to the south of the main street and 26km from Cork City Centre. The site is 1km from the M8 – Cork Dublin Motorway which is situated to the east of the site.

The total site area comprises 11.75 hectares and slopes gently downwards from west to east. There is a net developable area of 11.23 hectares. There is an existing open drainage channel along the eastern boundary of the site with a wooded area beyond. Permission for the development of these lands was originally granted under Cork County Council Ref. 05/4806.



Fig 1: Site Location – site outlined in red.

The site is within easy walking distance of a number of commercial and community facilities including local shops, churches and schools. The site is bounded to the west with a number of private residential dwellings, an ESB facility and a number of commercial properties. The St Colman's sports ground lies to the north of the site with agricultural land to the south.

The native hedgerows which define the existing field boundaries and are part of the local green infrastructure network will be retained where possible. The site

will be accessed via the R639 which runs to the west of the site. An existing lay-by and weigh station is situated adjacent to the proposed entrance to the site.



Fig 2: Site Context.

2.2 Development Description

The proposed development will function as a natural extension to the town of Fermoy by consolidating development in the area and ensuring the retention of a compact settlement.

Permission is sought for the following development:

- The construction of 336 no. residential units comprising 242 dwellings houses (comprising a mix of 5, 4, 3 and 2 bed detached, semi-detached and townhouse/terraced units) and 94 no. duplex/simplex units (comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bed units);
- A 587m² creche/childcare facility;
- The provision of landscaping and amenity areas to include 4 no. flexible open space areas with natural play features, a linear green route with a 3m wide shared surface path running along the western boundary and a number of informal grassed areas;
- Public Realm upgrades along the R639, including a shared footpath and cycleway, a 4m toucan crossing with tactile paving;
- The proposed alteration to the Barrymore-Coolcarron 38kv line. The proposed alteration will involve the undergrounding of a section of the above mentioned overhead 38kV line to facilitate the housing development and the realignment of approximately 13.6 metres of 38kv overhead line. The proposed alterations will comprise of one (1) 12 metre Type "F" lattice steel end terminate mast structure and one (1) 38kV cable sealing ends. The proposed retirement of 282 metres of overhead conductors and one (1) type "F" Lattice steel mast structure , one (1) Type "C" light angle strain structure and one (1) Type "B" portal suspension structure; and
- All associated ancillary development including vehicular access on to the R639 road, 2 no. access gates to the existing weighbridge and associated ancillary development, lighting, drainage, boundary treatments, bicycle & car parking and bin storage.

The proposed development will see the extension of the Fermoy residential area and will promote compact growth in a location contiguous to the existing urban footprint where it can be served by public transport and walking.

The design of the proposed scheme has been informed by detailed pre-planning discussions with Cork County Councils Planning, Architectural, Engineering and Environmental Departments, as well as the relevant planning policy documents at national and local levels, including in particular the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages), the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a national level, and the 2014 Cork County Development Plan , 2022 Draft Cork County Development Plan and 2017 Fermoy

Local Area Plan at a Local Planning Policy level. The proposed site layout designed by Geraldine Coughlan Architects proposes a density of 30 units per hectare, which is considered suitable for the subject site and consistent with national policy which seeks higher densities on residential sites.



Fig 3: Site Layout Plan

The proposed development has been designed to provide high-quality houses that will contribute positively to Fermoy where demand for housing has been consistent. The proposed Site Layout focuses on the creation of a number of new distinct residential neighbourhoods that will enhance and integrate with the wider area. A new entrance to the site is proposed as part of the layout for the proposed development, ensuring that the scheme integrates in a cohesive manner with the surrounding area and makes a positive contribution to the Fermoy area. To ensure the visual integration of the site, the proposed development will promote the protection and enhancement of areas of biodiversity value where possible, including hedgerows, and tree lines, particularly those located to the south and east of the site and traversing the site.

Planning Context

A Statement of Consistency has been prepared in support of this Strategic Housing Development application, which sets out the principal planning policy documents at national and local level, and assesses consistency with the principle and relevant objectives of each policy document in a matrix format

A summary of the key policies that apply to the site are provided below:

2.3 National Policy

2.3.1 Project Ireland National Planning Framework 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF) makes provision for population growth of an additional 340,000 - 380,000 people in the Southern Region. The majority of the region's growth has been allocated to Cork City and County which equates to an additional 226,620 people or 60% of the Region's growth.

The NPF places a focus on achieving compact growth and sustainable mobility and targets a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing 'footprint' of built-up areas.

2.3.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES)

It is a principle of the RSES to inform the integration of land use and transport planning by *"ensuring that future developments are planned and designed to maximise their accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling"*.

Regional Policy Objective RPO 10 sets out that the RSES seeks to achieve compact growth by prioritising housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing urban footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.

