

Doyle &
O'Troithigh
Landscape
Architecture

Landscape Design Report
Mooretown Phase 3 (SHD)



Project Ref 21-003
Client Gerard Gannon Properties
Date 07/04/2022



Landscape Design Development Report

Landscape Design development for the proposed residential development on lands at Mooretown Phase 3, Swords.

Prospective Applicant Name: Gerard Gannon Properties

1.0 Vision for the Landscape

The layout and design of the streetscape, characterful landscape amenity areas, landscape mitigation and celebration of the cultural heritage is central to ensure the long-term successful establishment of this Strategic Housing Development (SHD) at Mooretown Phase 3, Swords, Co. Dublin.

The site landscape design development has, where possible, been guided and influenced by the ecological, arboricultural and archaeological appraisal of the site lands, contouring, constraints and surrounding environment. From the early stages of conceptual development the opportunities and constraints of the site lands were identified (as per fig 1.0 below; extract from 'Landscape Strategy' booklet as presented to Fingal County Council at Stage 1 'Pre-App meeting' dated 17/05/21.)

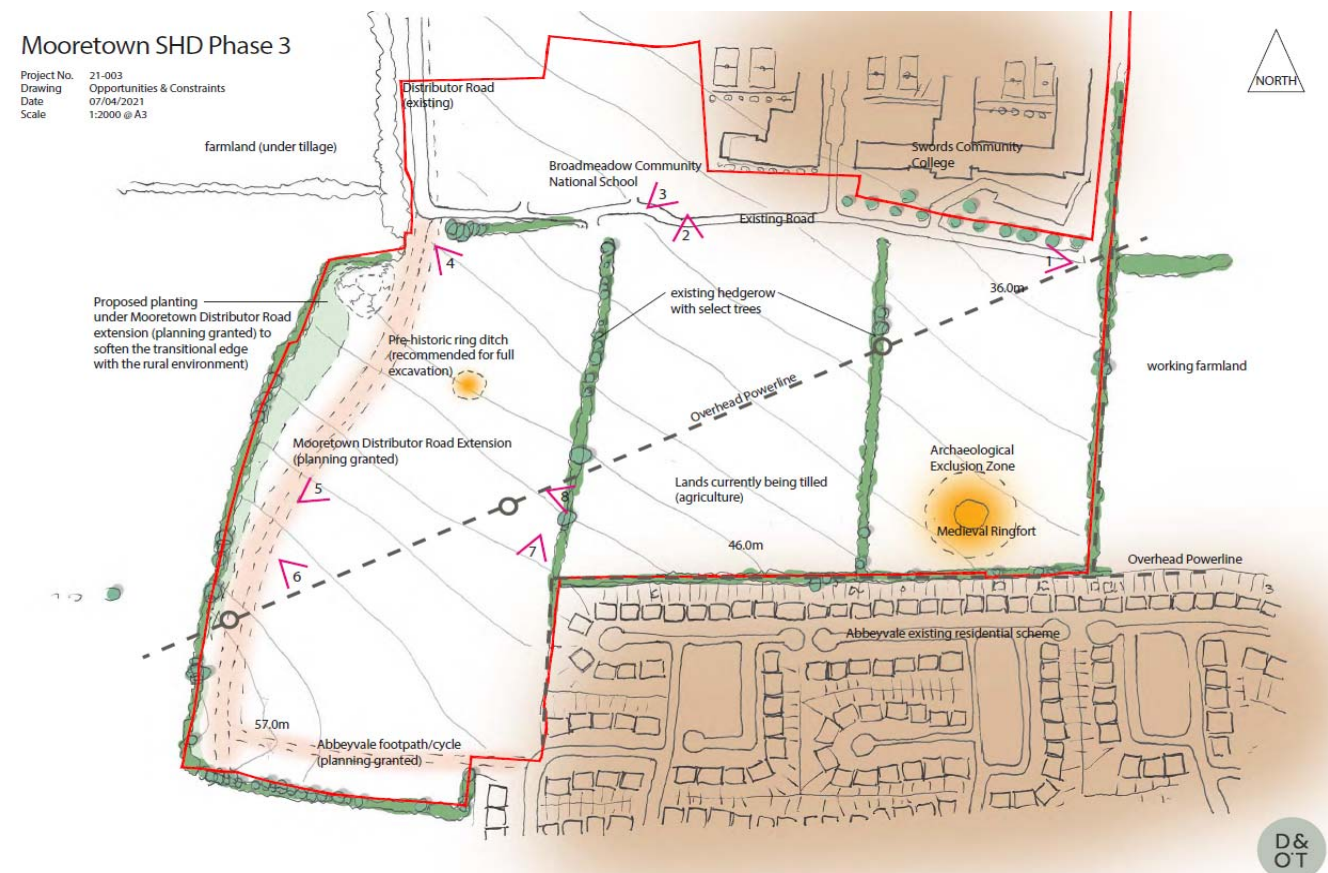


Fig. 1. 'Opportunities and Constraints' – Extract of Landscape Strategy Booklet tabled at Stage 1 FCC Meeting (17/05/21)

The site, which currently comprises of arable land is located to the western edge of Swords Town Centre, Co. Dublin. Refer to Fig. 2.0 below for reference. The site is edged to the south and south-east by established residential developments, farmland to the east and west; and Swords Community College and Broadmeadow Community National School along with permitted residential development (under construction) to the north.

The Western Distributor Link Road is permitted immediately to the west of the site lands; and will connect to the road network already constructed to the north-west of proposed scheme and Rathbeale Road beyond.

