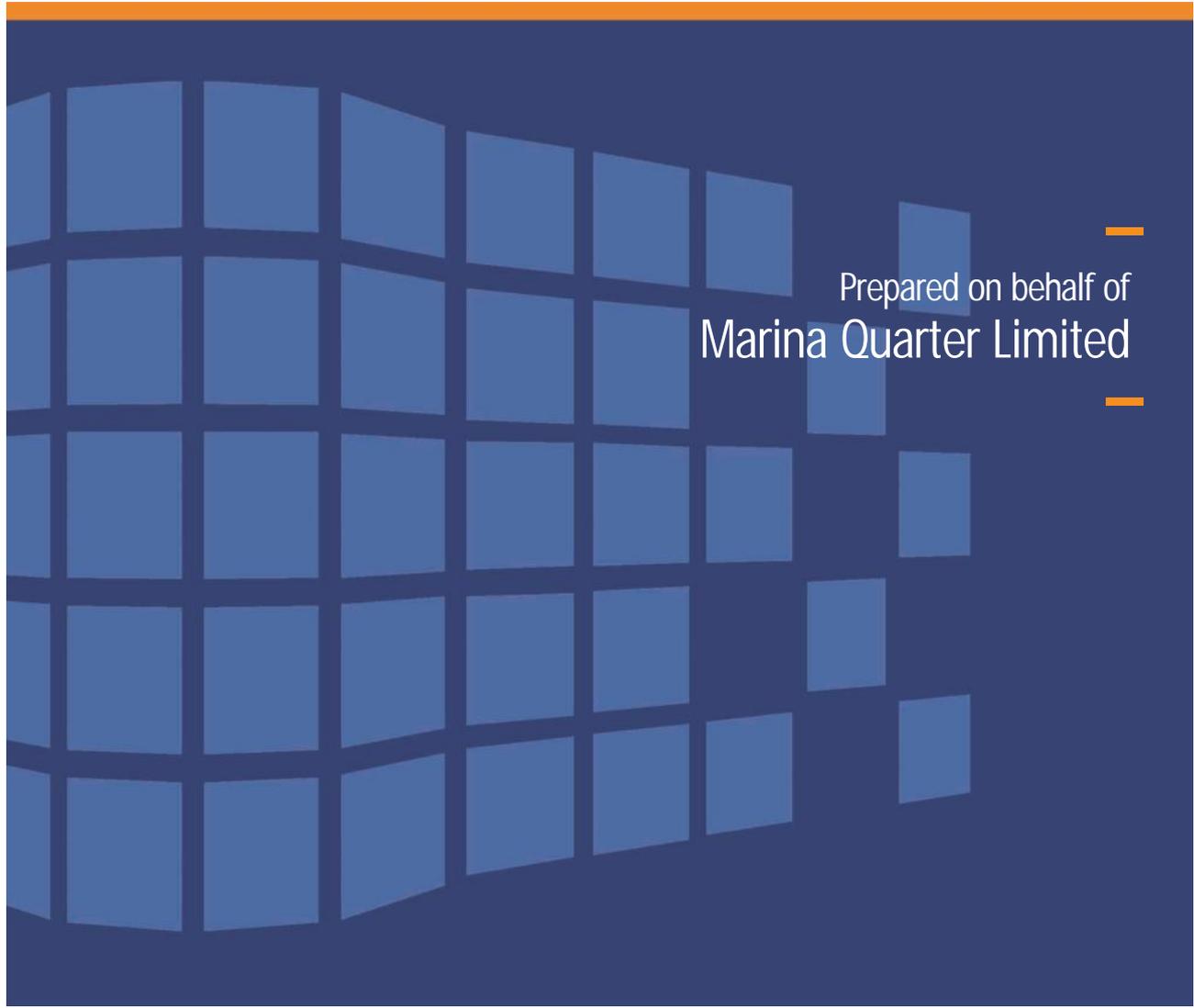


Planning & Design Statement

Strategic Housing Development Application for a 10-year permission for a mixed use development comprising the removal of existing structures/tanks; and the construction of 1,002 no. apartments and non-residential uses, at The Former Ford Distribution Site, fronting on to Centre Park Road, Marquee Road and Monahan's Road, Cork.

December 2020



Prepared on behalf of
Marina Quarter Limited

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1.0 Introduction

This Planning & Design Statement has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants, in conjunction with O'Mahony Pike Architects, Arup Engineers and Ilsa Rutgers Landscape Architect on behalf of Marina Quarter Limited to accompany a planning application for a Strategic Housing Development application at The Former Ford Distribution Site, fronting on to Centre Park Road, Marquee Road and Monahan's Road, Cork

A 10-year permission is sought by the applicant for the proposed development comprising:

- The demolition of existing structures including a single storey building, entrance canopy, pump island canopy, flood lights and the decommissioning/removal of 3 no. underground fuel tanks; and
- The construction of 1,002 no. apartments (comprising a mix of studio, 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments) in 12 no. blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 14 storeys;
- Blocks 1 to 12 also include commercial and community facilities, including the provision of 5 no. retail units, 1 no. Montessori school, 1 no. creche (provided as part of a two-storey building connected to Block no. 3), a medical centre, bar, café, venue/performance area, 2 no. community resource spaces and ancillary signage;
- The provision of internal and external amenities for residents and open space/landscaping areas to include pocket parks, linear park, residential squares and urban spaces;
- Ancillary car, motorcycle and bike parking;
- Reservation for the Monahan's Road extension;
- The provision of 1 no. internal link road through the site linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan's Road extension;
- The provision of 2 no. pedestrian streets through the site linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan's Road extension; and
- All associated ancillary development works, including storage, plant and management facilities.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement has been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompanies this application.

The application contains a statement indicating why permission should be granted for the proposed development, having regard to a consideration specified in section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, notwithstanding that the proposed development materially contravenes a relevant development plan or local area plan other than in relation to the zoning of the land.

The proposed development will see the sustainable expansion of Cork, in line with dwelling targets set out in the Cork City Development Plan. The design and development of the proposed scheme has been informed by detailed pre-planning discussions with Cork City Council's Planning, Architectural and Engineering Departments, as well as feedback from the pre-application consultation meetings with An Bord Pleanála and their subsequent Notice of Pre-Application Consultation Opinion. Key design aspects have been shaped directly by feedback and comments received from both parties, with the design and in particular the layout having been amended and altered throughout the design process.

The Planning and Design Statement report amalgamates the planning statement and the design statement into a single cohesive document which has been structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Site Context & Development Description
3. Planning Policy Context
4. Planning History
5. Assessment

6. Design Approach
7. Conclusion

2.0 Site Context & Development Description

2.1 Existing Site Context

The proposed site, known as The Former Ford Distribution Site, is situated within the South Docks Development area, approximately 1.9km from Cork City Centre. The total red line area of the site comprises 5.97 hectares (this includes roads and other infrastructure). The subject site has a relatively flat topography and is rectangular in shape. There is a net developable area of 3.64 hectares. The site is located within development precinct 16 'Marina', of the now expired 2008 South Docks Local Areas Plan (SDLAP). The site is bounded by Centre Park Road to the north, Marquee Road with existing commercial development beyond to the west, Monahan Road to the south and Pairc Ui Chaoimh to the east. Permission for the development of these lands was previously granted under Ref. 08/32919 on July 15th, 2009. This permission was extended and now expires on October 12th, 2024.



Fig. 1 Subject site highlighted in magenta.

The site is within easy walking distance of Cork City Centre and Blackrock/Mahon which provide a number of commercial and community facilities, including local shops, churches and schools. The major employment hubs of Cork City Centre and Mahon are within close proximity and both are well connected by public transport. The area is served by the 202-bus route which has numerous stops located within 400m of the site. A bus serves the area every 10 minutes Monday to Friday. The 202 bus stops on Monahan's Road, to the south of the site, 3 times daily. The site will benefit from the pending improvements to transport services and infrastructure which will arise through the re-development of the South Docks area and the implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area-Based Transport Strategy, which has identified the local road network surrounding the site as strategic transport corridors to incorporate high-frequency bus services along Monahan Road to the South and Marquee Road to the west, and the implementation of a mass transit system along Centre Park Road to the north (a Bus Rapid Transit system is proposed in the medium term, which will be upgraded to a Light Rail Transit in the longer term) the site will have immediate access to these bus services and to the mass transit system. The area is well serviced with several large amenity sites located within walking distance of the site with the closest being Pairc Ui Chaoimh, Kennedy Park and the Marina Park all within 1km of the site.

2.2 Future Site Context

The South Docks development area measures 131 hectares in total and includes approximately 4km of waterfront. The vision for the development of the South Docks is that of a vibrant mixed use and socially inclusive urban quarter, building on the characteristics of the area itself, and its proximity to both existing and proposed amenities and connections.

The subject site is located on the interface between the proposed development zone of the docklands, the Marina Park and the River Lee, providing a unique opportunity to develop a significant urban community. Unlike many projects within the vicinity of Cork City, the Former Ford Distribution Site is relatively unencumbered and is therefore suitable for the delivery of a mixed-use development in the short term.

In order to achieve the future vision for the docklands area, the south docks will require a commensurate improvement in both transport infrastructure and transport services which may result in a potential future change in road levels surrounding the site. Local and strategic transport proposals for the transport network in the site vicinity will include upgrades to the local road network and additional road infrastructure and at a strategic level the site lies along a proposed rapid transit corridor linking Mahon to Ballincollig via Cork City.

As is detailed in the submitted DMURS Compliance Statement by Arup, the site will benefit from the strategic transport corridors proposed in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy which incorporates high-frequency bus services along Monahan Road to the South and Marquee Road to the west, and the implementation of a mass transit system along Centre Park Road to the north (a Bus Rapid Transit system is proposed in the medium term, which will be upgraded to a Light Rail Transit in the longer term) the site will have immediate access to these bus services and to the mass transit system.