Section 3.4 of the RSES states that sustainable regeneration and growth (particularly compact growth) will be achieved through effective sustainable transport and spatial land use planning.

2.4 Local Policy

2.4.1 Cork County Development Plan 2014

The Cork County Development Plan (CDP) established a hierarchical network of settlements in the County. Fermoy is located within the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Area. Policy CS 3-2 sets out the core objectives for the town of Fermoy. The strategic aim for Fermoy is:

"To provide a better balance of development throughout the Greater Cork Ring Area, and fulfil their economic potential as quality urban centres providing employment, shopping, services and public transport for their rural hinterland so that they can become the location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus."

It is an objective of the plan to support the future growth of the town of Fermoy. Objective CS 4-2 states that it is an objective to:

“Establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth, in line with this Core strategy so that Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom and Youghal can accelerate their rate of growth and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport.”

In terms of residential density, the CDP states that a Medium ‘A’ (i.e. 20-50 dwellings per hectare) will be applicable in “city suburbs, larger towns over 5,000 population and rail corridor locations.”

Policy objective HOU 3-3: Housing Mix of the Cork County Development Plan aims to improve the range and choice of available housing throughout Cork County by ensuring developers secure a mix of house types and sizes to meet the needs of the likely future population. In response to this, the proposed housing mix has been influenced by a range of factors including:

- The desirability of providing for mixed communities and a range house types and tenures;
- The nature of existing stock in the area;
- The existing social mix in the area and the need to cater for groups such as the elderly and disabled; and
- The saleability of different types of housing having regard to the local housing market.

2.4.2 Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017

In the 2017 Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan (LAP) Fermoy is identified as a main town. The current Local Area Plan (LAP) states that the vision for the main town of Fermoy is to:

“increase the population of the town in line with targets established in the Cork County Development Plan 2014; to optimise employment opportunities having regard to the location of the town adjacent to the M8; manage development in order to support the strengthening and rejuvenation of the retail function of the town; ensure all new development respects the significant built heritage of the town and its setting on the river Blackwater, and to deliver an enhanced environment and range of facilities to make the town a more attractive place to live.”

Policy FY-GO-01 establishes objectives for the quantum of development to be accommodated in the Fermoy area over the plan period. It is an objective of the plan:

“To achieve its target population of 7,589 persons. Provide a balance between the provision of housing and employment uses in the town, to support Fermoy’s development as an integrated live/work destination”

The site is zoned ‘Medium A Density Residential’ in the Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 and is within the development boundary of the main town

of Fermoy. Objective FY-R-08 of the Local Area Plan sets out the following objective for the site:

“Medium A density Residential Development. The scheme shall provide development of active open space to include playing pitches. A link to pedestrian walks through O-05 shall also be provided”

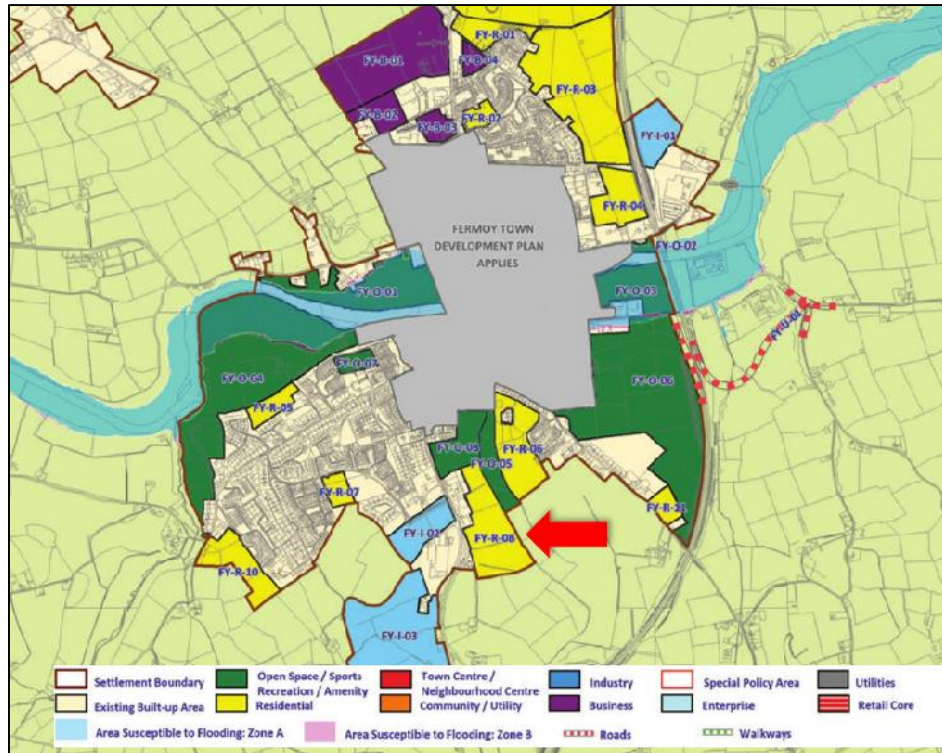


Fig 4: Extract from Fermoy MD LAP 2017.

