



Statement of Consistency

Proposed Strategic Housing Development (SHD) on Lands at Ratoath, Co. Meath

On behalf of

Beo Properties Limited

May 2022

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This Statement of Consistency has been prepared by KPMG Future Analytics Consultants on behalf of Beo Properties Ltd. in respect of a proposed Strategic Housing Development (SHD) relating to a residential development of 452 no. residential units and crèche facility on a 14.166ha (gross) site located to the immediate south of the established town of Ratoath.

This Statement of Consistency is prepared as an accompanying document to a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application which is lodged with An Bord Pleanála in compliance with Part 2 Section 4 (1) and 5 (1) of the Planning & Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, as amended, as well as An Bord Pleanála's Guidance for Prospective Applicants.

This report should be read as part of the wider suite of reports accompanying the application. We refer An Bord Pleanála to the Covering Letter enclosed herewith, which clearly sets out a schedule of documents enclosed with this application.

This Statement of Consistency is intended to outline consistency with guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act (as amended), national and regional planning policy, and the key policies, objectives and development management standards contained within the Meath County Council Development Plan 2021-2027.

Table 1-1 Key Development Statistics

KEY DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS	
Site Area	14.166 ha
Gross Floor Area (Residential)	54,175 sq. m
Density	41.1
Plot Ratio	0.42
Site Coverage	17.2%
Height	2-6 Storeys
Total No. of units	452 units
OPEN SPACE	
Public Open Space	2.2 ha (22,470 sq. m)
Communal Amenity Open Space	1.06 ha (10,583 sq. m)
NON-RESIDENTIAL	
Commercial Units	547.4 sq.m comprising 4 no. commercial/local retail units
Crèche facility	1,003 sq.m (Capacity 121) Creche play areas 726.8 sq.m
RESIDENTIAL	
Apartments	120
Houses	150
Maisonettes	182
Dual and triple aspect apartments and duplexes	100%
Part V	45
PARKING	
Car Parking Provision	746 no.
Bicycle Parking	816 no.

Motorbikes	6
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1.2 Report Structure

The following ministerial guidelines, national and local plans are considered relevant to the current SHD proposal and are discussed in this Statement of Consistency:

- Project Ireland 2040: The National Planning Framework
- Project Ireland 2040: The National Development Plan 2021-2030
- Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland (September 2021)
- Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness
- Smarter Travel – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for EMRA (2019)
- Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009)
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2020)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages) 2009
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2007);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)
- Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Guidelines (2017) and Affordable Housing Act (2021), as amended
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)
- Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015

2.0 Strategic Planning Policy Context

The following section provides a summary overview of the how the development proposal aligns with and supports a range of national planning policy guidance documents.

2.1 Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country out to the year 2040. It is a national document that will guide the strategic planning and development of the country over the next 20+ years, so that as the population grows, that growth is sustainable (in economic, social and environmental terms).

The NPF calls for a major new policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements. A shared set of goals for every community across the country, expressed in the Framework as the National Strategic Outcomes, are set out. One of the key goals is to achieve ‘compact growth’ and this is reflected throughout the NPF and through its policies and objectives.

Compact growth is to be achieved by:

- Targeting a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing ‘footprint’ of built-up areas.
- Making better use of under-utilised lands and buildings, including ‘infill’, ‘brownfield’ and publicly owned sites and vacant and under-occupied buildings, with higher housing and jobs densities, better serviced by existing facilities and public transport.
- Supporting both urban regeneration and rural rejuvenation through a €3 Billion Regeneration and Development Fund and the establishment of a National Regeneration and Development Agency.

The NPF sets out that the Eastern and Midland region will, by 2040, grow by over half a million on its current population to around 2.85 million people.

The regions’ ability to accommodate this growth in a successful way, that will safeguard ‘liveability’ or quality of life of urban places, is predicated on achieving the goal of compact urban growth. With this in mind, National Policy Objectives (NPOs) such as no. 3a and b are established:

NPO 3a *‘Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements.’*

NPO 4 *‘ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being’.*

NPO11 *‘There will be a presumption in favour of development that encourages more people, jobs and activity within existing urban areas, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth’.*

NPO 13 *‘in urban areas, planning and related standards, including in particular building height and car parking will be based on performance criteria enabling alternative solutions that seek to achieve well-designed high quality and safe outcomes in order to achieved targeted growth and that protect the environment’.*

NPO 27 *‘Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.’*

The NPF strives to prioritise urban areas in settlements other than the five Cities and their suburbs, such as Ratoath, as ideal locations in which to accommodate the State’s future population. National Policy Objective (NPO) 3c defines this approach; *“Deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the five Cities and their suburbs, within their existing built-up footprints.”*

Such areas allow for the creation of critical mass that allows services and infrastructure to be more effectively, efficiently and easily provided. Targeting development in urban areas also reduces negative impacts on the natural environment and the loss of valuable, finite land resources and the emission of greenhouse gases. To achieve compact growth – a key National Strategic Outcome (NSO) of the NPF – NPO 9 allows for select settlements to be “identified for significant (i.e. 30% or more above 2016 population levels) rates of population growth at regional and local planning stages...” However, to achieve both this NSO and NPO, there must be a pragmatic and progressive approach to planning and development in terms of residential densities achieved through increase heights. The general approach of building up, not out, must be followed.

Clearly, the NPF will drive increasing levels of forthcoming population growth and residential development into urban areas as the most sustainable and resilient locations in which to secure Ireland’s future. This proposal aligns with the NPOs, NSOs and the broader principles of the Plan, developing a site that is immediately adjacent to existing built-up areas to secure additional sustainable housing supply as a high-quality scheme.

The proposed development is on land zoned for residential development inside the Ratoath Outer Relief Road (RORR) and the settlement boundary of Ratoath. The scheme proposed is compact in form, attractive and well-designed at an appropriate density of 41.1 uph which a range of housing unit types in close proximity to schools, childcare facilities, shops are a range of other community services. **It is therefore considered that the development as proposed is consistent with the goals and objectives of the National Planning Framework.**

Table 2-1 National Core Principles set out to guide the delivery of future housing, Section 6.6, National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040

National Core Principles to Guide the Delivery of Future Housing	The Ratoath Development Proposal
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<p><i>Ensure a high standard quality of life to future residents as well as environmentally and socially sustainable housing and placemaking through integrated planning and consistently excellent design.</i></p>	<p>The proposed SHD south of Ratoath seeks to create an innovative development of new homes on the lands between the existing built-up area of Ratoath and the proposed Outer Relief Road. The scheme will provide a vibrant new neighbourhood based on the principles of sustainability, permeability, walkability and shared public spaces. The neighbourhood model will provide each block with a communal court space to be shared by the residents and encourage social interaction. These communal courts will have distinct characters and functions to encourage the inhabitants to move between them. The development proposes an alternative model of living to the dendritic street patterns of more traditional housing estate layouts. It aims to set a sustainable precedent for the future of Ratoath.</p>
<p><i>Allow for choice in housing location, type, tenure and accommodation in responding to need.</i></p>	<p>The proposal includes a range of amenity spaces, home sizes and typologies to meet the needs of a wide range of residents. These include a mixture of house, duplex maisonette and apartment units. The variety of units will accommodate a diverse mix of inhabitants varying in age, life stage, mobility and family unit size.</p> <p>The proposed development offers a variety of units across the site to encourage an inclusive and varied community. It consists of: 33% terraced houses (3-beds); 40% duplex maisonettes (1-beds and 3-beds) and 27% apartment (2-beds and 3-beds).</p> <p>A minimum of 5% of the dwellings across the site have been designed to comply with the Universal Design Guidelines. These are divided between 1-Bed ground floor maisonettes and 2-bed apartments. Each of the neighbourhood blocks has a mix of typologies to encourage a diverse mix of inhabitants.</p>
<p><i>Prioritise the location of new housing provision in existing settlements as a means to maximising a better quality of life for people through accessing services, ensuring a more efficient use of land and allowing for greater integration with existing infrastructure.</i></p>	<p>Situated on the south edge of the build-up area of Ratoath and surrounded by existing residential development to the north and lands subject to a future masterplan for strategic employment (MP33), the site is ideally location to ensure a high quality of life for future residents.</p> <p>This proposed development takes into consideration an overall framework plan for the lands south of the Ratoath South SHD that are zoned for employment, visitor and tourist facilities and include the Fairyhouse Racecourse and Tattersalls complex. The concept for this wider framework plan integrates connections to neighbouring sites such as existing residential estates, the Jamestown SHD and other residential zoned land. The design concept for this wider framework plan envisages the creation of a strong network of public amenity spaces and ecological corridors connecting Ratoath Town to Fairyhouse and Tattersalls. This</p>

	network defines a series of neighbourhood clusters of varying size that can provide a wide range of functions, with the SHD clusters focused on housing. It is considered that this approach will result in an efficient use of land and the creation of a high quality living environment for future residents.
<i>Tailor the scale and nature of future housing provision to the size and type of settlement where it is planned to be located.</i>	The site location on the edge of the settlement of Ratoath is designated as part of a wider Masterplan (MP37) to provide a residential scheme. This scheme is reflective of population targets set out in the RSES of Ratoath. The density proposed is entirely appropriate to the area and will ensure the delivery of a suitably scaled new housing development in an appropriate location.

2.2 Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2021-2030

The National Development Plan 2021 – 2030 (or “NDP”) was published in 2021 as an updated version of the previous National Development Plan 2018 – 2027. As part of Project Ireland 2040, the NDP sets out the Government’s over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030.

It is an ambitious plan which places a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure both speed of delivery and value for money across all projects. The Document sets out funding to underpin key Government priorities, including allocations which will support the realisation of critical goals laid out in *Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland* (September 2021).

The NDP underpins the overarching message of the National Planning Framework (“NPF”)

Given the location of the subject site and its close proximity to existing services such as public transport and amenities, it is considered that the proposals align with the principles outlined in the National Development Plan. Moreover, the development also aligns with the principles and objectives of the *Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland* (see below).

2.3 Housing for All, A New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)

A new National Plan addressing housing supply has been launched for the period 2021-2030. According to ‘*Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland*’ (2021), Ireland needs an average of 33,000 homes constructed per annum until 2030 to meet targets set out for additional households as outlined in the National Planning Framework up from approximately 20,000 homes a year. “Increasing New Housing Supply” is one of four pathways identified by the Plan to achieve the objectives.

Under this pathway, new arrangements will be introduced for Large-Scale Residential Developments (LRD) that will replace the current Strategic Housing Development (SHD)

arrangements. The proposed development will contribute to the increased supply required to meet the demand for housing in Dublin, whilst also providing a range of different housing typologies and a creche facility also.

It is considered that the development, if granted planning permission, would positively contribute towards the housing targets as illustrated above. Moreover, the construction of an additional 452 no. residential units would greatly benefit the area by providing much needed housing.

2.4 Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness: Rebuilding Ireland (2016)

The *Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness: Rebuilding Ireland* document highlights that a very significant increase in new homes is required in order to tackle homelessness in Ireland. In order to address issues around housing and homelessness, the Action Plan outlines a five-pillar strategy which is as follows: -

- Pillar 1 – Address Homelessness;
- Pillar 2 – Accelerate Social Housing;
- Pillar 3 – Build More Homes;
- Pillar 4 – Improve the Rental Sector; and
- Pillar 5 – Utilise Existing Housing.

In relation to the proposed development, it is considered that the proposals directly address Pillar 1, Pillar 2 and Pillar 3 in particular. It is noted, however, that a number of these pillars are inter-related and therefore the proposal will, to an extent, have a positive impact on each of the abovementioned pillars individually and collectively.

2.5 Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future (2009)

The *Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020* document was first published in 2009 by the Department of Transport and includes a number of key goals (as set out below), which aim to promote sustainable travel throughout the country. The key goals are as follows: -

- (i) To reduce overall travel demand;
- (ii) To maximise the efficiency of the transport network;
- (iii) To reduce reliance on fossil fuels;
- (iv) To reduce transport emissions; and
- (v) To improve accessibility to public transport.

Given the location of the subject site and its close proximity to an existing bus stop on Fairyhouse Rad which is served by several bus routes, including a link to Dunboyne Rail Station (with Park & Ride), it is considered that the proposal would align with the key goals above in terms of promoting sustainable travel and improved accessibility and reduced reliance on fossil fuels.

The Dunboyne Parkway Railway station is only a 10 minute drive away, providing direct access to Dublin' Connolly Station. As such, the residential principal of a residential

development in this location would be in accordance with the principals set down in the Smarter Travel.

The proximity of the development to the existing town centre and also the enhancement of connectivity between the proposed development and adjoining estates (for both cyclist and pedestrians) will allow future residents to make more sustainable model choices when accessing local services in the area.

2.6 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, 2018

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (RSES) is a high-level strategic plan and investment framework that seeks to shape the development of the Eastern and Midland region up to 2031 and beyond, supporting the implementation of the NPF by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the region.

The RSES translates the NPOs of the NPF to key Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) to inform and guide the relevant local authorities with respect to the preparation of the City and County Development Plans, Local Area Plan and other plans and in their assessment of planning applications. The vision for the RSES is “To create a sustainable and competitive Region that supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all”.

Key RPOs are detailed below, and it is firmly considered that the proposed development is consistent with them and their principles. The proposed development will achieve compact development immediately adjacent to the existing settlement of Ratoath and will provide a range of housing types including rowhouses, duplexes and apartments which will cater for a wide demographic profile. The high-quality design and layout provides public, communal and private open space areas and encourages walking and cycling with the use of shared surfaces and permeable routes.