As stated above the proposed development is designed in the existing site context, however the development is positioned so as to facilitate the expected future streets to fit into layouts for Centre Park Road and Marquee Road. The future layouts have been inferred from discussions with Cork City Council and the Area Based Transport Assessment by Cork City Council. As a result of this, when the development is considered in the existing context, there is a significant temporary landscape zone along both of these frontages, which allows for some tolerance between existing road levels and potential future road levels. Any level changes due to the road upgrades, which can be either an increase or decrease from existing levels, can be managed within this temporary landscape zone. In order to accommodate the future Monahan Road Extension along the south of the site, there is a linear park, which is a permanent landscape zone what will allow a significant tolerance between the proposed scheme and the future road levels of the Monahans Road Extension. Again, any increase or decrease in levels can be managed within this landscape zone.

2.3 Development Description

The Cork City Development Plan 2015 includes the specific zoning '*Mixed Use Development*' with a portion zoned '*Neighbourhood Centre*'. The proposed development is in line with this zoning requirement providing:

- The construction of 1,002 no. apartments (comprising a mix of studio, 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments) in 12 no. blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 14 storeys;
- Blocks 1 to 12 also include commercial and community facilities, including the provision of 5 no. retail units, 1 no. Montessori school, 1 no. creche (provided as part of a two-storey building connected to Block no. 3), a medical centre, bar, café, venue/performance area, 2 no. community resource spaces and ancillary signage;
- The provision of internal and external amenities for residents and open space/landscaping areas to include pocket parks, linear park, residential squares and urban spaces;
- Ancillary car, motorcycle and bike parking;
- Reservation for the Monahan's Road extension;

- The provision of 1 no. internal link road through the site linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan's Road extension;
- The provision of 2 no. pedestrian streets through the site linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan's Road extension; and
- All associated ancillary development works, including storage, plant and management facilities.

The proposed development will also benefit from the provision of landscaping and amenity areas to include pocket parks, a linear park, residential squares and urban spaces at both podium and street level. The open space areas incorporate seating, play areas and paths for pedestrians and cyclists.

The development has been guided by the feedback received from An Bord Pleanála and Cork City Council. Based on these comments, several iterations of the proposed development were undertaken by the design team.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

The following outlines the relevant planning policy context for the proposed development. For a comprehensive analysis of the development compliance/accordance with the relevant policy documents, at a national/regional/local scale, please see the submitted Statement of Consistency by McCutcheon Halley Planning. The proposed development is subject to the following policy documents, as set out by Cork City Council.

3.1 National Planning Framework 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040 is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland up to the year 2040. The NPF was adopted on 29th May 2018 and states that Cork is emerging as an international centre of scale and is well placed to complement Dublin, but that it requires significantly accelerated and urban-focused growth to more fully achieve this role. The NPF envisages that Cork will become the fastest-growing city region in Ireland with a projected 50% to 60% increase of its population by 2040. The higher targeted rate of growth for Cork also means planning for significant numbers, i.e. at least 105,000 more people by 2040.

3.2 The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages)

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages)' issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2009, provides guidance in relation to the development of larger towns. The Guidelines recommend that planning authorities should encourage increased densities in appropriate locations such as cities and larger towns with 5,000 or more people. This recommendation was based on three considerations which include the following:

- The trend towards smaller household sizes;
- The need to encourage the provision of affordable housing; and
- The need to reduce CO² emissions by reducing energy consumption.

It is an objective of the Guidelines to achieve '*an efficient use of land appropriate to its context, while avoiding over development*'. It is imperative that the planning authorities encourage design and layouts that ensure the highest quality of residential environment is achieved. The criteria to be considered in the design and assessment of higher density is as follows:

- Acceptable building heights;
- Avoidance of overlooking and overshadowing;
- Provision of adequate private and public open space;
- Adequate internal space;
- Suitable parking close to dwellings; and
- Provision of ancillary facilities including childcare.

In relation to the appropriate locations for higher densities, the Guidelines state that increased densities should be on sites residentially zoned lands close to city/town centres and served by existing/planned public transport.

Section 5.7 of the **2009 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages)** states that for "Brownfield Sites (within city or town centres)" (defined as lands which generally comprise of redundant industrial lands or docks), the greatest efficiency in land usage will be achieved by providing higher densities, subject to appropriate design and amenity standards:

"Brownfield" sites (within city or town centres): 'Brownfield' lands, which may be defined as "any land which has been subjected to building, engineering or other operations, excluding temporary uses or urban green spaces.", generally comprise redundant

industrial lands or docks but may also include former barracks, hospitals or even occasionally obsolete housing areas. Where such significant sites exist and, in particular, are close to existing or future public transport corridors, the opportunity for their re-development to higher densities, subject to the safeguards expressed above or in accordance with local area plans, should be promoted, as should the potential for car-free developments at these locations.”

3.3 Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide

The ‘Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide’ issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009) states that all residential development should evolve naturally in response to its surroundings and be of high quality in terms of design and layout. The Manual sets out 12 key design criterion (i.e. Context, Connectivity, Inclusivity, Variety, Efficiency, Distinctiveness, Layout, Public Realm, Adaptability, Privacy and Amenity, Parking and Detailed Design) – these criteria are addressed in the ‘Statement of Consistency’ prepared by McCutcheon Halley and the Design Statement prepared by O’Mahony Pike Architects.

3.4 Cork City Development Plan

The Cork City Development Plan (CDP) 2015-2021 sets out Cork City Council’s policies for the development of Cork City to 2021 and beyond. It establishes the following vision for Cork City:

“The vision for Cork City over the period of this Development Plan and beyond is to be a successfully, sustainable regional capital and to achieve a high quality of life for its citizens and a robust local economy, by balancing the relationship between community, economic development and environmental quality. It will have a diverse innovative economy, will maintain its distinctive character and culture, will have a network of attractive neighbourhoods served by good quality transport and amenities and will be a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest in.”

To achieve this vision, the Core Strategy set out in the plan establishes a framework for the development of the city, derived from the strategic goals of the CDP. This is set around the population targets for the city, as outlined in Chapter 2 of the plan. In 2011 the overall population target for the City, as per the CDP is 150,000 up to 2022, with a growth of 25.8% on 2011 levels which were recorded at 119,230 (this was the population of the city prior to the city boundary extension). This equates to a target of 64,955 households by 2022 with a requirement for approximately 20,032 new housing units.

The CDP puts forward several policies to achieve the projected level of growth in the city and promote sustainable residential communities. Objective 6.1 provides a number of residential strategic objectives:

- a) *To encourage the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods;*
- b) *To provide a variety of sites for housing to meet the various needs of different sections of the population;*
- c) *To continue to work with the Approved Housing Bodies and to actively engage with all key stakeholders in the provision of housing;*
- d) *To continue to regenerate and maintain existing housing;*
- e) *To encourage the use of derelict or underused land and buildings to assist in their regeneration;*
- f) *To promote high standards of design, energy efficiency, estate layout and landscaping in all new housing developments;*
- g) *To protect and, where necessary, enhance the amenities and the environment of existing residential areas.*

The CDP presented a refreshed vision for the Docklands informed by a report ‘Unlocking the City Docklands’ which was completed in 2012. This report concluded that priority should be given to expanding eastwards into the Docklands from the City Centre, with a focus on a new office quarter in the first phase. The CDP states that ‘other parts’ of the Docklands will develop as demand increases and resources for infrastructure become available. Objective 13.25 of the CDP states that it is the City Councils aim to:

“Re-orient the Docklands as an extension of the City Centre and to initially focus on development of areas easily accessible from the City Centre, with other areas developing as barriers to development are overcome and opportunities arise.”

In the context of this objective the subject site is identified as being the 4th district of the docklands, identified as ‘Marina Lifestyle’. This categorisation is not an indication of phasing, but rather a reimagining of the breakdown of uses within the Docklands.



Fig. 2 Extract from Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021.

Objective 13.25 of the CDP further states that is the Council's aim to:

-) To promote the development of the North and South Docklands as major development opportunities of regional and national importance;
-) To create a vibrant and mixed use and socially inclusive urban quarter in Docklands;
-) To review the local planning frameworks and if appropriate amend them to take account of changed circumstances;
-) To work with key stakeholders, including government agencies and landowners, to overcome infrastructural deficits and other barriers, to secure the development of Docklands.

Objective 6.8 of the CDP aims to achieve residential developments which provide a mix of house types and sizes to meet the needs of a range of households and to provide mixed communities and tenures. It is an objective to:

“... encourage the establishment of sustainable residential communities by ensuring a mix of housing and apartment types, sizes and tenures is provided...The needs of special groups such as the elderly and disabled shall also be considered as part of this process.”

With regards density, Objective 6.9 states that the Council will:

“Promote suitable densities to meet the needs outlined in the Core Strategy as set out in Chapter 16 Development Management.”

The CDP states that:

“... within the city the minimum residential density in Suburban areas should be 35-50 dwellings per hectare. Densities greater than 50 dwellings per hectare will normally require a mix of houses and apartments. Densities higher than this baseline level will be appropriate in other types of locations:

-) Along bus routes densities should be to a minimum density of 50 dwellings per hectare (subject to constraints imposed by the character of the surrounding area);*
-) At larger development sites (>0.5 hectares in size, the size of a residential block) capable of generating and accommodating their own character;*
-) Major development areas and mixed-use areas (including the central areas, District, Neighbourhood and local centres).”*

However, paragraph 16.12 states that the appropriate density for any site will be determined by a wide range of factors including the surrounding context, building heights and setting.