2.5 Planning Guidelines

2.5.1 Urban Design Manual 2009

The Urban Design Manual is a key document of the guidelines published under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act and has informed the design of the proposed scheme.

The core of the documents are the 12 criteria which have been both a helpful guidance and checklist since their publication, its structure leading from the wider context referring to the neighbourhood, towards site specific matters and detailed design represent master planning principles.



Therefore, this document has adopted the structure and refers to the 12 criteria in detail.



2.5.2 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines

Section 5.11 of the 2009 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages) states that for 'Outer Suburban / 'Greenfield' sites' (defined as open lands on the periphery of cities or larger towns whose development will require the provision of new infrastructure, roads, sewers and ancillary social and commercial facilities, schools, shops, employment and community facilities), the greatest efficiency in land usage will be achieved by providing net residential densities in the general range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare and such densities (involving a variety of housing types where possible) should be encouraged generally and that net densities less than 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be discouraged.

Circular Letter: NRUP 02/2021

On April 21st, 2021 the Department of Housing, Local Government and Housing issued Circular Letter: NRUP 02/2021 in relation the residential densities set out Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines.

In relation to development at the edge of larger towns, the Circular states the following:

While the Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines clearly encourage net densities in the 35-50 dwellings per hectare range within cities and larger towns, net densities of 30-35 dwellings per hectare may be regarded as acceptable in certain large town contexts and net densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, although generally discouraged, are not precluded in large town locations.

These 'outer suburban' provisions apply to cities and larger towns, and the Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines define larger towns as having a population in excess of 5,000 people. Large towns therefore range from 5,000 people up to the accepted city scale of 50,000 people. Given

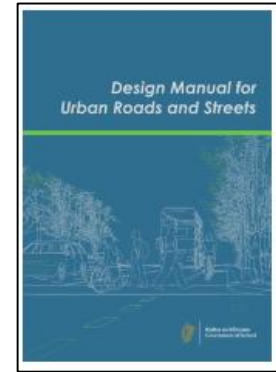
the very broad extent of this range and variety of urban situations in Ireland, it is necessary for An Bord Pleanála and Planning Authorities to exercise discretion in the application and assessment of residential density at the periphery of large towns, particularly at the edges of towns in a rural context.

2.5.3 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

The holistic approach of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets to understand and design the streets as part of the open space network was applied to the proposed development with the intention to promote sustainable transport and encourage social activities and active neighbourhoods.

The four design principles of DMURS are:

- Connected Networks
- Multi-Functional Streets
- Pedestrian Focus
- Multidisciplinary Approach



These design principles have been used as the pillars of the design of the proposed scheme.

	<p>Design Principle 1 – Connected Networks</p> <p>To support the creation of integrated street networks which promote higher levels of permeability and legibility for all users, and in particular more sustainable forms of transport.</p>		<p>Design Principle 3 – Pedestrian Focus</p> <p>The quality of the street is measured by the quality of the pedestrian environment.</p>
	<p>Design Principle 2 – Multi-Functional Streets</p> <p>The promotion of multi-functional, place-based streets that balance the needs of all users within a self-regulating environment.</p>		<p>Design Principle 4 – Multidisciplinary Approach</p> <p>Greater communication and co-operation between design professionals through the promotion of a plan-led, multidisciplinary approach to design.</p>

3. Planning History

There have been 2 no. applications / permissions relevant to the subject site. These are outlined below:

[Cork County Council Ref. 05/4806](#)

Cumnor Construction lodged an application for permission for a residential development consisting of 308 no. dwelling houses and a creche and all associated site development works on July 7th, 2005. Following a lengthy application process which was extended by 2 years under the provisions of Section 34(9) of the Planning Act, on September 7th, 2007 granted a 7 year permission for 305 no. houses and a creche on the site.

Condition 3(a) attached to the permission required that:

No development shall commence on site until such time as Cork County Council has appointed a contractor to construct the SLI scheme serving the scheme.

The Services Land Initiative (SLI) never came to fruition during the lifetime of the permission and the government withdrew funding from the SLI Process thereby making it impossible to comply with the conditions attached to the permission on the site.

Permission was extended under Ref. 13/6357 and expired on September 24th, 2019.

[Cork County Council Ref. 08/8303](#)

Cumnor Construction Ltd. secured permission for amendments to the residential development permitted under Ref. 05/4806 to construct 3 no. dwellinghouses (no's 145, 146 and 147 – an overall increase in density to 308), alterations to the site layout and redesign and relocation of the creche and associated site works.

Permission was extended under Ref. 13/6356 and expired on November 2nd, 2011.