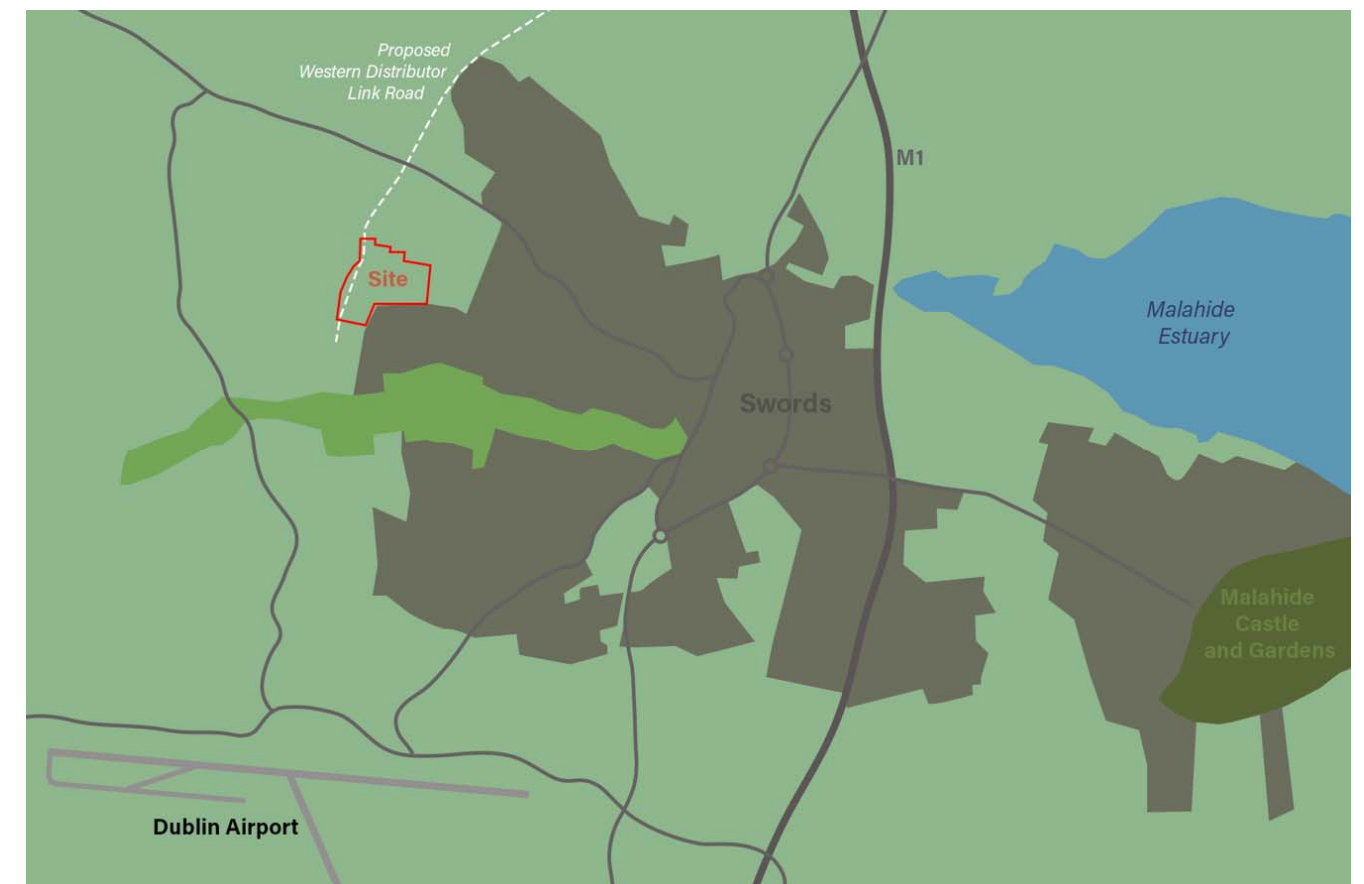


Fig. 2. Site Context Mapping with Mooretown Phase 3 boundary shown.

The proposed development consists of a mixed-use residential neighbourhood of some 650no. units; comprising of 265no. houses, 113no. duplex units, 6no. triplex units, 266 apartments, a 519sq.m. creche and 946 sq.m. of retail/café uses clustered in a small village centre.

The development includes all associated site works and infrastructure, including landscaped open space, internal road, paths, cycle paths, public lighting and drainage. The development also includes off-site drainage works for a stormwater storage tank and overflow outfall gravity sewer to the Broadmeadow River on lands at the junction of the Glen Ellan and Balheary roads.

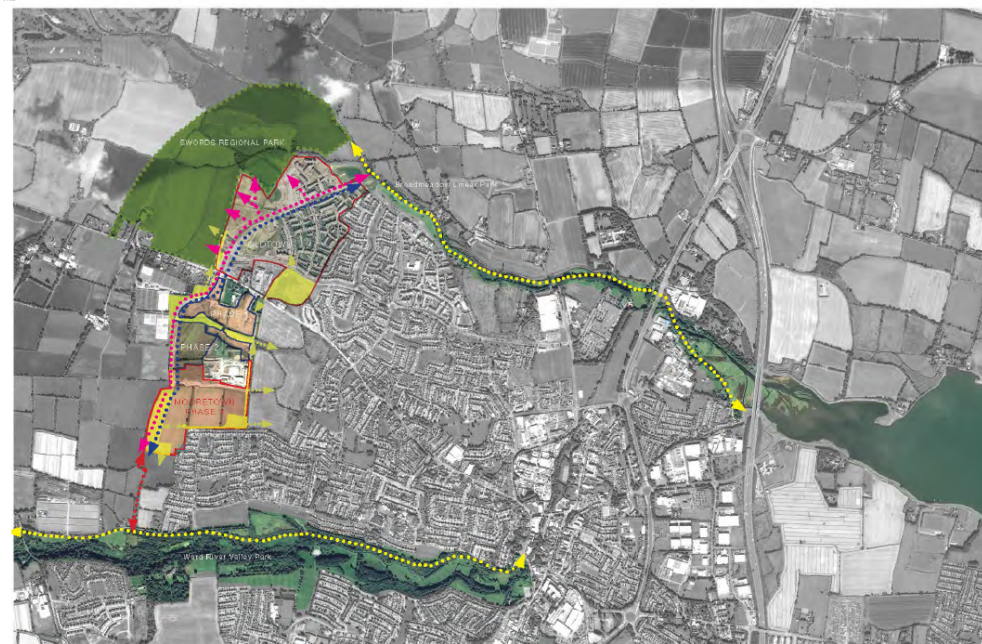
The proposed scheme is very responsive to the requirements of the Oldtown Mooretown LAP 2010 (now lapsed) which references the importance of a 'Strategic Necklace of Open Space' within the local context. This would include the Regional Park to the west of Oldtown (under construction) and follow up 'connecting' linkages with the Broadmeadow River Valley Linear Park to the north-west and Ward River Valley Park to south of the scheme. The external connections, as shown in Fig. 3.0 below responds to the aforementioned vision and strengthens the wider green infrastructure within the context of Swords.

The Broadmeadow River Valley connects eastward to the Swords Estuary and captures a variety of ecological zones including riparian habitats, existing woodland, open greens, a community garden and the local landmark of Lissenhall Demesne. This positively connects with the Oldtown Lands, established attenuation ponds (refer to Fig. 4.0 below) and the emerging Regional Park which is currently under construction. Other positive open space arrangements within Oldtown lands which have been developed by the Applicant include the Archaeological Park, the Civic Square on Glen Ellan Road and various pocket parks and tree lined streetscapes.