RPO 3.2: “Local authorities, in their core strategies shall set out measures to achieve compact urban development targets of at least 50% of all new homes within or contiguous to the built up area of Dublin city and suburbs and a target of at least 30% for other urban areas.”

Response: While this RPO relates to actions by the various local authorities, the proposed development will ultimately support its principles as a scheme located within the existing built-up area of the settlement of Ratoath.

RPO 5.5: “Future residential development supporting the right housing and tenure mix within the Dublin Metropolitan Area shall follow a clear sequential approach, with a primary focus on the consolidation of Dublin and suburbs, and the development of Key Metropolitan Towns, as set out in the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) and in line with the overall Settlement Strategy for the RSES. Identification of suitable residential development sites shall be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns.”

Response: The proposed development follows the logical, sequential approach set out by RPO 5.5, seeking the redevelopment of the underutilised subject site within the settlement boundary of Ratoath, which is within reach of employment opportunities, services and public transport.

RPO 9.4: “Design standards for new apartment developments should encourage a wider demographic profile which actively includes families and an ageing population.”

Response: The proposed development has been designed to cater for individuals and households from varying demographic and socio-economic backgrounds by offering a range of unit types. The inclusion of the Part V social housing units within the scheme will add diversity to the tenure type and social background. The mix of units (1-beds, 2-beds and 3-beds) will cater to individuals and families of various demographic backgrounds and stages of the life cycle.

RPO 9.10: “In planning for the creation of healthy and attractive places, there is a need to provide alternatives to the car and to prioritise and promote cycling and walking in the design of streets and public spaces. Local authorities shall have regard to the Guiding Principles for ‘Healthy Placemaking’ and ‘Integration of Land Use and Transport’ as set out in the RSES and to national policy as set out in ‘Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas’ and the ‘Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)’.”

Response: The proposed development has prioritised pedestrian and cyclist movement by providing attractive routes in the form of a greenway for inhabitants across the site to use in travelling to Ratoath Town centre, Ratoath College or the Jamestown Sports Campus. In the future it could form part of an extended greenway to Fairyhouse Racecourse and Tattersalls. of An Bord Pleanaála are referred to the *DMURs Compliance Statement* prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers which demonstrates compliances with the DMURs standards.

3.0 Ministerial Guidelines

3.1 Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, 2009

The *Urban Design Manual*, introduced in 2009, provides the basis for the design and development of developments at the levels of ‘neighbourhood’, ‘site’ and ‘home’. At each level the guide outlines the key considerations to be made by architects and urban designers as they advance their plans and drawings. A description of the ways in which the scheme aligns with the Urban Design Manual is also provided in the Urban and Architectural Design Statement prepared by RKD Architects.

Response: This proposal adheres to the 12 key considerations to create an attractive and sustainable proposition for the currently undeveloped sites (Table 3.1).

Table 3-1 Urban Design considerations at the levels of ‘neighbourhood’, ‘site’ and ‘home’.

		Context	
Neighbourhood	1	How does the development respond to its surroundings?	<p>The proposed development is envisaged as a natural extension of the existing built area of Ratoath. It sits adjacent to existing residential neighbourhoods and land zoned for future residential, commercial and enterprise use. Its delivery will enable the creation of a new live/work destination in the town.</p> <p>The layout of the development takes into consideration the history of the site by incorporating the existing field patterns, retaining perimeter hedgerows and enabling a new ecological corridor within the green spine running through the site.</p> <p>The approach to building height and density considers adjacent properties and places higher buildings at prominent locations.</p> <p>The architecture and the landscaping are inspired by the site’s history as farm land. Strong connections and a network of public open space invites the local population to engage with newly created public amenity. The layout ensures that future connections to neighbouring lands is considered.</p>
	2	How well connected is the new neighbourhood?	<p>A key part of the proposal is the inclusion of the second phase of the RORR facilitating greater connectivity for all of Ratoath.</p> <p>Vehicular access to the site is provided by two junctions with the RORR. Within the site there is</p>

			<p>a clear hierarchy of streets with a main loop road allowing for a future bus route. Neighbourhood access is via local streets, with lower speed limits, and shared-surface homezones which are designed to form part of the public space.</p> <p>A strong dedicated pedestrian/bicycle route runs through the site's public space network with connections to R155, Glascarn Lane and Carraig Na Gabhna. Potential future connections are considered to Ratoath College, neighbouring Jamestown SHD, the existing bridle path towards Fairyhouse Racecourse and the lands south of the site.</p> <p>An Bord Pleanála are referred to the separate Roads/DMURS and Landscape Design submissions by OCSC and BSM.</p>
	3	Inclusivity	
		How easily can people use and access the development?	<p>The proposed development offers a wide range of housing typologies and amenity spaces to accommodate a variety of needs.</p> <p>All external spaces, except for private gardens, are permeable and open to the public. This includes the communal courtyards and the layout of the blocks ensures passive surveillance of these spaces.</p> <p>All public space is designed for accessibility and 5% of units are designed to comply with the Universal Design Guidelines.</p> <p>45 Part V units (10% of the total) are to be provided within the development.</p>
	4	Variety	
How does the development promote a good mix of activities?		<p>The proposed development promotes a variety of uses across the site including; a great range of dwelling typologies, a creche and a number of local commercial/retail units.</p> <p>The public open space allows for a range of activities along three key areas: a green spine, a central green park and a civic plaza. Within these areas there are a mix of playgrounds, kick-about areas, outdoor gyms and social meeting points.</p> <p>The retail/commercial units are located at the central park and civic plaza which are within easy walking distance of all neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Each courtyard also features a communal shared space with a unique design to suit the needs of the residents.</p>	

Site	5	Efficiency	
		How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?	<p>The proposed development offers an alternative model to traditional housing estates that achieves a higher density whilst ensuring high quality amenity spaces.</p> <p>The total dwelling number of 452 gives a Net-density of 41.1 dwellings/ha, in excess of the 35 dwellings/hectare set out for a 'self-sustaining town' in the MCC Development Plan.</p> <p>The layout and landscaping of the proposed development incorporates 10m buffer zones to existing perimeter hedgerows and sustainable urban drainage features that also form part of the public open space.</p> <p>All dwellings are dual aspect at minimum and the typologies are designed to optimise daylight in their related orientations.</p> <p>The site layout avoids north-facing units to promote energy efficiency and wall thicknesses allow for a thermal envelope that can exceed NZEB requirements.</p>
	6	Distinctiveness	
		How do the proposals create a sense of place?	<p>Each neighbourhood cluster has a distinctive character provided by its material palette and the landscaping of its communal courtyard.</p> <p>Each cluster consists of a variety of typologies offering a varied roofscape, dynamic street character and sense of place.</p> <p>Height of buildings is used to highlight prominent entrances to the site and entry points of the communal courtyards.</p> <p>The proposed central green park and civic plaza provides a focal point for the development and its residents. Clear view lines are created to these points from each entrance of the site.</p> <p>The development will stand as an alternative model of living to the more traditional dendritically laid out housing estates.</p>
	7	Layout	
		How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?	<p>The proposed development offers a clearly defined, safe and accessible network of streets and public open space. The layout accords with the principles of DMURS, providing active street frontage, permeability and traffic calming.</p> <p>A major concept for the site is a greenway spine for pedestrians and cyclists that provides routes for residents to Ratoath Town via the R155,</p>

			<p>Jamestown SHD, Glascarn Lane and future development to the south.</p> <p>A hierarchy of street types is provided consisting of a 30km/hr site access road with distinctive footpaths, 15km/hr neighbourhood access roads with footpaths and 15km/hr shared surface 'home zones', all designed to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic speeds are controlled by bends and surface treatment.</p> <p>An Bord Pleanála are referred to the separate Roads/DMURS and Landscape Design submissions by OCSC and BSM.</p>
	8	<p>Public Realm</p> <p>How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?</p>	<p>Open space across the site takes three distinct forms – public open spaces as formed by the greenway and park areas, communal courts that are permeable but also enclosed within neighbourhood block layouts, private gardens and terrace spaces on unit curtilage.</p> <p>The layout provides 20.4% of public open space and an additional 9.6% communal open space, in excess of the required amount by MCC Development Plan.</p> <p>The four-sided nature of the neighbourhood blocks ensures that all public open spaces and communal open spaces are fronted by dwellings, ensuring passive surveillance.</p> <p>There are multiple children's play areas located in both communal open spaces and public open spaces.</p> <p>An Bord Pleanála are referred to the separate Landscape Design submission by BSM.</p>
Home	9	<p>Adaptability</p> <p>How will the buildings cope with change?</p>	<p>The proposed development is based on principles aligned to UN's Sustainable Development Goals as well as the ambitions of Ireland 2040 and the Climate Action Plan.</p> <p>The site layout considers orientation and structural flexibility to optimise performance.</p> <p>Typologies and block layout with loose-fit design allow for adaptation and subdivision</p> <p>Building envelope and landscaping are designed for resilience to future climate change impacts.</p> <p>Approximately 60% of the house units feature an attic space that can be extended into.</p>
	10	<p>Privacy and Amenity</p>	

		How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?	<p>All units, including all apartments, enjoy dual aspect as a minimum.</p> <p>Private open space requirements as set by the Development Plan and Apartment Guidelines are met and exceeded by the various typologies.</p> <p>22m minimum direct rear setbacks are respected throughout the development and shared streets offer a minimum of 18m between units.</p> <p>Storage requirements as set out in the Development Plan are met in all units.</p> <p>Landscaping is used to ensure privacy and acoustic buffer for private open space at ground floor level.</p> <p>An Bord Pleanála are referred to the separate Landscape Design submission by BSM.</p>
	11	Parking	
		How will the parking be secure and attractive?	<p>Parking is provided through a mix of on-curtilage and clusters to minimise impact on streetscapes and enable dwellings to front the RORR.</p> <p>Parking for apartments and maisonettes is located in under-croft or external clusters buffered by vegetation. These are primarily located at the gable-ends of blocks and also facilitate visitor parking</p> <p>The parking areas form part of the public realm which is reflected by the use of the same materials as the pedestrian zones.</p> <p>Secure bicycle storage is provided within communal courtyards, availing of passive supervision and adding to the activation of these spaces.</p> <p>An Bord Pleanála are referred to the separate Roads/DMURS submission by OCSC.</p>
12	Detailed Design		
	How well thought through is the building and landscape design?	<p>The scheme has been carefully considered in both macro and micro scale to deliver a legible and coherent new neighbourhood for Ratoath.</p> <p>The individual units are of highest quality offering a great variety of living environments serving various needs.</p> <p>The architectural approach is informed by local context and a strong sense of identity. The building facade palette is modern and durable, with variations of form and colour offering visual identity and distinctiveness between clusters.</p>	

			<p>The design allows for optimal building performance to produce nearly zero energy buildings with PV panels.</p> <p>The landscaping makes use of the existing natural features of the site, is respectful to the local ecosystem and provides a high quality public realm with clear wayfinding and wide range of activities for both residents and visitors.</p> <p>An Bord Pleanála are referred to Housing Quality Assessment and Architectural Drawings by RKD, and the separate Landscape Design submission by BSM</p>
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3.2 Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2020

All of the apartment units (and duplex units, where relevant) proposed have been carefully designed in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities published in March 2018 and updated in 2020. A summary of compliance aspects is set out below. For details on evidence of compliance with the Apartment Guidelines, please refer to the Housing Quality Assessment and architectural drawing pack prepared by RKD Architects.

3.2.1 Unit Mix

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

Response: The proposed development provides for a wide unit mix and includes 1, 2 and 3 bed units. 1 bed units account for 3.3%, 2 bed units account for 22.1% and 3 bed units account for 74.6%. The unit mix includes 7.7% of units as universally designed units. There is potential for 4 bed units as 89 attic convertible units are provided. The total unit breakdown by unit type is illustrated below on table 2-2.

Table 3-2: Unit breakdown summary

Unit breakdown summary	Number of units	%
3 bed houses	150	33.2%
Total houses	150	33.2%
3 bed maisonettes	167	36.9%
1 bed maisonettes	15	3.3
Total maisonettes	182	40.3%
3 bed apartments	20	4.4%

2 bed apartments	100	22.1%
Total apartments	120	26.5%
Total 1 bed units	15	3.3%
Total 2 bed units	100	22.1%
Total 3 bed units	337	74.6%
Total units	452	
Attic convertible units (4 bed)	89	19.7%
Universal design units	35	7.7%

3.2.2 Minimum Floor Area

Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 3: Minimum Apartment Floor Areas:

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

Section 3.8 of the Guidelines also states: ‘The majority of all apartments in any proposed scheme of 10 or more apartments shall exceed the minimum floor area standard for any combination of the relevant 1, 2- or 3-bedroom unit types, by a minimum of 10%’.

Response: A detailed Housing Quality Assessment has been provided by RKD Architects and included in the architectural package accompanying this application, illustrating in tabular format how the proposed apartments comply with and exceed SPPR 3 and requirements of the Guidelines. The majority of apartments proposed exceed the requirements of the Guidelines.