4. Assessment

4.1 Overview

The consultation process in relation to this application commenced in November 2019 with the S. 247 meeting with Cork County Council. Since this initial meeting, the scheme has evolved to account for the requirements of the Council and the subsequent opinion of the Board. In order to comprehensively address all items, it was necessary to engage with adjacent landowners and Irish Water. These consultations took several months in each instance and together with the extended timeframe to secure a tri-partite meeting (due to understandable delays related to the Covid-19 pandemic) have resulted in a lengthy consultation period in advance of the lodgement of the SHD Application.

Over the course of the consultation process, the net density proposed has been reduced from 36.6 units/ hectare to 30 units/hectare which is consistent with the guidance issued in Circular NRUP 02/2021 which issue on April 21st, 2021. The density proposed as part of the Pre-Application submission was prepared in advance of this circular having been issued. The Circular states that, '*... net densities of 30-35 dwellings per hectare may be regarded as acceptable in certain large town contexts*'. It is considered that Fermoy with a population of 6,585 (2016 census) is large town with modest population in the context of the parameters of 5,000-50,000 people as outlined in the Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines and that a residential scheme with a density of 30 units/ hectare (or less) is appropriate in this location. Based on this guidance, revisions to the unit types and site layout were undertaken while adhering to the general principles of the masterplan for the site presented as part of the pre-planning consultation process.

Following the tri-partite meeting on September 27th, 2021 there were further discussions with Irish Water in relation to the capacity of the existing Waste Water Treatment Plant. Consideration was given to pursuing 2 no. separate planning applications to ensure that the number of units proposed in the first application could be connected to the WWTP. However, in December 2021 Irish Water contacted the consultant engineer for the project, Walsh Design Group, to advise that Irish Water had completed a revised study of the available capacity at the Fermoy Waste Water Treatment Plant with the result that the 336 units and creche being proposed could be accommodated and advised that we proceed with the submission of design acceptance. Full details of the consultation with Irish Water are detailed in the Walsh Design Group's Civil Engineering Report.

Based on Irish Water's most recent assessment of the capacity of the Fermoy Waste Water Treatment Plant and the guidance issued in Circular NRUP 02/2021, we submit that the proposed development represents an appropriate scale and density which can be serviced by public infrastructure. The following sections of this report will detail compliance with the wider objectives and national guidelines.

4.2 Site Characteristics

4.2.1 Site Access and Accessibility

The main vehicular access to the proposed residential area is taken from the R639. It is proposed to construct a new vehicular entrance to the west of the site. This access will allow immediate access to a new and existing footpath which will be subject to improvements. A pedestrian access is located at the main access point. This will allow a direct and easy access to the 245 bus routes located 700m from the subject site.



Fig 5: Site access and accessibility.

The development proposes improvements to the existing roadway and footpaths on the R639 (including amendments to an existing weigh bridge).

The site is shaped by the local distributor road which runs throughout the site. This primary local distributor road is in turn fed by a series of secondary local streets, which offer direct access to each residential cluster



Fig 6: Proposed access points.

4.2.2 Topography

The Site slopes gently downwards in an easterly direction. There is an existing open drainage channel running along the eastern boundary which is to be retained and incorporated into the open space provision.

The site is bound to the west by a number of existing retail and industrial uses with some residential dwellings to the south west. Access to the site has been carefully designed given the sites existing topography and access opportunities onto the R639.

Existing mature trees and hedgerows along site boundaries will be protected and retained where possible as part of the proposed development.

