FOSTERSTOWN NORTH SHD

Design Statement

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Applicant:
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PCOT Architects
Architectural submission

ARROW
Architectural submission

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Contents

1.0

Introduction

1.1 Client Brief and Project Aspirations

1.1.1 This document, prepared in addition to the SHD application drawings, has been produced by ARROW Architects and PCOT Architects for the client J. Murphy (Developments) Limited. It describes the proposed development on a site at Fosterstown North, Swords. It is located approximately 1,0km south of Swords Main Street along the R132/ Dublin Road and less than 3 kilometres north of Dublin Airport.

1.1.2 The proposed scheme comprises residential, an element of commercial units, a community facility and a childcare facility. The information within this document summarises the iterative design process undertaken for the site, the background of the project and the factors that influenced the evolution and development of the current design.

1.1.3 The document responds to The Urban Design Manual Best Practice (2009) that sets out 12no criteria for sustainable residential development and objective DMS03 of the Development Plan. The analysis establishes how the development adheres to those criteria. Summary of the design response for each have been listed under the Section 16 of this document.

Fig 1.1: The site

Fig 1.2: Axo diagram of the proposal

1.2 General description

1.2.1 The layout was developed in response to the specific requirements of the site, dictated by its zoning, profile and physical context, in particular the stream on the northern boundary and necessity to provide future access to the lands to the North.

1.2.2 The location of the Public Open Space has been carefully considered to maximise its use, amenity value and visually soften the impact of the development. Our intention is to improve the amenities of the adjoining properties by developing this site, to an appropriate scale and design which will revitalise the area socially, physically and commercially. The dwellings and building design will respect the existing site constraints and respond to the opportunities while at the same time giving it a modern interpretation.

1.2.3 The internal road network creates a calm and composed environment by virtue of the number, layout and composition of dwellings. Our proposal will be a positive urban response to the local context, place making and identity of the area. High quality materials and finishes are proposed throughout the scheme both in the buildings and the landscaping and will have a positive impact on the local context and future developments in the neighbourhood.

1.3 Initial design proposal

1.3.1 Design proposal Stage 2 - Pre-Application Consultation (2020) was prepared by PCOT Architects and other design team members. Arrow Architects were not engaged at this stage.

1.3.2 The design proposal submitted to An Board Pleanala in May 2020 is set out in the following images. This was subject to a tri-partite meeting held on the 27th of November 2020, with the Board's Opinion issued on the 3rd of December 2020.

1.3.3 The pre-application proposal included 705 no. residential units and retail/retail services units, a resident amenity facility and a creche together with associated site and infrastructure works. The Board's Opinion set out three specific items requiring further consideration by the applicant and design team, relating to the vehicular access, the design and height of the proposed buildings, and foul water drainage proposals. In addition, 17no items for further information was requested.

1.3.4 Details on the key design moves and response to ABP opinion have been expanded further down in the following section.

Fig 1.3: Initial site plan and layout proposal

1.4 ABP Opinion's Response

1.4.1 This is a response to Item 2, below, in the ABP Opinion which was issued in relation to a pre application meeting in December 2020 Ref Number ABP 307260-20.

> *"Further consideration of the documents as they relate to the design and heights of the proposed buildings. In addition to the local statutory plans, the submitted documentation should have regard to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Building Heights and Urban Development, 2018 including its specific planning policy requirements, and the need to provide a sufficient density of development on the site and a high standard of architectural and urban design and residential amenity particularly with respect to adequate amenity areas and sunlight/ daylight access. If it is proposed to materially contravene the provisions of the local area plan, then a statement justifying the contravention is required to be submitted".*

1.4.2 Response to An Bord Pleanala Opinion relating to the design and heights of the proposed buildings.

1.4.3 Since the pre application meeting the design has evolved and advanced significantly with regard to both the overall site layout design and the massing, fenestration and architectural expression of the blocks and their facades.

1.4.5 The original pre application was for 705 units in a variety of 11 No detached blocks of varying heights including a creche and commercial units.

1.4.6 The current application is for a reduced 645 units in 3 No detached rectangular blocks, including a creche and commercial units with the balance of the blocks organised around 2 No landscaped courtyards separated by a boulevard connecting the civic space to the riparian strip.

1.4.7 The layout has developed to reflect the general format as suggested in the Swords Masterplan Part C: Fosterstown May 2019. Rather than the single individual blocks originally proposed, there are now longer angular blocks to form high quality urban spaces with distinctive environments, each with its own unique identity.

1.4.8 What is now proposed provides the optimal urban design and architectural solution with the choice of an exceptional variety of high-quality materials, building heights and design elements to create quality architecture, thus providing a positive contribution to the character of the site in this location for the foreseeable future.

1.4.9 A number of strategies were adopted in order to achieve this:

- Copenhagen based Arrow Architects were appointed to collaborate with the enhancement of the public realms including the elevational and fenestration treatment of the buildings

- Provide lower heights adjoining existing residential area on the periphery of the site and provide a strong urban edge to the R132 to the north of the site, where taller development will be supported and the location is capable of absorbing more scale

- Ground floor activation and animation of the spaces along the boulevard which links the civic space to the riparian strip by the use of own door residential and commercial units.

- Creating gaps, voids and steps within the apartment blocks to allow light penetration, visual permeability and interaction with glimpses and views from both within and without the courtyard areas.

- Introduce a composition of 3no character areas with individual look and feel each that responds to specific site's criteria. In order to emphasis the strategic location of the site and its scale it is believed that this variety in both architectural design and materiality are required.

1.5 ABP Opinion's Response

- Give a strong unique identity to both the overall scheme and the individual urban, public and private spaces created, with each of the areas having their own specific character and identity as different colours, materials and textures are used. There is a variety of scale and architectural treatment including façade articulation but still creating a consistency and uniformity to give the overall scheme a sense of place and identity.

- Design amended with a change in direction in the overall height strategy with Block 10 becoming a landmark building as it is at the northern end of the site and won't directly overshadow the other blocks and the other blocks stepping elsewhere to achieve a roofline profile similar to that in the Masterplan. The proposed development has building heights which are in keeping with the principle of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guideline for Planning Authorities December 2018 and an appropriate density to match. Still achieving the key objective with regard to 'a variety of heights to create visual interest and to facilitate access to light', the various blocks address the street and internal courtyard areas to create unique spaces.

- Placemaking by the creation of a new neighbourhood with a unique character and distinct architecture with the use of varying colours, materials and textures.

- Create a hierarchy of public and private spaces within the develop that are accessible and overlooked, each with their own character and providing a mix of active and passive open spaces

- Density to a scale to reflect the principles and aspiration of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guideline for Planning Authorities December 2018 for brownfield infill sites.

- Creating permeability and connectivity, including future access to the lands to the north and the existing adjoining developments together with the provision of football pitches, a creche and other ancillary community accommodation.

1.5.1 Fingal County Councils main areas of concern, in their opinion, were with regard to the building form, massing and lack of variety, this lack of sufficient variety manifesting itself in both the scale and the forms of the buildings.

1.5.2 The current proposal addresses all of these concerns with a much greater attention to detail, materials, colours and how they are integrated into the overall scheme to give a clear design intent and identity while at the same time meeting the ancillary needs of the riparian corridor, football pitches and civic space and still achieving high level of permeability and connectivity.

1.5.3 In addressing all of the key issues raised by the Board and Fingal County Council in satisfying their requirements we have successfully provided a design justification for the proposed development in respect to any elements which may be contrary to the Swords Masterplan Part C: Fosterstown May 2019 or the Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 while at the same time being consistent with the relevant, national, regional and local planning policies.

1.5.4 In conclusion we are of the opinion that the SHD as proposed fully responds to Item 2 of the Board's opinion and is appropriate to this site, with its inherent infrastructure and public trasport accessibility can provide for 'compact and sustainable urban growth' in close proximity to the town of Swords.

1.6 ABP Opinion's Response

Fig 1.4: Initial massing proposal

Fig 1.5: Revised massing proposal by 3DDB

Fig 1.6: Initial massing proposal

Fig 1.7: Revised massing proposal by 3DDB

1.7 ABP Opinion's Response

Fig 1.8: Initial massing proposal

Fig 1.9: Initial massing proposal

Fig 1.10: Revised massing proposal

Fig 1.11: Revised massing proposal

NEIGHBOURHOOD

2.0

Context

2.1 Site context

2.1.1 The site is situated in the southern part of Swords known as Fosterstown North, on the Dublin Road (R132) opposite Airside Retail Park. Swords is a Metropolitan consolidation Town in Dublin, the County town of Fingal and one of the larger population settlements in the Greater Dublin Area.

2.1.2 The town is very well connected to Dublin City Centre via the M1 motorway, with journey time approximately 30 minutes.

2.1.3 The town is also well connected to numerous smaller towns and employment centres to the north with continuous motorway and road connections to Drogheda, Dundalk and Belfast. The site is approximately a 30 minute (41 km) drive to Drogheda.

2.1.4 The application site is situated 1,0 km from Swords Town Centre and is currently accessed from the Dublin Road (R132). The site is located opposite to the proposed location of the Fosterstown Metro stop. It is well serviced by public transport and there are a number of Dublin Bus routes operating via the Dublin Road, as well as Bus Eireann and Swords Express. There is also a bus stop directly outside the site and future upgrade proposals under Bus Connects. The future Metro North will provide for even better connections to Dublin.

Fig 2.1: Site context plan

2.2 Local context

2.2.1 The site is currently in agricultural use and is bounded by agricultural lands to the north (these lands, together with the proposed site, form the overall Fosterstown Masterplan), the existing residential development of Boroimhe to the south and west and the Dublin Road to the east.

2.2.2 There is an existing stream (the Gaybrooh) on the northern boundary.

2.2.3 Site elevation varies, with levels rising from north to south generally.

Fig 2.2: Site Topography extract from Swords MasterplansPart C: (2019)

Fig 2.3: Plan diagram of local context

2.3 Visual context

2.3.1 SITE PHOTOS

2.3.2 Opposite are a number of site photos illustrating the existing condition of the application site.

1. Dublin Road (R132)

2. North- East corner of the site

3. South-East corner of the site

4. Northern boundary of the site

5. East- West boundary of the site

Boundary of the Site along Dublin Road

1.

Airside Retail & Business Park

3.

Trees and shrubs along the stream

Boundary of the Site along Dublin Road

2.

Housing at Boroimhe Willows

Trees and shrubs along the stream

4.

Airside Retail & Business Park

Housing along Forest Road

5.

2.4 Planning Policy context

2.4.1 JSA's Statement of Consistency and Planning Report provides a detailed assessment of the planning policy context, which is briefly summarised herein.

2.4.2 The subject site is zoned Residential Area (RA) with the objective "Provide for new residential communities subject to the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure" in the Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023 (CDP).

2.4.3 The proposed development is located in an area designated MP.8.I I the CDP. The Fosterstown Masterplan has been prepared by the Planning Authority and informed the proposed development (see JSA's planning reports). The key objectives / guiding principles set out in the Development Plan of relevance to the subject site and Fosterstown Masterplan are as follows

- Provide for required road improvements including: the construction of the Fosterstown Link Road; realignment and improvements to the Forrest Road and improvements to the R132 (including Pinnock Hill) as part of the phased development of the Masterplan Lands.

- Provide for a vehicular connection to the adjoining MC zoned lands to the north.

- In order to protect existing residential amenities, where development immediately adjoins existing residential development, the heights of such development shall be restricted to 2-3 storeys.

- Future development shall provide a strong urban edge with attractive elevations which satisfactorily address, overlook and provide a high degree of informal supervision of the R132, the Forrest Road and the Fosterstown Link Road.

2.4.4 As set out in this Design Statement, and illustrated through the architectural drawings, and the accompanying application documentation, the proposals have regard to and have been informed by the Fosterstown Masterplan, with some variation in height, unit mix, density and phasing proposed in light of Government policy and guidelines, and given the accessibility of the subject site and location within the Metropolitan Consolidation Town of Swords (please refer to JSA's Material Contravention Statement for further details and justification).

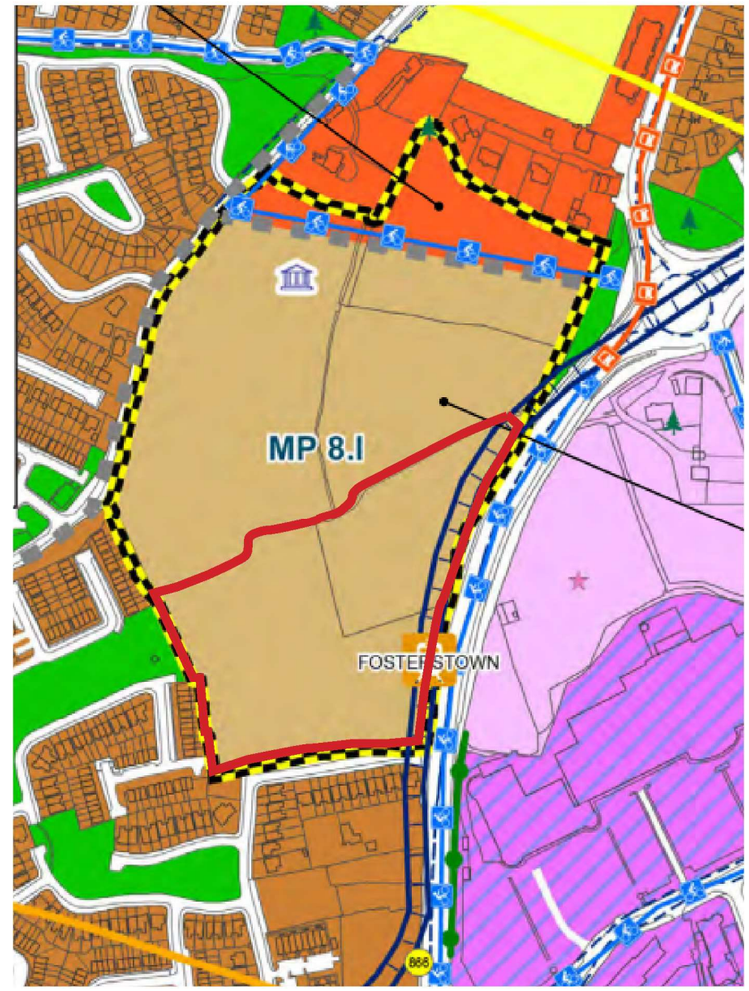


Fig 2.4: Land use zone map with site outline (Fingal Coco Development Plan 2017 - 2023)

- Facilitate the indicative route for new Metro North through these lands and an appropriate relationship with the indicative route for new Metro North at this location.