3.2.3 Dual Aspect

Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 4: In relation to the minimum number of dual aspect apartments that may be provided in any single apartment scheme, the following shall apply:

- (i) A minimum of 33% of dual aspect units will be required in more central and accessible urban locations, where it is necessary to achieve a quality design in response to the subject site characteristics and ensure good street frontage where appropriate.
- (ii) In suburban or intermediate locations, it is an objective that there shall generally be a minimum of 50% dual aspect apartments in a single scheme.
- (iii)

Response: The proposed development provides for 100% dual aspect which far exceeds the standards under SPPR 4. The scheme achieves triple aspect with 19% of the total units.

3.2.4 Internal Layout Requirements

Specific Planning Policy Requirement 5: *Ground level apartment floor to ceiling heights shall be a minimum of 2.7m and shall be increased in certain circumstances, particularly where necessary to facilitate a future change of use to a commercial use.*

Response: Ground floor apartment ceiling heights exceed 3m in height. Please refer to the material prepared by RKD Architects which accompanies this pack.

Specific Planning Policy Requirement 6: *A maximum of 12 apartments per floor per core may be provided in apartment schemes.*

Response: The proposed development does not propose more than 12 apartments per floor per core. Please refer to the material prepared by RKD Architects which accompanies this pack.

3.2.5 Car Parking

Section 4.18 of the Apartments Guidelines 2020 states that “*the quantum of car parking or the requirement for any such provision for apartment developments will vary, having regard to the types of location in cities and towns that may be suitable for apartment development, broadly based on proximity and accessibility criteria*”.

Response: The proposed development requires 762 spaces under policy guidance. The proposed development provides for 746 parking spaces.

Please refer to the Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers which provides a parking justification. This report is included in this planning application.

3.2.6 Bicycle Parking

The Design Standards prescribe a general minimum standard of 1 bicycle parking space per unit, and additional visitor parking spaces at a rate of 1 space per 2 residential units, allowing that deviation from these standards may be justified “*with respect to factors such as location, quality of facilities proposed, flexibility for future enhancements/enlargements, etc.*”

Response: The proposed development provides for 816 bicycle parking spaces. This is well in excess of the minimum standard which requires 775 bicycle parking spaces. Bicycle parking spaces are located throughout the development.

3.3 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages) (2009)

The *Sustainable Residential Development* guidelines provide guidance for the design and development of residential schemes, outlining key considerations for their successful and sustainable delivery. The Guidelines also outline the potential residential densities that should be realised in different development situations. Planning Authorities should promote increased residential densities in appropriate locations, including city and larger town centres (defined for the purposes of these guidelines as towns with 5,000 or more people).

- The guidelines note that where there is good planning, good management, and the necessary social infrastructure, higher density housing has proven capable of supporting sustainable and inclusive communities. In general, increased densities should be encouraged on residentially zoned lands and can include Outer Suburban / 'Greenfield' sites. These may be defined as open lands on the periphery of cities or larger towns whose development will require the provision of new infrastructure, roads, sewers and ancillary social and commercial facilities, schools, shops, employment and community facilities.
- Studies have indicated that whilst the land take of the ancillary facilities remains relatively constant, the greatest efficiency in land usage on such lands will be achieved by providing net residential densities in the general range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare and such densities (involving a variety of housing types where possible) should be encouraged generally. Development at net densities less than 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be discouraged in the interests of land efficiency, particularly on sites in excess of 0.5 hectares.
- Section 5.8 of the Guidelines recommends that 'in general, minimum net densities of 50 dwellings per hectare, subject to appropriate design and amenity standards, should be applied within public transport corridors, with the highest densities being located at rail stations / bus stops, and decreasing with distance away from such nodes'.

Response: The proposed development is a greenfield site to the south of the existing built-up settlement of Ratoath. The proposed development achieves a progressive density of 41.1 uph and is deemed appropriate and in line with sustainable urban development in urban areas. The proposed development is considered suitable for the subject site given the proximity to public transport and Ratoath town centre.

The subject site and its close proximity to an existing bus stop on Fairyhouse Rad which is served by several bus routes, including a link to Dunboyne Rail Station (with Park & Ride). The Dunboyne Parkway Railway station is only a 10 minute drive away, providing direct access to Dublin' Connolly Station.

- In addition to recommending appropriate densities, the Guidelines focus on the provision of sustainable residential development, including the promotion of layouts that:
 - Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise car use;
 - Easy to access for all users and to find one's way around;
 - Promote the efficient use of land and of energy, and minimise greenhouse gas emissions; and

- Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand.
- Reduce traffic speeds in housing developments

Response: The proposed development is within walking and cycling distance of Ratoath town centre. Ratoath is a sizeable town with almost 10,000 residents recorded within the settlement boundary during the 2016 census. This town which acts as a hub for employment, retail and services is easily accessible for future residents. The proximity of the development to the existing town centre and also the enhancement of connectivity between the proposed development and adjoining estates (for both cyclist and pedestrians) will allow future residents to make more sustainable model choices when accessing local services in the area. The proposed development has prioritised pedestrian and cyclist movement by providing attractive routes in the form of a greenway for inhabitants across the site to use in travelling to Ratoath Town centre, Ratoath College or the Jamestown Sports Campus. In the future it could form part of an extended greenway to Fairyhouse Racecourse and Tattersalls.

The Guidelines also provide guidance on the core principles of urban design when creating places of high quality and distinct identity. The Guidelines recommend that planning authorities should promote high quality design in their policy documents and in their development management process. In this regard, the Guidelines are accompanied by a Design Manual discussed below which demonstrates how design principles can be applied in the design and layout of new residential developments, at a variety of scales of development and in various settings.

Response: The proposed scheme provides a wide variety of housing typologies including, terraced houses, maisonettes and apartments. Each house is provided with its own private open space, whilst each apartment is provided with a balcony or terrace with ample open space also provided throughout the site. Placemaking principles have been implemented throughout the scheme with permeable spaces provided with passive and active surveillance available to all public areas.



Figure 3-1 Computer Generated image of internal streets within proposed scheme

3.4 Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities, 2007

Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities was published by the former Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2007. These Guidelines were prepared to inform the design of residential developments (houses in particular) with respect to minimum standards, individual unit design, materials, unit mix, open space, site selection, layout, connectivity, placemaking, safety and security, transport, services and delivery. Many of the foregoing considerations also feature in more contemporary Guidelines. The policy statement is accompanied by Best Practice Guidelines that promotes quality sustainable residential development in urban areas.

The proposed development has been designed to adhere to the policies, principles and objectives of the Guidelines (where not superseded), and this is evident in the Architectural Drawings Urban and Architectural Design Statement and Housing Quality Assessment prepared by RKD Architects.

3.5 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), 2013

The connection between transport and planning and development is illustrated in the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DMURS) published in 2015 and updated in 2019. The Design Manual emphasises the need for streets and roads to efficiently support the movement

of people, by foot, bike, private car or public transport. However, such movement must be done in conjunction with the development of a coherently planned built environment. Furthermore, a prioritisation or hierarchy of users is promoted, whereby pedestrians are “*considered first*”, followed by cyclists, public transport, and private motor vehicles. Using such an approach makes sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport) more attractive (safer, enjoyable, efficient and cheaper).

A DMURS Statement has been prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers and accompanies the application pack. The statement demonstrates how the design for the proposed residential development incorporates the key design principles set out within the DMURS – Connected Networks, Multi-Functional streets, pedestrian focus, Multi-disciplinary approach. The statement also shows how the proposed development is consistent with the objectives set out in DMURS to create better street designs that encourage people to walk or use public transport over the private car.

3.6 Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines, 2018

The Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines was prepared in response to the National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040 that favoured higher buildings at location with good public transport corridors and major transport nodes.

With specific regard to suburban / edge locations the Guidelines note the following:

- Newer housing developments at the edge of existing centres, typically now include town-houses (2-3 storeys), duplexes (3 storeys) and apartments (4-5 storeys).
- Such developments deliver medium densities, in the range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare net.
- Such developments also address the need for more 1 and 2 bedroom units in line with wider demographic and household formation trends, while at the same time providing for the larger 3, 4 or more bedroom homes across a variety of building typology and tenure options, enabling households to meet changing accommodation requirements over longer periods of time without necessitating relocation.
- These forms of developments set out above also benefit from using traditional construction methods, which can enhance viability as compared to larger apartment-only type projects.
- The forms of development set out above can, where well designed and integrated, also facilitate the development of an attractive street-based traditional town environment with a good sense of enclosure, legible streets, squares and parks and a strong sense of urban neighbourhood, passive surveillance and community.
- Development should include an effective mix of 2, 3 and 4-storey development which integrates well into existing and historical neighbourhoods and 4 storeys or more can be accommodated alongside existing larger buildings, trees and parkland, river/sea frontage or along wider streets.
- Linked to the connective street pattern required under the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), planning policies and consideration of development proposals must move away from a 2-storey, cul-de-sac dominated approach, returning to traditional compact urban forms which created our finest town and city environments.

The design of the subject proposal has had due regard to these recommendations. We specifically note:

- The proposed development provides a range of building types, including 2-3 storey terraced houses, 3-4 storey maisonettes and 6 storey apartment buildings in select locations. While, slightly higher than the suggested height for these locations, we note that the proposed apartments are located at prominent locations close to the R155 and the RORR where there is no overlooking issue. This is just slightly higher than the permitted 5 storey apartment blocks permitted as part of the adjoining Jamestown SHD.
- The density of the proposed development comes in at 41.1 uph net which is considered appropriate for this edge of town setting.
- A broad mix of unit sizes are provided including c.25% 1 and 2 beds and c.75% 3 bed.
- The proposed development will use traditional construction methods.
- The layout has been carefully designed with the use of communal courtyards to create a neighbourhood with a balance of enclosure and permeability with legible streets and well designed public open space, which together will create a strong sense of community in this area.
- A mix of building heights are proposed with the higher apartment blocks located to create a sense of place; provide legibility; give a sense of enclosure from the main road and create a strong urban edge, in line with request from both Meath County Council (MCC) and An Bord Pleanála.
- The internal movement network has been designed having regard to DMURS thereby creating a more compact urban form.

The Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPR) set out within the guidelines takes precedence over any conflicting local policies and objectives as per section 28(1c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

SPPR 1: In accordance with Government policy to support increased building height and density in locations with good public transport accessibility, particularly town/ city cores... to secure the objectives of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and shall not provide for blanket numerical limitations on building height.

In accordance with the development management criteria of the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines, 2018, the site is located in an area with good public transport accessibility. The subject site is located proximate to an existing bus stop on Fairyhouse Road which is served by several bus routes (103, 105, 105X and 109), including a link to Dunboyne Rail Station (with Park & Ride). The Dunboyne Parkway Railway station is only a 10 minute drive away, providing direct access to Dublin' Connolly Station.

An Bord Pleanála are referred to the Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers for further detail in respect of the accessibility of the site.

In accordance with SPPR 3, planning applications are also required to demonstrate that they satisfy criteria set within section 3.2 of the Guidelines, as follows:

At the scale of the city/town:

- The site is well served by public transport with high capacity, frequent services and good links

- Development should successfully integrate into /enhance the character and public realm of the area... setting of key landmarks, protection of key views. Such development proposals shall undertake a landscape and visual assessment by a suitable qualified practitioner such as a chartered landscape architect
- On larger urban development sites, the proposed development should make a positive contribution to the place making, incorporating new streets and public spaces...

The subject site is located proximate to an existing bus stop on Fairyhouse Road which is served by several bus routes (103, 105, 105X and 109), including a link to Dunboyne Rail Station (with Park & Ride). The Dunboyne Parkway Railway station is only a 10 minute drive away, providing direct access to Dublin' Connolly Station.

The 6 no. storey apartment blocks represent the highest points of the subject proposal. These blocks are located at prominent locations close to the R155 and the RORR where there is no overlooking issue and are setback from properties on adjoining lands. The neighbourhood centre with fronting public plaza area is provided within Courtyard H to the south of the central park. The remaining parts of the site are characterised by 2-3 storey houses and 3-4 maisonette units, in the interest of stepping down and protecting the residential developments to north and west.

The proposed scheme will successfully integrate into and enhance the character and public realm of the area, having regard to topography, cultural context, and the built form of the receiving environment. As a large urban development project, the proposed development makes a positive contribution to place-making, incorporating new streets and public spaces, using massing and height to achieve the appropriate density but with sufficient variety in scale and form to respond to the scale of adjoining developments and create visual interest throughout the scheme. The buildings fronting onto the RORR have been purposefully designed to create a strong urban edge and sense of place.

In terms of visual impact, the following was concluded by landscape architects Brady Shipman Martin Planning and Landscape specialists in Chapter 14 of the accompanying EIAR:

It is considered that the Proposed Development is appropriately sited, designed and laid out so as to be capable of being integrated into the new emerging residential character of the southern extent of Ratoath. This integration is underpinned by the proposed delivery of a contiguous section of the Ratoath Outer Relief Road and by the architectural and landscape approach for the Proposed Development that envisages diverse and integrated communities with connected public and communal open spaces.

Therefore, while the Proposed Development will give rise to localised visual impacts the overall development will have a positive residual impact on the emerging local character, and will not adversely impact sensitive landscape characteristics or views to and from the wider landscape. It is considered that the operational stage of the development will make a continued positive contribution to the emerging residential community of the wider area.