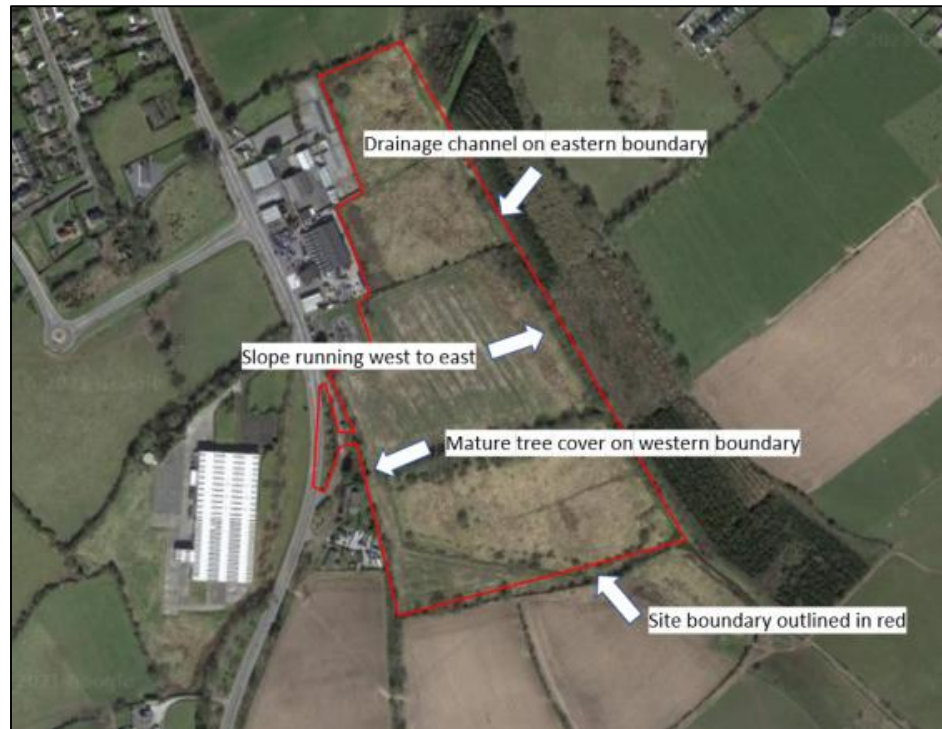


Fig 7: Existing site features.

4.2.3 Infrastructure and Services

The subject lands are currently in agricultural use and has no services or infrastructure within the site boundary.

A pre-connection enquiry has been made by Walsh Design Group. The Pre-Connection Enquiry Feedback has been received from Irish Water (included in Appendix C of the Civil Engineering Report by Walsh Design Group). A water supply and foul water connection is feasible for the proposed development.

A Statement of compliance with Irish Waters Standard Details and Codes of Practice & Statement of Design Acceptance has also been issued by Irish Water (included in the Civil Engineering Report by Walsh Design Group). Irish Water has no objection to the proposals.

Wastewater

The proposed development will connect to the existing public wastewater treatment system in the area. This has been discussed with Irish Water who have confirmed that subject to a valid connection agreement being put in place, the proposed connection to the Irish Water Network can be facilitated without infrastructure upgrade by Irish Water.

Water

It is proposed that a connection to the existing Irish Water infrastructure will be made on the R639. Private properties will each have a separate service connection fitted with an Irish Water approved boundary box.

This has been discussed with Irish Water who have confirmed that subject to a valid connection agreement being put in place, the proposed connection to the Irish Water Network can be facilitated without infrastructure upgrade by Irish Water.

Surface Water Drainage

Storm water infrastructure will be appropriate for the site. The proposed storm sewer collection system consists of a 100mm diameter pipe collection network around each house in accordance with TGD part H discharging to a 150mm diameter uPVC sewer or larger under the estate streets. All networks are designed to discharge an attenuated flow of surface water into the existing open drainage channels in the site.

The overall drainage network has been designed in 6 separate networks due to the topography of the site and the proposed street layout. all networks are designed to discharge an attenuated flow of surface water into the existing open drainage channels in the site which in turn, eventually discharge to the River Blackwater in Fermoy.

The proposed storm water drainage system is designed using appropriate SuDS principles to suit the location and topography of the site.

4.3 Design Concept and Development Principles

4.3.1 Site Constraints / Potentials



Potentials

- Footpath Connection to main street, services and facilities in Fermoy.
- Existing public transport links.
- Natural extension to the existing town.
- Well established residential area.
- Existing landscape features on site.
- Flat topography.



Constraints

- Proximity to ESB Substation and commercial units to the west.
- Only one potential vehicular access point.



4.3.2 Site Context

The 11.75 ha site slopes in an easterly direction and fronts onto the R639 to the west. The lands are currently utilised for agricultural purposes and are bound by an existing open drainage channel along the eastern boundary of the site with a wooded area beyond. The site is bounded to the west with a number of private

residential dwellings, an ESB facility and a number of commercial properties. The St Colman's sports ground lies to the north of the site with agricultural land to the south.

As outlined in section 6.1 above, the site is within easy walking distance of a number of commercial and community facilities including local shops, churches and schools. The native hedgerows which define the existing field boundaries and are part of the local green infrastructure network will be retained where possible. The site will be accessed via a new entrance on the R639 which runs to the west of the site.

4.3.3 Connections

Connectivity is a core design principle for the proposed scheme.

In the wider urban context, connectivity focuses on the accessibility to the R639 connecting the site to the main street of Fermoy. The site also benefits from connections to public transport including the 245-bus route with access approximately 700m to the northwest of the site.

The proposed development allows for a potential pedestrian and cycle connection to both the lands to the north and northwest of the subject site.

4.3.4 Inclusivity

The proposed dwellings offer a broad range of accommodation choice, in terms of both unit size and configuration. Open spaces are designed to provide facilities for all age groups and support outdoor activities.



The predominant form of development in the vicinity of the site is semi-detached and detached dwellings. It is proposed as part of this application to introduce a wider range of dwellings types and sizes to encourage a more varied population and permit a greater level of mobility within the local area, for example first time buyers, traders-down, persons with disabilities, etc. A number of step-down duplex and simplex units are also provided for older residents.