In relation to dwelling sizes, paragraph 16.43 suggests that the provision of a range of housing types and sizes will increase in importance as trends show a decline in family households with the provision of 3 / 3+ bedroom units seen as increasingly important in achieving balanced communities as they are attractive to families.

The CDP outlines that it is the Councils policy to make the most sustainable use of existing urban lands, and that the planning authority will consider the appropriate development of infill housing on suitable sites on a case by case basis taking into account their impact on adjoining homes, traffic safety, etc. In general, infill housing should comply with all relevant development plan standards for residential development. However, in certain limited circumstances, the planning authority may relax the normal planning standards in the interest of developing vacant, derelict and underutilised lands.

This residential development is proposed on lands zoned ‘Mixed Use Development’ with a portion zoned ‘Neighbourhood Centre’ in the 2015 Cork City Development Plan. The Planning Authorities objectives for the area are defined by objective ZO 16 and ZO 9 which states the following:

ZO 16 – Mixed Use Development states that it is an objective of the Council:

“To promote the development of mixed uses to ensure the creation of a vibrant urban area, working in tandem with the principles of sustainable development, transportation and self-sufficiency.”

ZO 9 – Neighbourhood Centre states that it is an objective of the Council:

“To protect, provide for and/or improve the retail function of neighbourhood centres and provide a focus for local services.”

No development is proposed along the southern strip zoned open space. This area is reserved for the Monahans Road Extension and a linear park.

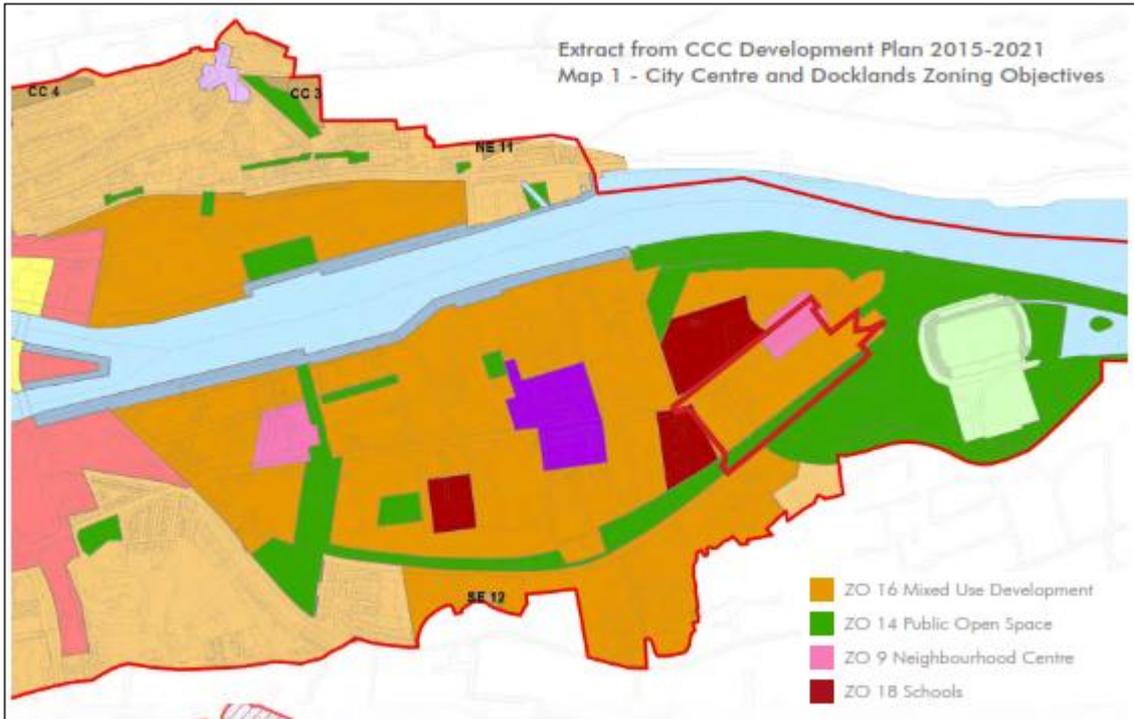


Fig. 3 Extract from Cork City Development Plan 2015 – Site outlined in red.

3.5 South Docks Local Area Plan 2008 (SDLAP)

The South Docks Local Area Plan 2008 (SDLAP) contains a detailed planning strategy for the South Docks area. While the SDLAP expired in 2018, the 2015 City Development Plan makes reference to the SDLAP and states that it is to be reviewed during the Plan period. Pending completion of a new SDLAP and given the multiple references to the 2008 SDLAP in the 2015 Plan, we have included the 2008 SDLAP (and its main objectives) in this Planning and Design Statement.

In the SDLAP, the subject site falls within 'Development Precinct 16 'Marina' of the South Docks LAP. This precinct includes the subject site and the 'Coal Yard' site to the north (c.7 ha). The general development objectives for the precinct are noted as:

- High density development;
- Maximum gross plot ration of 2.1:1;
- Residential floor space as a % of the total = 60%;
- Non-residential floor area at 40%;
- Community facilities to include:
 - Childcare facilities;
 - 1 community centre;
 - Recreational & cultural facilities in the neighbourhood centre;
 - 1 post primary school in the Coal Yard Site;
- Retail facilities – 1 neighbourhood retail centre;
- Transportation – 1 high quality public transport stop.

In relation to density and plot ratio, the objectives for the subject site are at the highest range proposed for the Docklands. The SDLAP zoning objectives for the site provided for 'Mixed Use Development', a 'Neighbourhood Centre' and 'Public Open Space'. The Cork City Development Plan made some slight amendments to the zoning objectives by changing the 'Public Open Space' zoning to 'Mixed Use' (the zoning objectives have been superseded by the 2015 CDP). The Mixed-Use Development zoning objective included the following range of permissible uses: general offices, conference centre, third level education, hospital, hotel, commercial leisure, cultural, residential, public institutions, childcare services, business and technology / research uses and local convenience stores / corner shops and community civic uses.

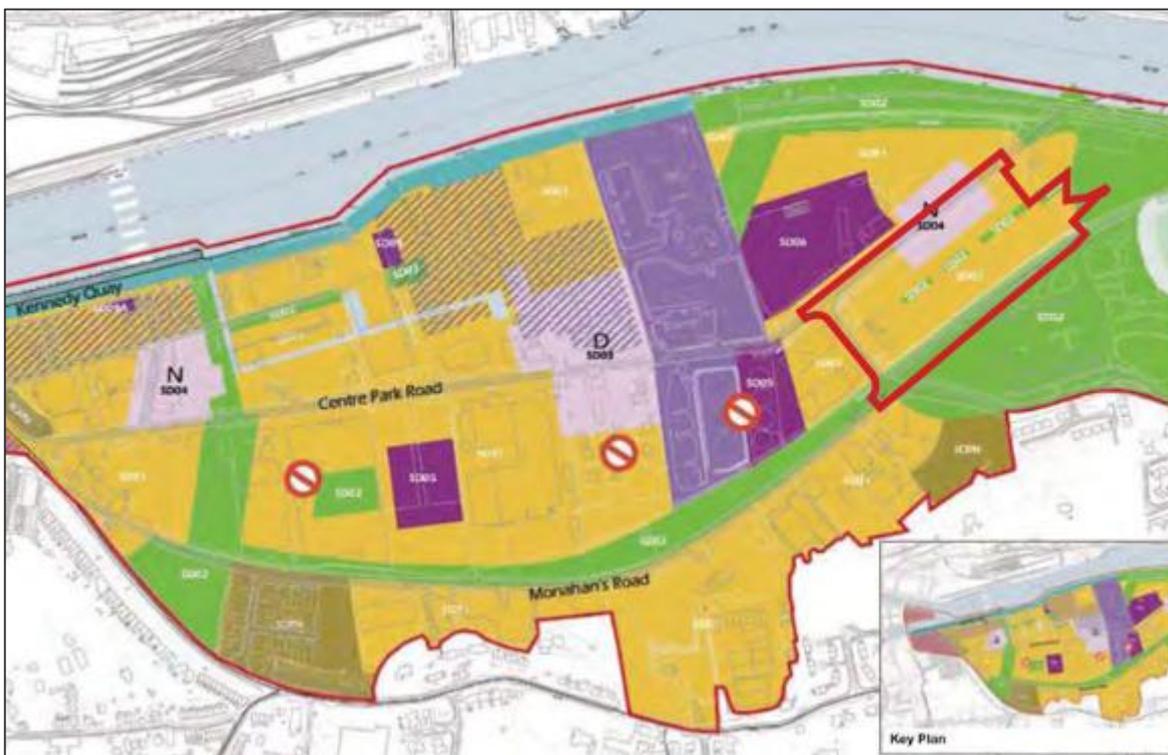


Fig. 4 Extract from South Docks Local Area Plan – site outlined in red.

In terms of building heights, the CCDP reiterated the objectives set out in the South Docks LAP. For the subject site the building height guidelines are as follows:

- Approximately 50% of the footprint at 6/7 storeys at parapet plus 1 storey setback;
- Approximately 40% of the footprint a mix of 5/6 storey and 4/5 storey at parapet with 1 storey set back;
- Tall building of +96 (c.32 storeys);
- A focal building.

In relation to the residential mix, Objective SD 24 of the LAP states that a minimum of 30% of units should be 'family / flexible' units of at least 90sqm, and a minimum of 15% one-bed units should be provided. The CCDP has amended this objective and table 16.4 provides indicative targets for dwelling size and distribution. The CCDP seeks a minimum of 35% of units to be 3 / 3+ bed units, and a minimum of 15% 1 bed units. This objective is not consistent with the 2018 Apartment Guidelines, which state that prescriptive requirements for housing mix should be avoided in Development Plans and that there is a need for greater flexibility going forward. Specific Planning Policy Requirement 1 of the Guidelines allows for a greater proportion of 1-bed or studio apartments (up to 20-25% of the total development), with no minimum requirement for 3 or more bedrooms.