At the scale of neighbourhood:

- The proposal responds to its overall natural and built environment and makes a positive contribution

- The proposal is not monolithic and avoids long, uninterrupted walls of building
- The proposal enhances the urban design context for public spaces and key thoroughfares and inland waterway/ marine frontage
- The proposal makes a positive contribution to the improvement of legibility through the site or wider urban area
- The proposal positively contributes to the mix of uses and/ or building/ dwelling typologies available in the neighbourhood

The subject site of the proposed development is green field in nature and is located at the edge of the built up area of Ratoath. The proposal seeks to create a new residential neighbourhood which links effectively to the existing built up area of Ratoath. For this reason, the scale of the development as proposed varies across the site to ensure is respectful of and ties in with the scale of the existing built form in these locations. Increased height as a strong urban edge is provided along the southern boundary of the site to provide appropriate form of development along the RORR. In addition, the connectivity of this area will be enhanced by the subject proposal as a result of permeability and linking associated with the pedestrian and cyclist routes through the scheme.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to create a neighbourhood that is appropriate for the context of Ratoath. The height of larger blocks are appropriate for their function, highlighting prominent entrances to the site and entry points of the communal courtyards. The stronger elements of built form are softened through the use of soft landscaping elements and through the retention of boundary hedgerows and treelines, proposed planting and the architectural quality of the Proposed Development.

One of the principal design intentions has been to create a sense of place within each of the 12 no. neighbourhoods. The mix of typologies, their varying height and roofscape creates an interesting streetscape. The taller maisonettes have been placed at the gable ends of the blocks to mark entrances to the courtyard and a visual distinction. The apartment blocks are located at key entrances and the central green park to highlight points of interest.

The form of proposal is purposely urban in nature in the interest of creating a sense of place and improving legality of the built form of Ratoath town along the RORR. The 6 no. storey apartment blocks proximate to the RORR have been purposely places to create the strong urban form that is well suited to this location.

Overall, the proposed development offers a mix of unit sizes and typologies to cater for a broad range of household types, sizes and tenures.

At the scale of the site:

- The form, massing and height of proposed developments should be carefully modulated so as to maximise access to natural daylight, ventilation and views and minimise overshadowing and loss of light.
- Appropriate and reasonable regard should be taken of quantitative performance approaches to daylight provision outlined

Each building within the development has been carefully positioned to provide the highest quality living environments for future residents and to minimise the negative impacts that arise

from overshadowing and restricted access to natural light. All units in the proposed scheme are dual aspect, with a total of 19% of all units being triple aspect. This ensures that all units will have excellent access to daylight.

The design of the residential units within the proposed has had regard to best practice guidelines in respect of natural daylighting and sun lighting. Every effort has been made to position and orientate each unit in a manner that achieves maximum solar/daylight penetration throughout the day.

It is worth noting the height as proposed will have no adverse impacts on existing or future residents. that A Sunlight and Daylight Assessment prepared by digital dimensions accompanies this application. In their assessment, digital dimensions have reviewed the impacts in respect of daylight and sunlight for existing dwellings, proposed dwellings and proposed amenity space. The assessment also provides a shadow analysis.

In respect of the impact on existing dwellings, digital dimensions reviewed the impact on a single story dwelling on Fairyhouse Road which has a window facing towards Apartment Block A. Their assessment concluded that while there is a minor reduction to the VSC of this window, it meets the recommendations of the BRE guidelines. Any reduction to the daylight in the neighbouring dwellings would be imperceptible. On that basis, digital dimensions concluded that the proposed development meets the recommendations of the BRE guidelines.

In respect of Average Daylight Factor (ADF), digital dimensions have assessed the multi-unit buildings within the scheme. Their assessment concluded that 100% of the apartment units exceed the minimum recommendations for the ADF, set out in the BRE guidelines. In terms of the maisonettes, 100% of bedrooms and 96% of Living/Kitchen/Dining rooms exceed the minimum recommendations for the ADF and will be well lit. While a small number are marginally below the 2% target for ADF, they all exceed the 1.5% value. The living kitchens dining rooms that do not achieve the 2% have a layout that consist of a long room with windows at both ends to the kitchen and the dining room. The layout is well designed with kitchen located beside the window and would receive ample levels of daylight. On this basis, digital dimensions have concluded that the proposed development meets the recommendations of the BRE guidelines in respect of ADF.

In respect of sunlight to the amenity areas within the scheme, digital dimensions note that 100% of public amenity spaces exceed the BRE recommendation that 50% of the area receive more than 2 hours of sunlight on the 21st of March, most of which received in excess of 90%. All of the private amenity gardens in the proposed development were assessed. It is the nature of a housing estate that plots orient in all directions. It was concluded by digital dimensions that the scheme is well designed for sunlight, with more than 70% meeting the BRE recommendation.

As demonstrated by the assessment carried out by digital dimensions, the scheme has been designed to maximise access to sunlight and daylight, minimise overshadowing and for future residents.

3.7 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (November 2009) provide guidance for planning authorities when preparing their statutory plans and when adjudicating on planning applications. In accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers to support and inform this application. The primary objective of the FRA was to work with the design team to progress a site design that can manage any potential impacts of flooding to the site. The report was prepared in accordance with Department of Housing and Local Government (DEHLG) and the Office of Public Works (OPW) document *“The Planning Process and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”*.

A *Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment* has been prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers and concluded the following:

“The assessment is carried out in full compliance with the requirements of “The Planning System & Flood Risk Management Guidelines” published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in November 2009.

From the information reviewed, it is considered that the site of the proposed development is not within the 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000-year flood extents.

The site is located in Flood Zone C as outlined in the Meath County Development plan and, as such, the proposed residential development is considered appropriate.”

An Bord Pleanála are referred to the Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment accompanying this application for further detail.

3.8 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001)

The Childcare Guidelines provide a framework to guide local authorities in preparing development plans and assessing applications for planning permission, and developers and childcare providers in formulating development proposals. The Guidelines are intended to ensure a consistent approach throughout the country to the treatment of applications for planning permission for childcare facilities. The Guidelines identify a number of appropriate locations for childcare facilities, which include the following:

- New Communities/Large Housing Developments
- The vicinity and concentrations of workplaces, such as industrial estates, business parks and any other locations where there are significant numbers working
- In the vicinity of schools
- Neighbourhood, District and Town Centres
- Adjacent to public transport corridors, park and ride facilities, pedestrian routes and dedicated cycle ways

The recommendation for new housing developments is the provision of 1 facility for each 75 dwellings. This will generally provide for 20 childcare spaces based on a requirement of 35 of such dwellings requiring childcare spaces.

The proposed development includes a crèche in the north-east portion of the subject site within neighbourhood K; ensuring that it is accessible to the residents of the scheme as well as being proximate to existing residential areas within Ratoath, thereby expanding upon the community infrastructure available locally. With a gross floor area of 1,003 sq. m, it will have a capacity for approximately 121 no. children and will cater for the demand generated by the proposed development.¹ A detailed Social infrastructure audit accompanies this report.

It is worth noting that the creche has been moved from Phase 4 to Phase 3 following feedback from the Planning Authority during the PAC stage.

3.9 Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)

Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Natura Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Altermar for the proposed development in accordance with Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009). These reports forms part of the application documentation.

Response: The following was concluded by Altermar: *“There is no possibility of significant impacts on European sites, features of interest or site specific conservation objectives. A Natura Impact Statement is not required.”* An Bord Pleanála are referred to the AA Screening prepared by Altermar which accompanies this application.

3.10 Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Guidelines (2017) and Affordable Housing Act (2021), as amended

The Guidance for Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 highlights the importance of early engagement between the developer and the Housing Department within a Local Authority to consider the efficient delivery of appropriately located Part V units on the site. The consideration of which units are most appropriate to fulfil this requirement will be informed by the Local Authority’s Housing Strategy.

Recently enacted Affordable Housing Act, 2021, amends section 94 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, to increase Part V contributions from 10% to 20%. Transition arrangements allow 10% Part V contributions where the lands were purchased between 01st September 2015 and 31st July 2021 to all permissions granted until 31st July 2026. Lands purchased prior to 01st September 2015 and permissions granted after 31st July 2026 would be required to contribute 20% as Part V.

Response: Part V documentation is included with this application. The subject site qualifies for the transition arrangements which makes this site eligible for 10% Part V contributions. The applicant has engaged with Meath County Council Housing Department in this regard

¹ 452 units / 75 equates to 6.026. 20 no. places x 6.026 = 120.5.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared and included as part of this application. Although the development does not trigger the mandatory threshold of 500 residential units, the inclusion of this report in this application was considered a prudent measure, particularly given the construction of the proposed Ratoath Outer Relief Road (RORR)

4.0 Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted at a Special Planning Meeting on, 22nd September 2021.

The Meath County Development 2021–2027 identifies Ratoath as a Self-Sustaining Town – a town with a high level of population growth and a weak employment base which requires targeted ‘catch-up’ investment to become more self-sustaining.

There is a specific reference to the long-term ambition to complete the RORR recognising the:

“...opportunity to maximise the investment in this LIHAF funded infrastructure by facilitating the completion of this Outer Relief Road and complete the link between the R125 and R155. This will be achieved by zoning additional lands for residential development and requiring that the remainder of this link road is delivered as part of the development of these lands.”

This is an important statement in terms of Beo’s long term, integrated vision for the proposed SHD lands, the proposed RORR and the Masterplan for economic lands to the north of Fairyhouse. As set out previously, Beo is fully committed to completing the relevant section of the RORR. It is envisaged that this realignment will be completed in full prior to first occupation of the proposed SHD scheme.

The keys policies and objectives relating to (1) core strategy, (2) housing, (3) infrastructure, (4) environment and heritage and (5) community and social are stated below and responded to as evidence of the development’s consistency with them.

4.1 Land Use Zoning

The subject site is zoned in the MCDP as being ‘**A2 New Residential**’ (Figure 4.1), with an objective,

“To provide for new residential communities with ancillary community facilities, neighbourhood facilities and employment uses as considered appropriate for the status of the centre in the Settlement Hierarchy.”

The entirety of the site is within the Ratoath settlement boundary and abuts existing development.

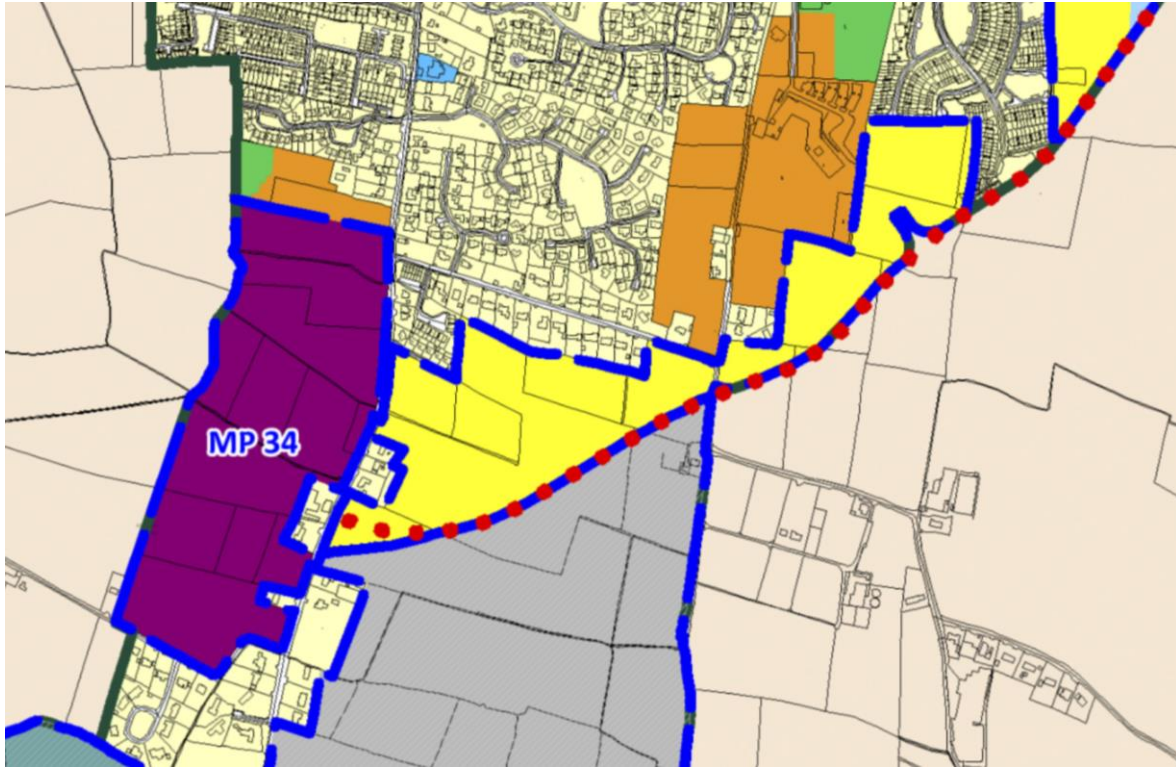


Figure 4.1 Subject Site Zoning

The guidance in the MCDP in relation to non-residential uses notes the following;

“Whilst residential zoned lands are primarily intended for residential accommodation, these lands may also include other uses that would support the establishment of residential communities. This could include community, recreational and local shopping facilities...

These facilities must be at an appropriate scale and can not interfere with the primary residential use of the land. The detail of ancillary uses to be provided as part of a residential development shall form part of pre-application discussions in respect of any planning proposal unless otherwise indicated in Volume 2 of the Development Plan.