The Mooretown lands to the south of the Rathbeale Road allow for unlocking the potential to continue the green linkages southwards. These spaces exist along western edge of Mooretown Phase 1 (currently under construction) which lies to the south of Rathbeale Road and the permitted 'Mooretown Phase 2'. The green linkage shall continue southward along the western edge of Mooretown Phase 3 in order to facilitate future positive connections to the Ward River Valley Park. East-west connections are also captured within Mooretown Phase 1 where the Watermill Park is proposed. This 'Park' includes open water and drainage swales which address the attenuation requirements for all of the Mooretown lands including this application.

Mooretown SHD Phase 3

Project No. 21-003
Drawing External Connections
Date 23/04/2021
Scale nts



Linear Park / Riparian Connections
Western Distributor Road
Internal Green/Woodland/Biodiverse Trails
Future Connection into Ward River Valley Park
Pedestrian/Cyclist Routes Connections



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Fig.3.0. 'External Connections' – Extract of Landscape Strategy Booklet tabled at Stage 1 FCC Meeting (17/05/21)



Fig. 4.0 Attenuation Ponds north of Oldtown - a valuable green infrastructure 'asset' forming part of the Broadmeadow River Valley.

The wider green infrastructure network has provided strategic guidance to scheme development of Mooretown Phase 3 and its considered delivery. The network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, streams, and waterbodies that intersperse and connect with the built development of Swords and its town centre are of vital importance. Individually, these elements are Green Infrastructure assets and when planned, design and managed, the assets have a potential to deliver a wide range of benefits, including creating sustainable transport links and mitigating and adapting the effects of climate change.

The design and layout of the open space is essential in the creation of a visually appealing built environment. The landscape design for the scheme has been developed to offer its own character and sense of place with the use of a comprehensive set of cohesive and complimentary external finishes. The landscape scheme includes the following key spaces and features:

- a central overlooked neighbourhood park with appropriate play facilities
- an open greenspace which sensitively responds and interprets the medieval subterranean ringfort;
- a sports focussed western park responding to envisaged desire lines and permeability;
- Well sited local pocket parks with good aspect and amenity features;
- a south facing civic square with a pedestrian focussed zone for school drop off/collection;
- Communal courtyards in association with apartments and duplexes to offer local, considered and appropriate amenity;
- Above podium courtyards associated with apartment blocks (A and B)

The design and layout of the public realm is essential in the creation of an appealing built environment for the scheme. It will offer unique character areas and sense of place with the use of a comprehensive set of cohesive and complimentary external hard and soft landscape finishes. Refer to Fig. 5.0 below for reference and drawing no.'s LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP detailed information.



Fig. 5.0 Typical palette of external hard and soft materials

The use and mix of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants (as appropriated) have been considered as part of the site wide 'Planting Strategy' (drawing no. PP-01-PP for reference) in order to be robust enough to establish, whilst still offering seasonal interest, movement and a focussed expression.

Native plant material has been considered, where appropriate, to improve the overall biodiversity of the site. Pollinator species have also been included within the planning strategy which would be in line with the 'All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025' which is a *'new five-year road map that aims to help bees, other pollinating insects and our wider biodiversity encouraging a better way of managing our whole landscape to permanently support our struggling biodiversity'*.

The planting has been selected to ensure resilient planting establishes well and offers variety throughout the seasons. A select number of species which are already present in the hedgerows on site have been included within the planting species mix. Refer to supporting 'Planting Strategy' drawing and Fig 6.0 below for detailed reference of the same. By including species which are already present on the site

lands, and flourish in the local micro-climate; this is considered a practical and a respectful approach with regard to a species selection.

It is proposed that much of the appropriate ornamental shrubs, for more highly maintained zones, shall be under-planted with bulb species to offer 'flurries' of colour from early to late spring. Leaf colour, bark tone and berries shall all be considered for the scheme which allows for good contrast and again, seasonal variation. To the grass amenity areas, the planting of large swathes of bulbs many of the open spaces and pocket parks will provide colour in early through to late spring. This will reduce the grass cutting maintenance for a period of time when bulb planting is developing right through to senescence. This reduced mowing regime would also be encouraged under the previously referenced 'All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025.'

The landscape is designed to be comfortable, passively supervised, accessible, welcoming, sheltered and safe. The passive and active recreation open space areas will provide a high level of visual amenity while allowing for a seamless connection between this development and adjoining established communities.

The provision of a permeable landscape; offering pedestrian and cyclists alike with opportunity and visual variety and interest throughout the scheme is one of the core principals of the design.

Second to the core principal of design is the development of a sustainable palette of materials for hard and soft landscaping for the amenity areas and the streetscape.

We have developed a check list of both hard and soft landscape materials:

Hard works materials must;

- Allow for ease of movement for all users
- Be sustainable
- Enhance the space and not conflict with the building finishes
- Work and look attractive in both wet and dry conditions
- Have a long timeline appeal

Soft works plant materials must;

- Be suitable for the Irish climate
- Be non-invasive
- Collectively provide visual interest all year round
- Enhance biodiversity and habitat creation
- Be disease resistant

By approaching the overall landscape design of the scheme at both macro and micro levels, the proposal for Mooretown Phase 3 will provide a high level of amenity.

Refer to drawing no.'s LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP detailed information which reference the hard and soft landscape elements pertaining to the scheme.



Fig. 6.0 Typical species with visual appeal, seasonal interest and textual quality.

2.0 Landscape Development, Engagement and Green Infrastructure.

It is proposed that both the streetscape and landscape amenity areas proposed will receive a landscape treatment of a high standard in terms of materials and specification; both for hard and soft landscape elements.

The key objectives of the landscape proposals specific to the distinctiveness of this development are noted as follows:

- To provide a landscape scheme which delivers a high level of visual amenity and passive recreation for the residents all year round.
- To create an attractive, high-quality landscape for the residents and their lifestyles. Well-designed landscapes, especially in neighbourhoods contribute to an overall sense of well-being by providing places for people to meet up for a walk, for collaboration or just to chat. People places are successful places.
- To ensure that the planting strategy is suitable in terms of scale, species selection, on-going maintenance and overall longevity.
- To adopt a repetition and rhythm of plant species to ensure a cohesive style and an overall consistency.
- To adopt ecological compensatory measures for the scheme, including the objective to retain the boundary hedgerows where possible, which will provide a positive aspect to the landscape and offer significant ecological mitigation measures.

The existing trees and hedgerows pertaining to the site lands have been surveyed and reviewed in accordance with BS 5837:2012 by the Project Arborist (Arborist Associates). The completed survey and associated drawings have been included as part of this submission to An Bord Pleanala.