- The existing stream which crosses the lands shall be maintained within a riparian corridor. The majority of the public open space shall be provided along the stream and it shall link into the existing public open space at Boroimhe.

Fig 2.5: Extract from Swords Masterplans Part C: Fosterstown (2019)

2.5 Fosterstown Masterplan Context

2.5.1 The subject lands are contained within the Fosterstown Masterplan area, consisting of the southern portion of the designated land. The Fosterstown Masterplan, which was adopted in May 2019, is Part C to the Swords Masterplans prepared in response to Objective SWORDS 27 of the Development Plan. The following provides an overview of the vision and key principles for the Masterplan lands, which have informed the design process as justify below.

The Vision

2.5.2 The vision for Fosterstown is to create a residential community that is mixed and balanced and forms a clear nexus with the scale of commercial development anticipated on the nearby Barrysparks & Crowscastle area. The Fosterstown lands have a unique opportunity to utilise the new connections that will emerge in Swords via the MetroLink station and Core Bus Corridor on the R132.

2.5.3 The proposed development has been designed to address all of the principles and objectives as set out in the Masterplan in a coherent and sustainable manner.

Land Use

- The lands at Fosterstown are envisaged to be residential in nature, reflecting the existing residential character of the surrounding area and aligning with the proposed MetroLink station at 'Fosterstown'. The Fosterstown lands will balance and connect with the scale of commercial development anticipated on the nearby Barrysparks & Crowscastle area.

Open Space

- The majority of public open space shall be provided along the existing stream and it shall link into the existing public open space at Boroimhe. The riparian corridor will provide pedestrian and cycle facilities to facilitate the movement of people through the site and to the station and wider Swords area.

Fig 2.6: Site Diagrams by Arrow Architects

Transport and Movement

- The Masterplan seeks to facilitate strong pedestrian and cyclist connections, as well as strong connections to the town centre and public transport infrastructure. Car dominance will be discouraged and active travel promoted. Pedestrian and cyclist connections have been incorporated to facilitate access to Swords Main Street.

Green Infrastructure

- Green Infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout of development, with flood risk mitigated by SuDS features. These proposed green corridors will provide significant pedestrian and cyclist linkages, and support a rich biodiversity in the area whilst reducing the carbon footprint of new developments.

Fig 2.7: Site Diagrams by Arrow Architects

Built Form, typologies and density

- This Masterplan envisions a community that can adapt and grow with the changing needs of its residents, with a mixture of residential typologies and a mixture of bedroom sizes. This will ensure that the development can continue to grow with the population. Lower density dwellings have been incorporated along existing residential communities to the south and west, with higher density dwellings located through the centre and

Heights

- The height rationale for Fosterstown takes cognisance of all existing developments in the surrounding area, and its strategic position along the R132. Heights on the land will range from 4 to 10 storeys. Heights will not exceed 4 storeys fronting the houses at Boroimhe Willows.

Interface Areas

- The building heights and typology proposed considered a development form and structure that is compatible with the adjacent communities. Density and height respectfully transition down towards the residential dwellings to the south and west. The R132 provides the opportunity to develop higher density building types, with the potential for a landmark building at the Plaza.

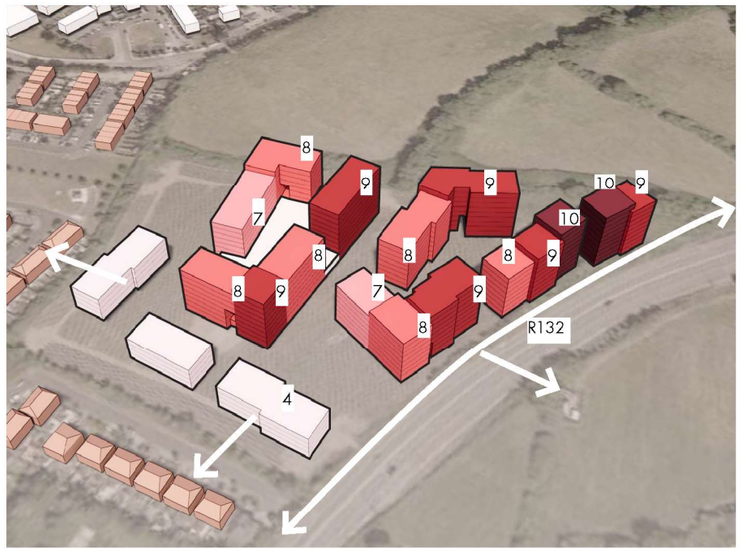
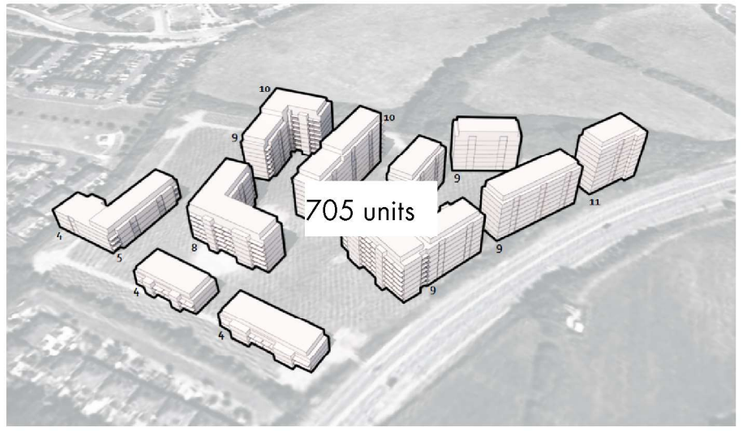


Fig 2.8: Site Diagrams by Arrow Architects

Fingal County Council Masterplan massing (485 units)

Significant density reduction and value evaluation.



Initial scheme's massing (705 units) (As submitted in 2020)

2.6 Improved massing strategies

2.6.1 Based on the initial massing studies and analysis of the masterplan further opportunities to improve the scheme have been investigated. Building heights have been carefully considered to respond to both the masterplan and project's objectives.

1. First scheme alteration- reduced heights (650 units).

Number of levels have been reduced throughout all buildings. The extra units could be achieved by filling some gaps and extending some buildings.

2. Second scheme alteration- revised heights and massing (650 units)

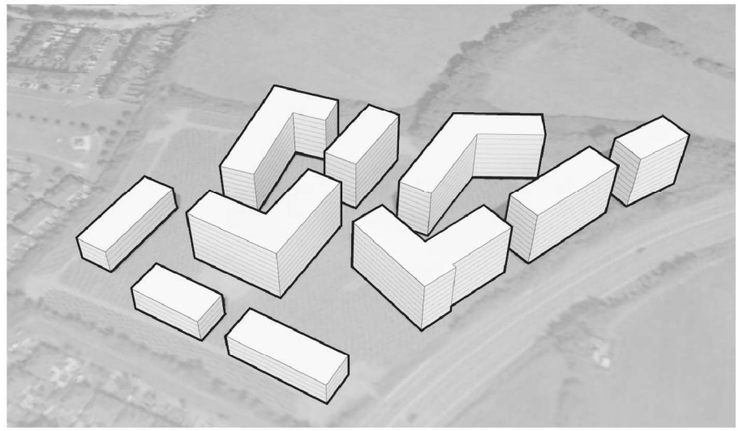
This study seeks to break the scale of the largest blocks and revise the location of the lowest/ highest buildings on site.

Following the heights principle shown as per Fingal County Council Masterplan (2019), while maintaining the current massing and layouts it is possible to achieve around 650 units.

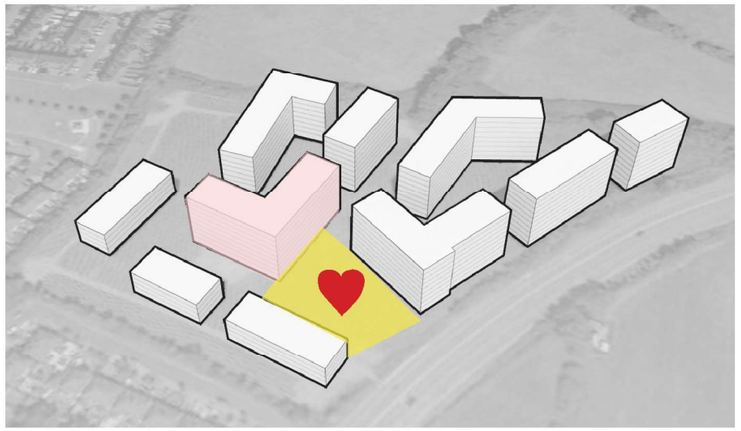
Ground Floor is to be animated by the series of both Commercial and Amenity spaces.

Fig 2.9: Site Diagrams by Arrow Architects

2.7 Further Design Evolution

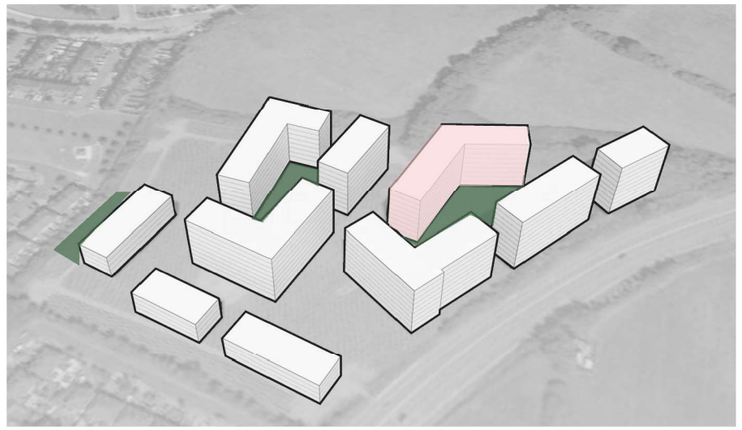


START - ISSUES: Public Square, Communal Courtyards need stronger definition, definition of public/semi public & private space, Establish strong infrastructure hierarchy.



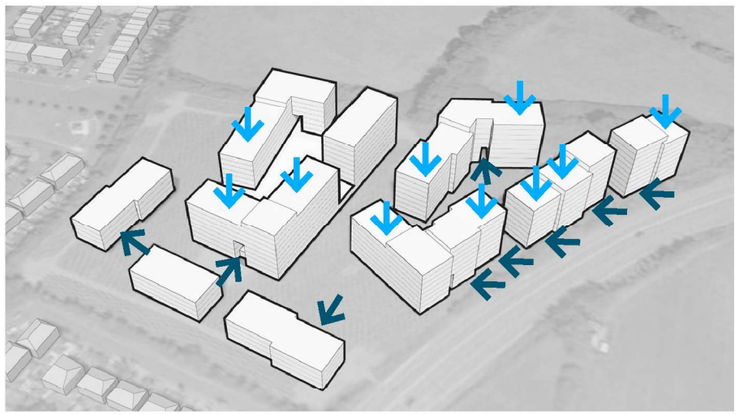
STEP 1 - PLACEMAKING

Frame the urban space, increase square frontage.



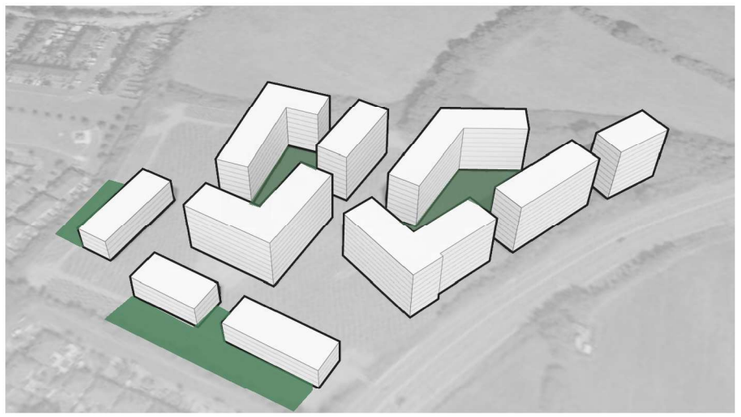
STEP 2- COMMUNAL SPACE

Frame the courtyards and define ownership boundaries.



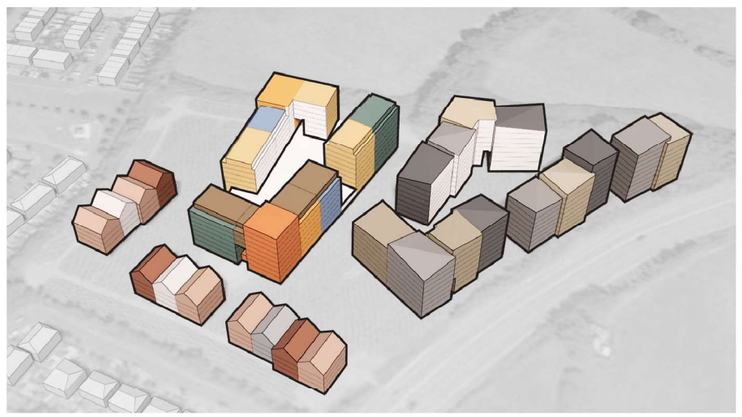
STEP 4 - BUILDING HEIGHT AND SET OUTS

Break the scale by using varying heights & explore massing options by creating set outs.