Individual convenience stores in neighbourhood centres on A2 zoned lands should generally not exceed 1,000m² net retail floorspace unless otherwise identified in a Local Area Plan”.

The various permitted and open for consideration uses are detailed in Table 3.1, below. The proposed development, with its 452 no. units, crèche (c.1,003 sq. m) and 4 no. commercial/ local retail units (533.6 sq. m) aligns with these uses and will support the creation of a vibrant and viable community, with an appropriate mix of uses.

Table 4.2 Permitted and open for consideration uses on A2-zoned lands.

Permitted Uses	Open for Consideration Uses
Residential / Sheltered Housing, B & B / Guest House, Bring Banks, Community Facility / Centre, Childcare Facility,	Betting Office, Caravan Park, Cultural Facility, Education (Third Level), Enterprise Centre, Health Centre,

Permitted Uses	Open for Consideration Uses
Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Education (Primary or Second Level), Halting Site / Group Housing, Home Based Economic Activities, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Retirement Home / Residential Institution / Retirement Village, Utilities.	Healthcare Practitioner, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Offices <100m, Place of Public Worship, Bar/ Restaurant / Café, Take-Away / Fast Food Outlet, Veterinary Surgery.

The 4 no. commercial/local retail units will be subject to final occupier and will provide a local service to residents of the scheme. It was considered appropriate to refrain from seeking permission for prescriptive neighbourhood uses at this location in order to provide flexibility for the applicant to secure suitable tenants as end users have not been identified at the time of this planning application. This will help avoid unnecessary change of use applications, whilst ensuring a broad mix of uses and vibrancy at street level in accordance with the zoning objective.

4.1.1 MP 37 Lands

The Meath County Council Development Plan 2021-2027 provides the following in relation to the subject and surrounding lands:

“Additional lands identified to deliver the completion of the R125 and R155 link road amount to approximately 3.8 hectares and shall include the provision of a public landscaped park of circa 0.7 hectares with appropriate recreational facilities to be agreed with the planning authority. This facility shall be delivered as part of the overall development proposal. The public park can be provided as part of the overall open space requirement on site. The first phase of development shall include the construction of the adjoining section of the Ratoath Outer Relief Road. Any planning application made for development on these lands shall be accompanied by a Master Plan (MP 37), detailing development proposals for the full extent of the lands. This shall include details of the overall site and building layout for the lands, building height and design principles, mix of uses, open space and recreational provision, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service.”

The subject proposal directly responds to above requirement from Meath County Council, proving a section of the RORR in conjunction with a high quality proposal for 452 no. residential units. The proposal currently before the Board will open up this area of Ratoath for development and provide a catalyst for the further development of the wider masterplan lands.

Response: The proposed development provides for a primarily residential scheme and lies on A2 residential lands and complies with the policies and objectives set out in the Development Management Standards. An Bord Pleanála are also referred to the Material Contravention Statement provided with this proposal.

4.2 Development Management Standards

This section describes how the proposed development aligns with relevant standards and provisions of the Development Management Standards set out in the County Development Plan.

4.2.1 Core Strategy

CS POL 1 To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities in the County by managing the level of growth in each settlement to ensure future growth is in accordance with the Core Strategy and County Settlement Hierarchy in order to deliver compact urban areas and sustainable rural communities.

Response: The proposed development is on land zoned for residential development inside the Ratoath Outer Relief Road (RORR) and the settlement boundary of Ratoath. The scheme proposed is compact in form, attractive and well-designed at an appropriate density of 41.1 uph which a range of housing unit types in close proximity to schools, childcare facilities, shops are a range of other community services

CS OBJ 1 To secure the implementation of the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy, in so far as practicable, by directing growth towards designated settlements, subject to the availability of infrastructure and services.

Response: The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan provides a housing allocation of 803 units to Ratoath over the 2021 – 2027 period and the subject proposal will deliver 452 no. of the units. The proposed development provides a progressive density of 41.1 uph with a range of housing unit types in close proximity to schools, childcare facilities, shops are a range of other community services

CS OBJ 4 To achieve more compact growth by promoting the development of infill and brownfield/ regeneration sites and the redevelopment of underutilised land within and close to the existing built-up footprint of existing settlements in preference to edge of centre locations.

Response: The proposed development lies on underutilised land which are zoned for residential development and is within the existing settlement of Ratoath and thus achieves sustainable compact growth.

CS OBJ 5 To deliver at least 30% of all new homes in urban areas within the existing built-up footprint of settlements

Response: The proposed development will ultimately support the above objective as a scheme located within the existing built-up area of the settlement of Ratoath.

4.2.2 Urban Design

DM POL 4 To require that all proposals for residential development demonstrate compliance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Cities, Towns & Villages (2009) and the Urban Design Manual-A Best Practice Guide, 2009 or any updates thereof.

Response: The proposal complies with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages) and the Urban Design Manual-A Best Practice Guide, 2009. The development delivers 452 no. residential units across the 14.166 ha site. This equates to a gross density of 32.1 uph. However, further analysis indicates that if only the developable residential portion of the site is considered (11 ha, which excludes the outer relief RORR, the main site access road and the crèche area), the net residential density achieved is 41.1 uph. These densities are deemed to be appropriate and progressive as means to secure sustainable residential density at respectful increase relative to the existing residential areas to the north and the white lands to the south (which have the prospect for more intense development uses in the future).

DM OBJ 12 To encourage and facilitate innovative design solutions for medium to high density residential schemes where substantial compliance with normal development management considerations can be demonstrated.

Response: The development as proposed provides an innovative design solution that uses land efficiently whilst ensuring quality of dwellings and public realm. The proposed density coupled with the provision of public open space over and above the required minimum, the additional communal open space and the retention of natural site features represents an efficient use of the site area in such a way that will not negatively impact the public amenity of the site.

DM OBJ 13 A detailed Design Statement shall accompany all planning applications for residential development on sites in excess of 0.2 hectares or for more than 10 residential units.

The Design Statement shall:

- Provide a Site Analysis
- Outline the design concept;
- Clearly demonstrate how the 12 Urban Design Criteria have been taken into account when designing schemes in urban area (as per the 'Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide (2009)');
- Set out how the development meets the relevant Development Plan Objectives, Local Area Plan, Masterplan, Public Realm Strategy, etc;
- Provide site photographs;
- Provide an open space/landscape strategy which identifies any areas of ecological interest and sets out proposals for same; and
- Set out how energy efficiency measures have been incorporated into the project design process (Refer to DM POL 2).

Response: As the proposed development site area is over 14 ha and provides for 452 no. residential units DM OBJ 13 applies. A full design statement has been prepared by RKD which accompanies this report.

4.2.3 Housing Strategy

SH POL 5 To secure a mix of housing types and sizes, including single storey properties, particularly in larger developments to meet the needs of different categories of households.

Response: The proposed development provides a range of different house types and sizes in order to meet the needs of different households. The development comprises of 452 no. residential units (150 no. houses (3-bed), 182 no. maisonettes (15 no. 1-bed & 167 no. 3-bed) and 120 no. apartments (100 no. 2-bed and 20 no. 3-bed)).

SH OBJ 14 To support the delivery of social housing in Meath in accordance with the Council's Social Housing Delivery Programme and Government Policy as set out in Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness.

Response: With the agreement of the Planning Authority the proposed development will provide 45 no. social housing units to MCC. A letter from MCC Housing Department confirming agreement in principle is included with this application.

SH OBJ 15 To apply a 10% social housing requirement, pursuant to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, except where the development would be exempted from this requirement.

Response: The proposed development consists of 452 no. residential units. With the agreement of the Planning Authority the proposed development will provide 45 no. social housing units to MCC. A letter from MCC Housing Department confirming agreement in principle is included with this application.

SH OBJ 16 To address the identified need to increase the supply of social housing in Trim, Ashbourne, Ratoath, Dunboyne, Dunshaughlin by seeking the provision of social housing additional to that required by way of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, subject to funding.

Response: With the agreement of the Planning Authority the proposed development will provide 45 no. social housing units. The inclusion of the Part V social housing on-site will support the mix in tenures and household incomes. Please refer to the part V documentation which is included in this planning application.

4.2.4 Housing Development Policies

SH POL 7: To encourage and foster the creation of attractive, mixed use, sustainable communities that include a suitable mix of housing types and tenures with supporting facilities,

amenities, and services that meet the needs of the entire community and accord with the principles of universal design, in so far as practicable.

Response: The proposed development provides a combination of houses, maisonettes and apartments to cater for the needs of a variety of households, both now and in the future. The development will provide units of different types and sizes, thereby catering for individuals and families of different sizes, stage in life and incomes. Additionally, the proposal provides for a creche, commercial/retail units and public open space.

SH POL 8: To support the creation of attractive residential developments with a range of housing options and appropriate provision of functional public and private open space that is consistent with the standards and principles set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the associated Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009) and any subsequent Guidelines.

Response: The proposed development provides a combination of houses, maisonettes and apartments to cater for the needs of a variety of households. The proposed public open space proposition has sought to meet the quantitative standard of 15% of the site area, whilst creating an attractive, functional and ecologically beneficial series of spaces. In doing so, it has secured an area of 2.2ha, equivalent to 20.4% of the total site area, and incorporated significant stretches of existing hedgerows. The private open space standards for houses are set by the MCDP and for apartments the standards are set by the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. The proposed private open spaces by dwelling type will all exceed the minimum standards prescribed in the relevant plans.

SH POL 7 To encourage and foster the creation of attractive, mixed use, sustainable communities that include a suitable mix of housing types and tenures with supporting facilities, amenities, and services that meet the needs of the entire community and accord with the principles of universal design, in so far as practicable.

Response: The development will provide a combination of houses, maisonettes and apartments to cater for the needs of a variety of households, including, a minimum of 5% designed in accordance with the Universal Design Guidelines. The development will provide units of different types and sizes, thereby catering for individuals and families of different sizes, stage in life and incomes. Full details are provided in the material submitted in this pack.

SH POL 9 To promote higher residential densities in appropriate locations and in particular close to town centres and along public transport corridors, in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009).

Response: The proposal complies with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages) and the Urban Design Manual-A Best Practice Guide, 2009. The development delivers 452 no. residential units across the 14 ha site. This equates to a gross density of 32.1 uph. However, further analysis indicates that if only the developable residential portion of the site is considered (11 ha, which excludes the outer relief RORR, the

main site access road and the crèche area), the net residential density achieved is 41.1 uph. These densities are deemed to be appropriate and progressive as means to secure sustainable residential density at respectful increase relative to the existing residential areas to the north and the white lands to the south (which have the prospect for more intense development uses in the future).

SH POL 10: To require that applications for residential development take an integrated and balanced approach to movement, place making, and streetscape design in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTS and DECLG (2013 and updated in 2019).

Response: This development proposal has sought to introduce the principles of DMURS, with: the inclusion of quality public open spaces, shared surfaces, pedestrian and cyclist routes; the creation of a legible and permeable development; its siting close to services and amenities (convenience retail, schools, childcare, etc.); and the design of the internal road network to limit speeds and prioritise and protect pedestrians and cyclists. Please refer to the DMURS Compliance Statement provided OCSC Consulting Engineers.

SH POL 12 To promote innovation in architectural design that delivers buildings of a high-quality that positively contributes to the built environment and local streetscape.

Response: The subject proposal provides high quality design which will contribute positively to the built environment and local streetscape in Ratoath.

SH POL 13: To require that all new residential developments shall be in accordance with the standards set out in the Development Management Standards and Land Use Zoning Objectives set out in Chapter 11 of this Plan, in so far as is practicable.

Response: The proposed development provides for a primarily residential scheme and lies on A2 residential lands and complies with the policies and objectives set out in the Development Management Standards. An Bord Pleanála are also referred to the Material Contravention Statement provided with this proposal.

SH OBJ 22 To require that, where relevant, all new residential developments shall be in accordance with SSPR 1 to SPPR 4 of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities, December 2018 as well as SPPR 1 to SPPR 9 of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, March 2018. All new residential development should comply with the densities outlined in Chapter 11 of this plan.

Response: A response to SSR 1 and SPPR 4 of the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities, December 2019 is provided in Section 2.2.1 above.

SH OBJ 23 To seek that all new residential developments on zoned lands in excess of 20 residential units provide for a minimum of 5% universally designed units in accordance with the requirements of the 'Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland' developed by the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (National Disability Authority).

Response: The development will provide a wide mix of typologies with a minimum of 5% designed in accordance with the Universal Design Guidelines. Full details are provided in the material submitted in this pack.

SH OBJ 24 To require that all new residential development applications of 50 units or more are accompanied by a Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA) to determine if social and community facilities in the area are sufficient to provide for the needs of the future residents in accordance with the requirements of policy SOC POL 6 in the ‘Community Building Strategy’ (Chapter 7).

Response: The proposed development provides for 452 no. units and is accompanied by a full Social Infrastructure Audit. Full details are provided in the material submitted in this application pack.

4.2.5 Public Open Space

DM OBJ 26 Public open space shall be provided for residential development at a minimum rate of 15% of total site area. In all cases lands zoned F1 Open Space, G1 Community Infrastructure and H1 High Amenity cannot be included as part of the 15%. Each residential development proposal shall be accompanied by a statement setting out how the scheme complies with this requirement.