Whilst there will be some hedgerow loss, to facilitate the development, a site wide strategy in terms of appropriate compensatory planting has been considered and presented. It is proposed that the peripheral hedgerows to the south-east and east are largely retained and enhanced as part of the overall scheme. Coupled with the retained hedgerow beyond the site lands to the west, this will create a strong and reinforced boundary to the scheme and with augmentation will mitigate in part against the loss of a hedgerows and vegetation through the site lands. The retention and associated infill/augmentation of the select boundary hedgerows will provide opportunity to protect and enhance the site's biodiversity locally while improving linkages of green infrastructure and wildlife to connect with habitats with the surrounding environment. This resonates with Fingal County Council's Development Plan 2017-2023 objective 'DMS71' which notes '*provide green corridors in all new developments where the opportunity's exists*'. A wider context green infrastructure approach was considered from the outset as referenced previously in Fig. 3.0 above.

Aside from the over-arching strategy above, considering the sloping nature of the site in a north-east direction, coupled with the existing hedgerow arrangement, along with maximising the lands for development in accordance with planning densities, it was considered inevitable that the central portion

of hedgerows within the core of the site lands would require removal. Notwithstanding this issue, a full and detailed exercise was carried out to assess whether ‘part of’ the existing hedgerows could be retained within the new open spaces.

As part of the early consultation with Fingal County Council along, commentary was provided by Fingal County Council that the scheduled hedgerow removal was deemed to be excessive as part of the development proposals. Prior to the Stage 2 pre-application lodgement, a section of hedgerow (some 55 linear metres) was proposed for retention in the ‘central open space’ following a site design change in an effort to alleviate any concerns. Refer to Stage 2 pre-application ‘Tree Protection Plan’ (extract) as prepared by Arborist Associates (Fig. 7.0 below).



Fig. 7.0 Extract of tree protection plan (Lodged at Stage 2 Pre-application) showing part retention within the Central Open Space.

It was agreed at the Tripartite meeting (held on the 21st October 2021) that Ms. Annie Meagher, FCC Parks and Green Infrastructure Division would attend a detailed site review to assess the hedgerows further, in combination with providing commentary on the landscape proposals put forward. A follow-on site review was held with Ms. Annie Meagher on the 2nd November 2021 and the following items were noted:

- It was advised by FCC that the hedgerow section shown to be retained through the central open space could be omitted and the open space be redesigned to maximise play value and permeability through the scheme. FCC further noted that care must be taken when considering the proximity of playgrounds in association with housing units in terms of noise/issues.

- It was further requested by FCC Parks that the Ash trees (tag numbers 0892 & 0893) be removed as there was a general concern over ash dieback, retention and management of these trees in a small pocket park in the future and the limitations they posed in terms of design and maximising play and amenity value. It was requested that mature replacement trees (in the order of 2 to 3no.) would be required as replacements at this location.
- Site wide hedge-cutting on hedgerows scheduled for retention was requested during Winter2021/Spring 2022 in accordance with guidelines to promote tillering at the base.
- The east-west cycle footpath route to Abbeyvale was not seen to be acceptable in the long term when considering future desire lines as it appeared to be ‘perpendicular’ from the Western Distributor Road. It was noted that a ‘curving’ arrangement in a north-westward arrangement would be more suited, and this would also maximise space to allow for the installation of a large MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) in the order of 40x20m which would support the play provision requirements for the overall scheme.
- Rationalising the southern boundary with rear garden properties of Abbeyvale Residential was recommended. It was suggested that consideration to be given to alter the site layout to provide back-to-back gardens at this location; however, the hedgerow to the south of the ‘Ringfort’ Park was seen largely acceptable to retain, augment and reinforce.

The above-mentioned guidance was considered in detail to address all items and requests raised, coupled with the landscape related items raised in An Bord Pleanala’s opinion as received in October 2021.

A follow-on meeting was held with Ms. Annie Meagher, FCC Parks and Green Infrastructure Division on the 1st March 2022 to advise of design development. The approach, as provided in the application provided was put forward for review. The general feedback noted that the landscape proposals put forward (including the tree and hedgerow removal put forward) were accepted in principle and considered largely in order with the built site plan as provided. The follow-on commentary provided by FCC Parks and Green Infrastructure included the following:

- a. The open space and play provision shall be fully disclosed in the formal application.
- b. Additional street tree planting (particularly on Road 4) was required as part of mitigation.
- c. Large mature specimen trees will be required to mitigate the removal of the 2no. category B Ash trees (tag numbers 0892 & 0893) in the local pocket park.
- d. In terms of formal play, *‘a minimum of 25 metres should normally be provided between the activity zone and the nearest dwelling’* where possible as noted in the DRAFT document entitled ‘Space for Play, A Play Policy for Fingal’.

These items raised have been fully addressed below; and graphically and in full in terms of drawing package provided. Specific reference to the same have been highlighted below as necessary.

As a general over all, and overarching approach in order to ameliorate against the potential loss of green infrastructure, further ecological compensatory measures are proposed as part of the scheme which include, developing new compensatory woodland clusters where space allows, planting of flowering trees which are beneficial for pollinators, including complimentary ‘herb layer’ along hedgerows scheduled for retention, planting diverse meadow mixes within the open space areas and managing these as meadows (where appropriate) and woodland edge planting beneath the canopy of retained trees.

As part of the hedgerow removal works, topsoil from the ditch line shall be salvaged and stored separately. This material shall be reused in the forming of berms for the new woodland/herb layer zones. It is felt that the seed stock within the salvaged soil will include hedgerow species (such as *Viola* sp.); which potentially may flourish as part of the new planting arrangement.

Ecological compensatory measures are proposed as part of the scheme including:

- A. The **planting of native species**, where appropriate
- B. Infilling and augmenting of **existing hedgerows** along the boundaries; as well as the inclusion of an appropriate herb-layer along its extent.
- C. Planting of **semi-mature trees**, with many flowering varieties which are beneficial for pollinators. Refer to detailed ‘Planting Strategy Drawing’ provided for numbers/species proposed.
- D. Planting **diverse grass mixes**, including **naturalised bulb planting** and potentially managing key grass areas zones as meadows within the proposed green open spaces where appropriate.
- E. Managing public open space grass areas, where possible, as **meadows** in an effort to reduce mowing operations and subsequently be more economical whilst benefitting local biodiversity. Refer to Fig. 8.0 below for reference.
- F. As part of the hedgerow removal works, **topsoil from the ditch line shall be salvaged** and stored separately. This material shall be reused in the forming of berms for the new native planting. We believe that the **seed stock and within the salvaged soil** will include hedgerow species (such as *Viola* sp.); which potentially may flourish as part of the new hedgerow arrangement.
- G. Inclusion of **bird boxes** to encourage nesting at locations to be agreed with consulting ecologist.