3.6 Relevant National/Local Planning Policy Documents

The proposed development is also party to a number of national and local planning policy / guidance documents specifically:

- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (2018);
- Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) 2013, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport;
- 2018 Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2018, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government;
- Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2018, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government;
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines, June 2001.
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, 2009;
- Southern Regional Assembly: Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2019).
- Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2019;

The submitted Statement of Consistency by McCutcheon Halley Planning provides a breakdown of the proposed developments compliance with all the relevant planning policies and guidance documents.

4.0 Planning History

There has been 1 no. planning application/permission relevant to the subject site. This is outlined below.

Cork City Council Ref. 08/32919

On the 15th July, 2009 Cork City Council granted a ten year permission to Alleyquay Investments Ltd. for the demolition of the existing structures and site clearance on the site of the old Ford Distribution site at Centre Park Road, Cork. The site is bounded by Centre park Road to the north, link road to the west and Monahan's Road to the south. Permission is sought for redevelopment of the 4.984 ha site and all site development works to incorporate the construction of a mixed-use development of 12 no. buildings arranged in 11 no. parcels ranging from 1 to 27 no. floors plus mezzanine. The development includes: 564 no. residential units consisting of 112 no. 1 bed apartments, 295 no. 2 bed apartments, 28 no 2 bed and studio apartments, 71 no. three bedroom apartments, 12 no. 2 bed duplex, and 46 no. 3 bed duplex apartments; 11 no. retail units with total GFA of 1,986 sq.m which includes a 768 sq.m anchor store, 48,033 sq.m Gross Office space, 205 bed hotel with conference facilities, leisure centre and bar/lounge; 10,927 sq.m GFA Events Arena with a maximum capacity of approximately 5,000 people including associated bars, artist space in the main foyer area and outdoor display area; 2 no. bar/restaurants with a total GFA of 1,984 sq.m with an outdoor seating area; 490 sq.m GFA creche; 2 no. cafes with a total GFA of 232 sq.m; a 115 sq.m GFA bookmakers; 115 sq.m GFA pharmacy and a 200 sq.m GFA glazed community/civic building; 94 sq.m GFA medical unit. The development also consists of solar panels to the roof levels of parcels 7, 9, 10 & 11; wind turbines to roof top of parcel 7 and a public viewing gallery to the roof of building 1. All ancillary site and landscaping development works including a district heating system at sub grade level, switch buildings, ESB substations, public and private open space, lift shafts, vents at grade level and access onto Centre park Road and Monahan's Road. The development also includes raising of ground levels to +4mOD and 2207 car parking spaces at sub grade level -1 and -2. The development requires a waste license for the disposal of excavated soil off site. Permission is sought to extend the appropriate period from 5 to 10 years. An Environmental Impact Statement accompanies this application.

Permission has been extended and now expires on October 12th, 2024.

5.0 Assessment

The proposed development comprises the development of:

- The demolition of existing structures including a single storey building, entrance canopy, pump island canopy, flood lights and the decommissioning/removal of 3 no. underground fuel tanks; and
- The construction of 1,002 no. apartments (comprising a mix of studio, 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments) in 12 no. blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 14 storeys;
- Blocks 1 to 12 also include commercial and community facilities, including the provision of 5 no. retail units, 1 no. Montessori school, 1 no. creche (provided as part of a two-storey building connected to Block no. 3), a medical centre, bar, café, venue/performance area, 2 no. community resource spaces and ancillary signage;
- The provision of internal and external amenities for residents and open space/landscaping areas to include pocket parks, linear park, residential squares and urban spaces;
- Ancillary car, motorcycle and bike parking;
- Reservation for the Monahan's Road extension;
- The provision of 1 no. internal link road through the site linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan's Road extension;
- The provision of 2 no. pedestrian streets through the site linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan's Road extension; and
- All associated ancillary development works, including storage, plant and management facilities

The proposal will form a sustainable residential extension to the settlement, seeking to consolidate development in the area and retain Cork's compact form. It will provide residential development which is appropriate to its setting and of high-quality architectural value and quality, which is viable in development terms and will be attractive to buyers seeking quality family homes in the area.

The format and design of the subject planning application has been developed in consultation with the relevant departments of Cork City Council as well as An Bord Pleanála. The following are the key issues we consider relevant in the assessment of this planning application.

- Compliance with Current Planning Policy
- Part V Proposal
- Childcare Provision
- Recreation, Amenity and Open Space
- Traffic Impact, Access & Connectivity
- Service Infrastructure

5.1 Compliance with Current Planning Policy

A statement of Consistency by McCutcheon Halley Planning is submitted in support of the subject planning application. This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed developments consistency with the relevant planning policy documents at national, regional and local levels. The main body of the report provides both a narrative outlining how the proposed development is in compliance with the relevant planning policy, while the attached appendix provides an individual breakdown of each of the relevant planning policies/objectives and guidance. The following are covered in the report:

- Context and Principle of Development
- Density and Housing Mix
- Layout
- Landscape and Amenity
- Sustainability

This report concludes that the proposed development is consistent with the general objectives of the Cork City Development Plan including the ZO 16 Mixed Use Development and ZO 9 – Neighbourhood Centre zonings for the site.

The density of the proposed development is also in line with the that identified for ‘Brownfield sites’ in the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development and the CDP 2015 which states that:

“... within the city the minimum residential density in Suburban areas should be 35-50 dwellings per hectare. Densities greater than 50 dwellings per hectare will normally require a mix of houses and apartments. Densities higher than this baseline level will be appropriate in other types of locations:

-) Along bus routes densities should be to a minimum density of 50 dwellings per hectare (subject to constraints imposed by the character of the surrounding area);*
-) At larger development sites (>0.5 hectares in size, the size of a residential block) capable of generating and accommodating their own character;*
-) Major development areas and mixed-use areas (including the central areas, District, Neighbourhood and local centres).”*

At a strategic level, the proposed development will contribute to the realisation of the housing targets for Cork and the maintenance of Cork’s compact form, while also delivering much needed high-quality dwellings to meet existing market demand in the short to medium term.

5.1.1 Material Contravention Statement

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act, 2016 makes the provision for An Bord Pleanála to grant permission for a development which materially contravenes the Development Plan, other than in relation to the zoning of the lands with Section 9(6) stating:

6) (a) Subject to paragraph (b), the Board may decide to grant a permission for a proposed strategic housing development in respect of an application under section 4 even where the proposed development, or a part of it, contravenes materially the development plan or local area plan relating to the area concerned.

(b) The Board shall not grant permission under paragraph (a) where the proposed development, or a part of it, contravenes materially the development plan or local area plan relating to the area concerned, in relation to the zoning of the land.

(c) Where the proposed strategic housing development would materially contravene the development plan or local area plan, as the case may be, other than in relation to the zoning of the land, then the Board may only grant permission in accordance with paragraph (a) where it considers that, if section 37(2)(b) of the Act of 2000 were to apply, it would grant permission for the proposed development.

The proposed development is considered to materially contravene the Cork City Development Plan in relation to the height of the proposed buildings height and apartment design (size and floor to ceiling height). In both instances, national guidance has changed since the adoption of the Plan in 2015.

Chapter 16 of the CDP 2015 outlines the development standards against which proposals for development will be assessed. The Plan states that:

Of foremost importance will be the encouragement of development of the highest possible architectural and urban design quality.

Specific policies with the development plan provide standards in relation to height and apartment design. In relation to height. Section 16.5 of the CDP 2015 categorises buildings as being low-rise, medium- rise and tall buildings based on their number of storeys or height with tall buildings being considered as being 32 metres or higher with Section 3.64 identifying the Docklands as being an area with the potential to accommodate high buildings. The Mapped Objectives in Volume 2 of the Plan identify specific locations within the City where buildings of 32 metres of higher can be developed.

Chapter 16 also provides standards in relation to the apartment sizes and floor to ceiling heights outlining minimum requirements. The standards outlined in the CDP 2015 pre-date the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments but as they are presented as minimum standards in the Plan, it is considered that the compliance with Design Standards for New Apartments requires a deviation from the standards contained within the CDP 2015.

Ministerial Guidelines can be issued to planning authorities in relation to any function of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) under Section 28 with Section 28(1C) stating:

Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), guidelines under that subsection may contain specific planning policy requirements with which planning authorities, regional assemblies and the Board shall, in the performance of their functions, comply.

While new Guidelines will ultimately form part of the Development Plan as part of the next review of the Plan, Section 28(1C) requires that planning authorities adhere to new Guidelines immediately which can lead to inconsistencies in local planning policy and the national guidelines.

This Material Contravention Statement by McCutcheon Halley submitted with this application addresses the inconsistencies between the City Development Plan 2015 and the ‘Sustainable Urban House: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ and ‘Urban and Building Height, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’, both of which were published in 2018.

It is considered that the proposed development is material contravention to the CDP 2015 in relation to the proposed height of the block and the apartment standards. In this regard, Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides for the Board to grant permission where the proposed development materially contravenes the development plan, subject to paragraph (b) where it considers:

(i) the proposed development is of strategic or national importance,

The proposed development is at a scale which is to be considered under the Strategic Housing Development planning process which confirms the strategic importance of the current application, in accordance with Section 372(b)(i). The proposal is for a residential led development and the national importance of the proposal is confirmed in the Government’s plan *Rebuilding Ireland* designed to accelerate housing supply to address the housing shortage.

The location of the site within the South Docklands, an area identified as being of both regional and national importance in the City Development Plan, further confirms that the proposed development is both of strategic and national importance.

On determining that point (i) is applicable, it must be determined that **one** of the sub-sections set out below is relevant.