STEP 5 - COURTYARDS AND GARDENS

Create a permeable pedestrian area and providing a mix of the activated varied public realm and green spaces.



STEP 6- MATERIALITY

Reinforce individual block's identities using varied materials, colour, texture and design character.

Fig 2.10: Site Diagrams by Arrow Architects

Fig 2.11: Axo of the site proposal

2.8 Site Constraints & Opportunities

2.8.1 The site has a number of significant physical constraints and opportunities which inform the development and dictate the form and arrangement of new buildings:

1. Respond to road R132 frontage in scale and facade treatment

2. Accommodate public plaza adequate as a centre

3. Provide a feature block overlooking the plaza

4. Create a clear relation with a future Fostertown Metro Station

5. Facilitate the Central Green Corridor and greenery distribution throughout the site

2.8.2 Result: Variety of form, massing and roofscape results in a series of distinct buildings and spaces between.

2.9 Design Proposal

2.9.1 The initial form of the blocks were largely driven by the permitted Masterplan for the area. The proposals progressed through the stages of the Strategic Housing Development Process and through consultation with internal and external consultants and design process resulting in a scheme of 645 units.

NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS:

1 BED APARTMENT	208 - 32%
2 BED (4P) APARTMENT	410 - 64%
3 BED APARTMENT	27 - 4%
TOTAL	**645**

ORIENTATION OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS:

DUAL ASPECT UNITS	**447** - 69%
SINGLE ASPECT UNITS	**198** - 31%

COMMUNAL AMENITY SPACE REQUIRED:

1 BED APARTMENT	208 x 5 = 1040
2 BED (4P) APARTMENT	410 x 7 = 2870
3 BED APPARTMENT	27 x 9 = 243
TOTAL	**4153 m2**

Fig 2.12: Axo of the site proposal looking south to north

Fig 2.13: Axo of the site proposal looking north to south

3.0

Connections

NEIGHBOURHOOD

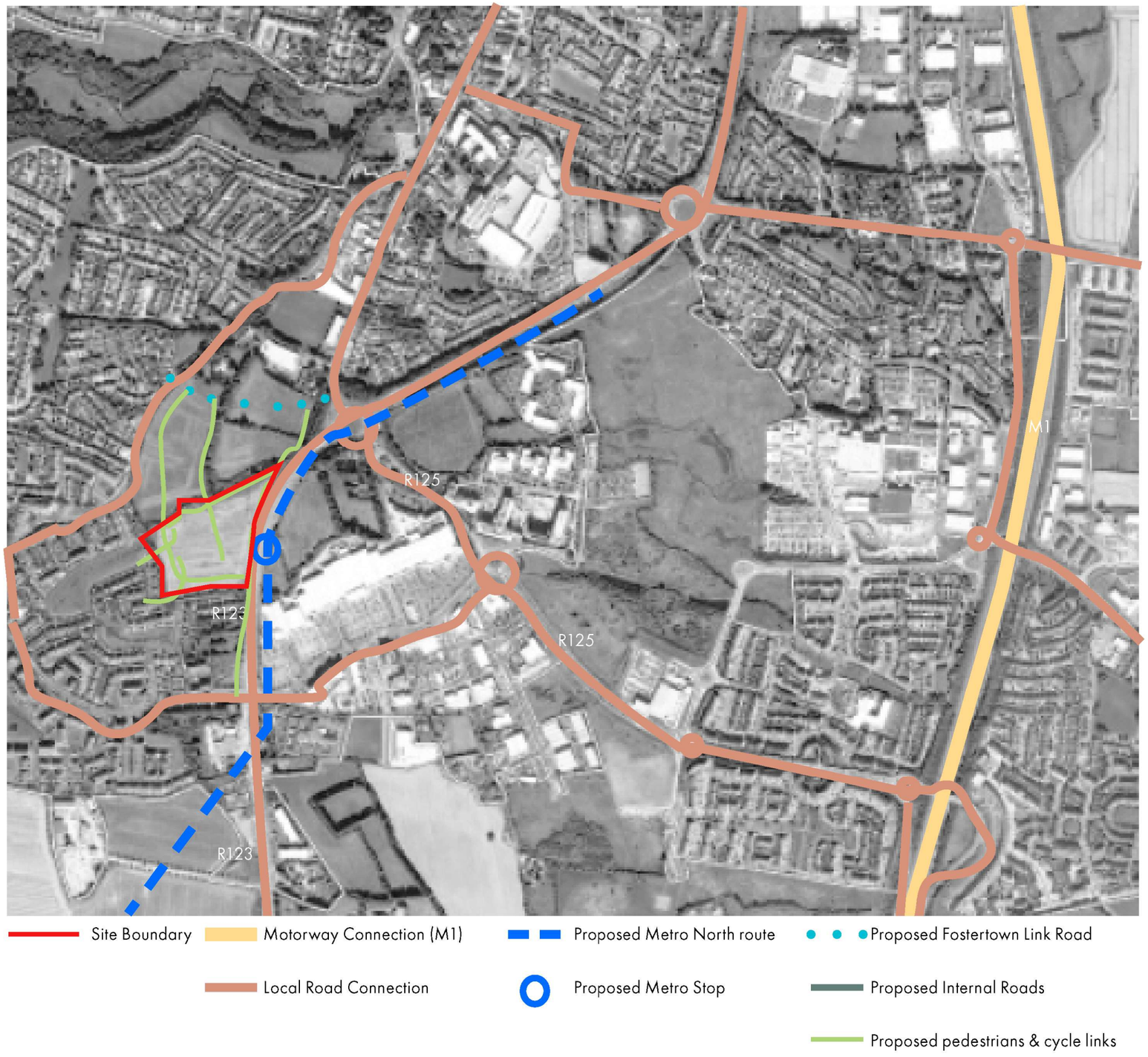
3.1 Site connections

3.1.1 The site has direct links to the national road network (M1/M50), and is located on the Dublin/ Belfast economic corridor. The M1 runs north-south along the east of the Swords, and links with the M50 to the south. The R132, which run directly along eastern boundary of the site, links Dublin Airport to Swords and continues north as a secondary route along the M1.

3.1.2 The MetroLink project is a high frequency/ high-capacity urban railway service that will run between Swords and Dublin City Centre, connecting key destinations such as Dublin Airport en route. The presence of the Fosterstown Metro Station, as well as the upcoming BusConnects project, presents a unique opportunity to create a community with excellent public transport links and reduced reliance on the private car.

3.1.3 Key principles:

- Future Fosterstown MetroLink station, just opposite the site, well connected via pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Proposed pedestrian and cyclist connections to link with existing infrastructure.
- Vehicular assess to the site from R132 and new Fosterstown Link Road.



3.2 Site connectivity

3.2.1 The design and layout are legible and can provide transparent development plan. Layout is well connected and movement router is integrated with existing road infrastructure.

3.2.2 The development has been designed to ensure for a future connection to adjoining lands both pedestrian and vehicular.

3.2.3 Public open space in front of apartment blocks will provide for formal and informal social and recreational interactions.

3.2.4 The design and layout facilitate an easy access to buildings and spaces. The layout and landscape will comply with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations for People with Disabilities.

3.2.5 The development will also provide for accessible car parking spaces.

3.2.6 All apartments have been designed with both lift and stair access for universal use. Equally internal layouts lobbies etc comply with the requirements of Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents.

3.2.7 Childcare facility and community facility have been relocated to a focal point of the scheme to allow easy reachability .

Fig 3.1: Plan diagram of the site conectivity

NEIGHBOURHOOD

4.0

Inclusivity

4.1 Inclusivity

4.2 The proposed development includes a wide mix of unit types/ sizes including 1,2,3 bed house in a variety of formats to cater for as many household types,living arrangements and demographics as possible. All units within the development will meet the requirements of Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents where accessibility is concerned.

4.3 The design of the entrances has been carefully addressed to ensure strong legibility along roads from the distance. The development includes a range of single level unit types for improved accessibility including own door on grade apartments.

4.4 The landscape design for the public open space ensures a comfortable and gradual accessible pedestrian route rising up south to north. Falls and gradients will be minimised wherever possible on site and level access will be provided at all parking locations and at the front doors of all units.

4.4.1 The landscape design promotes walking and cycling and the provision of amenities to support and connect Residents and Local community.

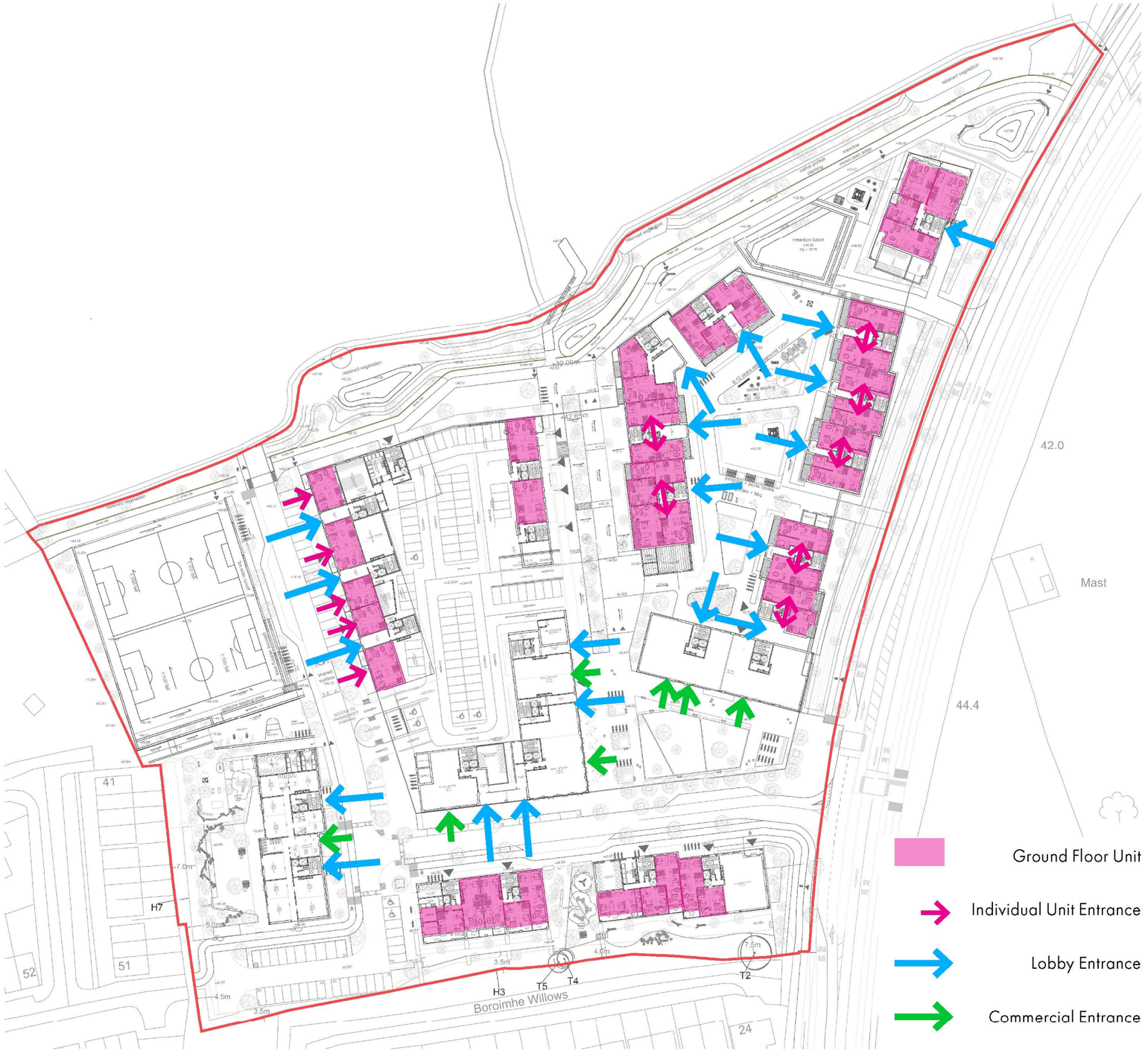


Fig 4.1: Plan diagram showing entrances and accessible ground floor units

Fig 4.2: Block C Courtyard

Fig 4.3: Block C Courtyard

Fig 4.4: Accessible Gardening (Precedent from Trafalgar Square by dRMM, London)

Fig 4.5: Communal Spaces (Precedent from Trafalgar Square by dRMM, London)

NEIGHBOURHOOD

5.0

Variety

5.1 Variety

5.1.1 Proposed development creates a mixed community by providing a range of unit types and tenures and apartments of varying sizes. There is a large variety of different apartment types provided for within the development.

5.1.2 These can be broadly categorized as follows:

- 1 Bed Apartments
- 2 Bed Apartments (3 Persons)
- 2 Bed Apartments (4 Persons)
- 3 Bed Apartments

5.1.3 All apartments have been designed in accordance with the Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments DoHPLG March 2020.

5.1.4 Proposed development provide various local amenities such as: Commercial Units, Community facilities, Childcare facility.

5.1.5 Different range of recreational facilities including pocket parks, communal open spaces, civic spaces and sport grounds.