Fig. 8.0 Adopt ‘reduced’ mowing in select areas of the Public Open Space to improve on local biodiversity and support long term maintenance.

3.0 Open Space Provision

The Open Space has been designed to provide a diverse high quality public realm with opportunities for moving, socialising and spending time outdoors in an inclusive and overlooked space. The spaces have been developed to provide a distinctive setting which will appeal to all ages.

The location and positioning of all open spaces have been considered in detail as part design development stage in terms of proximity to the surrounding houses as being positioned to provide passive surveillance, visual relief and a quality aspect. The spatial arrangement of the open spaces has been graphically highted below in Fig. 9 below for reference.



Fig. 9.0 Spatial Arrangement of the Open Spaces proposed in Mooretown Phase 3 Lands.

An Bord Pleanála's Opinion no. 1 noted that the following was required – 'A quantitative and qualitative assessment which provides a breakdown of the public and communal open space areas. This assessment should include a detailed landscape plan including the provision of communal amenity spaces and play facilities in line with the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020) and the requirements of Fingal County Council Parks Department'. To fully address this reference raised, the Open Space Provision in terms of Class 1 and Class 2 has been referenced in detail in CCK Architects drawings provided. All Class 2 Open Space has been referenced on architectural drawing no. 1830-SHD-S-139 and as referenced in Fig. 10 below to note the same. (This drawing has also been referenced in duplicate on landscape architectural drawing no. OS-02-PP)



Fig. 10.0 Open Space drawing extract – drawing no. 1830-SHD-S-139 (CCK Architects) refers.

The Open Space Provision in terms of Class 1 has been referenced in detail in CCK drawing 'Class 1 Public Open Space' drawing (reference 1836-SHD-S-134) and Fig. 11 to note the same. (This drawing has also been referenced in duplicate on landscape architectural drawing no. OS-02-PP).

Some 1.230 ha has been attributed to Class 1 open space in the future Swords Regional Park. The land parcel put forward to address Class 1 requirements forms part of the Swords Regional Masterplan as developed by Fingal County Council. An 'approximate' overlay of the publicly available 'Swords Regional Masterplan' has been provided for reference on drawing no. OS-01-PP ('Open Space Zoned Lands'

enclosed. We respectfully note that the hard and soft landscape detailing of the said lands can only be fully addressed once the masterplan is updated and/or developed further in accordance with FCC's requirements.

As a general note, 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': (refer to supporting landscape plans prepared)

- Pathways (and in some cases cycleways) which link to surrounding pedestrian routes,
- Structural tree planting and meadow grass mixes with a diverse seed range,
- The development of woodland edge planting and 'herb layers' to the base of retained trees and hedgerows to help reinforce green infrastructure where appropriate,
- Naturalised bulb planting,
- Grass mounding to provide form and visual interest; and offer a sense of enclosure,
- Informal kick-about or multifunctional space,
- A variety of seating zones with good aspect and direct views to play areas allowing for passive supervision,
- Formalised playgrounds and informal play for all age groups (including opportunity for natural play),
- Opportunity for active and passive recreation,
- Nature trail (combined cycle/walking route) with stationary exercise points offering a direct connection to the natural environment.

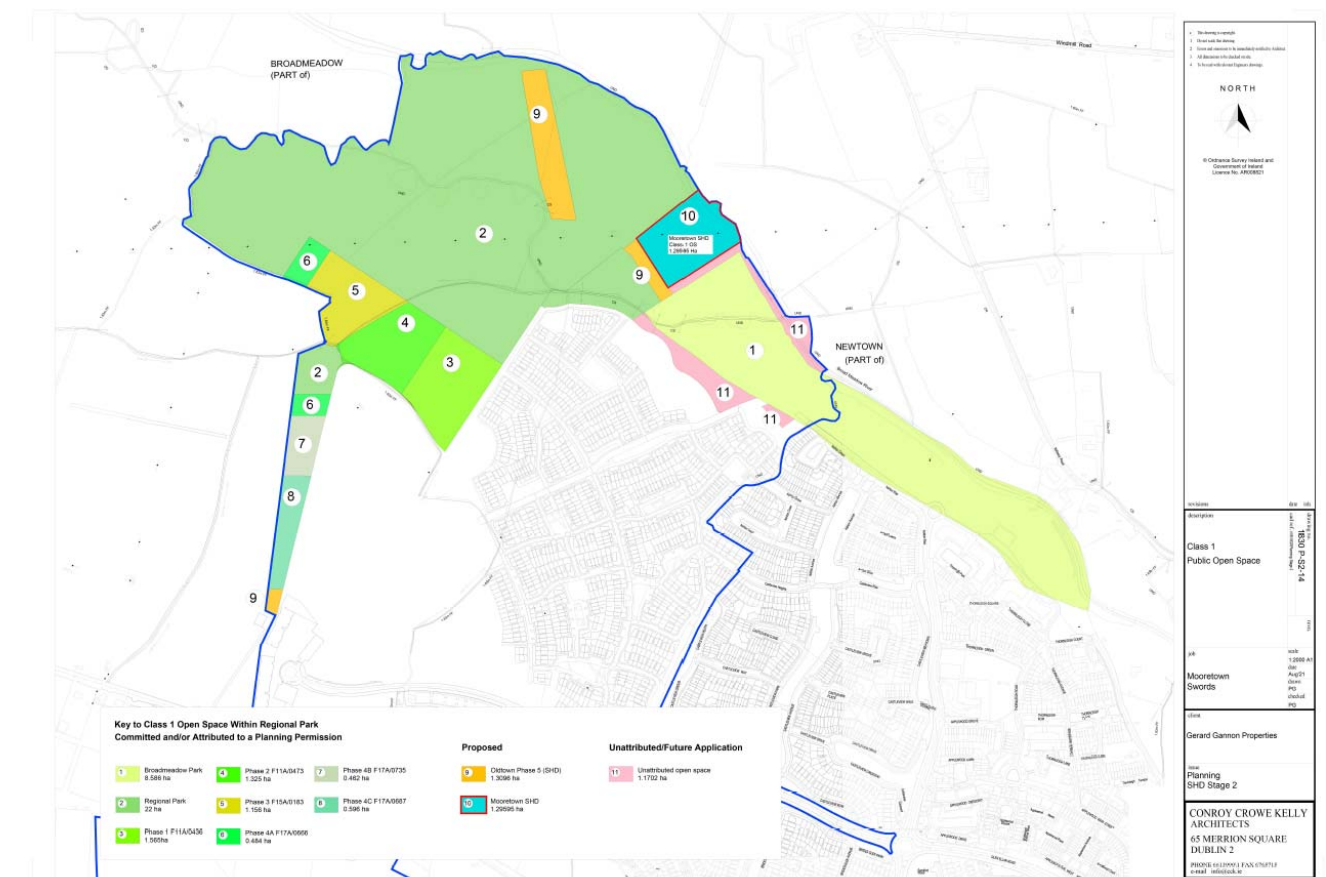


Fig. 11.0 Class 1 extract – drawing no. 1836-SHD-S-134 (CCK Architects) refers.