(ii) there are conflicting objectives in the development plan or the objectives are not clearly stated, insofar as the proposed development is concerned, or

- (iii) permission for the proposed development should be granted having regard to regional spatial and economic strategy for the area, guidelines under section 28, policy directives under section 29, the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area, and any relevant policy of the Government, the Minister or any Minister of the Government, or
- (iv) permission for the proposed development should be granted having regard to the pattern of development, and permissions granted, in the area since the making of the development plan.

It is respectfully submitted that permission should be granted in accordance with sub-section (iii) as the proposed development is consistent with the relevant national and regional planning policies and Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

5.2 Part V

As outlined in the Statement of Consistency by McCutcheon Halley Planning, Objective 6.3 Social Housing under Part V and under the amended Planning and Development Regulations (2015), pursuant to Part V, s.96 of the planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), 10% of all new residential developments are required to be made available for social housing.

The applicant proposes to meet the site-specific Part V obligation through the transfer of 100 no. dwellings on site specifically:

- 15 no. 1 bed apartments – Type A1A;
- 15 no. 1 bed apartments – Type A1K1;
- 10 no. 2 bed apartments – Type A2A;
- 5 no. 2 bed apartments – Type A2AD;
- 5 no. 2 bed apartments – Type ASAF1;
- 10 no. 2 bed apartments – Type A2C2;
- 14 no. 2 bed apartments – Type A2E;
- 5 no. 2 bed apartments – Type A2F;
- 5 no. 2 bed apartments – Type A2T;
- 1 no. 2 bed apartment – Type A2U;
- 15 no. 3 bed apartments – Type A3F.

These units are dispersed around the proposed development and will be developed through the earlier phases of development as per the attached Part V Housing Schedule. This approach has been submitted to and agreed with Alison O'Rourke of Cork City Council. A 'Part V Costs Methodology' by Marina Quarter Limited is submitted as part of the planning application documents. Locations of these Part V units are outlined on the drawings by O'Mahony Pike submitted with this application.

5.3 Childcare Provision

Appendix 2 of the 'Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities' establishes an indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas (Paragraphs 2.4 and 3.3.1 refer). One facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare places is considered to be a reasonable starting point in this regard. The guidance acknowledges that other case specific assumptions may lead to an increase or decrease in this requirement.

The proposed development consists of 1,002 no. apartments and makes provision for 1 no. Montessori school, 1 no. creche. These facilities are considered to be of adequate size to cater for the needs of the proposed development. Please refer to the Childcare Demand Report by McCutcheon Halley Planning.

5.3 Recreation, Amenity and Open Space

As outlined in the Statement of Consistency, Cork City Council requires all new residential development to comply with its policies to ensure the adequate provision of community and amenity facilities to meet the needs of future residents of the development. In terms of the Council's open space policy, the proposed development proposes to provide 5,868sqm or 16.1% of the site as public open space. The public open space will consist of pocket parks, linear park, residential squares and urban spaces. The open space areas incorporate seating, play areas and paths for pedestrians and cyclists. The on-site will provide a range of play and amenity spaces from all ages, from toddlers to seniors.

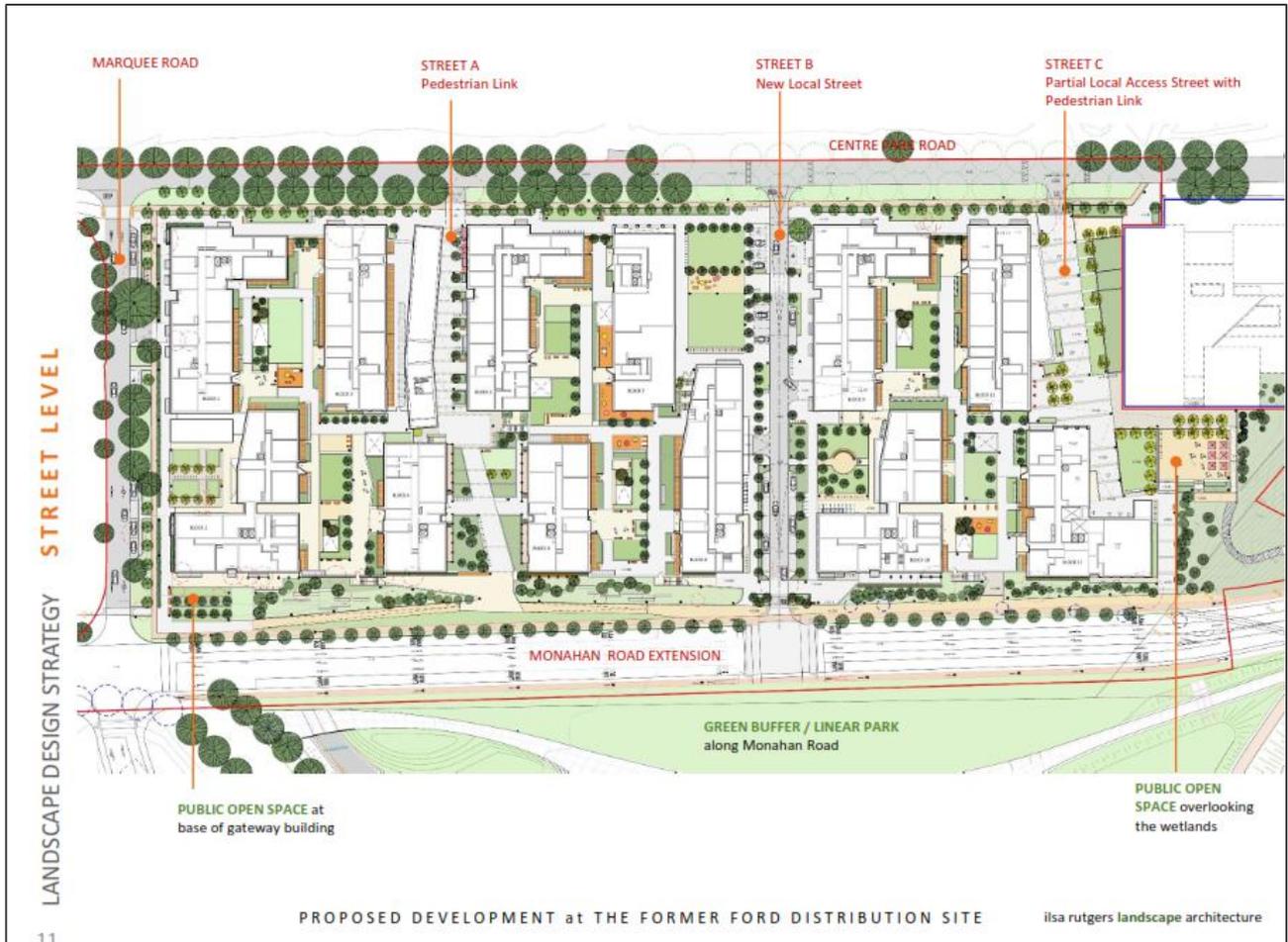


Fig. 5 Proposed Landscape Design by Ilsa Rutgers Landscape Architect.

5.4 Traffic Impact, Access & Connectivity

5.4.1 Traffic Impact

A Traffic and Transport Assessment has been prepared by Arup Engineers. The scope of the TTA was agreed with Cork County Council's Traffic and Transport Department. Peak hour traffic flow was recorded at the following six junctions:

- Junction 1 – Centre Park Road / Marquee Road
- Junction 2 – Marquee Road / Monahan Road / Monahan Road Extension
- Junction 3 – Marquee Road / Site Phase 1 Entrance
- Junction 4 – Maryville / Blackrock Road
- Junction 5 – Victoria Roundabout / Victoria Signalised Junction
- Junction 6 – Albert Road / N27 Junction.

The results of the TTA concluded that the anticipated impact of the proposed development on the surrounding road network will be minor. It is therefore concluded that the impact of the proposed development on the local road network would not result in any material impact on the operation of the local road network. The site layout has been informed by the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport & Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013, and in accordance with DMURS, provides a network of streets, pedestrian priority areas and traffic calming

5.4.2 Access and Connectivity

Pedestrian and cyclist access and connectivity through the site is provided throughout. All of the existing and proposed roadways bounding the site will have numerous entries to the site at podium level for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, three internal streets are proposed within the site, in a north south alignment linking Centre Park Road with the extended Monahan Road. These streets serve as divider streets between the internal podia and of these two will be for pedestrian and cyclists only. The central route through the site will facilitate vehicle access to the podium car park areas beneath podia 2 and 3 and will function as a local street as per DMURS, with a reduced emphasis on the movement of vehicles.

Vehicular access will be provided to the car parking area in Podium 1 via Marquee Road and Podium 2 and 3 via the new link road linking Centre Park Road and the Monahan Road Extension. There will be no internal connectivity between the car parking areas proposed. Two further link streets are proposed through the site which are to be for pedestrian/cyclist use only (and for emergency vehicle access). The access and routing throughout the site can be summarised as follows:

-) With the exception of emergency vehicles, no surface level vehicular through movements will be permitted on the site along the pedestrian streets. The only vehicular route through the site will be via the new link road connecting Centre Park Road and the Monahan Road Extension.