Fig 5.1: Axo of the ground floor uses distribution

Fig 5.2: Street View from Plaza looking West towards Block 3

Fig 5.3: Street View from Plaza looking East along Commercial frontage

SITE

6.0

Efficiency

6.1 Efficiency

6.1.1 The proposal looks at the potential of higher densities, taking into account appropriate location of the site, accessibility by public transport and the objectives of good design. Therefore, the higher densities are provided in the more accessible locations closer to Swords Town Centre and adjacent to R132.

6.1.2 Buildings and spaces are distributed to make the most of sunlight / daylight. For more details on daylight/ sunlight approach please refer to section 15.0 in this document.

6.1.3 The landscaped areas are designed to provide amenity and biodiversity with open spaces arranged around existing landscape features and landscape buffer zone - existing stream.

6.1.4 The apartment buildings generally step down from 10 storeys at the north-east corner of the site to 4 storeys joining the Boroimhe estate at the south side of the side. This provide for the sun to penetrate the scheme without higher buildings overshadowing lower.

Fig 6.1: Plan diagram showing the heights spread along the site

Fig 6.2: East Elevation of Blocks 8, 9 and 10 along R123

SITE

7.0

Distinctiveness

7.1 Distinctiveness

7.1.1 The proposals create a sense of place and this is reinforced by the creation of 3 individual neighbourhood character areas naturally divided by the proposed internal road:

- **Area A (Blocks 1,2,3) - lower density**

Blocks are 4 storeys high. More traditional facade treatment with majority faces to be brick. Middle face of Block 1 is corrugated metal cladding and the ground floor of Block 3 is textured render to emphasise the creche's function in this area.

- **Area B (Blocks 4,5,6) - higher density terraces with the views around the site**

Blocks are 7-9 storeys high. The architectural treatment changes to a more contemporary style for the apartment area south of the internal road.

Materials used are render and brick. Feature Block 4 facing plaza is the strongest red colour with some more articulated facade.

- **Area C (Blocks 7,8,9,10) - higher density terraces facing R132 and Green Corridor.**

Colour palette is kept in monochrome brick finish with some breaking points of champagne corrugated cladding.

Fig 7.1: Axo of the proposed design and Block's characters

AREA A

Fig 7.2: Typical elevation of Block A and colour palette below

AREA B

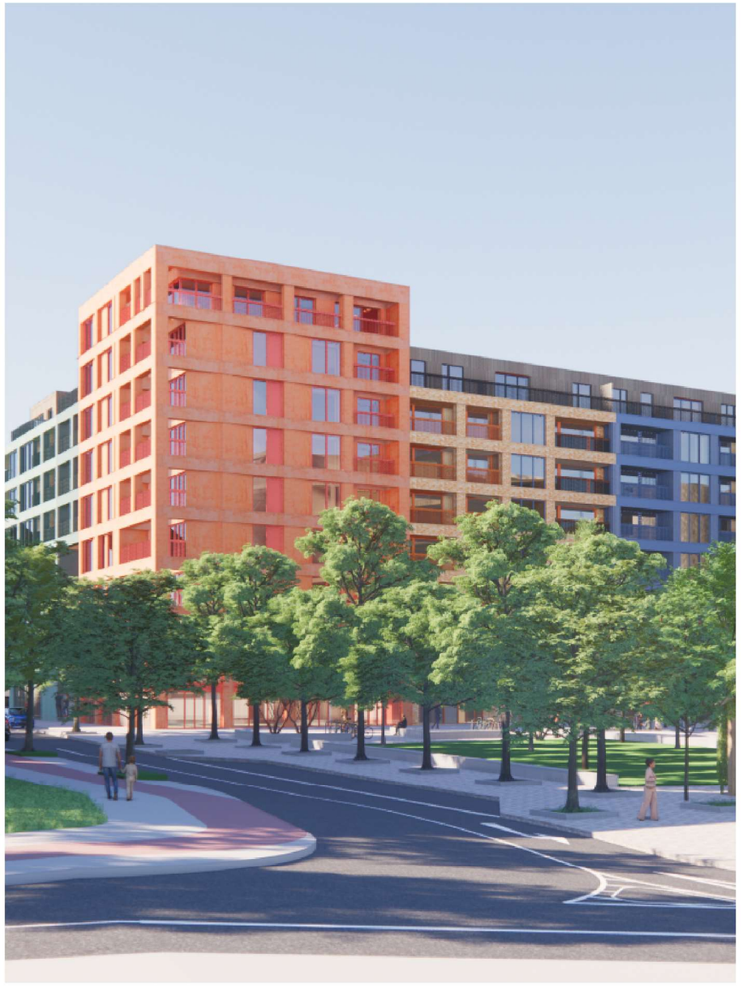


Fig 7.3: Typical elevation of Block B and colour palette below

AREA C

Fig 7.4: Typical elevation of Block C and colour palette below

SITE

8.0

Layout

8.1 Accommodation

8.1.1 The development of the site layout has been informed by the Link Road provided for future access to the adjoining zoned lands to the North and the existing stream which is to be used for the creation of a linear park.

8.1.2 These two elements feature both in how the landscape is arranged and also how the built form and streetscape is defined and contribute to dividing and linking the site into various character areas.

8.1.3 The majority of buildings face onto open space areas to promote social interaction and ensure safety/passive surveillance.

8.1.4 The proposed layout includes active frontage along the Dublin Road with a residential square/formal civic space provided right in front of the future location of the proposed Fosterstown Metro Stop feeding off the non residential uses at ground floor level in this area.

8.1.5 Care has been taken to arrange the apartments blocks to avoid any overbearing impact on the existing houses in the vicinity with smaller scale blocks being placed next to these.

Fig 8.1: Top floor view with the layout and distribution of green roofs

8.2 Phasing plan

8.2.1 The proposed layout and road network allows for a rational phased development of the site while at the same time minimising the impact of development on the surrounding area and transport infrastructure in the vicinity.

8.2.2 The phasing will allow for the early delivery of essential infrastructure including roads, landscaping open spaces and green areas in order to create the right environment for future delivery of a high quality living and working environment.

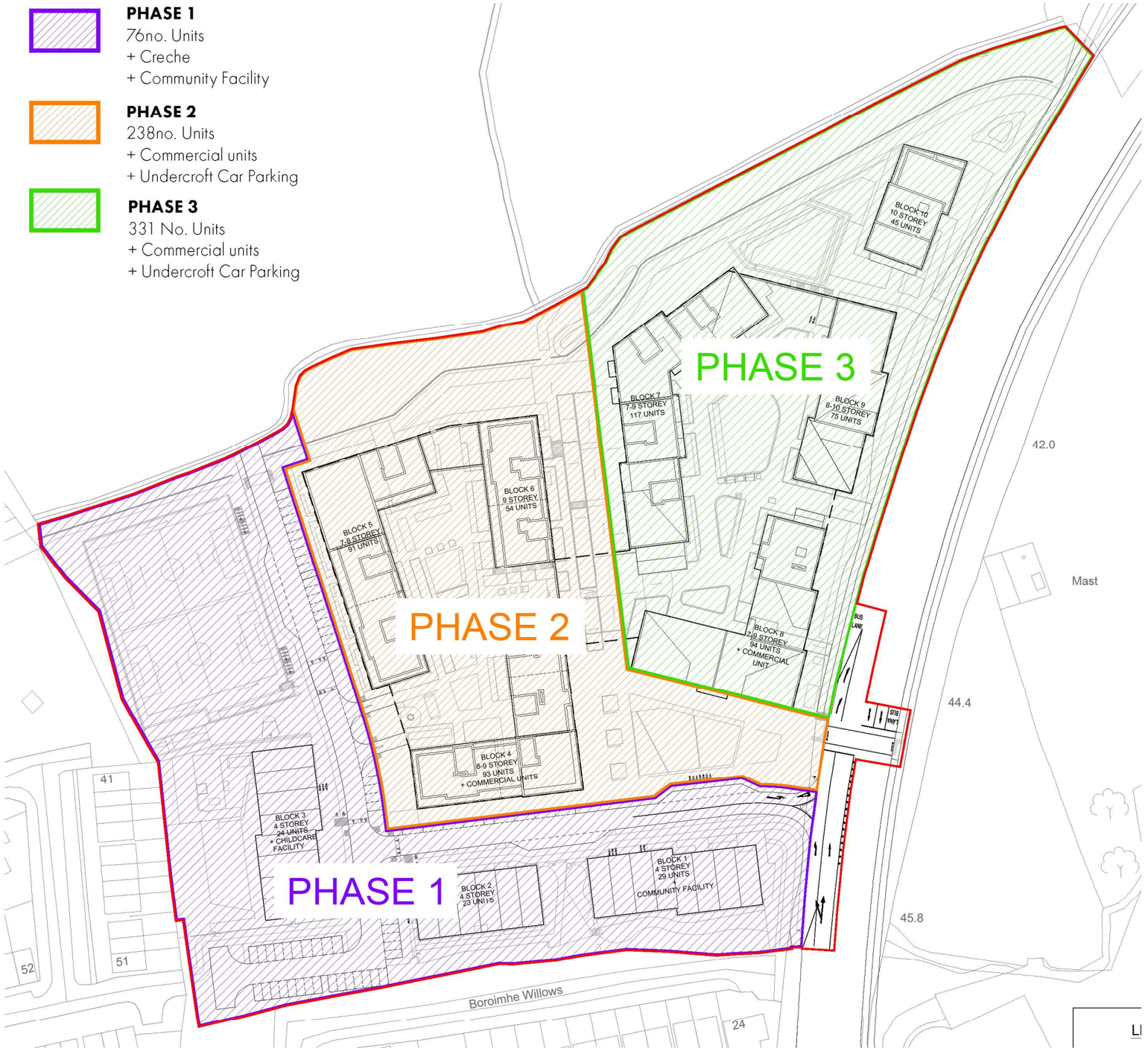


Fig 8.2: Plan diagram showing the heights spread along the site

SITE

9.0

Public realm

9.1 Open Spaces

9.1.1 The public open spaces are an integral element of the design. They promote social interaction, environmental sustainability in addition to enhancing permeable circulation routes.

9.1.2 All proposed public open space is overlooked by surrounding buildings, there are no gable ends directly adjoining open space.

9.1.3 Roads and parking areas are integral landscaped elements of the proposed public realm. Rather than dominate the layout, roads and parking have been designed such that the public realm is prioritized yet not at the expense or convenience of access to roads and parking.

9.1.4 Open spaces are distributed across the site and are easily accessible from units. All open spaces are functional and useable.

9.1.5 Children's play areas are distributed around the site where they will be overlooked, safe and contribute to the amenities of the neighborhood.

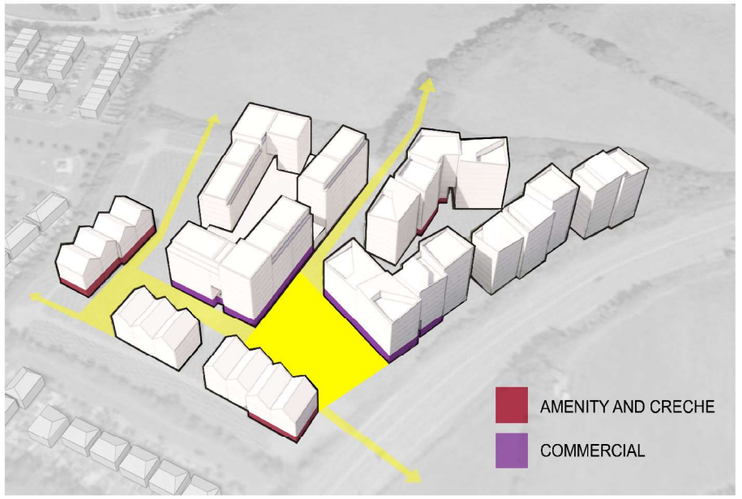


Fig 9.1: Diagram of the Ground Floor distribution

Fig 9.2: Public space precedent

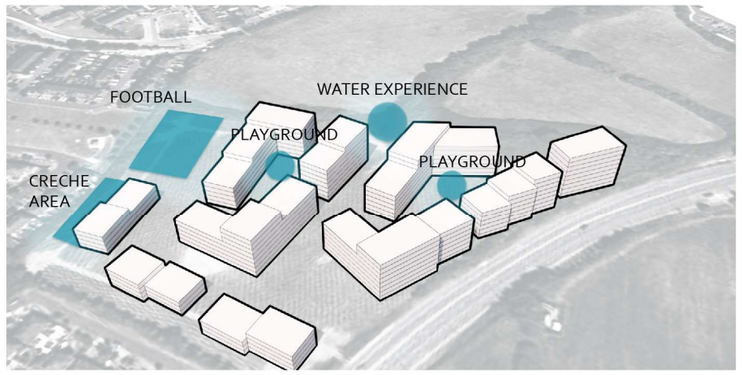


Fig 9.3: Diagram of the communal spaces

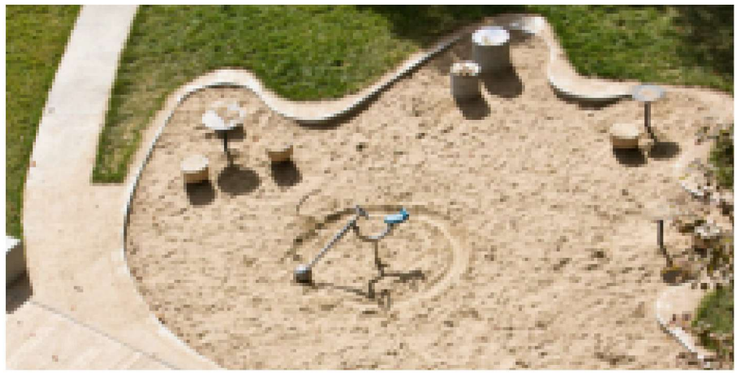


Fig 9.4: Playground precedent

Fig 9.5: Diagram of the green strategy

Fig 9.6: Natural landscape links precedent

Fig 9.7: Streetview looking towards the Creche's playground and Block 3

9.2 Communal areas

9.2.1 Variation of both private and communal open areas are proposed. Proposed open space clearly delineating public, semi- private and private spaces, areas to be gated.