The designed open spaces will be developed on the basis of linkages and connectivity throughout the scheme; pre-empting desire lines has been critical. People places are successful places and it is envisaged that these spaces will be actively used and enjoyed by future residents which bring about a great sense of ownership and overall pride.

The open spaces proposed throughout the scheme will be reflective and complimentary of the varying and distinctive character areas which will be visible throughout the built elements of the scheme.

The following plans, along specifically with the Architects Site Plan, address in full the landscape detail and the *'provision of communal amenity spaces and play facilities in line with the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020) and the requirements of Fingal County Council Parks Department'*. Refer also to reference 4.0 below with regard to detailed inputs on play provision. Refer to drawing no.'s LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, and playground specific drawings PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive for detailed information.



Fig. 12.0 – Open Spaces designed for living.

4.0 Playground Provision.

As part of the engagement with FCC's Parks and Green Infrastructure Divisions, as well as ABP's Opinion item 01, the play provision and facilities were requested to be addressed to ensure they were in fully line with *'the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020) and the requirements of Fingal County Council Parks Department'*.

To cater for the 650no. unit scheme, some 2,600sq.m. of play facilities are to be provided to fully address FCC's playground provision requirement. Drawing no.'s PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive, refers which noted that some 14no. play areas are proposed throughout the scheme, along with a MUGA (multi-use games area) as requested specifically by FCC Parks Department as noted in item 2.0 above.

Some 2,823 Sq.m. of play provision is provided which includes natural play, incidental play, formalised playgrounds, callisthenic units along with ensuring play needs are provided in association with the communal open space of the apartments to cater for the needs of toddlers and young children (< 6 years) with suitable equipment and seating for parents and guardians. The play provision provided is responsive to characteristic of the setting, local context and need.

5.0 Open Space Design

All open spaces provided as part of the scheme offer linkages and connectivity to and from the

scheme, including direct local connections to Swords Community College and Broadmeadow Community National School, the established Abbeyvale Residential Scheme to the south and the pedestrian routes associated with the Western Distributor Road.

There is an opportunity for passive amenity, designated play, kickabout activities, personal training along with visual enhancing landscape incorporating focussed and site specific biodiversity improvements.

The designed open spaces have been developed on the basis of linkages and connectivity throughout the scheme; pre-empting desire line connections. People places are successful places and it is envisaged that these spaces will be actively used and enjoyed by future residents which will bring about a great sense of ownership and overall pride.

The open space design has been conscious of creating a strong open space hierarchy which not only creates varied public realm, but also supports the creation of a public realm network with a sense of place for all ages and abilities. The pocket parks proposed throughout the scheme will be reflective and complimentary of the varying 'character zones' which will be visible throughout the built elements of the scheme.

An Bord Pleanála's opinion no. 5 notes that *'A report that specifically addresses the proposed materials and finishes to the scheme including specific detailing of finishes, the treatment of balconies in the apartment buildings, landscaped areas, pathways, entrances, boundary treatment/s and Village Centre. Particular regard should be had to the requirement to provide high quality and sustainable finishes and details which seek to create a distinctive character for the development. The documents should also have regard to the long-term management and maintenance of the proposed development and a life cycle report for the apartments in accordance with section 6.3 of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018).'*

All of the landscape finishing requirements have been addressed and fully referenced in each of the key open spaces below to ensure that that the landscape related elements are fully address as per the aforementioned ABP opinion no. 5. The key open spaces included are referenced as follows:

5.1 'Central Park' – the heart of the scheme

This centrally located open space, offers safe and considered pedestrian connections, featured walking routes along with an active frontage set in an open and overlooked space within the heart of the scheme. This space offers a robust approach to scheme permeability, envisaged space vibrancy and the values the nurturing of future communities through the form of amenity, play in balance with nature.

The 'Central Open Space' includes considered and potential desire lines throughout as well open grass areas which will provide multifunctional spaces for play, gathering and kick-about. These looping pathways will offer opportunities for younger age groups to learn to cycle in the safety of a secure environment; as well as a comfortable space for a range of users with safe and inviting rest stops with good aspect.

The space also proposes formal play in two distinct zones for a range of users, as well as a general fitness point for all age groups. Where feasible, consideration has been given to the requirement of *‘a minimum of 25 metres should normally be provided between the activity zone and the nearest dwelling’* as noted in the DRAFT document entitled ‘Space for Play, A Play Policy for Fingal’. Refer to playground drawings (PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive) for proposed play elements put forward as part of the scheme.

The tree planting has been considered to support a biodiverse flora and species mix with seasonal interest and appeal. Refer to supporting planting strategy drawing (drawing reference PP-01-PP) as provided for reference with regard to typical tree species proposed. The tree planting proposed is of the clear stemmed variety to ensure inter-visibility throughout the open space. There are opportunities within this space to establish a reduced mowing regime which can boost wildlife, increase pollinators and generally reduce maintenance costs.

To fully address landscape related items as raised in An Bord Pleanála opinion no. 5 the following drawings (plan and details should be referenced): LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP.

5.2 ‘Ringfort Park’ and Nature Walk Trail

The ‘Ringfort Park’ has developed and evolved following the identification of a medieval ringfort to the south-east of the scheme (Refer to Fig. 13.0 below for reference). In close consultation with the Courtney Deery, Heritage Consultants, the ringfort was recommended for preservation insitu within a greenspace/ open landscape.



Fig. 13.0 – Medieval Ringfort (Area 5) – Extract Mapping as provided by Courtney Deery.

As advised by the Heritage Consultant, policies and recommendations in the ‘Conservation Plan’ note that a protection zone (where no development can take place) is required around the extent of this feature. The protection zone should reflect the circular nature of the below ground remains. The ringfort site is some 30m in diameter and a buffer zone of some 20m beyond the monument is required to ensure no disturbance to the archaeological remains.