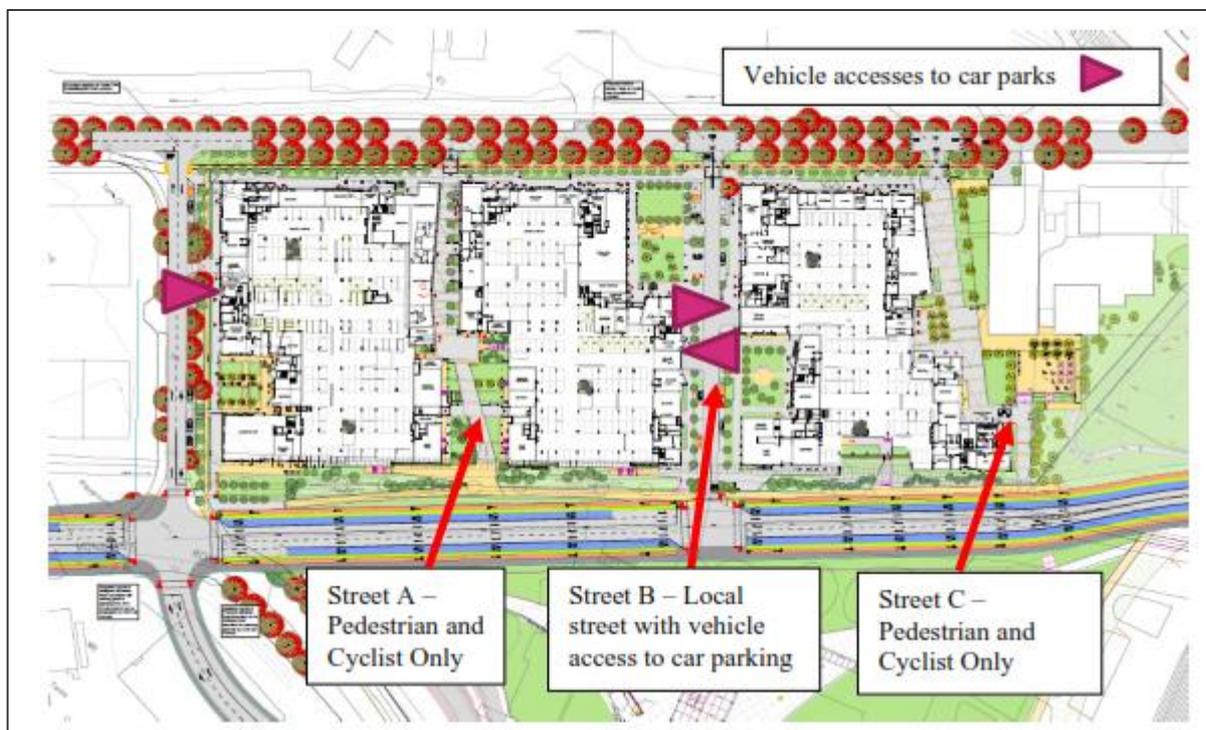


Fig. 6 Proposed Access Strategy.

5.5 Services Infrastructure

The proposed application is accompanied by a pre-connection enquiry (please see Site Infrastructure Report by Arup Engineers). This correspondence letter highlights that both wastewater (foul) and potable water supply connections are feasible for the proposed development (see appendix A of the Arup Report).

6.0 Design Approach

6.1 Introduction

This section (i.e. Design Statement) has been prepared in accordance with Objective 16.1 of the Cork City Development Plan (CDP) 2014 which specifies that it is an objective of the Council to require that:

All significant planning applications shall submit an accompanying design statement which provides a framework explaining how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting.

This Design Statement has full regard to the advice provided in Objective 16.1 and the relevant supporting text of the CDP in relation to the content and detail of the required Design Statement. It has also been completed in accordance with relevant national and local policies and guidance, including the 'Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide' and the 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (May 2009). These documents make particular reference to 12 no. design criteria which have been considered in the design of the proposed development, specifically

- Context
- Connections
- Inclusivity
- Variety
- Efficiency
- Distinctiveness
- Layout
- Public realm
- Adaptability
- Privacy and amenity
- Detailed Design

The documents require a description of the site context and the planning policy context, which has been covered in detail in Section 2 and 3 of this report. The following provides a description of the approach taken to the design of the proposed development, which seeks to establish a residential development of appropriate density and scale in order to maximise the development potential of the land. In this regard, the subject development aims to provide a sustainable residential development which:

- Provides a mix of high-quality apartments in a quality neighbourhood setting;
- Create a sustainable extension to the settlement, that also integrates with existing residential development in the surrounding area;
- Establishes an accessible development which prioritises pedestrians and cyclists; and
- Has regard to the realisation and delivery of pedestrian and cyclists' connections to the surrounding area.

6.2 Context

The proposed site, known as The Former Ford Distribution Site, is situated within the South Docks Development area, approximately 1.9km from Cork City Centre. The total red line area of the site comprises 5.97 hectares (this includes roads and other infrastructure). The subject site has a relatively flat topography and is rectangular in shape. There is a net developable area of 3.64 hectares. The site is located within development precinct 16 'Marina', of the now expired 2008 South Docks Local Areas Plan (SDLAP). The site is bounded by Centre Park Road to the north, Marquee Road with existing commercial development beyond to the west, Monahan Road to the south and Pairc Ui Chaoimh to the east. Permission for the development of these lands was originally granted under Ref. 08/32919 on July 15th, 2009. This permission was extended and now expires on October 12th, 2024.



Fig. 7 Subject site highlighted in magenta.

The site is within easy walking distance of Cork City Centre and Blackrock/Mahon which provide a number of commercial and community facilities, including local shops, churches and schools. The major employment hubs of Cork City Centre and Mahon are within close proximity and both are well connected by public transport. The area is served by the 202-bus route which has numerous stops located within 400m of the site. A bus serves the area every 10 minutes Monday to Friday. The 202 bus stops on Monahan's Road, to the south of the site, 3 times daily. The site will benefit from the pending improvements to transport services and infrastructure which will arise through the re-development of the South Docks area and the implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area-Based Transport Strategy, which has identified the local road network surrounding the site as strategic transport corridors to incorporate high-frequency bus services along Monahan Road to the South and Marquee Road to the west, and the implementation of a mass transit system along Centre Park Road to the north (a Bus Rapid Transit system is proposed in the medium term, which will be upgraded to a Light Rail Transit in the longer term) the site will have immediate access to these bus services and to the mass transit system. The area is well serviced with several large amenity sites located within walking distance of the site with the closest being Pairc Ui Chaoimh, Kennedy Park and the Marina Park all within 1km of the site.

The proposed layout responds to the need to integrate with its surroundings while also considering the sites constraints and potentials. In response to this, the proposed development has been designed to reflect the prevailing context of the surrounding areas, specifically with regard to scale, massing, density and urban grain.

The density has been developed with consideration to the advice received from Cork City Council and An Bord Pleanála as well as the specific site context. With an overall net density of 275, the density of development has been developed specifically with the site context in mind.

The form, design and mix of apartments has been developed to reflect market demand. A mix of apartments sizes are proposed, to suit differing needs. The landscape masterplan has been developed to provide a structure which strengthens and supports the overall design concept. There is a high proportion of open space within the development, which will serve both the proposed development and the future residents of the docklands area.

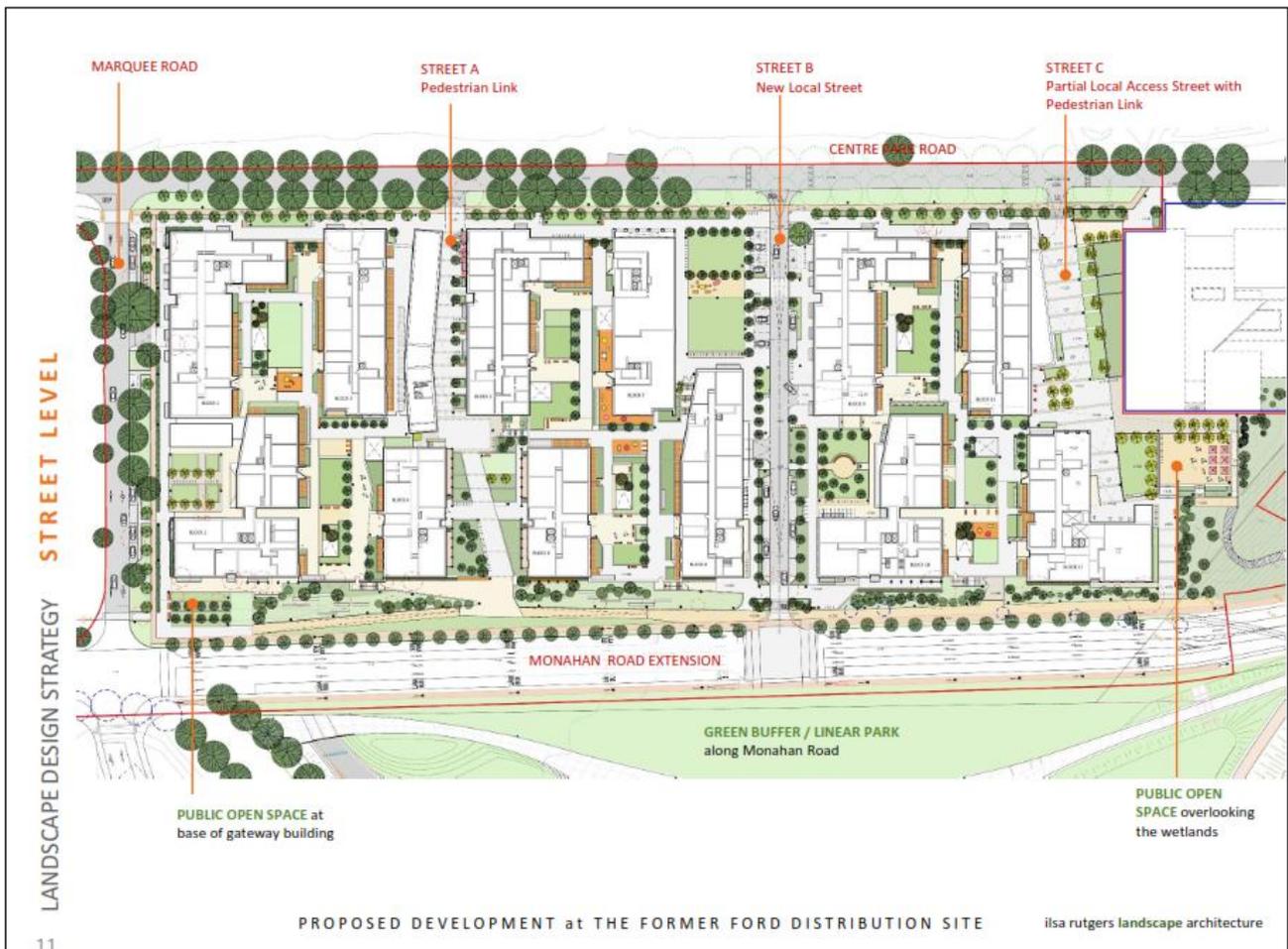


Fig. 8 Proposed Landscape Design by Ilsa Rutgers Architecture.