Response: The proposal provides for 2.2 ha hectares of accessible public open space. The central area of public open space provided creates a large inviting area of open green space and paved areas to provide a multi-functional space. The central open space and communal open areas all have strong levels of surveillance. This area includes a stepped down lawn amphitheatre, play area, plaza area with raised planter with seating edges, wildflower meadow and open lawn area. This area has the potential to support pop up markets and food trucks for community events. In addition, a public square / linear plaza will front onto the central open space area, activating the area outside the retail space thereat.

4.2.6 Private Open Space

DM POL 7: Residential development shall provide private open space. Apartment schemes shall in accordance with the requirements set out in Table 11.1. Each residential development proposal shall be accompanied by a statement setting out how the scheme complies with the requirements set out in Table 11.1.

House Type	Minimum Area of Private Open Space to be Provided
One/two bedroom	55sq.m.
Three Bedroom	60sq.m.
Four bedrooms or more	75sq.m.

Figure 4.3 - Table 11.1 from the MCDP 2021-2027

Response: The variation in dwelling type and size will result in a series of different open space types: ground floor gardens, balconies, terraces and winter gardens. As evident in the HQA prepared by RKD, the proposed private open spaces by dwelling type will all meet or exceed the minimum standards prescribed in the above Table. It is noted the Type B1 houses (3B6P, 30 in number, 7% of the total) meet the requirement through a combination of rear garden at ground level (typically 46.7m²) and wintergarden (typically 17.7m²) at Level 2. Please refer to the Material Contravention Statement prepared by KPMG FA for justification in this regard.

4.2.7 Building Height

DM OBJ 25: To require development with increased building height at the following locations;

- Dunboyne Central rail station
- Pace Rail Station
- Maynooth Environs
- Drogheda Environs
- Navan

In all cases all proposals for buildings in excess of 6 stories at these locations shall be accompanied by a statement demonstrating compliance with the Urban Development and Building Heights, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018), or any updates thereof.

Response: In limited locations across the proposed scheme, building heights of 6 no. storeys are achieved. The rest of the scheme comprises a combination of 2-4 storey buildings. The tallest buildings are the apartments which are situated in neighbourhoods A, C, H, and K. In order to be sensitive to this condition, runs of lower units are placed adjacent to boundaries with higher typologies limited to prominent locations at the corners of blocks. Maisonette gable ends, in which stair cores and service rooms are located internally, are faced towards boundaries to ensure privacy is not hindered. The proposed apartment blocks are located at prominent locations close to the R155 and the RORR where there is no overlooking issue. The mix of typologies, their varying height and roofscape creates an interesting streetscape. The taller maisonettes have been placed at the gable ends of the blocks to mark entrances to the courtyard and a visual distinction. The apartment blocks are located at key entrances and the central green park to highlight points of interest. The varying of heights of the blocks with lower runs of terraces and height at strategic locations ensure good daylight penetration to courtyards, public space and dwellings. It is worth noting that 100% of public amenity spaces

exceed the recommendation of the BRE Guidelines in respect of sunlight. An Bord Pleanála are referred to the *Daylight & Sunlight Assessment* prepared by digital dimensions which accompanies this application.

A response in respect of the Urban Development and Building Height, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) is provided in Section 2.6 above.

4.2.8 Density

DM POL 5 To promote sustainable development, a range of densities appropriate to the scale of settlement, site location, availability of public transport and community facilities including open space will be encouraged.

Response: The scheme proposed is compact in form, attractive and well-designed at an appropriate density of 41.1 uph with a range of housing unit types in close proximity to schools, childcare facilities, shops are a range of other community services. A Social Infrastructure Audit carried out by KPMG FA confirms that there are a total of 75 no. existing facilities within 2km of the site. The subject proposal provides a creche and 4 no. commercial/retail units which will serve future residents. In terms of access to the public transport, the site is located proximate to an existing bus stop on Fairyhouse Rad which is served by several bus routes, including a link to Dunboyne Rail Station (with Park & Ride). The Dunboyne Parkway Railway station is only a 10 minute drive away, providing direct access to Dublin' Connolly Station. With the above considered, the density as proposed is considered to be appropriate for the site.

DM OBJ 14: The following densities shall be encouraged when considering planning applications for residential development:

- Residential Development Beside Rail Stations: 50 uph or above
- Regional Growth Centres/Key Towns: (Navan/Drogheda) - 35-45 uph
- Self-Sustaining Growth Towns: (Dunboyne, Ashbourne, Trim, Kells): greater than 35uph
- Self-Sustaining Towns: 25uph - 35uph
- Smaller Towns and Villages: 25uph - 35 uph
- Outer locations: 15uph – 25uph

It should be noted that SPPR 1 of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities December 2018 shall be considered in the implementation of the above densities.

Response: The development delivers 452 no. residential units across the 14 ha site. This equates to a gross density of 32.1 uph. However, further analysis indicates that if only the developable residential portion of the site is considered (11ha, which excludes the outer relief RORR, the main site access road and the crèche area), the net residential density achieved is 41.1 uph. These densities are deemed to be appropriate and progressive as means to secure sustainable residential density at respectful increase relative to the existing residential areas to the north and the white lands to the south (which have the prospect for more intense development uses in the future).

4.2.9 Plot Ratio

DM OBJ 15 As a general rule, the indicative maximum plot ratio standard shall be 1.0 for housing at edge of town locations with an indicative maximum plot ratio of 2.0 in town centre/core locations.

Response: The proposed development provides for a residential scheme located at the south of Ratoath and has a plot ratio of 0.42, which complies with the Development Plan standard.

4.2.10 Site Coverage

DM OBJ 16 Site coverage shall generally not exceed 80%. Higher site coverage may be permissible in certain limited circumstances such as adjacent to public transport corridors; to facilitate areas identified for regeneration purposes; and areas where an appropriate mix of both residential and commercial uses is proposed.

Response: The proposed development of 452 no. units has an overall site coverage of 17.2%.

4.2.11 Separation Distances

DM OBJ 18 A minimum of 22 metres separation between directly opposing rear windows at first floor level in the case of detached, semi- detached, terraced units shall generally be observed.

Response: The proposed development provides for a minimum of 22 metres separation between directly opposing rear windows at first floor level. Full details can be found in the material by RKD.

DM OBJ 19 A minimum of 22 metres separation distance of between opposing windows will apply in the case of apartments/duplex units up to three storeys in height.

Response: Directly opposing windows are separated by 22m minimum to avoid overshadowing and ensure privacy. Full details can be found in the material prepared by RKD.

DM OBJ 20 Any residential development proposal which exceeds three or more storeys in height shall demonstrate adequate separation distances having regard to layout, size and design between blocks to ensure privacy and protection of residential amenity.

Response: The proposed development contains a 6-storey element with numerous residential units 3 storeys or more. Their siting, spacing and separation distances ensure that they will not result in overlooking or overbearance, with the heights respecting and reflecting the surrounding context. Full details can be found in the material prepared by RKD.

4.2.12 Dwelling Design, Size & Mix

DM POL 6 To require that the unit typologies proposed provide a sufficient unit mix which addresses wider demographic and household formation trends. The design statement required at DM OBJ 13 shall set out how the proposed scheme is compliant with same.

Response: The proposed development will principally consist of the construction of a 452 no. residential units comprising 150 no. semi-detached and terraced dwelling houses (3-bed), 182 no. maisonettes (15 no. 1-bed & 167 no. 3-bed) and 120 no. apartments (100 no. 2-bed and 20 no. 3-bed).

DM OBJ 22 The design of any housing scheme shall have regard to the requirement for connectivity between residential areas, community facilities etc. The design of any walkways, lanes or paths connecting housing estates or within housing estates shall be of sufficient width to allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists. They shall be adequately overlooked and lit and not be excessive in length.

Response: The proposed development will principally consist of the construction of a 452 no. residential units comprising 150 no. semi-detached and terraced dwelling houses (3-bed), 182 no. maisonettes (15 no. 1-bed & 167 no. 3-bed) and 120 no. apartments (100 no. 2-bed and 20 no. 3-bed). Furthermore, as noted in the Architectural and Urban Design Report prepared by RKD the character areas will have unique external finishes which are respectful to the surrounding context.

DM OBJ 23 To require that all applications for residential development shall be accompanied by a detailed phasing plan which demonstrates the early delivery of key infrastructure associated with that scheme.

Response: A phasing plan has been prepared by RKD. The phasing plan has 4 stages, of which the RORR is provided in phase one. The phasing plan can be found within RKD's Architectural and Urban Design Report which accompanies this application.

DM OBJ 24 To require the provision of EV charging points to serve residential development.

Response: The proposed development provides each House with own parking EV charging. For Maisonettes and Apartments 1 in 10 of car parking spaces shall be provided with car chargers, 3.7kw in size.

Response: Pedestrian and cycle linkages to all neighbourhood areas, attractive streets and a good distribution of open spaces for play, rest and relaxation will encourage residents to utilise the outdoor spaces, creating a sense of community and encouraging a healthy lifestyle. The design proposed achieves good levels of accessibility and permeability, with the primary access points located along the RORR.

4.2.13 Boundary Treatments

DM POL 8 To require the provision of high quality, durable, appropriately designed, secure boundary treatments in all developments.

Response: The proposed development provides for high quality, durable, appropriately designed, and secure boundary treatments. Details of boundary treatments can be found in RKD’s *Architectural and Urban Design Report* which should be read in conjunction with this report.

DM POL 9: To support the retention of field boundaries for their ecological/habitat significance, as demonstrated by a suitably qualified professional. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, mitigation by provision of the same boundary type will be required.

Response: There are 10m wide protection zones to the preserved hedgerows. These zones create linear green open spaces that link in with the green network. The proposed network will also provide an ecological corridor for the natural flora and fauna species of the area. The natural soft landscaping will provide a sustainable drainage network that connects into the drainage ditches within the existing hedgerows. Please refer the material prepared by Arborist Associates for further detail.

DM OBJ 28 To require that boundaries between the rear of existing and proposed dwellings shall be a minimum of 1.8 metres high and shall be constructed as capped, rendered concrete block or brick walls, to ensure privacy, security and permanency. Alternative durable materials will be considered

Response: Rear boundary walls of gardens will ensure a clear distinction between public and private and the setting of the rear walls at a lower height than 1.8m ensures supervision and help create a more sociable atmosphere within the neighbourhood. Details of boundary treatments can be found in RKD’s *Architectural and Urban Design Report* which should be read in conjunction with this report. Please also refer to the Material Contravention Statement prepared by KPMG FA for justification in this regard.

DM OBJ 29 To require that all rear boundaries within the development shall be a minimum of 1.8 metres high and shall be constructed as capped, rendered concrete block or brick walls, to ensure privacy, security and permanency. Alternative durable materials will be considered.

Response: Rear boundary walls of gardens will ensure a clear distinction between public and private and the setting of the rear walls at a lower height than 1.8m ensures supervision and help create a more sociable atmosphere within the neighbourhood. Details of boundary treatments can be found in RKD’s design statement which should be read in conjunction with this report. Please also refer to the Material Contravention Statement prepared by KPMG FA for justification in this regard.

DM OBJ 30 Open plan front gardens will generally be discouraged and will only be acceptable in innovative layouts and where a high level of safety is achieved and services can be accommodated at a location which meets the needs of service providers. Open plan gardens will not be permitted on main access roads. In general, front boundaries shall be defined by

walls or fences at least 0.5 metres high in keeping with the house design and to a uniform scheme design.

Response: Please refer to the enclosed Architectural and Urban Design Report by RKD.

DM OBJ 31 In the case of residential development where the layout does not provide for front boundaries, there will be a general prohibition against the erection of front boundaries.

Response: Please refer to the enclosed Architectural and Urban Design Report by RKD.

DM OBJ 32 To encourage the use of measures specifically designed to enhance wildlife in residential schemes such as gaps/holes, should be considered and incorporated into boundary treatments to allow for passage of all wildlife including hedgehogs, bat boxes and swift bricks/boxes.

Response: The proposed network will provide an ecological corridor for the natural flora and fauna species of the area. The natural soft landscaping will provide a sustainable drainage network that connects into the drainage ditches within the existing hedgerows.

4.2.14 Woodlands, Hedgerows and Trees

DM OBJ 11 Existing trees and hedgerows of biodiversity and/or amenity value shall be retained, where possible.

Response: Where possible, the subject proposal has promoted the preservation of trees and hedgerows. Please refer to the material prepared by Arborist Associates for further detail.

HER POL 38 To promote and encourage planting of native hedgerow species in new developments and as part of the Council's own landscaping works.

Response: The central green area is to be connected with site green corridors to enhance biodiversity. Mostly native plants are to be specified in connection with wildflower meadows and native hedgerows. A broad planting regime, with a focus on native species where possible, will ensure the greening of the site. Full details can be found in the material submitted within this pack.

4.2.15 Public Lighting

DM POL 3 All public lighting proposals shall be in accordance with the Council's Public Lighting Technical Specification & Requirements, June 2017, and the Council's Public Lighting Policy, December 2017, (or any updates thereof).

Response: Upon refinement and finalisation of the site layout and internal road and pedestrian/cycle networks, a detailed public lighting plan and public lighting specification has been prepared by Redmond Lighting Designs to ensure that public areas adequately and appropriately lit.

DM OBJ 9 A separation distance of 5 metres between the lighting column and the outside of the crown is required for the lighting to work as designed. Trees or vegetation shall not be planted within 7 metres of a public light column.

Response: An Bord Pleanála are referred to lighting report and drawing pack prepared by Redmond Lighting Designs for further detail in this regard.