Fig 9.9: Precedents of different character communal spaces

Fig 9.8: Plan diagram showing the distribution of the communal spaces

9.3 Permeability strategy

9.3.1 Variation of both private and commnual open areas are proposed. Proposed open space clearly delineating public, semi- private and private spaces, areas to be gated.

Fig 9.12: Street view of the gated courtyrad between Blocks 1 and 2

Fig 9.11: View of the semi- private open space of Courtyard C

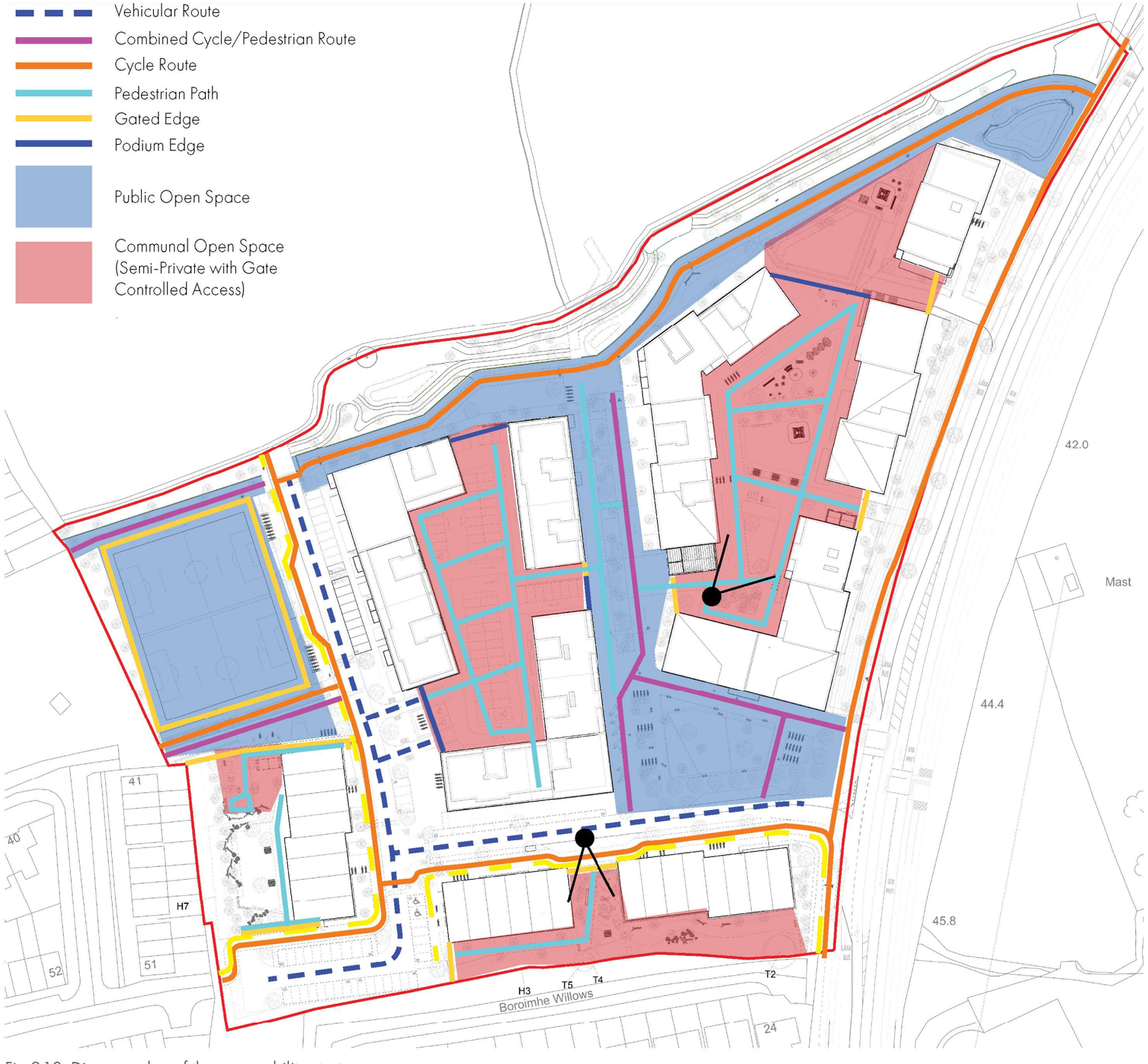


Fig 9.10: Diagram plan of the permeability strategy

9.4 Landscape strategy

MITCHELL + ASSOCIATES

9.4.1 Landscape masterplan summary. For more details refer to dedicated Ladnscape report document

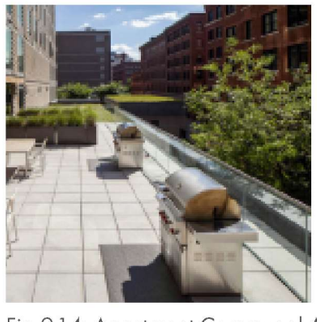
9.4.2 A mix of hard and soft landscaping materials will be used to create a varied and interesting amenity spaces. Hard landscaping paving and decking materials will be robust and durable and installed using proven details to minimise maintenance requirements. High slip resistance paving materials will ensure safety for all.

9.4.3 Green roofs of Blocks 4 - 10 will incorporate a sedum roof, green roofs are promoted as a means of achieving more sustainable buildings as they improve the durability of waterproofing materials, provide flora, fauna and reduce rainwater run-off.

Fig 9.13: Landscape plan overview

9.5 Recreation/ Planting/ Plaza

MITCHELL + ASSOCIATES



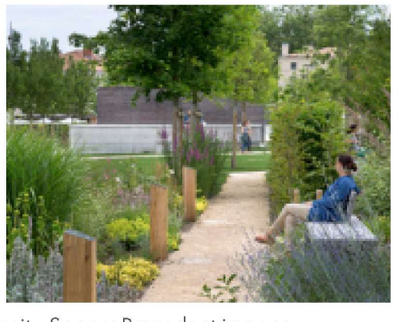
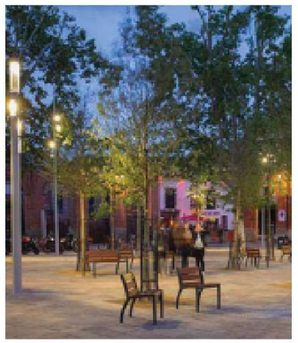


Fig 9.14: Apartment Communal Amenity Space: Precedent images

Fig 9.15: Stream Corridor Open Space: Precedent images



PICNIC TABLE SET

BESPOKE PERGOLA

Fig 9.16: Small architecture and surfaces, Precedent images

HOME

10.0
Adaptability

10.1 Adaptability

10.1.1 All units comply with or exceed the requirements of TGD Part M 2010 and embrace the principles of the Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland. This will promote access and use of all buildings regardless of peoples circumstances both now and in the future as they get older or become ill.

10.1.2 'Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability'.

10.1.3 'Universal Design Homes work well for everyone and look good. They are mainstream in aesthetics not separate or distinct for special needs – and are designed to 4 key Principles: '

1. Integrated into the neighbourhood

2. Easy to approach, enter and move

3. Easy to and manage

4. Flexible, cost effective and adaptable over time

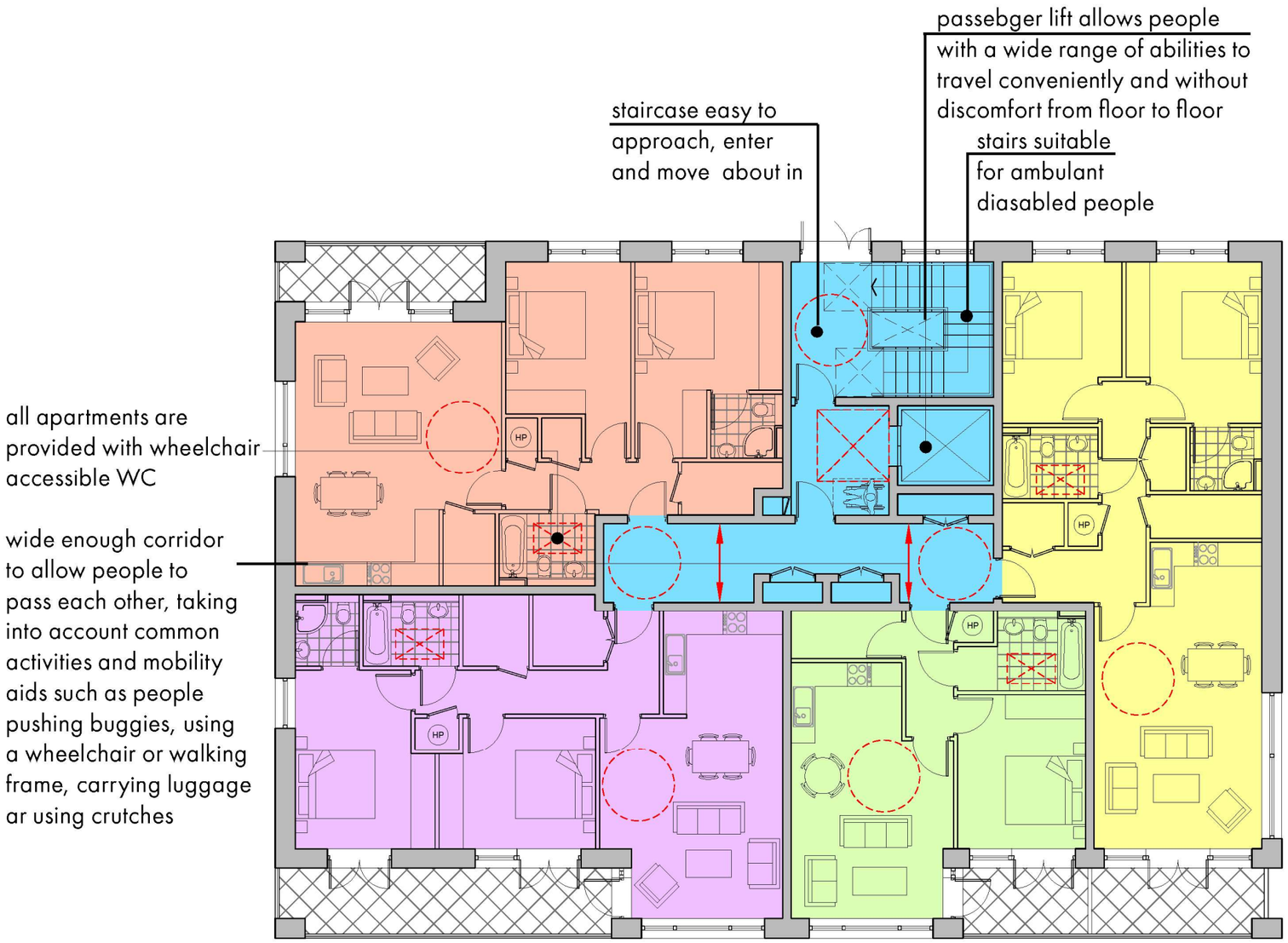


Fig 10.1: Typical Core extract from Block 6

Fig 10.2: Play and sitting area of podium level Courtyard B overlooking Block 3 and the Creche

HOME

11.0

Privacy and amenity

11.1 Privacy

11.1.1 The scheme provides for a decent standard of private amenity, with privacy a central tenet of the design concept.

11.1.2 Minimum separation distances of 22 metres between directly opposing windows have been maintained in all circumstances with a careful positioning of windows at upper levels to avoid overlooking.

11.1.3 The design maximises the number of dwellings enjoying dual aspect. Over 69% of apartments enjoy dual aspect and there are no apartments facing solely north, north west or north east.

11.1.4 Windows are sited to avoid views into the apartments from other dwellings and adequate privacy is afforded to ground floor units.

11.1.5 Landscaping will ensure ground level windows are afforded adequate separation from circulation paths.

Fig 11.1: Clear definition of different type amenity spaces

Fig 11.2: Plan diagram showing relations between the blocks

Fig 11.3: View toward Podium Courtyard B and Blocks 4 and 6

11.2 Dual aspect units and Daylight/ Sunlight

11.2.1 The scheme provides a decent amount of dual aspect units througthout the site. There are overall 69% dual aspect units which calculates as 447 units overall.

11.2.2 The overall configuration of the buildings have been designed to achieve optimum levels of sunlight and daylight penetration into the apartments, along with access to sunlighting to open amenity spaces, while at the same time providing an appropriate density and building height on an infill site in a very accessible location.

11.2.3 For specific daylight/ sunlight criteria and compensatory measures please refer to relevant Daylight/ Sunlight Assessment under Section 15.0 of this document.

Fig 11.4: View over Courtyard B

HOME

12.0

Parking

12.1 Car parking

12.1.1 Secure parking is provided in two ways for this site:

- On-street parking - grouped parallel or perpendicular alongside streets. On-street parking is dedicated for occupants but also for visitors and commercial units' customers.

- Undercroft and basement parking - dedicated mostly for occupants. Basement parking is situated in the middle of the scheme to serve all blocks. Parking has higher level of safety and security.

Fig 12.1: Entrance and exit to Undercroft Car parking below Podium of Courtyard B

Fig 12.2: Sedum roof

12.2 Parking layout

12.2.1 All car parking spaces provided on-street are in easy reach for occupants. For security all car parking spaces are overlooked by dwellings, pedestrians and traffic.

12.2.2 Secure lock-up bicycle parking for apartments is provided in underground parking. Visitor bicycle parking is also provided in accordance with the requirements of Design Standards for New Apartments.