The Conservation Plan further advises that the space is maintained as a green area and should be integrated into future development proposals in this form. The landscape proposals must respect the below ground remains to ensure non-invasive planting in the core exclusion area. Circulation routes, seating and interpretive panels all formed part of the recommendations.

Taking the recommendations of the ‘Conservation Plan’ on board, it is proposed that the ringfort area is retained and protected with the adequate buffer requirements. Refer to Fig. 14.0 for layout proposals. The core exclusion area features a grassed biodiverse meadow area in a circular arrangement along with spring bulbs to echo the arrangement of the former ringfort. The landscape approach has been sensitive and respectful to the cultural remains whilst offering a visual appealing and relaxed space for future users. It is envisaged that the space can change and alter with the seasons as well as adopting grass cutting regimes which can form mown paths through the long grass to add interest, appeal and respond to natural desire lines. (Refer to Fig. 8.0 above for reference.)

Beyond the buffer line, a formal arrangement a single tree species is proposed around the ring fort feature. This again aims to reinforce and highlight the subterranean cultural remains. At detailed design stage it is envisaged that appropriate rootbarrier will be installed to ensure there would be no negative impact on the cultural remains. The ringfort zone shall receive a full circular pedestrian route which shall link outwards to the remainder of the pocket park, amenity features and outwards to the adjoining streetscape and associated built development. The path links provide opportunity for walking /jogging trails as well as learning to cycle, along with appropriate rest stops and seating. An interpretive panel, in line with FCC’s ‘Heritage Signage and Heritage Trail Guidance’ is also provided; refer to drawing no. LD-02-PP (detail 5) for further detail.

Formal and informal play has been also proposed within this space which shall cater for a range of users. A stationary callisthenic unit is proposed to encourage and facilitate this natural form of exercise within the landscape setting to offer opportunity for cardio and strength in equal measure. This sporting feature naturally works well with the walking/trim trail route which extends outwards beyond the open green. Refer to Fig. 14.0 below for extract

Finally, this space is edged to the south and east by existing hedgerows which shall be retained, augmented and infilled as necessary. This hedgerow shall also receive a herb layer arrangement within 2-3metres of its base towards the centre of the open space. Refer to landscape strategy drawing (PP-01-PP) for species reference, which will be managed to benefit biodiversity, whether it be for plants, bees and other insects’ dependant on nectar or pollen, or farmland birds.

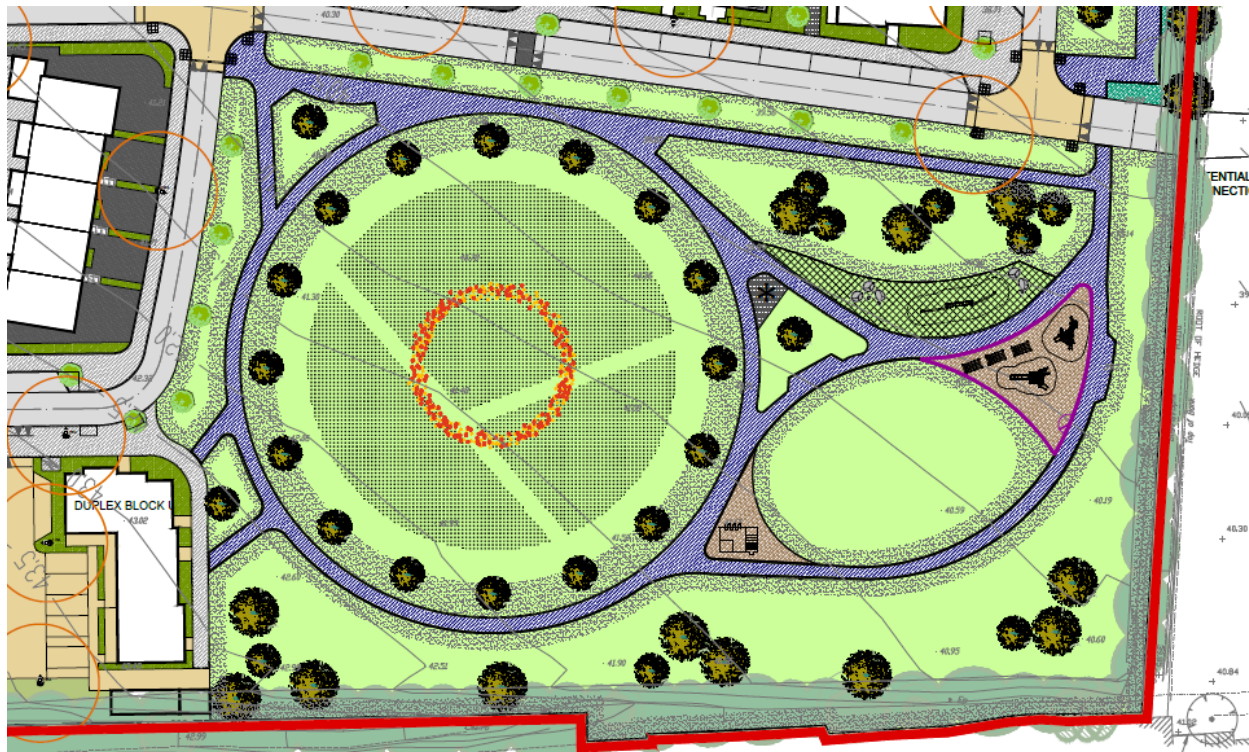


Fig. 14.0 – ‘Ringfort Park’ – Extract from Landscape Plan (LP-01-PP for reference)

A nature-walk trail is proposed to the east of the scheme which links with the aforementioned ‘Ring Fort Park’ in an effort to support active and healthy living for the community. The 3.0m wide combined cycle footpath, finished in bitmac with a concrete kerb, will offer users an opportunity to cycle and walk throughout this space and allow for safe connections northwards with Swords Community College and Broadmeadow National School. The route will actively engage with the retained hedgerow and proposed herb layer as referenced previously, which will promote and improve the sites biodiversity as well as lending to the green infrastructure strategy considered for the site. Refer to Fig. 15.0 below for typical herb layer arrangement. The nature walk route will link a series of pocket parks along this route which shall feature rest stops, natural play and stationary exercise points which all promote healthy and active living.

To fully address landscape related items as raised in An Bord Pleanala opinion no. 5 the following drawings (plan and details should be referenced): LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP.

5.3 Western Park

As part of the engagement process with both Fingal County Council and An Bord Pleanala to date, a redesign of the western park was requested in order to adequately link and provide an organic and responsive edge to the proposed built development, engage and buffer with the permitted Western Distributor Road, address desire lines and linkages with Abbeyvale and maximise amenity at this location to ensure that adequate play provision is put forward.