DM OBJ 10 The design of all new developments shall take into consideration the layout of the proposed public lighting column locations and the proposed landscape design. Both layouts should achieve the 7 metres separation between all trees and public lighting columns.

Response: An Bord Pleanála are referred to lighting report and drawing pack prepared by Redmond Lighting Designs for further detail in this regard.

4.2.16 Name of Residential Development

DM POL 10 The name proposed for all residential developments shall be clearly linked with the locality in which the scheme is located.

Response: The applicant will propose 3 no. residential development names for the consideration of the Council. These names will reflect or connect with the site location or local history and be translatable between English and Irish.

4.2.17 Light and Overshadowing

DM POL 11 New residential development should be designed to maximise the use of natural daylight and sunlight. Innovative building design and layout that demonstrates a high level of energy conservation, energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources will be encouraged.

Response: This proposed SHD has been carefully designed to integrate with the built and natural environment which surround the site to the north and south, respectively, and to offer a balanced mix of units in response to current and projected demand and market preferences. All units are designed to the highest standards of energy performance taking full advantage of natural light through careful siting and orientation of the homes. These are just some of the elements that will ensure that the scheme provides a suitable response to the policy objectives set out in the LAP for residential schemes.

Please refer to the Daylight & Sunlight Assessment prepared by digital dimensions which confirms that the proposed development meets the recommendations of the BRE Guidelines and BS8206 Part 2:2008 Lighting for Buildings, Code of Practice for Daylighting in respect of Average Daylight Factor. Their report further concludes that 100% of the public amenity spaces throughout the development are compliant with BRE guidance.

4.2.18 Apartments

DM POL 12 Apartment schemes shall generally be encouraged in appropriate, sustainable, locations, accessible to public transport in the following settlements: Drogheda, Navan, Dunboyne, Kilcock, Maynooth, Ashbourne and Dunshaughlin.

Response: Please refer to the enclosed Architectural and Urban Design Report by RKD.

DM POL 13 In towns and villages, there will be a general presumption against apartment developments however there are opportunities for infill developments and consolidation which would contribute to the regeneration of these settlements.

Response: Please refer to the enclosed Architectural and Urban Design Report by RKD.

DM POL 14 All planning applications for apartments are required to demonstrate compliance with 'Sustainable Urban Housing; Design Standards for New Apartments', Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) and any updates thereof. While these Guidelines set out minimum design standards, the Council strongly encourage the provision of apartments above these standards, in the interest of creating attractive living environments and sustainable communities.

Response: The proposed development includes 182 no. maisonette units and 120 no. apartments (in addition to the 150 no. houses). These units will meet and exceed the minimum standards internal floor areas, private open space, communal amenity space, aspect orientation, etc.) of the Guidelines. In many instances in relation to the maisonette units, having been designed to be high-quality living environments, they also meet and exceed the more generous standards for houses detailed in Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities.

DM OBJ 39: An appropriate mix of units shall be provided to cater for a variety of household types and tenures. Apartment development proposals will be assessed having regard to the following requirements:

- Aspect-dual aspect units are encouraged;
- Mix of units- to cater for different size households;
- Floor areas and room widths;
- Private and communal amenity space;
- Floor to ceiling height;
- Car and bicycle parking;
- EV Charging points;
- Lift/ stair core access;
- Storage provision;
- Adaptability.

All planning applications for apartment development shall be accompanied by a statement which sets out how the scheme complies with this objective.

Response: The proposed development will principally consist of the construction of a 452 no. residential units comprising 150 no. semi-detached and terraced dwelling houses (3-bed), 182 no. maisonettes (15 no. 1-bed & 167 no. 3-bed) and 120 no. apartments (100 no. 2-bed and 20 no. 3-bed), with heights ranging from 2 and 3 storey terraces houses to 4 storey duplex

buildings and 6 storey apartment blocks. The scheme is presented across 12 neighbourhoods (A-H & J-M), each with its own designated central communal open space and achieves 100% dual aspect. The standards for houses are set by the MCDP and for apartments the standards are set by the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments the proposed will all exceed the minimum standards prescribed in the relevant plans. An Bord Pleanála are referred to the Housing Quality Assessment prepared by RKD which accompanies this application.

DM OBJ 40: A Design Statement is required to be submitted with any planning application for apartment development.

Response: An Architectural and Urban Design Statement has been prepared by RKD and accompanies this application.

4.2.19 Parking Standards

DM OBJ 89 Car parking shall be provided in accordance with Table 11.2 and associated guidance notes.

Response: The proposed development provides for 746 no. car parking spaces. Under Table 11.4, additional spaces are required. While the proposal does not provide for these spaces it is deemed appropriate as the MCDP notes the relaxed standards within the Apartment Guidelines 2020 as acceptable. This has reduced the number of spaces required for maisonette and apartment units from 2 spaces per unit to 1.25 per unit.

DM OBJ 90 The dimension of parking bays shall comply with Table 11.3

Response: The parking bay dimensions proposed comply with the standards set out in Table 11.3. Full details can be found in the material that accompanies this report.

DM OBJ 92: Loading bays shall be located and designed to prevent any obstructions to traffic circulation and to accommodate vehicular manoeuvring on site.

Response: Please refer to the enclosed TIA by OCSC

DM OBJ 93: New residential development should take account of the following regarding car parking:

- Vehicular parking for detached and semi-detached housing should be within the curtilage of the house;
- Vehicular parking for apartments, where appropriate, should generally be at basement level. Where this is not possible, parking for apartments and terraced housing should be in small scale informal groups overlooked by residential units;
- The visual impact of large areas of parking should be reduced by the use of screen planting, low walls and the use of different textured or coloured paving for car parking bays;
- Consideration needs to be given to parking for visitors and people with disabilities; and

- Provision of EV Charging points.

Response: The proposed car parking provision meets the standards set out in DM OBJ 93. Full details of the car parking provision proposed can be found in the material prepared by RKD and OCSC which accompanies this report.

4.2.20 Cycle Parking

DM OBJ 96: To require the provision of cycle parking facilities in accordance with the Design Standards for New Apartments (March 2018) and Table 11.4 Cycle Parking Standards.

Response: Under table 11.4 the requirement is to provide for 775 no. spaces. The proposed development provides for 816 no. spaces.

DM OBJ 99: In residential developments without private gardens or wholly dependent on balconies for private open space, covered secure bicycle stands should be provided in private communal areas

Response: The proposed development provides for covered and secure bicycle stands which are provided in within the communal areas. Full details are enclosed within this pack.

4.2.21 Electric Vehicles (EV)

MOV POL 16 To support the provision of infrastructure for electrical vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles both on street and in new developments as such technologies advance to become viable transport options.

Response: The proposed development provides each House with own parking EV charging. For Maisonettes and Apartments 1 in 10 of car parking spaces shall be provided with car chargers, 3.7kw in size. Full details are provided in the drawings provided by RKD.

MOV OBJ 25: To facilitate the provision of electricity charging infrastructure for electric vehicles both on street and in new developments in accordance with car parking standards and best practice.

Response: The proposed development provides each House with own parking EV charging. For Maisonettes and Apartments 1 in 10 of car parking spaces shall be provided with car chargers, 3.7kw in size. Full details are provided in the drawings provided by RKD.

DM OBJ 95: In any car park in excess of 20 spaces where public access is available, four fully functional charging points for Electric Vehicles shall be provided in accordance with IEC 61851 Standard for Electric Vehicle Conductive Charging Systems

Response The proposed development provides each House with own parking EV charging. For Maisonettes and Apartments 1 in 10 of car parking spaces shall be provided with car chargers, 3.7kw in size.

4.2.22 Wastewater

INF POL 12 To require that in the case of all developments where the public foul sewer network is available or likely to be available and has sufficient capacity, that development shall be connected to it.

Response: The proposed development will be connected to the existing foul sewer network. Irish Water have noted that a connection is feasible without infrastructure upgrade. A Confirmation of Feasibility and a Statement of Design Acceptance was received from Irish Water and is included as an Appendix to the Engineering Services Report prepared by OCSC.

INF OBJ 11 To ensure that all development shall connect to the public foul sewer network where available within the County.

Response: As noted in the OCSC Engineering Services report (which should be read in conjunction with this report) the proposed development will be connected to the public foul sewer network.

4.2.23 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

INF POL 16 To ensure that all planning applications for new development have regard to the surface water management policies provided for in the GDSDS.

Response: The proposed design, for the aforementioned services, has been carried out in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS). Full details can be found within the material prepared by OCSC which accompanies this report.

INF OBJ 16 To ensure that all new developments comply with Section 3.12 of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works V6 which sets out the requirements for new developments to allow for Climate Change.

Response: The proposed design, has been carried out in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works (GDR COP). This work has been undertaken by OCSC. Details of such are enclosed with this pack.

INF OBJ 18 To ensure that new developments provide for the separation of foul and surface water drainage networks within application site boundaries.

Response: It is proposed to separate the wastewater and surface water drainage networks, which will serve the proposed development, and provide independent connections to the local

public foul and surface water sewers respectively. Full details can be found within the material prepared by OCSC which accompanies this report.

INF OBJ 19 To ensure that developments permitted by the Council which involve discharge of wastewater to surface waters or groundwaters comply with the requirements of the EU Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations and EU Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations

Response: The proposed development complies with the requirements of the EU Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations and EU Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations. Full details can be found within the material prepared by OCSC which accompanies this report.

4.2.24 Energy Efficiency

INF POL 38 To encourage that new development proposals maximise energy efficiency through siting, layout, design and incorporate best practice in energy technologies, conservation and smart technology.

Response: The building design and distribution of massing and footprints maximises daylight, optimising solar gain and reducing energy demands for heating. Renewable energy will be generated by the rooftop PV arrays. All dwellings within the proposed development are designed to provide a high level of energy efficiency and will be constructed to comply with all requisite standards under Part L of the Irish Building Regulations relating to the conservation of fuel and energy. Please refer to the Energy Statement prepared by BBSC which accompanies this application.

INF OBJ 40 To seek to reduce reliance on fossil fuels in the County by reducing the energy demand of existing buildings, in particular residential dwellings.

Response: The building design and distribution of massing and footprints maximises daylight, optimising solar gain and reducing energy demands for heating. Renewable energy will be generated by the rooftop PV arrays and will reduce the need for fossil fuels. Please refer to the Energy Statement prepared by BBSC which accompanies this application.

INF OBJ 43 To require, where feasible and practicable, the provision of Photovoltaic solar panels in new residential developments, commercial developments, and public buildings for electricity generation/storage and/or water heating purposes so as to minimise carbon emissions and reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels and reduce energy costs.

Response: Renewable energy will be generated by the rooftop PV arrays and will reduce the need for fossil fuels. Full details can be found within the material prepared by RKD which accompanies this report. Please also refer to the Energy Statement prepared by BBSC which accompanies this application.

INF OBJ 45 To ensure that all plans and projects associated with the generation or supply of energy or telecommunication networks are subject to an Appropriate Assessment Screening and those plans and projects which could, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site (or sites) undergo a full Appropriate Assessment.

Response: BBSC engineering has prepared an Energy Statement and a Telecommunications Impact Assessment in relation to the proposed development. Full details are enclosed in the reports by BBSC which accompanies this report

DM POL 2 Appropriate energy conservation strategies should be employed in location, design, mass, orientation and the choice of materials of all new and renovated developments.

Response: The building design and distribution of massing and footprints maximises daylight, optimising solar gain and reducing energy demands for heating. Renewable energy will be generated by the rooftop PV arrays and will reduce the need for fossil fuels. Please refer to the Energy Statement prepared by BBSC and the RKD's architectural material which accompanies this application.

DM OBJ 5 Building design which minimises resource consumption, reduces waste, water and energy use shall be incorporated where possible, in all new and renovated developments.

Response: The units within the proposed development have been designed to high quality standards which minimises resource consumption, reduces waste, water and energy.

DM OBJ 6 Building design shall maximise natural ventilation, solar gain and daylight, where possible, all new and renovated developments.

Response: The layout of the different typologies respond to their orientation as to optimise daylight and sunlight. All units have a living or dining area looking over the private amenity space and shared amenity courtyards.

DM OBJ 7 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) measures are required to form part of the design of all developments.

Response: The proposed development incorporates SuDS into the overall design. Please refer to the material provided by OCSC.

4.2.25 Waste Management

DM POL 16: All new residential schemes shall include appropriately sited and designed secure refuse storage areas, details of which shall be clearly shown in pre-application discussion and planning application documentation.

Response: For residences with access to rear private open space gardens it will be possible to store waste receptacles in these locations, with them being brought out to the road frontage

on collection days. Bin storage for the terraced housing units will be provided to the front of the house. Bin storage for the maisonettes will be provided in front of the house or in clusters to the side. Refuse and recycling storage will be provided in the communal courtyard space. Full details can be found in the material prepared by OCSC which should be read in conjunction with this report.

DM OBJ 52: In residential schemes, appropriately sized bin storage areas must be provided to the front of terraced dwellings in locations which are easily accessible by the householder. These areas shall be well screened and the design shall integrate with the dwelling.

Response: Appropriately sized bin stores are suitably located throughout the proposed development.

DM OBJ 53: Apartment schemes shall make provision for waste segregation and recycling. Bin storage shall generally be on the ground floor level of development, be adequately ventilated, screened from public view and adjacent to the block it serves. Where appropriate, the bin storage area shall be a separate structure to the apartment building.