CAR PARKING SCHEDULE:

SURFACE PARKING	**63 TOTAL**
PARKING FOR CHILDCARE FACILITY	**10**
PARKING FOR COMMERCIAL UNITS (50% 1 PER 30 GFA)	**23**
APARTMENTS	**30**
UNDERCROFT & BASEMENT PARKING	**300**

PARKING FOR APARTMENTS (30+300) **- 330 = 0.51 APARTMENTS**

Fig 12.3: Plan diagram of car parking strategy

12.3 Bike parking

12.3.1 Overall 1519 number of bicycle parking spaces is well distributed amount the site. There is a selection of open-air bike racks, covered and protected bike sheds and some dedicated indoor bike storage placed within each building core.

BICYCLE SPACES PROVIDED

ON SURFACE SPACES - 347 (visitor, commercial, childcare)

GROUND FLOOR SECURE - 244 (long term parking)

STORE SECURE - 100 (long term parking)

BASEMENT SPACES - 828 (long term parking)

TOTAL - 1 519

Fig 12.5: Cycle lane spanning around the site

Fig 12.4: Plan diagram of bike parking strategy

12.4 Bike parking pavilions and bins

12.4.1 It is proposed to allocate some unified timber pavilion structures along the site as ancillary spaces. They will accommodate bike storages, bin storages and ESB rooms.

Fig 12.7: Bike and ESB pavilion next to Block 7

Fig 12.6: Open structure bike pavilion on the plaza

Fig 12.8: Plan diagram of ancillary spaces

HOME

13.0

Detailed design

13.1 Residential Density and Mix

13.1.1 Fingal County Council Development Plan aims to provide a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures to support the development of a balanced community and meet the adapting needs of residents.

13.1.2 Higher residential densities are promoted where it is appropriate to its location and surrounding context Gross Site Density (645units /4.392Ha): 146.8 u/HaNet Site Density (645units /2.876Ha): 224.2 u/Ha.

13.1.3 The dwelling mix of the application is set out in table 1. The apartments proposed are a mix of 32% 1Beds, 64% 2Beds and 4% 3Beds.

13.1.4 Minimum floor areas and Standards

13.1.5 All apartments have been designed in accordance with Fingal County Development Plan and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments complying with or exceeding the minimum standards.

13.1.6 The majority of apartments in the proposed scheme exceed the minimum standards by a minimum of 10% as per the Apartment guidelines.

NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS:	
1 BED APPARTMENT	208 - 32%
2 BED (4P) APPARTMENT	410 - 64%
3 BED APPARTMENT	27 - 4%
TOTAL	**645**

APARTMENT BLOCKS

BLOCK No.	1 BED	2 BED(4P)	3 BED	TOTAL
BLOCK 1	8	21	-	29
BLOCK 2	6	15	-	23
BLOCK 3	6	18	-	24
BLOCK 4	34	54	5	93
BLOCK 5	34	55	2	91
BLOCK 6	13	38	3	54
BLOCK 7	40	76	1	117
BLOCK 8	33	58	3	94
BLOCK 9	23	48	4	75
BLOCK 10	9	27	9	45
TOTAL	208	410	27	645

Fig 13.1: Street view towards the Plaza and Landmark Block 4

13.2 Residential Use

13.2.1 Residential Unit Mix

13.2.2 A broad mix of residential unit types including 1 bed, 2 bed and 3 bed apartment units is incorporated within each of the residential blocks. A good unit mix accommodates a broad and sustainable mix of occupants.

Residential Unit Location

- The majority of residential units are located from Ground Floor upwards with a good variety of aspect and view on offer.

Residential Entrance Experience

- Each of the residential blocks are provided with independent entrances from the active ground floor street experience.

Residential Amenity Spaces

- The range of communal amenity spaces are located at Ground floor (Courtyard C) and Podium level (Courtyard B). These spaces offer a range of informal activities and meeting spaces within a landscaped setting.

13.3 Material palette

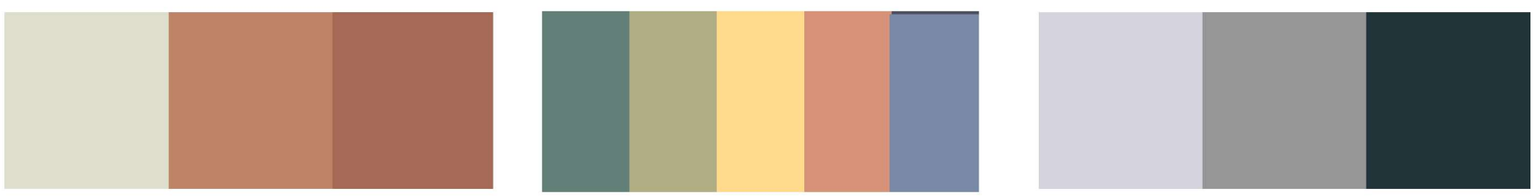
13.3.1 A high quality palette of materials will be used throughout this development. Yellow, red, grey brick, natural stone, cladding and render finishes will be incorporated throughout the scheme. Materials selected are of high quality, low maintenance and durable. The selection of a variety of materials adds interest to the development.

13.3.2 The choice of materials are those which are common in the suburban area and so creates a development rooted to its context. The materials and external design make a positive contribution to the locality.

13.3.3 Overall, each building responds to context in different ways in order to create a dynamic composition with the varied responses applied appropriately across the site.

Fig 13.2: Materiality concept

Fig 13.3: Reference of material palette concept



AREA A
Warm colour palette in masonry finishes

AREA B
Pastel colour palette in render finishes

AREA C
Grey colour palette in brick and metal cladding finishes

Fig 13.4: Block's colour palette

13.4 Area A

13.4.1 Area A take more direct cues from the specific context of the existing residential area to south and west from the site.

13.4.2 The elements have been designed to sit comfortably within the context of Boroimhe housing area. Therefore, the traditional double pitched townhouses form and a use of brickwork as the primary façade material were deemed appropriate. Brickwork also offers an opportunity to create variety through varying brickwork tones. This strategy has allowed us to create a family of buildings which have both independent character and common elements.

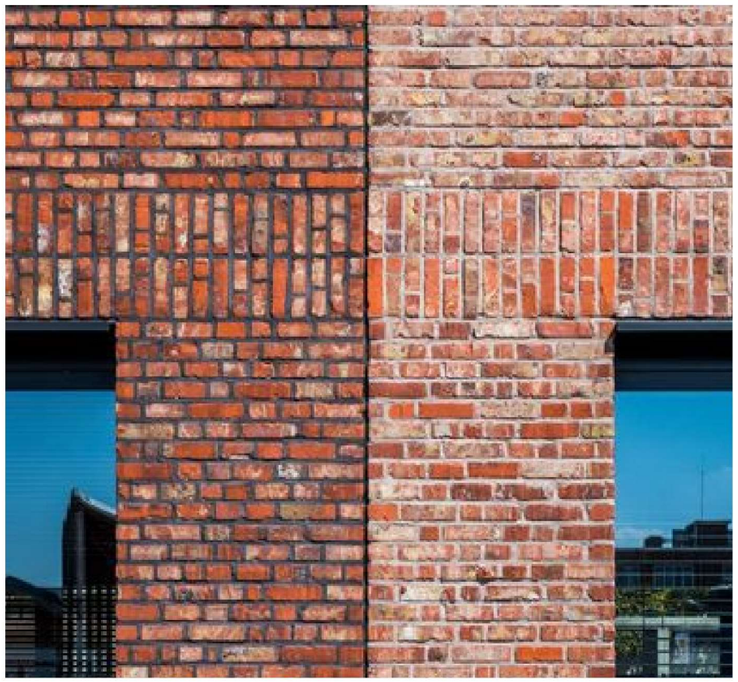


Fig 13.5: Reference of material palette concept

Fig 13.6: Block 1 Front Elevation

13.5 Area A

Fig 13.7: West Elevation of Block 3 (Creche and Playground)

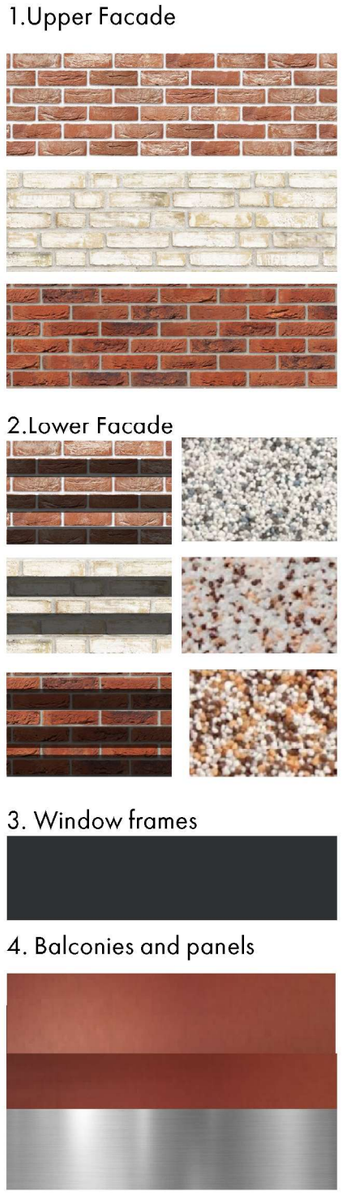


Fig 13.8: Material palette

Fig 13.9: Typical Block A Front Elevation of Block 1 (top) and Front Elevation of Block 3 (bottom)

13.6 Area B

13.6.1 Area B is composed in a more horizontal way and emphasis the balconies and terraces with the views across the site. We have developed the design as a family of elements which sit directly on the ground with a range of breaking points that allow to take a look what is happening within the courtyard on the podium level. Colourful and playfulness of rich, bright colours of brick and render finishes is tightened together in unified white render courtyard. That allow to create both unexpected experience and lighten the space. Block 4 stands out as the key feature of the Plaza in both colour and more refined articulation.

Fig 13.10: Reference of material palette concept

Fig 13.11: Block 4 South and East Facades

13.7 Area B

Fig 13.12: Block 6 looking from west to east

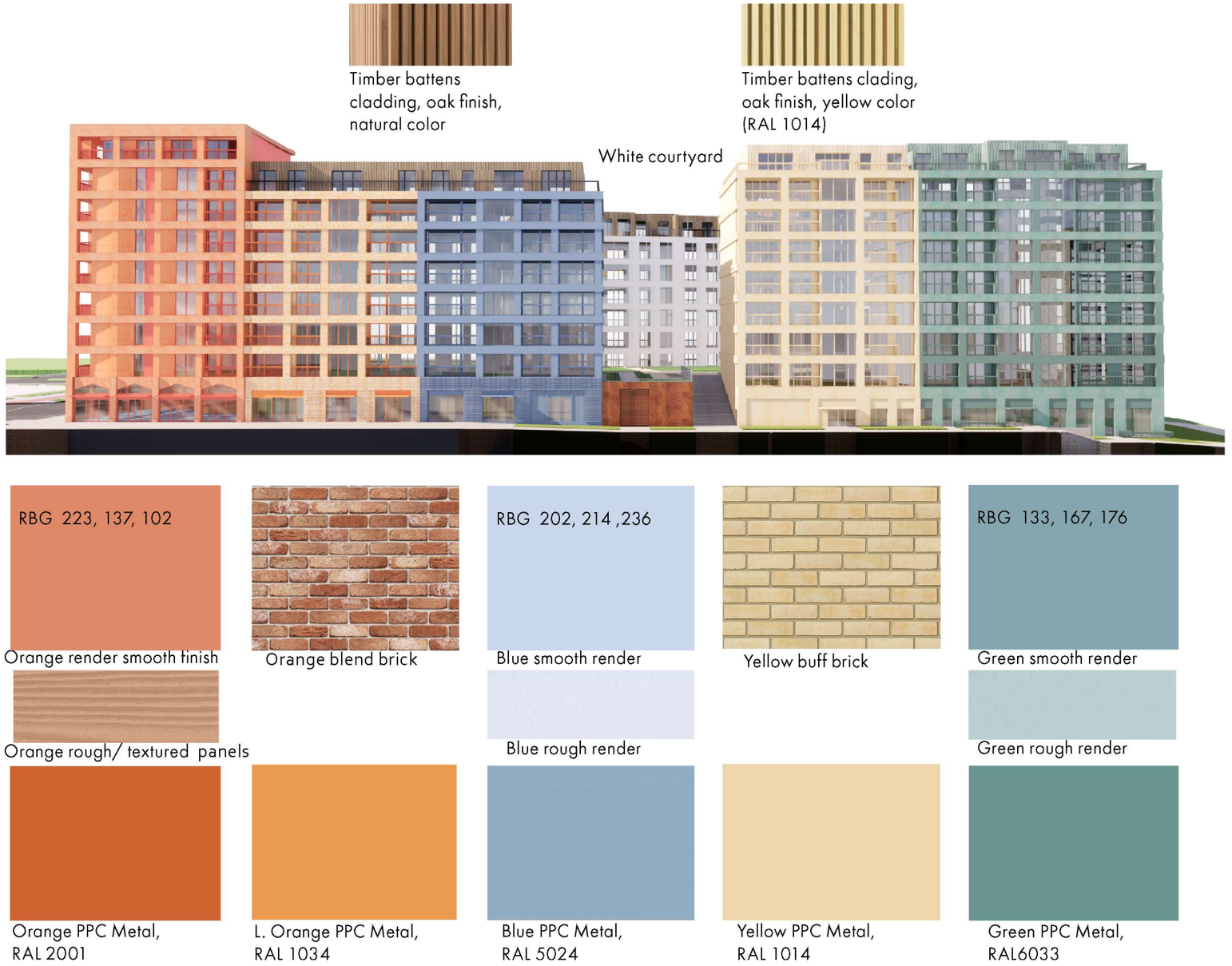


Fig 13.13: Block 4 and 6 front elevations

13.8 Area C

13.8.1 Area C has been designed to sit with the context of the busy R132 and future relation with Metro Link and Bus Connects. The dynamic aesthetics of varied pitched roofs and the rhythm created by different shades of bricks and moments of corrugated cladding echo the character of more urban feel. In order to break down the continuous wall of the buildings that grow in height south to north we introduced some breaking points to experience light and bright white brick courtyard. Those gable ends have been marked up with the brick gradient pattern that transfers outside to inside materiality.