This will be achieved through the provision of one and two bed duplex and simplex units, and two, three, four and five-bedroom housing units comprising of terrace, semi-detached and detached units.

The proposed development will also contain a range of public and private amenity space. This will include passive open space evenly distributed through the scheme, active spaces with a range of age-appropriate equipment.

All duplex units will be provided with adequate amenities, with each unit having a private amenity space. The design and layout of the proposed development will meet the requirements of all relevant documents, in particular Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents which deal with accessibility and inclusivity. In this regard, the design of the proposed development is also guided by the principles of universal design. The proposed scheme has been designed so that it can be

accessed and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or desirability.

All buildings are designed and sited to provide passive surveillance of the public realm, including streets, paths and open spaces.

4.3.5 Variety

In accordance with the zoning the proposed use is primarily residential with the provision of the crèche. The focus therefore is to provide a variety of homes for all age groups to allow all-day activity in the neighbourhood.

All open spaces are designed to support social interaction to create active neighbourhoods. Play Areas are also distributed throughout the site to cater for various needs.



Fig 8: Landscape Plan by Cathal O'Meara Landscape Architects.

4.3.6 Design Approach

The layout responds to the natural features that exist on site with the hedgerows and trees retained and integrated into the scheme where feasible.

As detailed in Section 6 of this report, while the site is located within Fermoy and will add much needed variety to the existing housing mix, there are number of site constraints which inform how the site can be developed. A key principle to the design was in ensure that all parts of the site were included in the overall masterplan for the site including the vehicular access and the pedestrian pathways.

These areas will be appropriately landscaped to allow for extra pedestrian activity throughout the site to ensure that there is a viable, active use in these areas. For this reason, these areas are included in the net developable area of the site even though their use within the overall scheme is restricted.

The strategy of the site layout evolved from a number of key considerations including:

- The decision to position the childcare facility in close proximity to the entrance on the south western boundary, enabling the development of synergies and improving access to and the viability of the facility.
- All open spaces are located to progress through the development and create a sense of place and awareness for residents and visitors alike. These open spaces are carefully positioned given the existing site constraints and position of units on site.



Fig 9: Site Layout

The proposed dwellings are orientated to overlook the open spaces and create passive surveillance for these areas. The open spaces vary with a mix of soft and hard landscaping to further enhance the quality of life in the area. Distinct corner units with individual features address the main corners along the main streets and on the open spaces to provide distinctiveness to the site.

The proposed layout includes 336 no. residential units comprising a mixture of 2, 3, 4 and 5-bed detached, semi-detached and terraced units as well as 1 and 2 bed

duplex/simplex units. The net density is 30 units/ha which is in accordance with national guidelines.

4.3.7 Landscape Design Rationale

As previously noted, the site is currently in agricultural use with the boundary defined by mature hedgerows, trees and hedgerows.

The landscape design of the development site has, where possible been guided and influenced by the topography, the Ecology and Arboriculture appraisal of the site lands and surrounding environment.

Native plant material shall be considered for the scheme, in part, to improve the overall biodiversity of the site. the inclusion of pollinator plants as part of the species mix will be a focused element of the planting palette.

The provision of permeability and improved overall pedestrian movement is one of the core principles of the site layout design. This core principle is coupled with the design objective to provide designed landscape amenity areas which offer comfort, passive supervision, ease of access in terms of the varying age groups and levels of mobility and a safe amenity space for all end users.

Second to the core principle of design is the development of a palette of materials for both hard and soft landscaping to both the amenity lands and the streetscape.



Fig 10: Landscape Plan.

Open Space Hierarchy

The following key elements have been considered as part of the open space detailed design and the protection and overall reinforcement of the sites "Green Infrastructure".

- Pathways which link to surrounding pedestrian routes;
- Structural tree planting and meadow grass mixes with a diverse seed range;
- Incorporation of new part native compensatory woodland blocks with appealing ground flora;
- Naturalised planting blocks;
- Clear demarcation of open spaces to provide form and visual interest; and offer a sense of enclosure/demarcation to the spaces.
- Informal kick-about or multifunctional spaces,
- A variety of seating zones with good aspect and direct views to play areas allowing for passive supervision,
- Natural play opportunities throughout the scheme.
- Opportunity for active and passive recreation,
- Inclusion of alternative play elements/facilities as required by Cork County Council's Recreation and Amenity Policy 2019; including rounded Caledonian play boulders, Robina Stepping stones and stilts and Sway Alley wobble bridge.



Fig 11. Featured elements of designed open space.

Useable Open Space

In total, 1.7 ha of public open space is provided within the development, equating to 15.2% of the net development lands.

Amenity Provision

1.7 ha of public space is provided within the development, equating to 15.2% of the net development lands. The amenity as part of the amenity provision it is proposed to provide 4 no. flexible open space areas with natural play features, a linear green route with a 3m wide shared surface path running along the western boundary and a number of informal grassed areas.