Considerable effort has been made to respond positively to the surrounding conditions wherever possible. Where possible, existing boundaries including trees are retained and supplemented to minimise the impact on existing habitats as well as existing residents of the immediately surrounding area. All unsuitable/undevelopable areas have been given over to protect and improve biodiversity on the site. This approach will ensure that the scheme will act as an attractive and sustainable expansion of Cork while also positively contributing to the character and identity of the settlement.

6.3 Connections

The proposed development is set around a network of streets, interlinked pedestrian and cyclist pathways and open spaces. The proposed development has been designed to accommodate public transport, car users and service vehicles. New vehicular and pedestrian streets have been proposed running in a north south direction through the site which will link Centre Park Road and the Monahan Road Extension. Access points to the proposed car parks, set down areas which cater for service vehicles and fire tender are provided on this street as well as on Marquee road to the west of the site.

Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity are priority throughout the scheme. Pedestrian circulation routes are provided on the 2 no. pedestrian streets that run in a north south direction between the courtyard blocks. Generous pedestrian paths are provided as part of the streetscape on Centre Park Road and Marquee Road and on the side that joins the Monahan Road extension, the footpath is provided within the linear park. Stepped and ramped access is provided between the public realm and the communal courtyards.

The subject site will benefit from excellent cycle infrastructure, with dedicated cycle paths provided on both Centre Park Road as part of the proposed development and on the proposed Monahan Road Extension (supported by LIHAF funding). Within the scheme itself, the pedestrian streets will all be cycle friendly.

The site will benefit from the pending improvements to transport services and infrastructure which will arise through the re-development of the South Docks area and the implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, which has identified the local road network surrounding the site as strategic transport corridors to incorporate high-frequency bus services along Monahan Road to the South and Marquee Road to the west, and the implementation of a mass transit system along Centre Park Road to the north (a Bus Rapid Transit system is proposed in the medium term, which will be upgraded to a Light Rail Transit in the longer term). The site will have immediate access to these bus services and to the mass transit system

6.4 Inclusivity

The proposed apartments offer a broad range of accommodation choice, in terms of both unit size and configuration (see O'Mahony Pike Schedule of Accommodation for further details). This variety will be attractive to a range of people and household types. The design and layout of the proposed development will meet the requirements of all relevant documents, in particular Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents which deal with accessibility and inclusivity. The proposed layout provides varied public spaces, these spaces allow for social interactions and community creation. Large open spaces have play areas for younger groups and family integrations. These serve as node points to orientate occupants/visitors. Semi-public space is provided at podium level to enliven apartment fronts, and block lengths are also kept short for permeability.

In this regard, the design of the proposed development is also guided by the principles of universal design. The proposed scheme has been designed so that it can be accessed and used in the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or desirability. The diverse needs and abilities of future occupants and users have been considered throughout the design process which reflect the life cycle approach. Ramps, ambulant steps, appropriate gradients and access arrangements have all been included where relevant and necessary to ensure that all areas of the site are accessible to the widest variety of people, regardless of age or ability. During the detailed design and construction, the proposed development will be subject to the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations to ensure compliance in this regard.

As stated previously, Part V units have been included within the overall development. This will ensure a cohesive and mixed community throughout the entire development. With regard to the amenity spaces, all have been developed to suit children of varying ages, teenagers, adults and seniors, where relevant.

All areas, whether public, private or communal, will be well defined and accessible to all, encouraging the use of the public realm by the community. All buildings are designed and sited to provide passive surveillance of the public realm, including streets, paths and open spaces.

6.5 Variety

The proposed layout considers the existing surrounding developments, the topography of the site and the amenities required for the proposed apartments. The layout is considered to allow for the most efficient use of the site. Open spaces and separation distances are designed to add to quality of life while not being excessive.

It is the policy of Cork City Council in the context of the relevant national policy document, to improve the range of choice of housing and accommodation available throughout Cork City. In particular, policy objective 6.8 of the CDP aims to achieve residential developments which provide a mix of house types and sizes to meet the needs of a range of households and to provide mixed communities and tenures. It is an objective to:

"... encourage the establishment of sustainable residential communities by ensuring a mix of housing and apartment types, sizes and tenures is provided...The needs of special groups such as the elderly and disabled shall also be considered as part of this process."

In response to this, the proposed mix of apartment types has been influenced by a range of factors including:

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

The layout incorporates 1,002 no. apartments. The apartment units are set out in a variety of Studio, 1, 2 and 3 bed configurations and vary in size and arrangement depending on their location. Please refer to the Housing

Quality Assessment and Schedule of Accommodation by O'Mahony Pike Architects for the breakdown of units proposed.

The units are represented in a variety of configurations to achieve a genuine mix of communities across the site. The layout of the units will exploit views within the site and provide passive surveillance over the streets and open spaces. All apartment units are generously sized in terms of internal space.

The layout of the development as well as the breakdown mix of units to be delivered has been designed to enable an equitable approach to the delivery of both market and social housing units across the site. Overall, the broad mix and adaptability of apartments proposed should be warmly welcomed, alongside recognition that the proposal will meet market demand for quality apartments in the local community.

6.6 Efficiency

As highlighted previously, an appropriate balance has been struck in terms of achieving required densities alongside open space requirements to ensure that the land is used efficiently, whilst quality of environment and place is retained.

Landscaped areas consist of the open spaces containing play areas. These will provide both passive and active amenity opportunities for the residents of the proposed development while also enhancing the biodiversity of the site. SuDs principles have also been incorporated wherever possible, as is confirmed in the Site Infrastructure Report by Arup Engineers.

All apartments are designed to maximize passive solar gain through the solar orientation. However, in line with the Urban Design Manual this is balanced with requirements of good urban form and the provision of ample spaces. 50% of apartments are dual aspect which ensures adequate daylight and passive warmth, as well as access to direct sunlight at various parts of the day.

With regard to waste provision and collection, storage areas for bins are provided within the apartment blocks at ground floor level. It is envisaged that collection of household waste would be facilitated by a waste collection service.

6.7 Distinctiveness

The economic growth of Cork City has always been intrinsically linked with the river and port and for many years the lifeblood of the docklands area was the Ford Factory including the distribution site which was located on the subject site. The factory employed up to 7,000 people at its peak. The industrial language of the former Ford Factory and other structures in the docklands such as the R + H Hall and the Odlum's building is part of the character of the docklands. The proposed scheme draws on aspects of this industrial heritage to create a unique docklands development, with a strong sense of place (refer to Design Statement by O'Mahony Pike Architects).

Consideration will be given to the use of place names and that are synonymous with Ford within the proposed scheme. The proposed development uses an architectural language that is robust and reflects the areas industrial past.

6.8 Layout

Informed by the relevant planning policy context, site analysis and existing site context, a number of options were considered (in consultation with Cork City Council and in response to consultation with An Bord Pleanála) before finalising the design of the proposed scheme. As the subject site forms part of the wider context, it was considered important to create a distinctive residential development which maximised the development

potential of the site while also respecting the individual characteristics of the surrounding area and responding to the site-specific features. The proposed layout is designed to respond positively to the existing context of the site by exploiting existing features, orientation, views and topography where possible to maximise its development potential.

The subject scheme has been designed to function as a sustainable and successful residential neighbourhood which will act a natural extension to the existing built-up area. Pedestrian and cyclist connections are also facilitated to the wider area. All routes are scaled appropriately to enhance legibility. In general speed has been controlled through passive measures including careful curvature of roads. The streets and pathways benefit from passive surveillance from the apartments that front onto them. Pedestrian / cyclists are prioritised through the incorporation of a network of pathways as well as the use of shared surfaces.

An appropriate balance has been struck in terms of achieving the required densities alongside open space requirements to ensure that zoned land is used efficiently, whilst quality of environment and place is maximised. Every effort has been made to ensure that the levels of the apartment blocks follow the natural gradient of the site to be maintained wherever possible.

As previously stated, pedestrian links are provided throughout the site at both street and podium level. This will create permeability within the site and surrounding area. The proposed pedestrian connections tie into the existing footpath network. This will provide connectivity to key services available in the area and to the wider Cork area via the bus and rail services, delivering a walkable and cyclable neighbourhood. The need for residents to require private vehicular transport, or the need to have more than one vehicle per household may not be necessary given the mixed uses provided within the development and surrounding area and the provision of an excellent walking and cycling environment and bus connectivity to other parts of Cork City and other public transport hubs.

The central link road supports the distribution of traffic through the site. This street is scaled to ensure that it is safe and attractive for all users. Within the residential areas, the proposed streets are designed based on the principles set out in DMURS. From the front entrance of each apartment block there can be quick and easy access onto the network of pedestrian links that loop through the development and connect to the open spaces, onsite services and to the nearby town and neighbourhood centres.