Response:

DM OBJ 54: Shared bin storage areas shall be located conveniently for residents and collection service providers with appropriate security measures.

Response: Appropriately sized bin stores are suitably located throughout the proposed development. Full details can be found in the material prepared by RKD and OCSC.

4.2.26 Childcare

DM POL 25: To facilitate the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations as set out in accordance with the provisions of the DoEHLG 'Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2001).

Response: The proposed development proposes for a childcare facility which can provide for 121 no. children. The SIA which is included within this planning application outlines that this will cater for the demand generated by the proposed development.

DM POL 26: Development of childcare facilities at the following locations will normally be encouraged;

- Areas of concentrated employment and business parks;
- Within new and existing residential developments;
- Neighbourhood Centres;
- Large retail developments;
- Schools or major educational facilities;
- Adjacent to public transportation; and
- Villages and Rural Nodes.

Response: A childcare facility has been provided by the applicant within neighbourhood K. This facility can cater for up to 121 no. children and will cope with the demand generated by the proposed development.

DM OBJ 68: Planning applications for childcare facilities shall be assessed for compliance with the following criteria:

- Suitability of the site for the type and size of facility proposed.
- Impact on residential amenity of surrounding residential development;
- Adequate availability of indoor and outdoor play space;
- Convenience to public transport nodes, pedestrian and cycling facilities;
- Local traffic conditions;
- Safe access and sufficient convenient off-street car parking and/or suitable drop-off and collection points for customers and staff;
- Number of such facilities in the area. In this regard, the applicant shall submit a map showing the locations of childcare facilities within the vicinity of the subject site and demonstrate the need for an additional facility at that location.

Response: The childcare facility is appropriately located within the proposed development. The facility provides for 121 no. childcare spaces and includes an outdoor play area.

DM OBJ 69: All applications for childcare facilities shall comprehensively set out the following as part of a pre-application discussion and/or planning application proposal:

- The type of childcare facility proposed – Full day care; sessional service including playgroups, preschools and Montessori; Child minding;
- No. of children;
- No. of employees;
- Proposed hours of operation;
- Car-parking provision; (please refer to Section 11.9.1)
- Location of secure external play area including secure site boundaries.
-

Response: The childcare facility proposed provides for 121 no. full day care spaces. 28 no. employees will work within the facility. Please refer to the information by RKD and OCSC which provide full details on the proposed childcare facility.

4.2.27 Social Infrastructure

SOC POL 5 To require, as part of all new large residential and commercial developments, and in existing developments, where appropriate, that provision is made for facilities including local/neighbourhood shops, childcare facilities, schools and recreational facilities, and to seek their provision concurrent with development.

Response: The proposed development will principally consist of the construction of a 452 no. residential units. Additionally, the proposal provides for 4 no. local commercial/retail units, a childcare facility, public open space and communal open space.

SOC POL 6: To require that all new residential development applications of 50 units or more on zoned lands are accompanied by a Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA) to determine if social and community facilities in the area are sufficient to provide for the needs of the future residents (of all age cohorts). This should include details regarding the following essential facilities: Playgrounds, parks and other green spaces, education, childcare, health and others such as shops, banks, post offices, community meeting rooms/centres and recreational facilities. The assessment should identify membership and non-membership facilities which allow access for all groups. Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to accompany the Planning application to address the deficiency. In certain cases however, residential development under these thresholds may, at the discretion of the Planning Authority, require the submission of a SIA. (Please refer to Chapter 11 Development Management Standards for further information).

Response: A full social infrastructure audit has been prepared by KPMG FA and accompanies this report. The report illustrates the high level of services in Ratoath and notes, *'This Social Infrastructure Audit has identified and established the level of existing social infrastructure provision within and bordering the c.2km study area to support the needs of the existing population and offered insights into the likelihood of the capacity of the existing services and facilities to support future residents. The baseline study undertaken identified a significant range of services which contribute to quality of life for local residents, with more than 75 no. facilities located in close proximity to the subject site'*.

4.2.28 Access for All

DM OBJ 8: The Council will seek to encourage the implementation of best practice standards with regard to access in both indoor and outdoor environments

Response: The development will provide a wide mix of typologies with a minimum of 5% designed in accordance with the Universal Design Guidelines. All development will focus on creating attractive, inclusive and safe environments for people with a diverse range of needs to play, interact or relax.

4.3 Ratoath Written Statement

The Ratoath written statement contained in volume 2 of the MCDP supports the policies and objectives in volume 1. The statement provides specific opportunities and objectives for Ratoath and has a vision to,

“promote the sustainable consolidation of Ratoath, accommodating, significant expansion of employment opportunities, whilst consolidating growth of the town and reinforcing the town centre. In this context, the plan will promote and support employment growth and expansion of the international equestrian hub in support of the town centre; and will promote sustainable movement through the completion of the Ratoath Outer Relief Road”.

The written statement notes that a detailed Local Area Plan for the town will be prepared during the life of this Plan., which will supersede the 2009-2015 LAP.

RA POL 1 To ensure Ratoath develops in a consolidated and sustainable manner which facilitates and supports employment opportunities, accommodates local services and reinforces the existing town centre.

Response: The proposed development will principally consist of the construction of a 452 no. residential units within the existing settlement of Ratoath. Additionally, the proposal provides for local commercial/retail units, a childcare facility, public open space and communal open space.

RA OBJ 1 To secure the implementation of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan, in so far as is practicable, by ensuring the household allocation for Ratoath as set out in Table 2.12 of the Core Strategy is not exceeded.

Response: The proposed development lies on underutilised land which are zoned for residential development and is within the existing settlement of Ratoath and thus achieves sustainable compact growth. The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan provides a housing allocation of 803 units to Ratoath over the 2021 – 2027 period and the subject proposal will deliver 452 no. of the units.

RA OBJ 7 To facilitate the development of the Ratoath Outer Relief route in tandem with development.

Response: A phasing plan has been prepared by RKD. The phasing plan has 4 stages, of which the key RORR is provided in phase one. The phasing plan can be found within RKD's Architectural and Urban Design Report which accompanies this report.

RA OBJ 8 To further advance public footpath and cycle path upgrades in the town in accordance with the Ratoath Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme.

Response: This development proposal has sought to introduce the principles of DMURS, with: the inclusion of shared surfaces, pedestrian and cyclist routes; the creation of a legible and permeable development; its siting close to services and amenities. An Bord Pleanála are referred to the DMURS Compliance Statement prepared by OCSC Consulting Engineers which accompanies this application.

RA OBJ 10 To reserve lands off the Fairyhouse Road for the provision of a swimming pool.

Response: The White Lands to the south have potential scope to deliver a swimming pool. These White Lands are expected to come forward under the 2021-2027 MCDP.

RA OBJ 12 To require that development proposals are prepared in accordance with a Masterplan which includes an, urban design and landscape design statement.

Response: A masterplan drawing has been prepared by RKD Architects and is included within their drawing pack. This masterplan is supported by design statement prepared by a team of qualified consultants. Full details of the materials provide can be found within this application pack.

4.4 Local Policy: Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015

The Ratoath LAP 2009–2015 was amended following the adoption of the MCDP. The amendments introduced land-use zoning objectives and an order of priority for the release of lands in a number of settlements including Ratoath. The land use zoning objectives contained within the MCDP were applied to the land use zoning objectives map for Ratoath which incorporated the subject lands, designated as ‘A2 New Residential’ with an objective:

“To provide for new residential communities with ancillary community facilities, neighbourhood facilities and employment uses as considered appropriate for the status of the centre in the Settlement Hierarchy.”

Table 4.4: Permitted and open for consideration uses

Permitted Uses	Open for Consideration Uses
B & B / Guest House, Bring Banks, Community Facility / Centre, Childcare Facility, Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Education (Primary or Second Level), Halting Site / Group Housing, Home Based Economic Activities, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Residential / Sheltered Housing, Retirement Home / Residential Institution / Retirement Village, Water Services / Public Services.	Betting Office, Caravan Park, Cultural Facility, Education (Third Level), Enterprise Centre, Health Centre, Healthcare Practitioner, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Offices <100m, Place of Public Worship, Bar/ Restaurant / Café, Take-Away / Fast Food Outlet, Veterinary Surgery

The order of priority assigned highlighted that the subject lands were part of Phase 2 (Post 2019). In now bringing forward the lands for consideration as a new residential development, the applicant is fully complying with the zoning objective and order or priority set out within the amended LAP, and as represented in Strategic Policy 1 (SP1) which states:

“...to operate an Order of Priority for the release of residential lands in compliance with the requirements of CS OBJ 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 as follows: (ii) The lands identified with an A2 “New Residential” land use zoning objective but qualified as “Residential Phase II (Post 2019)” are not available for residential development within the life of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019”.

However, notwithstanding this, the MCDP removes the subject site’s phasing, thereby allowing development to come forward immediately, without delay.

Section 3.3 sets out the ‘Settlement Strategy’ for the town with objective SS OBJ 1:

“To promote a more compact urban form in Ratoath and to prevent additional urban sprawl.”

The proposal development makes a strong contribution to this objective with a net residential density of 41.1 units/ha, that will result in a compact urban form in line with the provisions of national, regional and local planning policy.

Policy DEV MAN POL 1 in Section 3.4.1 ‘Development Management Standards and Guidelines’ states it is the policy of Meath County Council *“To seek a high standard of architectural design for new development in Ratoath.”* This planning application is accompanied by an Architectural and Urban Design Report prepared by RKD Architects which sets out the design rationale and approach of the proposal development. The scheme has been designed to comply with a range of local and national standards and guidance to ensure an attractive scheme that will afford its future residents a high quality of residential amenity.

On residential development, the LAP establishes as a key principle, the need to deliver:

“...high quality living environments in neighbourhoods with a range of housing types and sufficient community facilities to serve the needs of residents. Generally the objective will be to provide a range of residential units, which vary in both size and type, and an overall scheme design which can accommodate a broad population profile including single person households, couples, households with children, older people and people with a disability.”

The planning and design approach pursued for this scheme will bring a suitable variety and choice of unit to the local market that responds to both existing and projected population demand and demographic trends accommodating single persons, couples, families, older people and persons with disability. The neighbourhood character areas proposed are designed around a mix of units, house types and layouts with well-defined streetscapes and open spaces that offer natural supervision.

In total, the LAP establishes 13 Residential Policies which have been carefully considered in the planning and design of the proposed scheme, a selection of the most pertinent of these to housing schemes are set out below:

RES POL 1: To provide for the integration of new housing into the natural and built environment in a manner that makes a positive contribution to the overall environment in the locality.

Response: This proposed SHD has been carefully designed to integrate with the built and natural environment which surround the site to the north and south, respectively, and to offer a balanced mix of units in response to current and projected demand and market preferences.

RES POL 2: To encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities to avoid areas of social exclusion.

Response: The proposed development provides a combination of houses, maisonettes and apartments to cater for the needs of a variety of households, both now and in the future. Additionally, the development will provide units of different types and sizes, thereby catering

for individuals and families of different sizes, stage in life and incomes. The part V provision is evenly dispersed throughout the proposal.

RES POL 3: To achieve a mix of housing types and sizes in the consideration of individual planning applications for residential development and in development of the Councils own housing stock.

Response: The proposed development will principally consist of the construction of a 452 no. residential units comprising 150 no. semi-detached and terraced dwelling houses (3-bed), 182 no. maisonettes (15 no. 1-bed & 167 no. 3-bed) and 120 no. apartments (100 no. 2-bed and 20 no. 3-bed), with heights ranging from 2 and 3 storey terraces houses to 4 storey duplex buildings and 5 storey apartment blocks. The scheme is presented across 12 neighbourhoods (A-H & J-M), each with its own designated central communal open space.

RES POL 4: To ensure that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are provided for in the design of layouts in residential areas.

Response: Pedestrian and cycle linkages to all neighbourhood areas, attractive streets and a good distribution of open spaces for play, rest and relaxation will encourage residents to utilise the outdoor spaces, creating a sense of community and encouraging a healthy lifestyle. The design proposed achieves good levels of accessibility and permeability, with the primary access points located along the RORR.

RES POL 5: To promote energy efficiency both during the construction phase and during the lifetime of residential development by sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation and surrounding features.

Response: All units are designed to the highest standards of energy performance taking full advantage of natural light through careful siting and orientation of the homes. Additionally, renewable energy will be generated by the rooftop PV arrays and will reduce the need for fossil fuels.

5.0 Conclusion

The proposed development will provide for an appropriate form of high-quality residential development on lands to the immediate south of the established town of Ratoath. The development proposal now brought forward is the result of a carefully considered planning and design process which has been evolved and been enhanced by a detailed consultation process involving Cairn Homes, the design team, Meath Council County, An Bord Pleanála and a range of other parties. The residential and ancillary uses proposed on this site is fully consistent with all relevant strategic planning policies, Ministerial Guidelines, and local planning policies.

This statement has demonstrated the compliance of the proposed scheme with the following statutory planning policies and guidelines:

- Project Ireland 2040: The National Planning Framework
- Project Ireland 2040: The National Development Plan 2021-2030
- Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland (September 2021)
- Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness
- Smarter Travel – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for EMRA (2019)
- Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009)
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2020)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages) 2009
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2007);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)
- Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Guidelines (2017) and Affordable Housing Act (2021), as amended
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)
- Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015