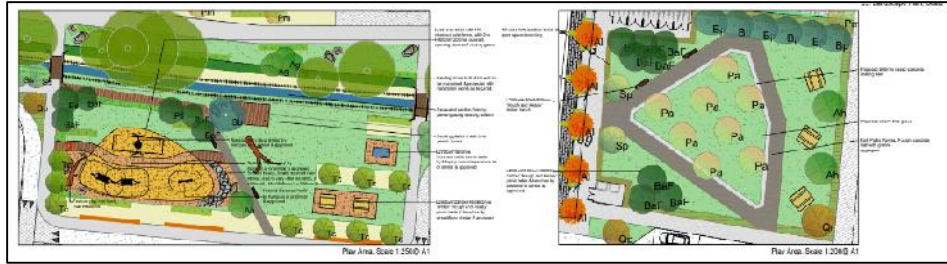


Fig 12: Open space areas.

Softscape Strategy

The softscape strategy for the scheme has aimed to provide a landscape structure of specimen trees, robust ornamental shrubs and hedge planting to soften and compliment the appearance of the built elements whilst also enhancing the setting of the residential units.

The inception of the approach has been to retain the site assets where possible; the existing hedgerows and trees. Due to the nature of their function, as agricultural field boundaries, there has been minimal maintenance during their lifetime to date. With consideration to their future use as prominent landscape features for a new community, appropriate tree works will take place to ensure successful progression of the hedgerow takes place.

The proposed softscape strategy also includes specifying indigenous and pollinator friendly plant species where appropriate

Each dwelling house and duplex /simplex unit is provided with a private garden space to the rear of the dwellings.

Main Entrance – Arrival Space

The Main Entrance – Arrival Space is located to the southwest of the subject site. it is proposed to retain the existing trees where possible and manage same to maximise their ecological values.

The arrival point will be characterful in nature, where the scheme will receive an access road with integrated footpath links (including steps and ramp options). This arrangement will offer an opportunity for a new compensatory landscaping.

Integrated Open Spaces

There are a series of open spaces interwoven throughout the proposed built scheme. The challenge has been to integrate useable open spaces within the site, whilst ensuring the spaces area overlooked, accessible and offer opportunity and address the recreational needs of a range of users.

Many of these open space areas feature informal play elements such as steppers, ladders, slides and climbing boulders to add interest and appeal as well as an alternative natural play element to that of a more regimented play arrangement.

Other key elements of the open spaces include:

- Seating with good aspect;
- Informal seating in the form of rounded boulders/timber posts at a variety of locations;
- Biodiversity enhanced spaces.

4.3.8 Character Areas

The development includes Character areas, which evolve naturally around the primary open spaces and create neighbourhoods with their own distinctiveness.

4.3.9 Traffic

A single vehicular access will be provided on the R639 on the western boundary of the site. This will include the provision of footpath at 2m wide.

Vehicular routes through the site will be calmed through various design measures including alignment, to reduce traffic speeds, with horizontal and vertical deflections introduced as required.

A design speed limit of 30 km/hour has been applied throughout the development in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (function – local road, context – neighbourhood, pedestrian priority).

4.3.10 Proposed Development/Phasing

The proposed development comprises The construction of 336 no. residential units comprising 242 dwellings houses (comprising a mix of 5, 4, 3 and 2 bed detached, semi-detached and townhouse/terraced units) and 94 no. duplex/simplex units (comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bed units), a 587m² creche/childcare facility, the provision of landscaping and amenity areas to include 4 no. flexible open space areas with natural play features, a linear green route with a 3m wide shared surface path running along the western boundary and a number of informal grassed areas, public Realm upgrades along the R639, including a shared footpath and cycleway, a 4m toucan crossing with tactile paving, the proposed alteration to the Barrymore-Coolcarron 38kv line. The proposed alteration will involve the undergrounding of a section of the above mentioned overhead 38kV line to facilitate the housing development and the realignment of approximately 13.6 metres of 38kv overhead line. The proposed alterations will comprise of one (1) 12 metre Type "F" lattice steel end terminate mast structure and one (1) 38kV cable sealing ends. The proposed retirement of 282 metres of overhead conductors and one (1) type "F" Lattice steel mast structure, one (1) Type "C" light angle strain structure and one (1) Type "B" portal suspension structure; and all associated ancillary development including vehicular access on to the R639 road, 2 no. access gates to the existing weighbridge and associated ancillary development, lighting, drainage, boundary treatments, bicycle & car parking and bin storage.

It is proposed to construct the development over 5 phases. A Phasing Drawing is included with this application prepared by Geraldine Coughlan Architects Dwg. No.PL02

4.3.11 Housing/Proposed Density

A range of dwelling types and sizes and provided in the scheme at densities appropriate to the location of the site. These densities are in accordance with the relevant Ministerial Guidelines.