Strategically placed pedestrian crossings are provided with the pedestrian priority surface material laid to remind drivers that the space is a shared space. This ensures that drivers are aware of their surroundings and emphasises that the safety of all users is of paramount importance, with the focus on free movement for vulnerable users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

The streetscape is designed to be attractive as well as accessible and street tree planting is incorporated. The incorporation of the street trees enables the streetscape to be softened and made more attractive to users without negative impact on underground utility services. This will ensure that in the future the trees will not be damaged, removed, or require unnecessary limb or root pruning by utility providers in the maintenance of their service networks.

The street trees selected (as outlined in the Landscape Masterplan and Landscape Design Report by Isla Rutgers Landscape Architect) are appropriate to a street environment. They will have a positive impact, softening the street and importantly will require minimal future maintenance or be the cause of nuisance to residents. Attractive public lighting posts and lanterns are designed into the streetscape to provide appropriate night-time illumination for the safety and security of all users.

Each street will be detail designed at construction stage to incorporate tactile paving and signage as appropriate. The streets will provide uncluttered environments. Minimal on street parking is provided, and the tight carriageway pinch points have to be negotiated by vehicular traffic at frequent intervals. The space will be accessible for all and will have a clear prioritisation of pedestrian and bicycle use, be attractive, encourage social interaction and outdoor activity.

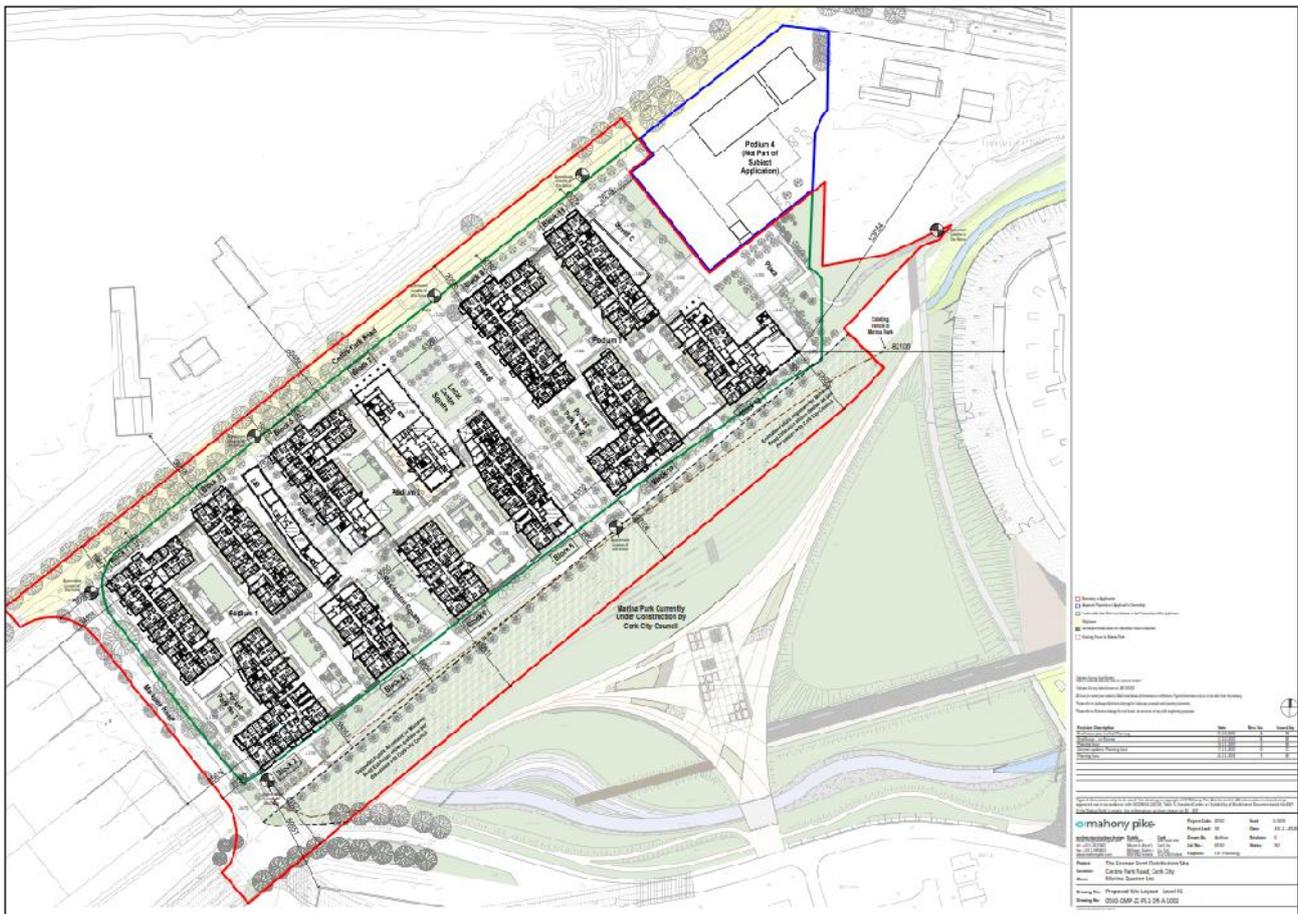


Fig. 11 Proposed layout by O'Mahony Pike Architects.

6.9 Public Realm

The proposed development is set around a network of streets, pathways and open spaces that are of a high quality, that provide an attractive public realm for both future residents and visitors to the site. The apartment blocks are located near the open spaces, including play areas, which will increase the likelihood of being used and provides an invaluable extension to their private open space. The open spaces function as local node points. To tie into its context the development provides open spaces that can be shared with the future residents of the docklands. A number of play areas will be provided within this open space. These play areas will be built according to Cork City Council recreation and amenity guidelines. The generous landscaped open space areas will contribute to the quality of life in the locality. The streets and spaces are overlooked by the surrounding residences which will foster a sense of ownership amongst the community. The play areas are sited where they will benefit from passive surveillance while also minimising the likelihood of noise transmission to adjacent dwellings. With regard to these spaces acting as a continuation of the private residences, there is still a clear definition between public, semi-private and private space. This is facilitated by the incorporation of landscaping to define the various spaces, including car parking, low planting/walls and semi-transparent boundary treatments such as railings.

6.10 Adaptability

The apartments have been designed to allow for a great deal of flexibility to reconfigure the internal arrangements in future. The floor areas have a tall floor to ceiling height to allow for possible alternative uses, this is considered prudent in such a central urban location.

6.11 Privacy and Amenity

The proposed layout has been designed to ensure that each residential unit within the development has a high standard of residential amenity and privacy. This has been achieved by carefully locating, orientating and positioning the buildings and also by providing generous separation distances between the proposed blocks. Windows are sited to prevent direct overlooking into adjacent units and private spaces.

Private amenity space is in the form of balconies and terraces and are provided throughout the development, which meet the Guidelines set out for minimum private amenity space and have been orientated to maximise solar gain. All homes will have adequate storage areas and areas for sorting of recyclables.

6.12 Parking

Each residential unit will have an average of 0.39 no. car parking spaces per unit¹ at ground/street level beneath the podium, equating to a total of 397 no. residential parking spaces. In addition to these, 1 no. surface residential parking spaces will be provided with an additional 29 no. commercial, go-car and set down spaces. An additional 21 no. non-residential spaces will also be provided beneath the podium. Adequate bicycle parking is also provided on site with 1,851 no. bicycle spaces provided for residents with an additional 502 no. visitor bicycle spaces. 50 no. motorcycle spaces are also provided.

6.13 Detailed Design

The proposed apartments are designed to reflect the industrial history of the area in a contemporary way while including some vernacular details such as grid patterns, framed gables and balconies, which reflect the industrial heritage of the area. This is achieved by reflecting the form, detailing and material palette of buildings such as the former Ford Factory, R+H Hall and the Odlum's buildings, often in a more contemporary manner,

The chosen palette of materials reference materials used in the locality and uses a contemporary architectural interpretation of traditional building form and materials. The chosen materials, including brick, precast concrete, dyed precast concrete, timber and steel are easily maintainable. The proposed modelling of the facades allows for interest and variation which offers a cohesive and mixed variety to the overall layout, whilst respecting the existing buildings within the locality.

With regard to form, the selected use of the vernacular in terms of façade detail makes further reference to the local and historical architectural language while integrating them into a high-quality design. The simple pattern of development is reinforced through the use of clear building frontages and edges where corners and gables are emphasised rather than ignored.

¹ Following consultation with Cork City Council and to comply with ABTA, an average of 0.39/unit in line with the parking ratios included in the final ABTA. The parking ratio reduces across the scheme so that 0.47/unit is provided for Podium 1; 0.4/unit for Podium 2; and 0.32/unit for Podium 3, resulting in an average of 0.39/unit.

The buildings frame the open space areas. The exterior of the buildings defines the adjacent streets and public spaces, with private open space provided in the form of balconies/terraces for each apartment, providing private amenity areas and passive surveillance of the shared amenity areas.



Fig. 12 Proposed development.

7.0 Conclusion

The subject development proposes a scheme of 1,002 no. apartment units on lands subject to Objective ZO 16 and ZO9 of the Cork City Development Plan 2015 to facilitate the development of residential development. The design has been developed in full accordance with the policies and objectives contained within the development plan, as well as the relevant national policy guidance documents. Development within the site will contribute to the realisation of housing targets for Cork City and the maintenance of the settlements compact form.

The proposed development will create a sustainable and attractive residential scheme, which will provide quality apartments that are suitable to the needs of modern households regardless of size or composition. The proposal will create a living environment that promotes the concept of 'neighbourhood' and promotes a sense of community within the area. This will help to form a vibrant and resident centred extension to this area of Cork. In doing so the proposed development strikes an appropriate balance between meeting density requirements to achieve the effective use of the land and addresses the constraints.

The proposed development will result in the creation of a sustainable residential community in close proximity to the city centre. We therefore consider that the proposed scheme provides for a much-needed range of housing options and will contribute to the sustainable growth of the settlement in the short to medium term.