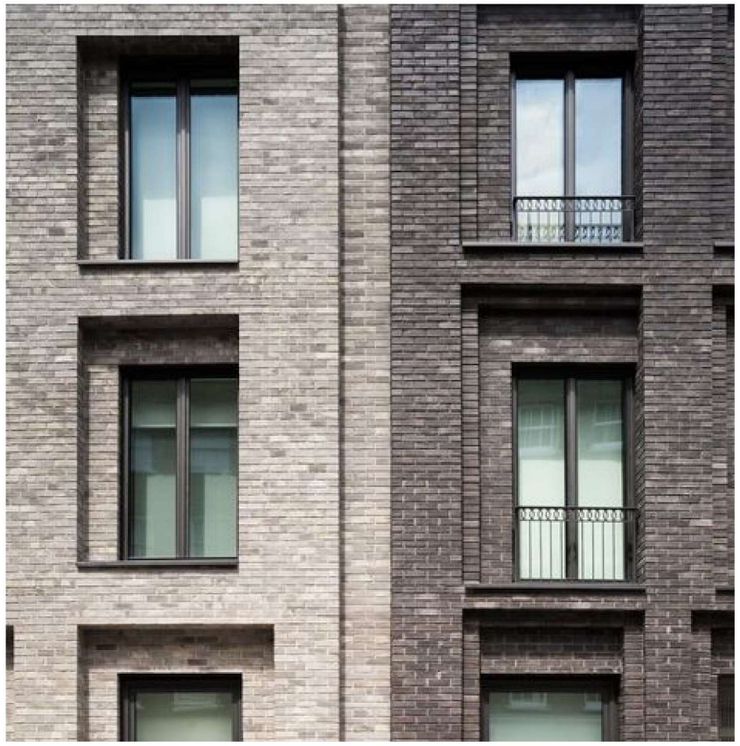


Fig 13.14: Reference of material palette concept

Fig 13.15: Blocks 8, 9 and 10 Front Elevation

13.9 Area C

Fig 13.18: Block 8 East Facade

Fig 13.16: Reference of material palette concept

Fig 13.17: Blocks 8, 9 and 10 Front Elevation

13.10 Street Facade

13.10.1 Street Facade spanning along R132 is one of the key hierarchies. It provides a widest variation of heights and distinctiveness. Colours of each block creates a repetitive rhythm of the elevation with interesting breaking points of gradient gable walls that bring white internal courtyards inside-out.

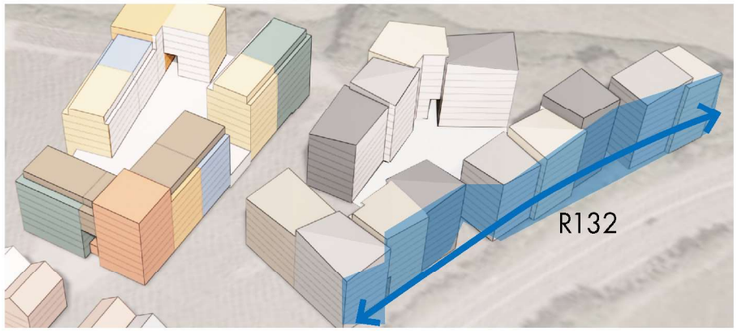


Fig 13.19: Reference of material palette concept

Fig 13.20: Blocks 8, 9 and 10 Front Elevation

13.11 Courtyard Facade

13.11.1 Both courtyards follow the same principle and are enlighten by continuous white feel (white render to Courtyard B) and (white brick to Courtyard C). Gable walls that introduce the courtyard from R132 are punctuated with brick gradient pattern.

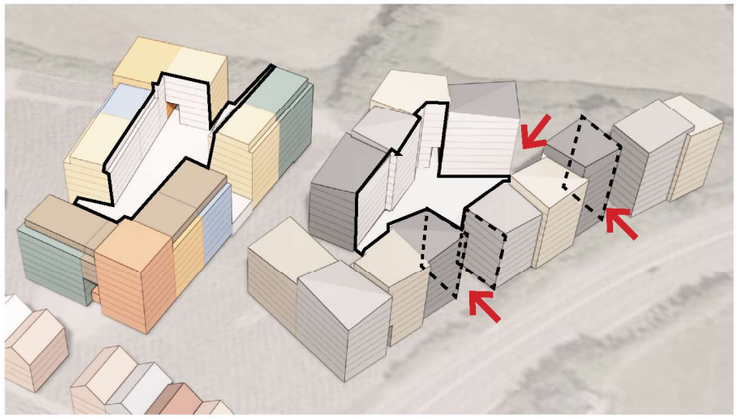


Fig 13.21: White brick finish to Courtyard C

Fig 13.22: Connection to Courtyard C

13.12 Defining the entrance

13.12.1 All entrances both residential and commercial/ retail are visible and well recognized. Canopies above the doors are to match the overall aesthetic of the door frames.

Fig 13.23: Block 4 commercial unit entrances

Fig 13.24: Block 5 North-West corner showing at grade apartements and articulated brick facade

13.13 Sense of space

13.13.1 In order to provide more visual permebility and interesting vistas from the courtyards a number of cut out moments have been introduced. Experience of the buildings when viewed from the street will be limited to a series of moments allowing for more fluent correlation between the different activities and spaces.

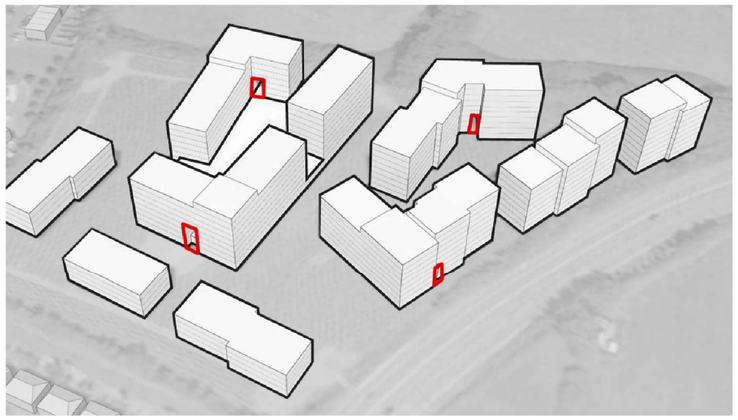


Fig 13.25: Block 5 North Facade opening to the Couryard B

Fig 13.26: Block 4 podium opening

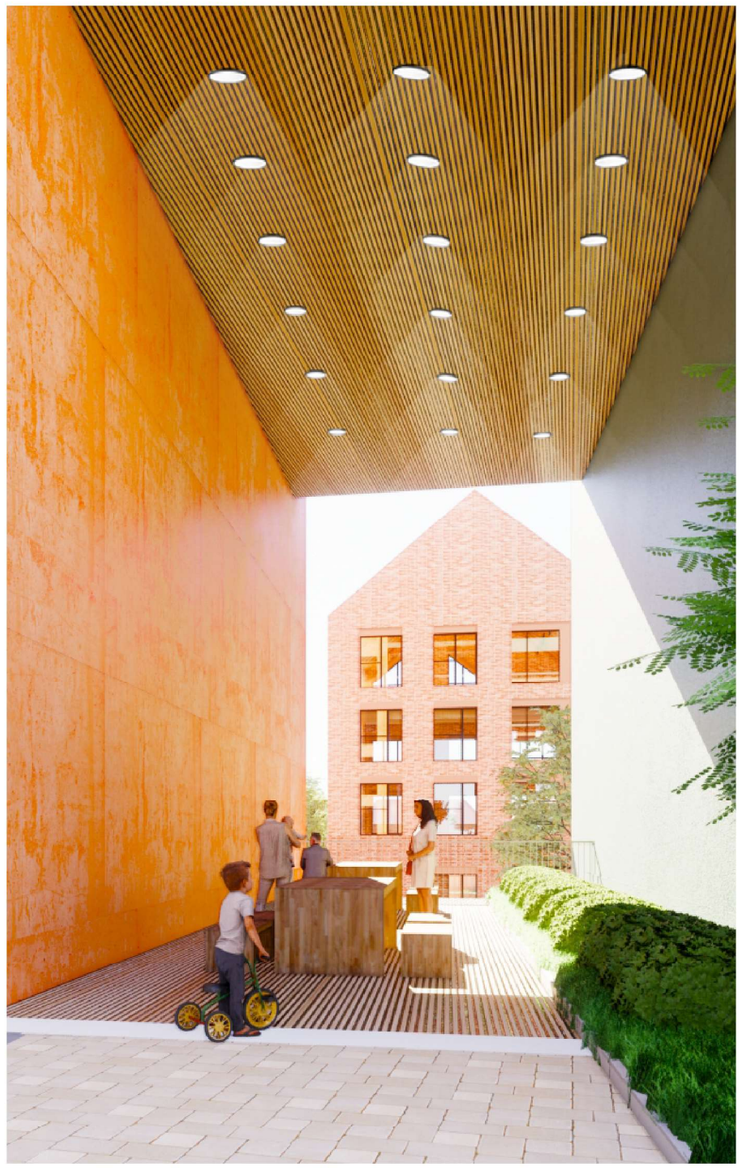


Fig 13.27: Block 4 podium opening view from inside looking towards Block 2

13.14 Universal design statement

13.14.1 The proposed development both internally and externally, have been designed in light of the principles set out in the National Disability Authority publications, the 7 Principles of Universal Design and also the Building Regulations Technical Guidance Document Part M Access and Use 2010.

13.14.2 All buildings have been considered with regards to commercial and resident access, visitor access and maintenance access. Adequate access routes are provided from all designated car parking facilities to the main entrances of the apartment blocks serving the vertical circulation cores of each. The routeswill be designed in accordance with Section 1.1.3 of TGD M 2010.

13.14.3 All common area entrances to apartment all Blocks are designed in accordance with the guidance in Section 1.2 and Table 2 of TGD M 2010.

13.14.4 Internal corridors, floor finishes and doors within communal areas of all Blocks are designed in accordance with Section 1.3 of TGD M 2010 with 1,800mm turning areas provided at adequate intervals throughout each building's common area.

13.14.5 At least 1 No. passenger lift and 1 No stair suitable for ambulant disabled people is provided in a vertical circulation core of each apartment the Blocks serving all floors within these buildings. The lifts are designed in accordance with the guidance in Section 1.3.4.2 of TGD M 2010 and stairs in accordance with Section 1.3.4.3 of TGD M 2010. Refer to drawings for further details which indicate the location of lifts and stairs within the Blocks;

13.14.7 All communal facilities within or surrounding the apartment Blocks are provisioned as accessible to meet the needs of all users in accordance with the guidance in TGD M 2010;

13.14.8 Apartment Blocks are designed to meet the guidance in Section 3 of TGD M 2010 (e.g. 1,200mm by 1,200mm level landings at apartment entrances and 800mm wide doors at entrances to apartments);

13.14.9 TGD M 2010 is the minimum guidance to show compliance with the requirements of the Part M of the Building Regulations.

13.14.10 For more details in regards to inclusivity, accessibility and car parking arrangements please refer specifically to 4.0 Inclusivity and 10. Adaptability, 12. Parking chapters accordingly.

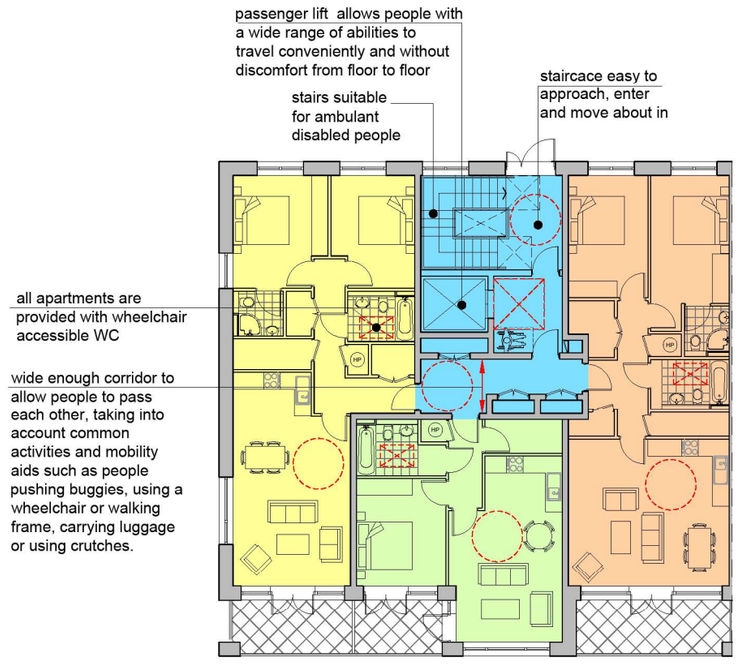


Fig 13.28: Typical Core example

14.0
Visualizations

14.1 View - The interface of the development with the R132

Fig 14.1: Artist's impression view in response to ABP's Opinion

14.2 View - The interface of the development with the R132

Fig 14.2: View prepared by 3DDB in response to ABP's Opinion

14.3 View - Relationship with the riparian corridor along northern site boundary

Fig 14.3: View prepared by 3DDB in response to ABP's Opinion

14.4 View - Public plaza addressing and connecting with future Metrolink station

Fig 14.4: View prepared by 3DDB in response to ABP's Opinion

14.5 View - Relationship between the ground floor, undercroft parking and the treatment along the internal access road

Fig 14.5: View prepared by 3DDB in response to ABP's Opinion

15.0
Daylight/ Sunlight Assessment

15.1 Daylight criteria

15.1.1 The daylight / sunlight assessment prepared by 3DDB has been undertaken in close consultation with PCOT and Arrow Architects and resulted in a number of design iterations to maximise the daylight to individual apartment units. However, it is acknowledged that not all units achieve the minimum targets set down in the BRE Guidelines, and accordingly this section of the Design Statement provides a justification for the design approach to the subject site, noting the provisions of the relevant guidelines referenced below.