The proposed development comprises the construction of 336 no. residential units, a creche, play areas and all associated site development works with a density of 30 units per hectare which demonstrates an efficient use of the site. The scheme, which will act as a natural extension to the surrounding area, will

provide a varied housing mix that will contribute positively to the urban fabric of Fermoy.

4.3.12 Schedule of Accommodation

A summary of the range of dwelling types and sizes proposed is submitted as part of this application. Please refer to the Housing Quality Assessment by Geraldine Coughlan Architects submitted as part of this application.

4.3.13 Proposed Social Infrastructure

The proposed development makes provision for a crèche of 587 sqm which will facilitate 86 no. childcare places. This facility is located to the west of the site, in close proximity of the site entrance which will allow for convenient accessibility.

The proposal includes parking for both staff and visitors as well as a drop off area.

The location of the site, within 1km of the main street of Fermoy town centre, ensures an adequate provision of essential services and amenities.

4.4 Detailed Design

4.4.1 Materials Palette

The buildings will use materials, proportions, and features that respect and enhance the existing local setting but express it in a more contemporary way. Careful consideration will be given to the individual housing clusters and neighbourhood areas, balancing a palette of materials comprising a mix of brick and render that will offer a cohesive and mixed layout, whilst respecting the existing houses within the locality.

Variations in roof profile, fenestration and elevational treatments will ensure interest and variety throughout the development. Materials have been selected with a view to longevity, durability and low maintenance in line with Building Regulations and include reference to BS 7543:2015 'Guide to Durability of Buildings and Buildings Elements, Products and Components'.



Fig 12: Types of Material Palette.

4.4.2 Building Design Components

The external materials of the units were selected to have a positive contribution to the locality. A proposed mix of brick and render will provide for a contemporary development whilst respecting the existing buildings adjacent to the site. The buildings will be constructed of traditional construction methods, with external materials selected for their durability. The placement of materials (i.e. brick location), elevational treatment and feature treatment will differ in various locations throughout the site to create distinct character areas. Generous open space with landscaping will enhance the overall design of the estate. The design of the buildings and public space will facilitate easy maintenance.

There is a variation of unit type designs for this site. These units are dispersed across the site to offer interesting elevation treatment and avoid a monotonous 'copy and paste' approach.

4.4.3 Adaptability

All houses are designed in accordance with the "Quality Housing for Sustainable communities" document. Houses in the development can be easily adapted to the future needs of occupants.

Provision has been made to extend in the attic or in the back garden of properties.

4.4.4 Homes Zones

A number of shared spaces are provided throughout the development site. The shared spaces allow pedestrians and cyclists to have priority over vehicles. Carriageway widths for the homezones will be 4.8m. Different surface material treatments will be applied to the full length of the homezones combined with no kerbing to further indicate pedestrian and cyclist priority.



Fig 13: Homezone/shared space areas.

4.4.5 Part V Proposal

Part V, s.96 of the Planning and Development Act (PDA) 2000 (as amended) applies to this application. As highlighted above the proposed development will result in an overall development of 336 no. residential units, therefore the applicant is obliged to provide 33 no. residential units in accordance with the 10% required by the Act.

In relation to **Part V** the applicant proposes to meet the site-specific Part V obligation through the transfer of 33 no. dwellings on site. These units are dispersed in clusters throughout the proposed development. An assessment of

the 'Part V Costs Methodology' for the proposed Part V houses is submitted as part of the application documents in the Part V Report by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants.



Fig 14: Part V unit locations.

4.4.6 Compliance with DMURS

The site layout has been designed to calm traffic naturally and ensure low driving speeds within the development minimising noise and air pollution. In addition, a range of physiological and physical measures including varying building lines, boundary treatments, street trees, frequent crossing points and junctions, horizontal deflections, tighter corner radii and shared surfaces have been adopted to ensure appropriate traffic speeds within the proposed development.

Changes of surface materials will inform drivers of a change in the hierarchy and notify the drivers of shared surfaces, and raised tables are provided as pedestrian crossings. Shared surfaces have been located on some streets to promote more liveable streets. Reduced corner radii and carriage widths promote lower speeds on the shared surfaces. The pedestrian / cycle paths provided offer the most direct routes through the proposed development.

5. Conclusion

This Planning and Design Statement provides an assessment of the design approach of the proposed scheme having regard to the relevant planning policy documents at national and local levels, including in particular the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages), the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a national level, and the 2014 Cork County Development Plan, 2022 Draft Cork County Development Plan and the 2017 Fermoy Local Area Plan at a Local Planning Policy level. It is submitted that the proposed SHD development is consistent with each of these documents and will provide a positive and significant contribution to the housing supply at Coolcarron, Fermoy, Co. Cork.