Fig. 15.0 – Example of a herb layer along a retained and augmented native hedgerow.

The commentary as provided has been fully taken on board and the Western Park has received a redesign to alleviate all concerns and to ensure an active and meaningful space is put forward. Refer to Fig. 16.0 below referencing the alteration in design.



Fig. 16.0 - Design Development – LHS: References the initial scheme for the Western Park put forward at Pre-application Stage. RHS: Referenced the improved and integrated Western Park Design capturing FCC and ABP recommendations from the engagement process.

The alteration to the design have included the following key elements:

- New and improved pathway (and cycle) network responsive to built environment, permitted Western Distributor Road, adjoining establish residence of Abbeyvale and integration with proposed amenity.
- Inclusion of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) with cross play as requested by FCC Parks Department as part of engagement process.
- Inclusion of formal and informal play zones.
- Organic 'elements' in the landscape in the form of planting, gentle grass mounding to merge with the built edge.
- Incorporation of callisthenic unit and stationary exercise elements to promote cardio and strength based activity.
- Focussed mature planted edge to offer screening and framing views to and from the permitted Western Distributor Road.
- Incidental play in the form of balance beams set in the local landscape along with a table tennis unit off set from the pathway network.
- Appropriate seating and rest stops forming part of the pathway network.

To fully address landscape related items as raised in An Bord Pleanala opinion no. 5 the following drawings (plan and details should be referenced): LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP.

5.4 Civic Square Amenity Zone

A south-facing amenity space is located to the east of Apartment Block D and immediately adjacent of the entrance to the Swords Community College. This space offers users opportunity to 'stay and rest' in association with school collection/drop off and utilising nearby proposed café facilities.

The space shall include raised planters with formalised ornamental plant species including a series of pollinators, which shall also include bench seating and underfoot this space shall be finished resin bound material to allow for a quality finish to this space. To the north of this arrangement, a retaining wall will be required in part to address the existing change in level.

Aluminium and powder coated planters, with coloured arrangement, similar to Fig. 17.0 shall be adopted for this space and will break up and provide interest to the paved arrangement which shall largely be in the order of contrasting concrete based paving units, with a focus area to the east of apartment Block D incorporating natural paving.

Formal fastigate street trees shall be planted along the Main Street in combination with the existing two-way cycle path arrangement which will further demarcate and rationalise this circulation route.

To fully address landscape related items as raised in An Bord Pleanala opinion no. 5 the following drawings (plan and details should be referenced): LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-

04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP.



Fig. 17: Aluminium and powder coated steel planters with bench seating.

5.5 Local Pocket Park / Communal Open Space

A local 'pocket park' is proposed to the east of Duplex Block K. This space will benefit from morning sun and will feature buffer hedging as a backdrop to a climbing play element suited to small children. The space will also feature mature trees in the order of 30-35cm girth as requested by FCC Parks during the engagement process. These aforementioned proposed trees aim to mitigate the loss of the 2no. Category B trees which are scheduled for removal at this location.

A series of communal open space are proposed within the parking courts of the various blocks throughout the scheme. Samples noted in Fig. 18.0 below. These overlooked spaces incorporate play opportunities, seating, circulation routes in a quality aspect location.



Fig. 18: Part of Landscape Plan referencing the east facing ‘pocket park’ at Block K with a number of communal open spaces associated with parking courts.

To fully address landscape related items as raised in An Bord Pleanála opinion no. 5 the following drawings (plan and details should be referenced): LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP.

5.5 Communal Open Space – above podium courtyards (Apartment Block A & B)

Both above podium courtyards, shall offer visual and active amenity. The hardscape finishes, of the concrete paving, resin and wetpour arrangement proposed shall receive adequate softening with planters, grassing and ornamental planting.

Play elements shall be incorporated within this zone to ensure small children and their minders are catered for in terms of provision of communal amenity spaces and play facilities in line with the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020). Other play elements including table tennis units, ground chess and chess games tables are included to cater for a range of ages and users.

The spaces shall incorporate a range of seating with good aspect and buffer planting shall be incorporating along ‘living’ edge of the apartments whilst still offering overlooking to allow for passive surveillance.

To fully address landscape related items as raised in An Bord Pleanála opinion no. 5 the following drawings (plan and details should be referenced): LP-01-PP to LP-09-PP inclusive, BP-01-PP to BP-04-PP inclusive, BD-01-PP, LD-01-PP to LD-04-PP inclusive, PG-01-PP to PG-04-PP inclusive and PP-01-PP.

5.6 Streetscape

It is proposed that the internal access roads will receive specimen trees suited to streetscape development including *Acer platanoides*. ‘Columnare’, *Acer rubrum* ‘October Glory’, *Carpinus betulus* ‘Frans Fontaine’ and *Prunus* ‘Sunset Boulevard’. Refer to enclosed Planting Strategy (drawing reference PP-01-PP) for further detailed references. Size, seasonal interest, colour and variation has been considered in choosing tree species for these locations. Supporting shrub planting will be included along these routes to ensure an overall unified approach is adopted.

The tree planting has been coordinated with the proposed site lighting in accordance with requirements set out by Fingal County Council. Planting to the front of the dwellings shall comprise of a mix of shrub, hedging and amenity lawns. The shrub planting will be structural in nature; whilst herbaceous planting will provide seasonal interest and colour.

5.7 Front of Dwellings / Internal Access Roads

It is proposed that the internal access roads will receive specimen trees, suited to streetscape development. Size, seasonal interest, colour and variation will all be considered in choosing

specific trees for these locations. Supporting shrub planting will be included along these routes to ensure an overall unified approach is adopted.

5.7 Stormwater Storage Tank

The application also includes for a stormwater storage tank on the Irish Water foul water network, Balheary Road, Swords. This will drain to the Swords Wastewater Treatment plan and will serve the Oldtown/Mooretown and Holybanks catchment in Swords, Co. Dublin.

Landscape screening proposals associated with this proposed stormwater storage tank are referenced on enclosed drawing no. LP-05-PP

5.10 Planting Programme

Planting on site will commence with the completion of each stage of the works and as a result the programme is closely tied to construction operations. Ground preparation will precede planting and will include weed clearance and soil amelioration where necessary. Planting will largely be carried out during the dormant period from November – March, with grass seeding carried out from April – September. An 18 month defects liability and landscape maintenance period will be set in place for all plant material with plant failures being replaced in the following planting season. Plant materials selected for this residential scheme will largely follow the planting plan to be prepared.

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