15.1.2 Section 6.7 of the Apartment Guidelines 2020 states the following:

15.1.3 "Planning authorities should have regard to quantitative performance approaches to daylight provision outlined in guides like the BRE guide 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight' (2nd edition) or BS 8206-2: 2008 – 'Lighting for Buildings – Part 2: Code of Practice for Daylighting' when undertaken by development proposers which offer the capability to satisfy minimum standards of daylight provision".

15.1.4 The Urban Design Manual published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2009, states (at p.43):

"Where design standards are to be used (such as the UK document Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, published by the BRE), it should be acknowledged that ***for higher density proposals in urban areas it may not be possible to achieve the specified criteria, and standards may need to be adjusted locally to recognise the need for appropriate heights or street widths."***

15.1.5 Having regard to the Apartment Guidelines 2020, the equivalent paragraphs in Section 3.2 of the Building Height Guidelines 2018 relating to compliance with the BRE guidance, and the recommendations in the Urban Design Manual 2009, there are a number of considerations, including compensatory design measures and national planning policy, which has informed the layout, height and density of development and support the provision of a number of rooms in apartments which are below the minimum recommended daylighting levels (see 3DDB Daylight / Sunlight Assessment for further details).

Fig 15.1: Axo view

15.2 Justification for Heights/ Density

15.2.1 The application site has an area of 4.635 ha and is zoned 'Residential Area' under the Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 and forms the southern part of the Fosterstown Masterplan area. The proposed development is located adjacent to one of the main routes into the city centre and is well served by public transport. The existing site is underutilised and presents a key opportunity site in the Metropolitan Consolidation Town of Swords to provide much needed residential development. The site represents one of the last remaining undeveloped larger scale landbanks zoned for residential use located between Swords and Dublin Airport and the city boundary. The proposed building height ranges from 4 storeys to 10 storeys, with the taller elements located centrally and on the north-eastern part of the site, away from existing residential properties, similar to that envisaged under the Masterplan.

15.2.2 The proposed development is located adjacent to a QBC, a proposed BusConnects corridor, and within close proximity to Swords Main Street, Pavilions Shopping Centre and the Airside Retail Park which provides for a range of services, shops and restaurants for future residents. There are significant employment generating uses located to the east, north and north ease of the site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development is suitable for increased heights and densities in accordance with the objectives of the Apartment Guidelines 2020 and the Building Height Guidelines.

15.2.3 Thus, in respect of the proposed layout, heights and density, the proposed development responds to national, regional and local policy, and it is considered the balancing of the daylight assessment must be considered against the desirability of achieving wider panning objectives.

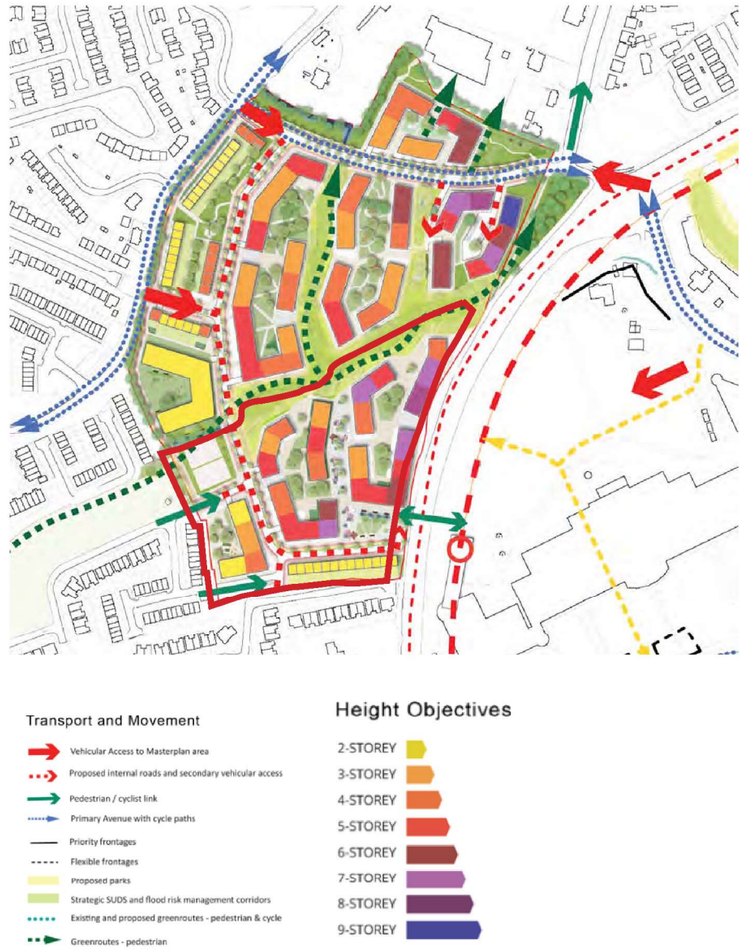


Fig 15.2: Extract from Swords Masterplans Part C: Fosterstown (2019)

15.3 Design Constraints

15.3.1 The most constrained areas of the proposed massing are in relation to Blocks 4 to 10, where the higher density elements are proposed, which is considered appropriate given the public transport accessibility and proximity to Swords Town Centre and the distances from any existing residential properties. The most constrained elements of these blocks are the lowest floors where blocks face each other. This is typical of any scheme within an urban environment and the layout has sought to provide appropriately scaled urban blocks, with a public plaza area adjacent to the R132 and good quality public open spaces and communal areas.

15.3.2 In order to respond to the above constraints, 3DDB worked with the design team to optimise the daylight and sunlight performance of the proposed development through an iterative process of technical assessment, feedback and design amendments. This included increased fenestration where possible (ensuring to avoid issues with overlooking), redesign of the internal layouts, including reduction of depth of rooms, and evolution of the facades to maximise daylight.

15.3.3 The proposed design and layout also has regard to the Fosterstown Masterplan which requires the provision of 2 no. playing pitches in the north west corner of the site, a 10m riparian zone along the northern boundary of the site, along with public open space, public plaza and pedestrian /cycle connections along the northern boundary of the site. No buildings are therefore proposed in these areas, and the layout of the proposed buildings is generally in keeping with the key objectives / indicative masterplan layout for the site in the Fosterstown Masterplan 2019.

15.3.4 The optimisation process has ensured that the majority of habitable rooms achieve and exceed the minimum levels of daylight and sunlight as recommended in the BRE Guidelines. Shortfalls are, however, an inevitable consequence of any development within an urban context. A degree of flexibility is recognised in both the Apartment Guidelines 2020 and the Building Height Guidelines 2019.

Fig 15.3: Top view

15.4 Compensatory Design Measures

15.4.1 The design team has therefore ensured that compensatory measures are incorporated into the scheme to address the fact that some of the units are below the minimum recommendations of the BRE Guidelines. This includes:

- The provision of public open space and communal open space which exceeds the minimum requirements (See M&A Landscape plans and reports);
- The provision of a community facility for residents;
- Apartment units exceed the minimum floor area requirements set out in the Apartment Guidelines 2020 (no derogation is sought in respect of any of the standards);
- Increased head heights to windows where views are more favourable;
- Increased window widths where views are more favourable;
- Provision of large private amenity in the form of balconies or terraces to all units which meet and exceed (where possible) the standards set out in the Apartment Guidelines, and locating balconies to ensure good levels of sunlight where possible;
- Reductions in the overall depth of rooms to improve the level of daylight, whilst still ensuring minimum floor areas for rooms are met and exceeded where possible;
- Very good levels of sunlight for all open spaces of amenity at ground and podium levels;
- Orientation and outlook of proposed units: the majority apartments have a westerly, southerly or easterly aspect, which overlook a landscaped context with good levels of sunlight amenity and facing adjoining buildings which have strong elements of architectural design with high quality finishes, materials and textures.

15.4.2 Summary

The overall architectural configuration and design of the proposed development is aimed at achieving the best optimum levels of sunlight and daylight penetration into the development for potential residents.

While some of the apartments may not receive the optimum levels of daylight/ sunlight, the use of compensatory measures, articulation of the blocks with variations in heights, architecture, fenestration, colours and materials, together with the voids and gaps in the blocks give continuous and uninterrupted varying vistas and quality of light at various times of the day and year.

This section of the ADS, in addition to 3DDB's Daylight and Sunlight Assessment, sets out in detail the architectural approach to site strategy, overall design and proposed finishes of the buildings, and how the buildings are designed to give optimum sunlight and daylight and how the proposed material and colours give enhanced levels of reflection and light.

It is therefore considered that the scheme as proposed achieves the appropriate balance with regards to daylight and sunlight levels for a scheme of such density and height in such a strategic accessible location in Swords.

16.0
Urban criteria summary

16.1 Urban Design - Best practice guide criteria

16.1.1 <u>1. Context: How does the development respond to its surroundings?</u>
The height, scale and massing proposed are appropriate to the characteristics of the site and the surroundings. Form, architecture and landscaping have been informed by the development's context and national, regional and local policy & objectives. The development positively contributes to the character and identity of the neighbourhood and natural topography of the site. Appropriate responses are made to the nature of specific boundary conditions.

16.1.2 <u>2. Connections: How well is the new neighbourhood / site connected?</u>
The site has direct links to the national road network and it is well connected to transport links (QBC, Bus Connects & Metro Link). Scheme intends to activate the neighbourhood including enhanced pedestrian ways connected. The mix of uses on site, ensures the need for cars is minimised, allowing more space in scheme for public space and residents interaction.

16.1.3 <u>3. Inclusivity: How easily can people use and access the development?</u>
Design and layout enable easy access by all based on universal accessibility. The new apartments meet the aspirations of a range of people and households. Apartments are a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments to provide a mix of dwelling types. A range of public open spaces within the development are accessible to all.

16.1.4 <u>4 . Variety: How does the development promote a good mix of activities?</u>
The scheme proposes a mixed range of unit types and tenures of varying sizes. The mix of amenity spaces at street level integrates the residents amenities of the development wit a range of other uses ensuring the interaction of the new residents with their neighbours is kept.

16.1.5 <u>5. Efficiency: How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?</u>
The proposal looks at the potential of higher density, taking into account appropriate accessibility by public transport and the objectives of good design. Landscaped areas are designed to provide amenity and biodiversity spaces with open spaces arranged around existing landscape features and landscape buffer zone - existing stream.

16.1.6 <u>6. Distinctiveness: How do the proposals create a sense of place?</u>
The place has recognisable features so that people can describe where they live and form an emotional attachment to the place. The scheme is a positive addition to the identity of the locality.

Fig 16.1: Street View from Plaza looking East along Commercial frontage

Fig 16.2: Street View looking towards the north elevation of the site

16.1.7 7. Layout: How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces?
The layout and different scale of the buildings contribute in creating a hierarchy of streets and spaces varying in size and type with opportunities for place making. The streets where less busy will have shared surfaces for use by pedestrian and cyclists and will be treated more like spaces than vehicular routes. There is a variety of open spaces provided, a mix of hardscaped urban areas together with softer area with trees, planting and informal play areas. Smaller incidental spaces are also provided in various locations, each with their own character created by the choice of materials and scale of the surrounding buildings.

16.1.8 8. Public realm: How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
The public realm is considered as a usable integrated element in the design of the development. There is a clear definition between public, semi private, and private spaces. Roads and parking areas are considered as an integral landscaped element in the design of the public realm.

16.1.9 9. Adaptability: How will the buildings cope with change?
Design exploits good practice lessons, such as the knowledge that certain apartment types are proven to be ideal for adaptation. All units comply with or exceed the requirements of TGD Part M 2010 and embrace the principles of the Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland. This will promote access and use of all buildings regardless of people's circumstances both now and in the future.

16.1.10 10. Privacy / amenity: How do the buildings provide a high-quality amenity?
The design maximises the number of homes enjoying dual aspect. Windows are sited to avoid views into the home from other apartments or the street and adequate privacy is affordable to all units. The homes are designed to provide adequate storage including space within the home for the sorting and storage of recyclables. All apartments have private amenity areas with balconies and terraces.

16.1.11 11. Parking: How will the parking be secure and attractive?
Secure parking is provided for residents at both as on-street parking and undercroft parking below Podium of Area B and basement parking below Area C. Adequate secure facilities are provided for bicycle storage.

16.1.12 12. Detailed design: How well thought through is the building and landscape design?
The design has been considered in detail with the input of specialist designers co-ordinated by the Architectural team to provide a high quality building and environment. The selection of materials and external design make a positive contribution to the locality. The landscape design has been considered in detail to provide a high quality amenity for residents and to provide screening and a green visual appearance to the development. Design of the buildings and communal spaces will facilitate easy and regular maintenance.

Fig 16.3: Street View looking from green link towards the Plaza

Fig 16.4: Street View looking from Plaza towards the existing stream

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